

## February 2021 Missionary Update

Ellyn Benson Dubberly: El Salvador

January 27, 2021



*Philippians 1:3-11 I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.*

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**DEAR Supporters,**

**THANK YOU** for all the ways that you encourage me to continue in the work of the LORD! I want to share with you a few updates for the month of February 2021. It's back to school time here in Ahuachapán. Classes officially begin on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Since we will be beginning our school year in a virtual format, this last week of January is all about getting online groups set up in WhatsApp, Google Classroom and Google Meet. Honestly it is a rather exciting and re-energizing way to jump back into the teaching environment. Of course, like everywhere in the world, we face the same challenges of an imbalance of resources among our students and teachers. Many of our students as well as our teachers perform all their school responsibilities on their cell phones. TEACHERS work a lot of extra hours making sure that no student goes without receiving instruction due to lack of resources or technology. The classroom is changing around the world...including Ahuachapán!

Our teaching team at Colegio Metodista is working hard to improve the quality of online instruction we are providing. And are making a promise to focus on the social-emotional aspect of our virtual classrooms. To make time to reach out to students and listen to them. The pandemic has taken such a toll on their lives in so many ways. This is when we get to be the hands and feet of JESUS to our beloved students.



About the Artist - AUXL of Ataco



A local Salvadoran artist. Has an art cooperative in the tourist town of Ataco where her art can be found. She can also often be found in the coffee shop attached to the store where you can enjoy a delicious coffee and local desert in the garden enjoying the view of several of her collages made from recycled materials. She is also the artist responsible for several of the murals that create the impressive atmosphere of Ataco.

I want to share with you this image that God brought to my attention yesterday. It's a print from a local artist that I bought years ago, honestly two houses ago, before Camila was a part of our family. It's a familiar Salvadoran scene of a woman filling up her water jug from the community well that she will carry back home. It's actually still an everyday reality for many Salvadoran families not to have running water on their property, but to participate in a sort of well co-op...or to have to go to the river or a natural source to carry water back for household needs. This is most usually the case in rural areas, that in my opinion are truly within minutes from city life, but actually worlds apart due to the drastic changes in road conditions and infrastructure. Political corruption from top down truly is at fault. My husband and I invested in a modest coffee farm a few years ago with his inheritance. The land does not have access to water. We have applied to the government for water, but truly nothing has happened. There is a co-op well that is controlled by one neighbor who has offered that we could join the use of that well for a not so agreeable sum of money.

So, Brian carries water out to the farm regularly in the back of his truck and pays for a water truck to fill up our tanks that hold water for the coffee plants. The water he carries is drinking water for Guillermo and his family who oversee our coffee plants and land.

In 2019, Guillermo talked with Brian about a neighborhood group working to get a well dug by a humanitarian effort of Japan. Brian met with city officials and was in process of donating a piece of our land to be the site of a well that would provide water to many of the communities around our farm. A spring was identified, and a location was determined and agreed upon. It seemed like something was really going to happen to get water to so many families, improving the quality of life for not just a few, but for many, hopefully for generations to come. But with the pandemic, things came to a halt on this project. I imagine there is more happening behind the scenes than we realize, but I have zero doubt that if a well on our land that benefits the entire community is God's plan, it will certainly happen in God's providential timing.

When I bought this print of a woman filling her jar at the well, we were not yet landowners. I had the thought of the passage in the gospel of John of the woman at the well in mind. This one of my favorite Bible stories because it reminds me of when I asked Jesus to fill my heart with rivers of living water.

Until yesterday, this print was packed away in a box as we moved from one house to another, and then another. This week I have been studying the story of how God led Rebekah to water the camels of Abraham's servant as a sign that she was God's chosen wife for Isaac, the promised son who would be the beginning of a star-filled sky worth of descendants. As Abraham's servant asked Rebekah for a drink of water, she said yes. And said she would water his 10 camels until they were no longer thirsty. How beautiful is the concept that the Lord meets our needs, not just in a bare minimum type of way, but until there is no more need? That is an example that I want to live out in my service to others.

Yesterday, God placed two students into my care who need some extra help getting set up with online classes and weekly work tasks. As a family we discussed what commitment we would make to these girls and prayed asking God to lead us in this commitment. Once Camila finished her online classwork for the day, the three of us went over to Ana's home who is a faithful woman who does good for all who God places in her path. She is the mother of Bishop Juan de Dios Peña-Gallegos of the Evangelical Methodist Church of El Salvador. It was at a picnic table of Ana's front porch that I met Camila.

Yesterday afternoon, Ana opened her dining room table so that we could help her niece and a neighbor's daughter with their classwork for the day. Each of these two girls are in two completely different situations but are both being raised by their grandmothers. Another common thread of Salvadoran life.

As we helped the girls, I became keenly aware of the amount of time we were giving. I had a feeling of wanting things to move along so that we could get back home and back to our family routine. But calm poured over me, we did not rush. The five of us sat around Ana's table doing third grade and fifth grade math homework. Until it was completed. And before leaving, we made plans to do the same thing tomorrow afternoon. And the afternoon after that, until each of the girls are in a rhythm of being able to complete the work more independently.

When we returned home later, God brought my attention back to the image of the woman filling her jar at the well that I had unpacked from a box earlier in the day. I thought of Rebekah's heart and willingness to bring enough water to satisfy the thirst of 10 camels. I realized that God is giving me an opportunity with my family to give of our time with a similar generosity. *O, how I*

*love the work of the Lord!*

*\*\*\*A few details...this passage can be found in Genesis 24 and in El Salvador school is currently beginning for the 2021 school year. All classes are virtual, distance format to protect children, youth, and their families from the pandemic. Many children fall through the gaps in a well-intended system of education. God is working through grass-roots efforts to make sure that all needs are met.*

*Salvadorans are community minded people and have inspiring ways of caring for each other in the midst of very complicated circumstances.*

*It's currently the dry season here. So this thought of carrying water is very timely. Water is a scarce resource in a very dry and thirsty land. Yet Jesus promises us of a water that satisfies our thirst eternally, without end. That's the kind of water we are called to share with the world.*

*Grace, Peace, and HUGS from EL SALVADOR!!!*

*LOTS of LOVE, Ellyn, Camila,  
and Brian*



## JOIN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD'S WORK IN EL SALVADOR.....

PRAY	Pray for children and families in El Salvador as well as teachers as the new school year is in full swing, the Bishop, Pastors and ministries of the Methodist Church in El Salvador, the safety of church leaders and congregation members, God's growing call on the Dubberly Family, as well as progress in getting fair access to water in rural communities.
GIVE	To support Ellyn's work go to this link: <a href="https://umcmmission.org">Dubberly, Ellyn Benson - Global Ministries (umcmmission.org)</a>  To support a student at Colegio Metodista go to this link: <a href="#">Sembrando Raices Scholarship Fund - Home</a>
SHARE	Tell others about what God is doing in El Salvador – you can share all communication that I share with you. I hope to offer a few opportunities soon for us to connect through zoom for more of a discussion format of updating you on what is happening in El Salvador. This is a great way to invite others to hear a little more of the story.
Contact Ellyn	I love to hear from you too! I want to pray for you and know how God is at work in your life and community. Also, it helps me to know when you want to know more about what is going on in my life and ministry. Send me a message. <b>WhatsApp – +503 7787 7289</b> <b>Facebook – Ellyn Benson Dubberly</b> <b>Email – <a href="mailto:ellyndubberly@gmail.com">ellyndubberly@gmail.com</a></b>

