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*For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven.
–Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Dear Friends,

The petite child smiled at me from the center of the video frame. Alicia stood barefoot bedecked in a flowered skirt and a pink shirt splattered with small white hearts. In her hands she clasped flaming red hibiscus flowers she extended toward the camera. Little sister, Mayli, from behind wrapped her small arms around Alicia's waist, gave a hug, then trotted off. The child's sweet voice called, "Where are you, Hermana Katy? Thank you for our house. We are peaceful. I am content. I send you greetings. Thank-you."



In the background, I saw the opened door of their house and could almost smell the new boards of its walls nailed together.



In this time of the coronavirus pandemic, like most other places in the world, Guatemala's president issued a mandate throughout the country called, "*toque de queda*" a touch of stay – where the people were asked to stay at home. Alicia, her little sister Mayli, her mother Tona, and her grandmother did so in their new house.

It is the house that generosity and love recently built through our outreach ministry.

Guatemala, like most of the world, remains closed to travel and certain services are suspended. Schools, restaurants, churches are closed. Grocery stores and banks remain open, but only on specific days and during shortened hours. In Santiago Ixcán, restrictions tightened even further when a young man brought the virus into our village after working in Playa Grande where he contracted the illness. In this time of 'shut-down' our ministries, too, are affected.

Early in the ministry, I saw the need for local leadership to help me run things. I formed committees to help guide and manage our scholarship, library, and women's Ixcán Creations micro-business projects. Also, Ixcán Ministries hired trusted and wise Javier Gonzalez to oversee and co-administer with me these projects and help manage our outreach of food, emergency medical, and housing assistance for those in need. We asked compassionate Carmen Jimenez to step in to provide counsel and prayer with our women's *luchadora* (abandoned mothers with children) group. Things are still running but differently through the on-site committees, Javier, Carmen, and me via the telephone.



Carmen Jimenez and son



Javier Gonzalez

Our library is open two days a week for lending books on a one- by- one basis, and librarian, Rolando, sends coloring pages for the children to do at home. The scholarship committee reviews those students who continue to study on-line to receive scholarship benefits. The outreach ministry through Javier and Carmen attend to the needs as they arise, including material assistance to build another house for a struggling young family. Carmen meets now with the *luchadoras*, individually for prayer and counsel.

Because of the pandemic-caused unemployment and lockdown, besides our work in the Ixcán, we are expanding our reach in a short-term, small, hidden ministry in Guatemala City for those who now find themselves hungry.

We learned that people on the curbsides, and from doors and windows, began waving a white flag as a sign of desperate hunger. So, we explored the possibility of helping just a few and implemented 'the white flag' ministry through two trusted young men from our village who are working in the Capital. For now, it is one of the small things that we can do with love for the poorest of the poor.



And finally, it is with a saddened heart I share the news that we recently lost one of our most trusted and self-giving friends from the village, Antonia Villatoro, who died on June 30th of complications of a surgery performed in Coban. Antonia served on our leadership committees for the women's Ixcán Creations jewelry cooperative and our scholarship outreach. We will greatly miss her.

Antonia Villatoro, Presente.

I continue to work here in the U.S. with a focus on writing the book.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our ministry. We are praying for you and yours. Stay well and may God bless you.

Sincerely,
Kathy Snider

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Ixcán Ministries is a Christian lay mission serving as a ministry of presence with the Maya people in the Ixcán jungle of Guatemala. We act as a bridge between cultures for the exchange of gifts to transform lives and society.

Our programs include- Scholarships, Community Library, Women's Micro-business, Medical, Housing, and Food Assistance, Spiritual and Pastoral Accompaniment, and Promotion of Peace and Justice.

Ixcán Ministries is a 501(c) 3 organization. Your contributions are tax deductible.

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