

MAC

News

MEN ABIDING IN CHRIST MINISTRIES

modeling + multiplying discipleship

Back to Renacimiento

Matthew 5: 3-8: *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those that hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”*

On July 7, a group from MCC went to Renacimiento, Mexico (outside of Monterrey) for our first group mission trip since September 2019. The group consisted of nineteen 18 to 60 year olds with a strong contingent of college age students (which definitely helped in the energy department...especially since each day hovered around 100°).

As all of my trips to Renacimiento (50+ trips since 2009), the focus was to assist our

Fall 2022



ministry/discipleship partner, Casa Samuel, in serving the people of Renacimiento; an impoverished neighborhood of approximately 900 families.

The majority of our first day was spent at a high school playing volleyball, dodge ball, soccer and BINGO (aka GRINGO) and then culminating a graduation celebration and lunch for the entire school and staff. That night, back at the hotel, we celebrated the Casa Samuel staff and families (25 total) to a fajita dinner grilled and enjoyed in the wonderful courtyard at the Los Vientos hotel.

Our second day was a long one, with several activities beginning with our annual kickball tournament between the ladies of Renacimiento vs. the ladies of Marietta. However, rumors of the fun dodgeball games from the day before at the high school had infiltrated our plans and the next hour was dodgeball mania! Not one person in

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attendance was left unscathed! As always, a soccer game morphed from the activities on the renovated turf field and we proceeded to play soccer at a level that most of us had not experienced before.

After the morning games, we started preparing for Saturday afternoon weekly church worship. We canvassed the streets inviting children and families to church where we had the pleasure of hosting worship for 100+ people from the community. Casa Samuel worship is an active experience where the kids fully engage and participate especially with the praise music led by Pastor Aldo and Pastor Eva. The message presented by our college age students was a skit of the Prodigal Son story done through the Lighthouse song, "Everything". Not only, did they perform in Spanish, but the message of redemption and restoration through Jesus was an emotional and stirring event for everyone present.

After worship, we finished the afternoon by hosting a festival with a trampoline, 9 square, parachute games, red light/green light (or rojo/verde) relay racing, and of course, more dodgeball mania!! More than 150 kids took part while 50+ moms had the opportunity to fellowship through fingernail painting. We brought closure to our time in Renacimiento with dinner for 300+ people. It truly was an amazing day with our friends from Renacimiento.

Our last day was spent in Santa Catarina (a town 45 minutes away) at the Casa Samuel offices. Our time was spent playing GRINGO

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Dodgeball Mania in Renacimiento



The Power of Relationship *by Austin Thomas*

It was late June, maybe July, as I sat across from Pat in a local cafe. It was early morning. As I sat across the table, Pat asked how I was doing, and it became clear that God was working in my heart and in his. As we talked and talked and talked, even though we had gathered to discuss one thing, it became clear God had a different intention for both of us. What started as a work-through the book *The Spiritual Man* by Watchman Nee, turned into a divine appointment to learn and grow me as a pastor, to be equipped with all the necessary tools, and a mentorship relationship that would ultimately propel me into the next steps of ministry that God had in store. What wasn't clear then became clear in the coming months.

God brought me to Pat to prepare me to transition from a newly ordained assistant pastor, to becoming the lead pastor of a church in Griffin, GA.

Our time together had been deeply shaped by sharing, discussing, and preparing me for leadership, but even more so, for pastorship—real, relational, hard-at-times pastoring. In our time with the *Spiritual Man*, the Lord opened our eyes to a deeper relationship with Him, which led to a deeper relationship with each other. We talked about hard spiritual truths, and as we wrestled with those truths, it revealed to us our own hearts, and how we could abide

more richly in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

As I grew in my relationship with Pat, I grew in my relationship to God.

How is that possible? Well, if there is one thing that Pat does well in MAC Ministries, and I might add, so differently from other ministries, is that he builds relationships with those he meets with.

It is not merely a business meeting, its deeper, it's spiritual. He knows and understands and reinforces one thing, that relationships are key to ministry for the Lord, and to discipleship in Jesus Christ. Without relationships, without intentionality, without face time, you tend to do all the things that are not ministry, and actually, never engage in ministry.

Pat has shown me how important it is to make relationships a priority, while dealing with the urgent, but never letting it take control.

It is this kind of relationship, and this model of ministry, that sets Pat apart in what he does and does so effectively. I see how relating to others, meeting men where they are at, enables Pat to make a Kingdom impact in the lives of so many men, and by extension many families, workspaces, churches, and communities.

If we give more attention and focus to the individual, as Pat is so adept at doing, we can



Austin Thomas

move greater mountains than when we try to paint for a large swath of people.

So, here I am sitting at my desk on day one as a lead pastor. Many ups and downs have got me to this moment. But none has been more important or more effective in preparing me for this moment than my time spent with Pat. I am not sure if asked 3 months ago that I would have said yes to this call, though a call from God for sure. But today, even with a little trepidation in pushing forward, I know that I am ready because through Pat, God will continue to equip me for the work He has laid before me.

Chairman's Update. *by Scott McLain*

The cooler weather in September has me thinking about both change and consistency with MAC Ministries. In the same way that our weather changes with the seasons but is still generally consistent with the past and with our expectations, the Ministry changes yet remains the same.

The individual, one-on-one discipleship methodology has always been at the core of the ministry. But our newfound comfort with remote, "Zoom" style collaboration has extended the reach of these meetings. In addition to some local mentees, Pat is currently meeting with three individuals from out of state! Additionally, the pandemic seemed to increase men's desire for the group style discipleship Pat has always

offered. This fall he is leading eight discipleship groups! And while Pat's travel was curtailed the last couple years, this summer marked the return of a group Mission trip to Mexico. With these changes we can take comfort in the consistency of the central theme (and Person!!) of Jesus and our need for dependency on Him.



On this note of consistency, we are currently planning our annual matching fundraiser, which will again be held in December. When combined with our monthly/quarterly donors a successful annual fundraiser puts the Ministry on a solid financial foundation for the coming year. If you are able, I ask that you prayerfully consider investing in this Ministry this year. Pat's availability meets men with Jesus right where they are.

As always we covet your prayers for the above Ministry activities, our fundraiser, and of course Pat's family.

Yours in Christ,
Scott McLain
Chairman, Board of Directors
MAC Ministries

Fellowship...a catalyst for discipleship

Hebrews 10: 24–25, *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

The month of June was a blur. We celebrated daughter Mary's high school graduation over Memorial Day weekend. A few days later, my wonderful mother entered the hospital culminating in a celebration of her life with the most meaningful funeral service and reception. Somewhere in between, we made it to the beach for a few days of R&R before taking a group of 20 people on my first group mission trip to Mexico since 2019.

Upon returning from Mexico, Bridget and I travelled to Chicago to celebrate her first cousin's life as she passed away due to cancer. July ended with the passing of one of my childhood friends, again celebrating a life that ended much too early like the cousin in Chicago.

With the travel and attention to family, I found myself somewhat isolated from the regular fellowship that I am blessed with through MAC Ministries. In the business of life, it's easy to lose one's intentionality to

fellowship with other brothers in Christ. Although my prayer time had been enriched through the ups and downs of the past 60 days, I had missed the encouragement and rejuvenation of life the Lord brings through the fellowship of believers.

Although, a break from everything may have been what the doctor was ordering, I was yearning for the routine of coming together with the 75+ people a week that happens during my normal week.

This yearning has been a good reminder of the gift of fellowship and how the Lord uses it as a catalyst for discipleship. Over the years, the Lord has shown how the focus of prayer, Scripture, and fellowship is a tried and true pathway for discipleship or growing one's



Pat MacPherson

love and dependency on Jesus.

Along with the Hebrews Bible verse above, the Holy Spirit has brought awareness that 'tis the season to transition back into the regular schedule of meeting together. Solomon mentions these seasons in Ecclesiastes chapter 3 (and yes, the Byrds sing about it as well) and I'm so grateful how our wonderful Father navigates us through these seasons of pouring ourselves out as well as being strengthened.

For me, Hebrews 10: 24 & 25 is a great reminder of why MAC Ministries works from a platform of weekly meetings. I've always loved how the writer of Hebrews uses the word "spur" describing how the Holy Spirit moves within our relationships to build His body. When the cowboy spurs his horse, it is for the sole purpose of getting more out of the horse. It's not to suppress or handicap the horse but to release and enhance the will of the rider. That's part of how I see the Holy Spirit moving within the seven weekly groups and many individual meetings that make up a normal week in MAC Ministries; using each other to achieve His purposes.

If you are seeking a weekly Bible study/fellowship group to join, then contact me so we can talk. Several of the discipleship groups will be going through the book of Acts and the Gospel of Luke. Looking forward to hearing from you.

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Back to Renacimiento

(aka BINGO) and dancing with the elderly community that exists next to the Casa Samuel office. After the games we enjoyed hamburgers and grilled corn on the cob for 50+ people before heading to the airport to make it home by midnight!

In between the activities, our home group spent much time sharing and discussing the uniqueness of this mission focus in Renacimiento that is almost 15 years old. The late-night discussions which highlighted several Bible verses (such as the one from Matthew above) always remind us that these trips are unique because of the special relationships that exists between our two communities through the power of the Holy Spirit. Relationships that brake through language barriers, calling each other by first names, and laughter that truly resonates from our hearts. It's relationships that have blessed us with watching kids grow up (and

vice versa for them with some of our college students) and adults aging together as sincere friends and sharing the presence of Jesus amongst us.

In these trips, we are reminded that we don't go to Renacimiento to fix things. We go to love others and be loved back. It's hard to fix things when you realize that the people are not broken (as one from our team remarked). The people of Renacimiento are not broken because of their environment. In fact, one quickly recognizes the happiness and joyfulness they reflect. Yes, they are a people of fewer possessions and greater day-to-day struggles that we don't experience, but one could argue that we are more broken than they. As I like to remind everyone, their need for Jesus Christ is just like our need for Jesus Christ; it's a sin issue. And Jesus is the answer!

I do believe that Jesus was speaking to



July 2022, Pat, James, Liam, & Mary in Mexico

people like myself in the beatitudes. This becomes even more apparent through a trip to Renacimiento, where less seems like more. The blessing is that Jesus uses these relationships to mold and shape us, always conforming us to His image (ref. Romans 8:29).

Please let me know if you ever want to join us on our Journeys to Renacimiento. As Frasure Hunter always says, using the clip from Back to the Future, "We have to go back!"

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Will you help us multiply disciples?

MAC Ministries is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization funded by individuals and churches who value this ministry in the community.

We invite you to participate in supporting this ministry through your financial contributions:

- Online through Paypal at www.macministries.net
- Send a check payable to MAC Ministries at the address above

A Note From Bridget's Heart, by Bridget MacPherson

2 Timothy 4:8, *Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

Millions of people around the world are observing the loss of a great and influential woman, Queen Elizabeth II. This past summer, my family experienced the loss of a very great and influential woman. It is a loss that we

feel deeply and personally. On June 12, my Mother-in-Law (or Mother-in-Love), joined so many of her family and friends in the celebration of heaven.

I remember meeting Nancy MacPherson almost 30 years ago. She impressed me immediately as the very definition of Southern Matriarch. Her children looked up to her, her grandchildren adored her, and her husband, Bob, was devoted to her. I have to admit that I was somewhat intimidated. Marrying into the MacPherson family was a commitment beyond Pat, and I would be lying if I didn't feel the weight of expectation of what a wife and mother was supposed to be in Nancy's eyes.

I remember a time right after the birth of our first born, Liam, when I was feeling especially inadequate. Certainly, I wasn't feeding him enough, or he was too cold, or too hot, or needed a diaper change, all comments I took personally as a new, exhausted,

hormone-filled mother. I remember complaining to my college roommate about how overly critical Nancy was being to my attempts of caring for my newborn son. She listened patiently and then asked me a question that changed my relationship with Nancy for the next 22 years. "Do you think that Nancy loves you?" I didn't even have to think to answer that question. I knew without a shadow of a doubt that Nancy loved me. My friend responded with such wise advice. To paraphrase, because I don't remember her exact words, she told me that if I knew that Nancy loved me, then I should trust that her comments are not coming from a malicious place. She was not going to change her love or concern for me. What needed to change was the way that I responded to her. I needed to respond with love and respect rather than feeling inadequate and judged.

That moment of our relationship was pivotal. I'm thankful that it happened early on in my marriage so that I could actually enjoy my Mother-in-Law as another blessing in my life. No longer did I have to conform to the expectations of this world that put such enmity between the mother/daughter-in-law relationship. I was free to develop our relationship as two women who loved God, our family and each other.



Selfie with Mom!