

March 2020, Reflecting on 2019

Dear Friends at Westminster Gospel Chapel,

Once again, I am writing on behalf of Blanquita Haggerty to acknowledge your faithful gifts through MSC in 2019. Thank you. Your financial support is so appreciated at this time in Mom's life; it is such grace. I also know that it comes with your prayers and affection.

2019 was Mom's first full year in Bolivia since moving there in August 2018. She has been able to maintain her independent living, though with almost daily help from her friend and helper, Rosa, and the regular presence of my brothers. Liam lives upstairs from Mom and he and his wife Miriam check in regularly; my brother Ian comes by 3-to-4 evenings a week. Although she can no longer see to read emails, my brother Ian regularly checks her email for any messages of news from friends.

Mom went back briefly to Vancouver to attend her grandson, Aaron's, wedding in November 2019. It was wonderful for her to see some friends, and while she loved seeing Vancouver again, it also became clear that she would not be able to live independently in the way she used to, and that it was a good decision to move back to Bolivia to be close to family and friends. Mom doesn't get out much anymore but she still enjoys her visits by her Sunday School 'girls' (50-60 years old now!) and the women she has mentored over the years. However, I do notice that although she still perks up for visits, it seems to take more and more out of her. She is very much feeling her age. I would so appreciate your prayers for her and for us as we navigate the unknown but inevitable waters of her decline.

It has been a very dramatic year in Bolivia. As you may know, Bolivia underwent an enormous upheaval in October 2019 after the national elections were widely perceived and then shown to be fraudulent. Essentially the country went on strike until the president stepped down, and left the country. Our city of Santa Cruz shut down all activity for 21 days. Although it was economically difficult, it was also characterized by a high level of solidarity and unity. Christians came together across denominations and traditional divides to pray. Prayer meetings were held 24/7 in a chapel set up at the place where people gathered together to protest. Even non-believers acknowledge that the lack of bloodshed and the unity that occurred was a miracle.

New elections have been called for May 6, 2020. Although it seems that things have slipped back to politics as usual, hope for a new way of doing things has been created, and Christians have an important legitimacy in the public square. We would really covet your prayers for Bolivia at this time, especially for continued bold and unified Christian witness and for the healing of very old wounds in the society. The ousted president is still in the running and there does not appear to be an alternative that unites the majority of Bolivians.

Closer to Mom, the work at Ebenezer chapel is flourishing. My father's protégé and Mom's 'adopted' son, Chaly Aparicio, runs a Bible Institute where many church members and others take different courses on the Bible. It is very impressive! Chaly is enrolled in a distance Master's program at Grace Theological College in Texas, and it has been lovely to see him be a brilliant and dedicated student, and passing on his knowledge.

Thank you again for your care and support of my Mom, Blanquita. I know the composition of community at Westminster Chapel has changed since we went there as a family in the 1970's (!!!) but it still holds such a place of affection in our hearts because of the warm embrace and welcome we experienced there. We have so appreciated your faithful love and support of my parents and now my Mom.

Again, on behalf of Blanquita, thank you.

In Him,

Jeannie Haggerty