

February 2019 | Quarterly Newsletter

# Recycled Lives News



New Years is one of my favorite holidays. I love taking the time to reflect, think and process on what the last year has brought. I also love looking ahead, eyes wide open with possibilities for what the next year will bring. As Christians, I believe that new beginnings have an even greater meaning for us. Because of Jesus, we have a new beginning! As you think about what opportunities lie ahead in 2019, and you read the stories in this newsletter, I want to challenge you to think about these five questions:

1. What is one thing you could do to increase your enjoyment of God?
2. What's the most humanly impossible thing you will ask God to do this year?
3. What is the most helpful way you could use your strengths to strengthen your church?
4. For whose salvation will you pray most fervently for this year?
5. What is one thing you could do to improve your prayer life?

Serving together,  
Lexi Johnson



## Recycled Lives Board of Directors

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Founder, Executive Director, Missionary

Dennis Troff

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Board Vice-Chair

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Board Treasurer

Liz Cheney

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Board member

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- **Feeling called to support Recycled Lives in some way? We need prayer partners, one time and monthly pledges as well as ministry project sponsors! Contact us via email, direct message or call for more details. We need everyone's help and support in BIG and LITTLE ways!**

Contact information

- Praise God for the resources to build 3 houses & give 400 sheets of lamina, 10 stoves and 28 bunk beds in the past year to families in great need.
- Praise God for the blessing of Christian friends & helpers that have come alongside our missionaries in Guatemala.
- Praise God for positive changes in the San Gabriel community; increased volunteerism, attitudes of gratitude and increased participation in prayer and praise during the monthly food distribution.
- Pray for God's continued guidance in developing a long-term plan for ministering in Guatemala
- Pray for God's provision for the ministry programs He has/will lead us into.
- Pray for Shawn to be able to commit the necessary time needed to rest in the Lord to renew and refresh.
- Pray for Brad's back, neck and leg pain that have been worsening as his steroid injections have worn off.
- Pray for God to call new members to the committees and Board of Directors of Recycled Lives.

## Missionary Update

God was so faithful in 2018, and I know He will continue to be faithful in 2019! Here are a few of my favorite memories from the past year that I would love to share with you.

In 2009, I was able to help construct a home for a family in a village near the mission home. At the time, one of the kids receiving the home was 16 years old. Jose, now 27, asked if he could come along and help with constructing homes in San Gabriel whenever we happen to be building on his days off from work. He is skilled at cement work and this is an area we always can use help! Keep in mind, this young man works 10 hours per day, 6 days per week. He also goes to school one day a week and is only given two days off each month. But, on his only days off, he is desiring to use his precious time to serve others, doing what he can to be a blessing to others by helping to build homes. *(in the photo below of 4 men, Jose is on the far right)*

In 2018, Recycled Lives was able to give work to three masons from the community of San Gabriel when we constructed homes for others in their own community. Not only does this provide paid work, it is also a way for them to give back to their own community. Each of these three masons have previously had homes built for them through Recycled Lives, and as a result of this, they desire to use their skills to serve and give back, though they receive pay, they actually request a lower wage than typical as a way of serving God and making construction more affordable with the rising costs of materials we have experienced. Because of this, we can keep the cost of homes the same and also decrease the number of days Brad and I need to be present for the labor intensive cement days which is necessary for us. Recycled Lives continues to focus on finding ways to help the San Gabriel community help themselves. It is such a blessing to see that the way we are ministering is making a difference in San Gabriel! *(in the photo below of the 3 men, the 3 masons from San Gabriel are on the left)*

One of my most favorite memories that I witnessed occurred during an event hosted for the woman in the San Gabriel community by the Hearts and Hands Mother Daughter mission team. It was an event centered on a special time shared between moms and daughters (some were grandmothers with their granddaughters). During a time of sharing personal affirmations and prayer with one another I watched walls between some mom's and daughters crumble down. I watched tears flow & and heard sweet giggles erupt. I witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit shine and wash over every precious woman in the church that day as I watched my dear friend Pastor Liz embrace and pray a special blessing over every individual mother-daughter. I sobbed most of that day not just because I was feeling overwhelmed with grief for my deceased momma and my daughter who had recently lost one of her twins babies in utero but because I was surrounded by a community and my dear friend Liz that loved on me and simultaneously filled me with the motherly affirmations I needed to hear too. That day God filled me with the depth of joy and peace necessary to completely fill in overflowing measures the profound depth of my sorrow. *(a few of my favorite photos of this event are below)*

### Serving together in Christ's abundant love,

Shawn Johnson, Missionary, Founder & Executive Director for Recycled Lives



# 30 Days in Guatemala

By: Erik Farquharson, Recycled Lives Volunteer



Hello, I'm Erik Farquharson and I'm on mission here in Guatemala for thirty days with Recycled Lives.

Nine days into the trip and this is so different from back home. It's warmer, there are volcanoes, and the people are quite nice! There are many new things to take in, but one stands out to me the most; the people here appear to be content with the little they have but they struggle hard. The poverty in Guatemala is abundant.

Families survive on the basics here in Guatemala.

They have rice, beans and bread. The mom's and dad's use the little resources they have to provide for their families. For example, they use plastic as fire starter and then cook their meals on that fire.

Lamina (corrugated tin) roofs and siding are common, and while some walls are concrete, plastic sheeting, corn stalks and lamina are the main components in holding a physical home together.

The children have fun playing with whatever and whoever they have access to, whether it be old discarded PVC pipes and climbing on dirt or garbage piles, or interacting with other neighborhood friends.

In addition to the poverty, the water here is rarely treated so the bacteria in water can make someone very ill. American's definitely cannot drink the water in Guatemala, and although many Guatemalan's are accustomed to the bad bacteria, it is still not safe for any person to be drinking! Apart from the water, the average income here varies greatly but what doesn't is that many are barely scraping by day to day.

Necessities such as uniforms, shoes, backpacks and notebooks are very expensive here, especially with what little income a family has, while in America they are affordable. Giving a little goes a very long way in Guatemala.

I look forward to sharing my experiences and stories with family and friends when I return home! Most importantly, I look forward to growing more and more in my Faith every moment I'm here!

As Scripture says, *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."* (New International Version, Phil. 4:11)

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## *Recycled Lives' Faith & Mission:*

*Recycled Lives is rooted and built upon the belief that faith in Jesus Christ renews and transforms broken or lost lives into something beautiful and purposeful - Jesus Recycles our Lives.*



## Hearts & Hands Mission Team

By: Pastor Liz Cheney

I knew the mother daughter trip was going to be special, and reflecting back now three months later I see the lasting effects both in our daughters and in the people we met and the ministry we had the privilege to be a part of.

As my fifth trip to Guatemala, you might think it's the "same old", but it's not. Each trip is new, different and life changing! You see, I have traveled to Guatemala with my daughter so that wasn't new to us, but what was new was watching her take on leadership, visit with kids she had met two years before and be her true self while experiencing being God's hands and feet with her cousin and best friend.

Helping families, kids and the community we served in is never the same. Each year it's new faces along with the old. It's a new set of challenges among the everyday life challenges of living in poverty. What never changes though is the love of Jesus being shared and experienced mutually with the people we serve.

And that's it...all we do is about Jesus and in and through that God shows up in so many unexpected ways and that is the joy and reason each year God calls together another mission team. Looking forward to the 2019 team whomever that might be called together to serve.



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Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!  
2 Corinthians 5:17 [NIV]

***Our Purpose:*** Recycled Lives is a non-profit Christian organization dedicated to bettering the lives of people living in poverty through facilitating access to resources that are physical, spiritual and/or financial in nature. We are advocates for ceasing poverty for all of God's people throughout the world.

***Our Faith & Mission:*** Recycled Lives is rooted and built upon the belief that faith in Christ renews and transforms broken or lost lives into something beautiful and purposeful (He Recycles our Lives).

Recycled Lives is focused on sharing the gospel through serving as the hands and feet of Christ in our communities and throughout the world. We will go forth into the world to bring positive change to lives through demonstrating the love of Christ so that we may bring praise and glory to God.