



Shoulder 2 Shoulder Ministries • Guatemala

THE COX FAMILY

Romans 5:3-5 says, "Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

By the time you receive this letter, it will be a little over a month and a half since we moved to Guatemala. This time has been filled with much joy along with many trials. We have met many new friends, found a church, slowly progressed in language learning, acquainted with the kids nanny, hiked an active volcano, and begun acclimating to the weather/area. However, it also came with many trials (sufferings). We had our first Urgent Care visit for Maverick, Jess had severe GI issues, we've hit a lot of language barrier walls, and we have been sorting through emotions and longing for the familiarity of "home."

However, during the trials, we are finding our endurance. Each day brings a breath of fresh air. We can breathe a little bit easier. That phrase is both literal and metaphorical haha. Living at almost 7,000 ft in elevation, we find ourselves needing to stop and catch our breath more frequently. The aching for what we knew as "home" is becoming more bearable. The language is becoming clearer, the sicknesses are fading, and our emotions are stabilizing. That is all thanks to your prayers! We appreciate your prayers more than you can even fathom. They help us get through each day! We feel so blessed and honored to have been called to Guatemala. We knew the transition would not be easy, but God made it possible.

What have we been doing??

The past several weeks have consisted of driving around to different stores trying to find what we need for our house. As mentioned in the last newsletter, there isn't a "one-stop-shop." We've had to go to many different stores to find everything we need. Including 3-4 different grocery stores just to find a week's worth of ingredients we need for meals



Halfway up Volcan de Pacaya.
Pictured is Volcan de Agua.



Roasting marshmallows in a volcano vent.



We made it to the top of
Volcan de Pacaya!

We have been taking a day of rest each week when we do something fun as a family. Some things we've done are walk around Antigua and hike an active volcano. The volcano we hiked is called Volcán de Pacaya. This has a funny story to it, although it was not funny in the moment. When we arrived at the volcano, immediately there were guides at our car asking to assist us on the hike. It is now required to have a guide with you because, in the past, there were some people who got lost. We knew the chances of getting a guide who spoke English would be very slim. We were correct. Our guide's name was Silvia and she did not speak any English. She was a fantastic guide, though. She helped a lot with our kids, allowed us to take breaks when we needed and however long we needed them, and she encouraged us (at least we think she was haha). The only issue we had, which turned out to be a big one, was that she took us on one of the hardest trails. Just picture us climbing at least a 35 degree incline with volcanic ash slipping out from under our feet for over an hour. I am not sure how, but the kids did an incredible job!!! They never complained until we were coming back down and even then, it wasn't bad. Even Maverick hiked 98% of the time. A reward we received for making it to the top was walking down the valley of the volcano and roasting marshmallows in one of its vents. It was such a cool experience. I am not sure when we will hike the volcano again, I think we need a little break from it, but it most certainly was an experience of a lifetime.

The kids have been adjusting well. Naam has been doing phenomenal. It's been beneficial for him to play his Nintendo Switch with some friends in the States. He also started playing on a soccer team. Our community has a lot of girls, so Taylyss has enjoyed making friends and playing at the park with them. She has learned the phrase, "Quieres jugar conmigo?" which means, "Do you want to play with me?" She has also joined a ballet class. We are so proud of her for stepping out of her comfort zone. Both Naam and Taylyss have been able to video chat their co-op classes that they attended over the fall. Maverick has been just taking everything in. A few weeks ago, we went to Antigua for dinner. As we were heading down the hill, Mavy said, "Are we going to An-tee-gah (Antigua)?" It caught Caleb and me off guard because it was the first time he acknowledged going anywhere specific in Guatemala.

Overall, Guatemala has been great. We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for your prayer and support. God is an incredible God and we would not be here without your obedience to Him! While our main ministry is to learn language and culture this year, we have had opportunity to witness to a few people we've met in our community. Please pray we are able to continue building relationships with these individuals and lead them to Christ. Your prayers and encouragement help us get through each day. We still have room on our prayer team! If you would like to join and commit to praying, at minimum, one day every month for us and the people of Guatemala, please reach out to us! Our emails are at the bottom of this newsletter.

Prayers:

- Language school continues to go well.
- The kids learn Spanish via their nanny and immersion
- Good health
- Nail down a daily schedule

Praises:

- Slowly adapting to language and culture
- The kids love their nanny
- Everyone is making new friends
- Everyone is healthy at the moment



The kids love their nanny and her son!

Stand With Us

If you are interested in knowing more about our ministry and how you can stand Shoulder 2 Shoulder with us, please contact us at: jess.c@cornerstoneinternational.org or caleb.c@cornerstoneinternational.org. We would love to meet up and fellowship together.

To give online: www.cornerstoneinternational.org/cox (Scan the QR)

To give via check:

Make Check out to Cornerstone International,
mail to PO Box 192 Wilmore, KY 40390.

Memo: Shoulder 2 Shoulder



...They will all worship Me together, shoulder to shoulder, as one people.

Zephaniah 3:9 (ERV)