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Dear friends,

"And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing, which came to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger," Luke 2:15.

We want to come with excitement and expectancy this Christmas—with joy and thanksgiving—because Jesus lives in us. Christmas is a season of joy, reflection, and faith—a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus and to embrace the challenge and privilege we have as God's children to share the message of love and joy with non-Christians and unreached people groups.

As we reflect on the ministries of our Caribbean and Mexican partners, we see them living out their faith each day and sharing the message of Jesus—the One who came as a baby, lived on earth as the God-man, shared in the same trials we experience, chose twelve disciples, mentored them, and went to the cross to die for our sins so that we might have eternal life.

Let's take a trip to the Caribbean to witness God at work, continuing what Jesus began, in a humble area of a large city—using ordinary people to lead this ministry of a local church.

Mount Horeb Church was founded in 2022 with eight people who were blessed in their baptism experience, along with nine children who desired to know Jesus. Then God brought them into the Mercy Network, with the vision and mission that the church would unite with one major purpose: to put all their efforts into multiplying churches through evangelism, making disciples who make disciples, training leaders, and planting new churches. We were challenged to be a part of the Mercy Network, being used by God to expand His kingdom. After only six months, our attendance of adults increased, and 25 children regularly attended. We began a ministry working with three disabled individuals, and that ministry has grown significantly. We were blessed when God provided a larger space to meet, now serving 25 adults and even more children.

We were equipped and empowered by the Mercy Network with a passion for lost souls that elevated our ministry to another level, allowing us to establish a ministry called At the Table with Jesus. We care for more than 25 elderly individuals, preparing daily meals and delivering them to their homes. Every Saturday, we also prepare meals for the children in the church.

We were blessed to raise up a daughter church in La Lisa. This church began with four elderly people, three alcoholics, a teenage couple with a baby, a pregnant teenager, and a widowed father with two children whose wife had just passed away. We thank God for providing a leadership team who could relate to their personal and spiritual needs.

In just two years and nine months, our church continues to grow. Three daughter churches have been raised up, and we are now serving 67 families. To God we give the glory! Praise God for transformed lives that can now worship Jesus with us this Christmas. May your hearts be lifted in praise this Christmas for the wonderful gift of Jesus and the joy He brings to our lives.

*Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year,
Willie & Joani Hochhalter*

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