

Great Things the Lord Has Done for Us

by Jocabed Gallegos, FDC Coordinator

When I was reading Psalm 126, I realized that in living with adversities, often people cry out because of separation or hopelessness. Much of today's news tells of unhappy situations in border cities. Have we grown accustomed to the realities of suffering, or do we open our hearts and eyes and ears? Do we extend our hands and give hope and compassion? At Frontera de Cristo, you will find friendship, goodness, and compassion. You will find faith in action. It is a positive story.

Here in Douglas, Arizona/Agua Prieta, Sonora—the borderlands—there is so much that is going on around us. All of the people and the situations give life or essence to the border. Some of the news focuses on the immigration situation and the many injustices that are lived by migrating peoples from around the world. There is a Latin American song that says: "I am not from here, I am from there." It tells the story of displaced people, people struggling to find their identity as they face an unknown future, often a future with closed doors. In Agua Prieta, Sonora, there is a small place where the door is



Painting the welcome banner for the MRC

open. As a migrant, you can find a welcome space, if even just for a brief time. You can find a friend who offers coffee, water, food, a blanket... You will hear soft voices and offers for help. You can find one who hugs with their heart. That place is the Migrant Resource Center (MRC)/Centro de Recursos para Migrantes. In 2022, the MRC welcomed 41,868 people (over their seventeen years, more than 156,000 people) from different countries, of different ages, and with different needs. Each person found kindness.

The ministry of Frontera de Cristo is also engaged in support services for the local community. I think that for everyone, Covid was a crisis of emotional and physical loss. Here in Agua Prieta, a result of the pandemic was the loss of educational opportunities and relationships for so many children. For that reason, Frontera de Cristo partnered to start an educational enrichment program. What happened to children in your community? We had virtual classes here, however, due to the economy of many families, access to computers or the Internet was very complicated. Few had computers and the family cell phones were needed by the working parents. Since 2020, it has been difficult to regularize classroom experiences but now, we thank God that we have been able to extend an education supplemental support program to various locations in the city. We have three venues with a total of 240 children who have benefited from the educational service. Our plan is to continue expanding the program by locating different sites within vulnerable communities where we can offer education enrichment, healthy food supplements, and spiritual care.



**Friends from CATPSIC have become experts at barbecuing
for Café Justo y Mas events**

As we focus on supporting the community's children, we also reach out to area adults suffering with addictions. I thank God for the partnership we have with CATPSIC (Centro de Atención Psicológica), a rehabilitation center for people suffering with drug and alcohol problems. Participants in the program must have the desire to change, although for many it is very difficult. They have to say "no" to the life that took them away from their families and the person they once had been. At CATPSIC, they have spiritual, artistic, and emotional activities. They are shown how God can change their lives, how they can be sensitive to

God's call. Such a call is difficult for me, for all of us, yet, when I see the CATPSIC clients interact, grow, encourage each other, prepare meals together, and help others, I see God at work. I see lives that are transforming. It is not easy for them but with help and prayers, there is a hope that is lived one day at a time.

I also want to share with you the program run by the women of Douglaprieta Trabaja. When they talk about their program they say: this program is like a school. For me, it is more than a little school, it really is a school of life. Every time I enter through its doors, there is a project that must be done. I am not able to work in the community garden due to allergies but I do enjoy the delicious products they grow: chard, tomatoes, pumpkins, coriander, cucumber, watermelon, melons, onion, garlic, apples, and quinces. The food they produce is an important and healthy supplement for their families and for the community. The women also sew and teach sewing: how to take measurements, design and make clothes, and produce textiles for selling—another small income for their families. Each week the cooperative sets aside time and provides a space for devotionals. The time they spend together is encouraging, supportive, and strengthening; they show each other and all of us the many images of God.



As we live with our many partners and countless other experiences at the border, I recognize how we are participants in the way of Christ. We can exclaim with joy that great and wondrous things have been and will be done with us!

We invite you to come and know our community, an area of the world where daily struggles are lived, but the love of God is experienced day by day. Where life is full of joys and tears; and where we seek to serve with sincerity. It is here in the borderlands we remember that to help others is to experience life. Come, join us, your family on the border.

