



SIFAT JOURNAL

SHARING GOD'S LOVE IN PRACTICAL WAYS

SPRING 2018

Donate Your Change

SIFAT is excited to share a new way you can help change lives throughout the world by simply donating the rounded-up change from your everyday purchases to our organization. SIFAT is the first nonprofit in Alabama to offer this platform, Change by Softgiving™, that allows you to do a lot of good with a little bit of change.

The signup process is simple; you can start donating the rounded-up change from your everyday purchases at www.sifat.org/change or by scanning the QR code below. In your account, you will link your debit and credit cards with your bank account to benefit SIFAT. *You have the option to cap your monthly donation at a specific amount and can cancel at any time.* Donations are tax-deductible and will appear on your monthly bank statement as charges to SIFAT.

You will feel great knowing that every time you use a linked card to buy a cup of coffee, fill up your car with gas or go to the grocery store, you are also helping SIFAT share God's love in practical ways. All purchases help SIFAT. *For example, if you purchase a coffee for \$2.75, your total is rounded up to \$3 and your change — \$0.25 — is automatically donated to SIFAT! If you buy \$20 worth of gas, your total becomes \$21 — an extra \$1 will be donated.* At the end of the year, SIFAT will send you a summary of your total donations. Change by Softgiving was built to make giving an easy part of your everyday life, so join us by signing up today.

If you have any questions, please contact us, and we can walk you through the process. Thanks so much for helping SIFAT share God's love through service, education and personal involvement with a needy world by donating your change.



www.sifat.org/change

Mission Team Openings

Would you like to be part of a SIFAT mission team? Some teams this summer and fall still have spaces available. Contact international team coordinator Peggy Walker, walkerp@sifat.org for more information.

6/9 - 6/16 Faith UMC, Pinson, Ala.
6/30 - 7/7 Eufaula FUMC (youth), Eufaula, Ala.
10/13 - 10/20 Bonifay FUMC (medical), Bonifay, Fla.
MD, PA or NP needed

For more details or to download a brochure about our Aida Leon project, visit www.sifat.org/international-missions/ecuador.

Are you interested in leading a SIFAT mission team from your church, university or community in 2019? Contact internationalteams@sifat.org to get started! Teams can serve in Ecuador in all months except December. To complete our construction project in Aida Leon, 20 construction/VBS teams are needed in 2019.

Donating Outside the Box: Unused FSA \$\$\$

Peggy Walker
International Team Coordinator

We received a wonderful gift from a former team member and SIFAT donor. She used the excess funds from her family's FSA (flexible spending account) to buy basic medical equipment for our international projects, such as blood pressure cuffs, thermometers and otoscopes; Band-aids; and over-the-counter medicines. These will be distributed among our project sites around Quito, where our graduates try to maintain a small on-site clinic in their churches with almost no funding for supplies. What a blessing to the children in their care! Some equipment will also be given to Dr. Ruth Noemi, our SIFAT-supported doctor in the Andes of Bolivia, to supply her outpost clinics in remote villages near Quesimpuco.

As FSA contributions must be used by the end of the year under the "use it or lose it" rule, please share with friends and family who have an FSA this incredibly helpful way of donating to SIFAT! If you are interested in using your unused 2018 funds, please contact me, walkerp@sifat.org, for a list of needed supplies and medicines.

Thank You!



Our Ecuador teams answered the call to provide funds for a concrete mixer and vibrator for SIFAT Ecuador. Because of new regulations in response to the devastating earthquake in 2016, this equipment was required to meet codes and build the safest buildings for the children with whom we work. From the feedback we have heard, the teams are not too disappointed to no longer mix all the concrete by hand.

On his 13th birthday, Tysean Allen asked his party guests to bring over-the-counter medicines and supplies that he could take on his mission trip to Ecuador this May. Here, he is at the hotel preparing to pack the presents to take to Aida Leon. What a great birthday gift!



Matching Funds

Have you checked to see if your employer will match your donation to SIFAT? Many companies do! We are glad to provide documentation, if needed.

Taking Clean Water to Puerto Rico

Tom Corson
Executive Director

Almost six months after Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico is *Rising up!* This slogan is telling of the spirit and resilience of this island's people. In late January, I led a small team of people from the Auburn Wesley Foundation and Auburn United Methodist Church to deliver and install another 450 water filters. Each one is capable of filtering one million gallons of dirty unsafe water, providing a total of 450 million gallons of clean, safe water to the people of Puerto Rico.

The SIFAT team was able to visit Vieques, a remote island with nearly 9,000 residents, that is eight miles off the main island's coast. The island is primarily dependent on ferries to provide food and other supplies. For these people, recovery is still a long way off. Working with Methodist pastor Carmen Cruz, the team provided 100 water filters for two communities on the island. Pastor Carmen was so grateful for the clean water, but shared that more than anything, our visit provided hope, saying we now know we have not been forgotten.

Back on the mainland, the team met with Pastor Isabelino Rivera of Puerta del Cielo Methodist Church in Patillas to help continue the church's effort to provide relief to an isolated community. The church had organized a daylong concerted effort to deliver flood buckets, hygiene kits, a solar powered light, staple food and SIFAT water filters to 200 families.

During this day, I met William, a contract government relief worker whose job was to maintain and fuel four generators that powered the water pumps to these communities. Even though the water is not potable, it does allow the communities to bathe, as well as clean and remove the mold from their homes. William had been working in this community for more than a month and had come to know almost everyone on the main road where he maintained the generators. He was very emotional when he shared about helping the community he had grown to love. For some time, he had been the only access to the outside world and had volunteered to pick up needed medicines and supplies for the shut-in and elderly people. He is just one of the unsung heroes that continues to do what he can to make a difference.

SIFAT is committed to continue to help support the recovery efforts for the people of Puerto Rico. We are grateful for your prayers and support that have allowed us to Share God's Love in Practical Ways to the people of Puerto Rico in their efforts to *Rise Up*.

Editor's Note: Since Tom wrote this article, SIFAT has provided a total of 1,750 filters, each providing up to 1 million gallons of clean water. In early May, 500 solar lights were donated from a company in India. Because of the generosity of SIFAT donors, we provided shipping costs to send these lights directly to Puerto Rico, where our partners there will distribute these lights where they are most needed.



Looking Back: Fall '17 Intern

Kathy Bryson
International Training Director

Our first Training Intern at SIFAT from UNA Honduras (National Agricultural University), Andrea Reyes Suarez was part of our staff this past fall. Andrea's internship gave her academic credit as part of her senior project, which was to learn more about producing and using green leaf powder in various recipes and promoting those at the community level to combat child micronutrient deficiency.

We paired her with our partners, Dave and Therese Kennedy of Leaf for Life when they were training at UNA and afterwards at their headquarters in Interlachen, Fla. She helped teach some of the sessions to fellow students and faculty, as well as for AHESUNA (SIFAT alumni group in Honduras) members at a retreat.

SIFAT obtained a scholarship from ECHO for Andrea to attend the ECHO Global Conference and to be a workshop presenter on the practical aspects of

incorporating green leaf powder to fortify local foods. Subsequently, Andrea returned to SIFAT to share some tips and recipes on cooking with leaf powder with Donna Medforth, our hospitality manager, so that she could make green leaf fortified foods to demonstrate to groups visiting SIFAT throughout the year.

Andrea also developed a flip chart for use at the community level to educate others about this sustainable way of fortifying local foods. Copies of this are available in English, Spanish and soon in Haitian Creole for our graduates to use in their community trainings. Additionally, we worked with Auburn University to set up a tour of its meat processing plant and poultry production/processing facilities and to attend a student food processing contest where she judged new recipes students were proposing to market. This was excellent exposure for Andrea, as well as a good opportunity for SIFAT to interact with faculty and students at Auburn. Her university was very pleased with the opportunities that SIFAT afforded to their student.



Andrea Reyes, fall training intern, focused on learning more about adding green nutrient-rich powder to foods. She taught hospitality manager Donna Medforth how to make healthy tortillas.

International Graduate Projects

Graduates of SIFAT training have the opportunity to write project proposals that can become official international projects. The SIFAT board of directors appoints a committee to approve, oversee and fund raise for these projects.

You can learn more about what our graduates are returning to their communities to do by reading their profiles on our website. Both current projects needing funds and completely funded projects are showcased.

[www.sifat.org/
international-missions/
international-projects](http://www.sifat.org/international-missions/international-projects)

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Are you moving? Don't forget to send us your updated contact information. E-mail info@sifat.org with your new mailing address, phone number and e-mail address.

Spring Training Held in April

Sarah Corson
Co-founder

SIFAT's Spring Training was held on our Galilee Campus during the last two weeks of April and was taught primarily in Spanish. Participants represented Pakistan, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Equatorial Guinea, which is the only African country whose official language is Spanish.

One particular session, Participatory Learning and Action for Training the Trainers, was designed to help our international interns, plus other experienced mission leaders attending, to increase their skills in integrated development training for their communities. While here, our training participants were warmly received on a visit to Auburn University, where they led a class on Global Poverty and Hunger and shared different perspectives on causes and solutions.

Five of the participants will remain at SIFAT until the first of September, serving as interns. They will be sharing the appropriate technologies they already use in their communities, as well as those they have learned from their university training, with groups participating in our Learn & Serve Summer Experience sessions.

Local churches are sending volunteers to practice conversational English on a one-to-one basis, enabling the interns to learn more English, as well as make friends with local people and learn our culture here in Alabama. These interns inspire us very much with their dedication, their abilities and their determination to work hard to make the world a better place. They have added enthusiasm and joy to Galilee Campus.



SIFAT staff members join participants in the Spring Training for a cross cultural class led by international training director Kathy Bryson. Six countries were represented during this training held the last two weeks of April and taught primarily in Spanish.

Training Presents at ECHO

Kathy Bryson
International Training Director

ECHO, a longtime partner with SIFAT, invited me to do a plenary presentation at its annual international agriculture and development conference in Ft. Myers, Fla., on integrating community nutrition education into agricultural programs. It was a wonderful opportunity to share on a topic that is cutting edge in international development circles currently and was well received. We were also able to offer an additional practical workshop to demonstrate linking agriculture with nutrition with leaf powder processing and fortification. Our intern Andrea from Honduras led this workshop as part of her training experience. She did an excellent job sharing with an international audience.

It was also a superb networking opportunity with other nonprofits and participants in international development. We were delighted that ECHO found conference scholarships for both Andrea and SIFAT graduate Pastor Anice to attend and participate. We appreciate our longtime partnership with ECHO!



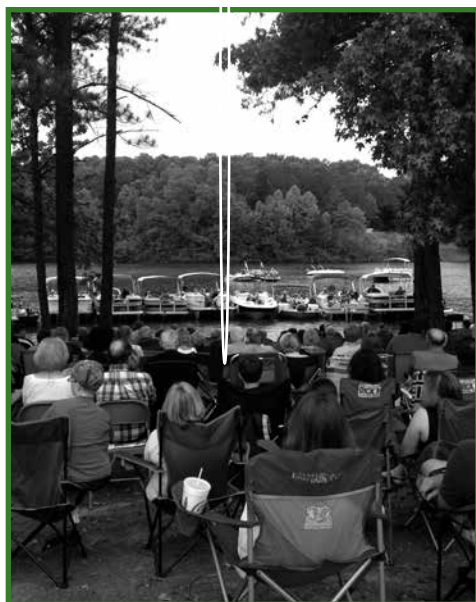
Cecelia Gonzalez, Latin America/Caribbean coordinator at ECHO joins SIFAT training intern Andrea Reyes during a Leaf for Life presentation at ECHO's annual conference.



Kathy traveled this spring to visit graduates and explore future training opportunities.

Left: Kathy visits with an indigenous women's cooperative of our Guatemalan graduate Lidia Romero.

Right: Kathy visits biointensive demonstration farm with professors of the Agrarian University of Nicaragua.



WOW Celebrates 10 Years!

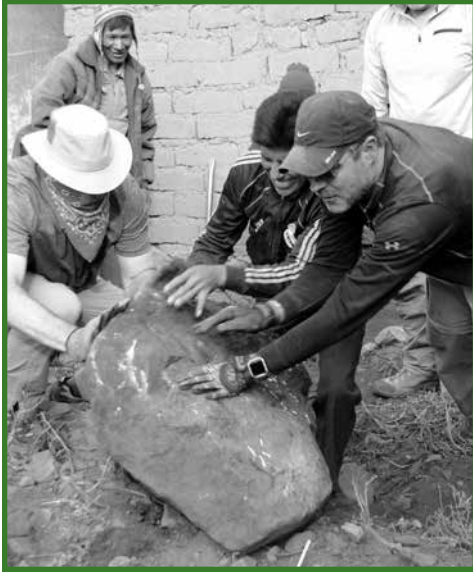
Marie Lanier
Promotions and Marketing Coordinator

Worship on the Water (WOW) celebrates 10 years on Lake Wedowee this summer. SIFAT began sponsoring this casual, nondenominational service eight years ago, and it has become one of the ways we can give back to our local community. Each week, we invite different speakers and musicians to lead the service, and we share what SIFAT is doing both locally and internationally with out-of-town visitors and locals alike. Last summer, our services averaged between 130 and 150 most weeks, but holiday weekends bring at least 300 out.

If you are in the area, we look forward to seeing you under the pines at Lakeside Marina at 9 a.m. from Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day Weekend. Come by boat, come by car, come as you are! Questions? Email wow@sifat.org.

A Medical Clinic for Chijmu

Bert Blanchard
Mt. Bethel UMC



The Mt. Bethel UMC men's team from Marietta, Ga., arrived in Quesimpuco late Saturday evening around 9 p.m. after an 11.5 hour drive from the La Paz airport, which included a nice picnic lunch stop beside a high-plains lake that is known for flamingos. They saw plenty of llama herds, quinoa fields and incredible mountain peaks in the distance that exceed 20,000 ft., higher than anything in North America. Each year, the roads improve with more paved surfaces — when we first went to Bolivia in 2008, the drive took about 16 hours!



After a good night's sleep, the team enjoyed a hot breakfast and a time for devotion. The men take turns preparing and cooking their own meals in the small kitchen with a propane stove and filtered water. Team members even bring guitars and a cajon to lead singing during devotions.

They drove to the neighboring village Chijmu, where most of their time was spent in 2017 building a health clinic. The men received a royal welcome from the villagers with singing and gifts of handmade flower wreaths for each person.

They attended church led by first generation Christian Patricio, and Mt. Bethel's associate pastor Carey Akin was invited to give a sermon that was translated into Spanish and Quechua.

Pastor Patricio was one of the first believers in the region after witnessing healing by the first SIFAT medical missionary teams, who saved the life of his best friend's wife. Patricio became known as the "Idol Slayer" after he tore down the stone idols that had been used in Chijmu for many generations prior to learning about the Gospel.

They held the official ribbon cutting for the clinic, which was followed by a big celebration and cookout with lamb, goat and roasted vegetables. The clinic in Chijmu is a big deal for this village; it represents the first project done by outside teams since the drinking water project shared with Quesimpuco more than 15 years ago. Chijmu was only accessible by foot until a road was cut in last year. This clinic will allow Dr. Ruth to care for the people in their own village instead of having to travel for aid. The majority of the labor for this beautiful clinic was provided by the residents, giving them ownership in the new clinic.

Above top: Team members from Mt. Bethel UMC work with local villagers in Cayanta to build a new medical clinic.

Above bottom: Team members paused working to take photos with friends from years past in beautiful fields high in the Andes Mountains of Bolivia.

Right: The team celebrated the ribbon cutting of the clinic in Chijmu. Patricio, far right, led the service of dedication for the community's clinic pictured behind the team members.



Construction Begins in Aida Leon

Peggy Walker
International Team Coordinator

SIFAT teams broke ground in February on a new project in Aida Leon, where they enjoy a beautiful setting overlooking the majestic volcanoes surrounding Quito. Because of complications with getting clear title to the land, SIFAT graduate Pastor Wilson has patiently waited 10 years for SIFAT to begin building a much needed addition to his church there. The project is called *Gotitas de Esperanza, Teardrops of Hope*. How fitting is that name because Pastor Wilson, his church and the parents in the community never lost hope as they prayed and waited for SIFAT teams to come.

Once again, an Auburn Building Science team was the first group to start construction on a new project, but this year their work was a little easier. First, the church and community came together to dig the footer holes in this hard, rocklike dirt. Second, we now have a concrete mixer. Thanks to the generosity of our past team members, we quickly raised the money to purchase the equipment needed to comply with new government codes for even stronger earthquake-resistant construction.

Aida Leon is in such a beautiful location that it is difficult to see the poverty of the people who live there — it is one of the poorest communities in Quito. Until the addition is completed, the church only has room to care for 90 students in the after-school program and 30 children ages 0 - 3. This area faces high instances of teenage pregnancy, high school dropouts and child abuse. These children have never had a place to come after school to be cared for and taught that they have an option.

That is the reason we are there, and although the size of the addition is very limited because of such a small footprint on which to build, this building will provide that safe place that can make a difference in so many young lives.

Several medical teams will provide care to the many communities we continue to serve. Already, a women's health team from Auburn University's School of Nursing provided a clinic with an education class, while the University of West Georgia's Department of Professional Counseling and Communicative Sciences provided much needed individual and family counseling sessions, hearing and speech screenings and therapy. Other medical teams will work in our past projects to ensure that all children in the churches' programs have access to yearly medical care.



The Auburn University McWhorter School of Building Science's team broke ground on our Aida Leon project site in Quito, Ecuador, in February. The new building will have two stories with classrooms, bathrooms, commercial kitchen, dining room and a rooftop playground.



The University of West Georgia's Department of Professional Counseling and Communication Sciences provided a week-long clinic in Aida Leon with screenings and therapy sessions. Some of the patients were encouraged with a treat after seeing the "doctor."

Fruits of the Spirit Experienced in Ecuador

John James
Clear Lake UMC's Ecuador Team

I was fortunate to be part of the second SIFAT construction team of 2018 to serve Gotitas de Esperanza (Teardrops of Hope) in Quito, Ecuador. Seven of my team members hailed from Clear Lake United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas, and three were from Harvest Youth Club in Harvest, Ala. After a warm airport greeting from executive director Tom Corson and international team coordinator Peggy Walker, we supported VBS and construction at the Eternal Hope Baptist Church. We hand-wired three rebar pillars and anchored two of these in huge blocks of concrete. Despite predictions of rain each day of the week, Mother Nature's "tears" never disturbed our progress.

Since I believe in the power of the Holy Spirit, I would like to report on what I observed while serving. No one can see the Holy Spirit. Like the wind, it is invisible; however, just as the effects of wind are obvious, so too are the effects of the Holy Spirit. In Paul's letter to the Galatians, he describes the fruits of the Spirit. During my time in Ecuador, I noted the following:

Love (agape) poured amongst us each morning as we met the children and adults of the church community. Hugs abounded. The greatest joy I observed was the giving of small stuffed toys, created by a group of women from Clear Lake UMC, to 41 of the daycare children. This was apparent on the faces of the givers and the recipients.

Long-suffering was renewed in my heart the morning I visited a home associated with a young woman served through the church's after school program. Words fail to capture the desperate situation of this Ecuadorian family. At times, they had to resort to gathering plastic bottles for income. Pastor Wilson invited the family to come to his church. We gifted a love basket of food staples to the family, but as we left, I felt useless; they need so much more.

Kindness was evident in the exceptional food prepared in a small kitchen for a large crowd of hungry children and adults. **Goodness** came in an unusual way. As each workday came to a close and we older guys were growing weary, SIFAT Ecuador engineer Edwin, the master of the giant cement mixer, kindly gave us smaller loads to deliver in wheel barrows. **Faithfulness** came in the form of knowing that subsequent teams will continue to work on this project until it is completed. We have faith that our labors for the Kingdom of God will bring a better kitchen, dining room, classrooms and bathrooms to the church complex.

Finally, **gentleness** flowed amongst us as devotions were delivered by team members. These were often from a piece of the presenter's soul and catalyzed rich discussion as we shared our beliefs.

I left Ecuador thinking that so much needs to be done. We must radically respond to God's call to love the poorest. It is through the Holy Spirit's empowering of Christ's followers that poverty will become rare in Ecuador.



John James shares his observations from his first trip to Quito, Ecuador, with the Clear Lake UMC mission team. SIFAT construction/VBS teams are serving in Aida Leon at the Teardrops of Hope project.

#GivingTuesday 2017 Results / Save the Date for #GivingTuesday 2018

In case you did not hear the news, SIFAT raised \$108,450, including our \$35,000 matching fund! Thank you to every person who donated on #GivingTuesday and who helped us spread the word. Without your support, this would not have been possible!

Go ahead and mark your calendars for #GivingTuesday 2018 — **November 27, 2018.**

Take a SHARE in SIFAT

Be part of SIFAT all year! Our monthly commitments — the SHARE program — help us budget throughout the year. Sign up at www.sifat.org/donate or contact Marie Lanier, lanierm@sifat.org, for more information.

Planning for SIFAT's Future

Did you know that you can donate stocks or leave provisions for SIFAT in your will? Contact executive director Tom Corson, corson@sifat.org, for more information.

Give Online
www.sifat.org/donate

Learn & Serve 2018 Summer Experience

Marie Lanier
Promotions and Marketing Coordinator

Our annual Learn & Serve Summer Experience begins on June 10 and continues throughout June and July. This year's theme is *Eyes Opened*. Limited, last-minute spaces are available for both groups and individuals. Learn more at www.sifat.org/learn-serve/summer-18.

As the Journal is going to print, our summer staff members are arriving to begin training for the summer. Please pray for them as they lead L&S participants throughout the summer; they will need patience, stamina and endurance!

Do you miss attending Learn & Serve or wish your youth group had participated? It's not too late! This year, we are offering an inaugural College Week session on Sunday, July 17 through Wednesday, July 20. *Mention seeing it in the SIFAT Journal and receive a discounted rate —\$100!* We are excited

Session 1: June 10 - 15
Session 2 / College Week:
June 17 - 20*
Session 3: June 24 - 29
Session 4: July 8 - 13
Session 5: July 15 - 20

*College Week is Sunday through Wednesday. Discount: Only \$100 if you mention the SIFAT Journal!

to bring a specialized experience just for college students.

Not able to attend L&S this summer? Schedule a fall retreat for your youth group, school, university or civic club! Contact Angie, strykera@sifat.org, to sign up for Summer Experience or to plan a field trip or retreat this fall.

Spring on Galilee Campus in Pictures



What I Learned as an Intern at SIFAT

Jenna Robinson
Learn & Serve Program Intern

My time spent at SIFAT opened my eyes to the realities of the world in which we live. As a girl who grew up in a suburb of Washington, D.C., and attended Georgia Tech in Atlanta, I knew that I was blessed, but I had no idea just how privileged I am. I knew I would learn a lot while interning at SIFAT, but I was surprised at how much of that knowledge I actually retained.

After my five years at Georgia Tech, I barely remember some of my classes. About a month into my internship, groups would ask me how long I had been here; they were shocked to find out that I was new, because I already knew so much about the countries in the Global Village, the appropriate technologies, etc. I wish I could stay for a few years, because there is so much left to learn! As an engineer, I was and continue to be fascinated by the technologies implemented at SIFAT to improve the quality of life for people around the world. It has inspired me to dream of more for my career; it has inspired me to consider an engineering career path that intersects with community development in the developing world.

Learn & Serve Interns Needed for 2018 - 2019

Are you a college-aged person wanting to serve on our campus? Internships with our Learn & Serve campus programs are available!

Questions? Visit www.sifat.org/learn-serve or email Angie, strykera@sifat.org.



Spring campus program intern Jenna Robinson, center, leads a Global Health Day retreat group that is learning about fuel-efficient cookstoves.

At SIFAT I found some of the kindest, most dedicated people I have ever met. Each staff member and volunteer is loving, driven and very fun! The groups that come to campus are full of inquisitive children and passionate students, and I loved teaching them and witnessing their eyes being opened, just like mine were. Working on the programs team was challenging; the job is hands-on and requires some long days and nights. But the programs team also has Angie and Maggie. Their love, support and jokes made even the hardest days easy. I was able to use my strengths to create schedules, coordinate volunteers, and teach technology, and they helped me every step of the way. I have been adopted into the SIFAT family, and I know I will always be welcome here. And although I am hoping to find a job in biomedical engineering, who knows, I may be back someday!

Buy a Brick for SIFAT's Commemorative Garden

Plans are being made to install our commemorative garden! Two sizes of bricks are available and can be personalized in honor or memory of your favorite people.

Don't miss having your brick in our first phase! You can order online at www.brickrus.com/order/sifat or contact Marie by email, lanierm@sifat.org.



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SIFAT's VISION: *Bridging the First and Two-thirds Worlds to alleviate spiritual and physical poverty, encouraging people to develop their God-given potential.*

SIFAT's MISSION: *To share God's love through service, education and personal involvement with a needy world.*

FROM THE DESK OF TOM CORSON

Several times a year for the past 18 years, we have walked a long trail on a narrow ledge in the Andes Mountains from Quesimpuco to outlying villages like Cayanta. But in April, we drove on a new road to within 500 meters of the village. How exciting to take a SIFAT team, Mt. Bethel UMC from Marietta, Ga.. to help the villagers build their long-awaited health clinic!

But the weather is ruthless in the heights of the Andes! Suddenly, the skies turned dark and hail stones over an inch in diameter began to pelt us. We took refuge in the little adobe church along with the villagers.

Living outside the money economy, their lives depended on what they grew. Their wheat and barley were almost ready to harvest. We watched big balls of ice mercilessly pelting the nearly ripe grains. Leaders in the village began throwing dynamite sticks into the storm to explode. Not knowing the villagers believed dynamite could stop hail storms, our visiting team members were shocked by the explosions, fearing a revolution had begun with the storm. And our jeeps were 500 meters away!

When the storm abated, the dynamite stopped. The lush fields of grain were destroyed, but the villages came out

singing, praising God, because of the promise of the health clinic. Even though food would be very scarce in coming months, they were praising God for the good He was providing with the health clinic and asked us to share the word of God.

This experience reminded me of another storm when Benjo led a SIFAT team to another village. We took shelter in a cave with mountain goats. Lightning streaked across the sky, hitting peaks across a chasm right in front of us; thunder clapped as we huddled together, trying to avoid the huge hailstones. To calm our team, Benjo started to sing "How Great Thou Art." The great power of our Creator was displayed right in front of us! Shakily, we all joined in the hymn. Right on cue, just as we sang the line, "I hear the rolling thunder..." a big boom roared across the chasm, and rolled down the valley, reverberating with deafening sound. It felt like we were singing with God!

These hail storms in the tops of the Andes are fearful and destructive beyond description. But what stands out most is the hope, the trust, the villagers have in God, and their ability to focus on the good things God is giving them, while helping them overcome the obstacles that raw nature throws into their lives.