

# october

## in Honduras

-- Janet Alcántara

### *Revelation 2 and 3*

After visiting more and more congregations this month, I'm reminded of Jesus' observations to the churches in Revelation: You are a great church; nevertheless you need to work this area...

These observations are defining my work. The churches, many in isolated communities, need regular—monthly—visits, for instruction and support. (That means LOTS of bus travel). The monthly visits will have two parts:

- **Meet with the pastoral committee.** Study the Scripture lessons for the coming month, help to choose appropriate hymns, teach sermon construction, plan liturgy, and coach RE: Lutheran identity.
- **Meet with the women of the congregation.** Address the pastoral needs of the women, help them build networking relationships, and work on leadership formation. Examine: what does it mean to be a woman of faith? A *Lutheran* woman? A member of your church and community?

This month I accompanied Ninfa, the woman in charge of the micro-business projects in several communities. We visited the church in San Nicolás, Olancho (a Wild West sort of state, except its in the east). I presented a Bible study on businesswoman Lydia, from the book of Acts. The women were disheartened in their project because their leader was recuperating from surgery and they felt lost without her guidance. We encouraged them to not only stand on their own, but to support each other, too.

Last Saturday we held a training workshop for the volunteer Health Program workers here in Tegucigalpa. It was well-organized and flowed smoothly. We had a great turnout of very participative women. A lawyer from a local women's program presented during the morning session. In the afternoon, I spoke about the spiritual impact of violence, and the spiritual care of victims of violence. I wondered if the women would be able to follow the theological framework, but they kept up just fine!

In faith and service in Christ, *--janet*

### Ambiance

I am amazed at how much obvious Evangelical presence I find in this country. At least a quarter of the radio stations have Christian programming, and are often playing in taxis. The guys in charge of my very hip internet café pore over the Bible and discuss it with each other. This week at the grocery store I had to plow through a group of 5 women re-stocking the yogurt case while vivaciously discussing Jesus' recommendation to 'turn the other cheek'



One of my tasks this month was to develop antibodies. Coming into a new country means meeting up with new germs and virus...and sometimes they win.



It is still rainy season. It mostly rains in the late afternoon or at night, but what rain! ("We're not in Seattle any more...")! These are truly tropical deluges that block out the view and turn streets into rivers.



I understood that in Honduras there are no earthquakes, but I sure was in one last week! It turns out that here we get the tail-end tremors of epicenters in Nicaragua or El Salvador, which is what happened the other evening, when southern El Salvador shared with us.



My two new addictions are to *lichas* (fresh lychees), off the back of a vendor's truck at 25 for 10 Lempiras and *pupusas* (a patty of tortilla dough filled with cheese (also available with pork rinds, but I'm vegetarian) and served with salty pickled onions and a coleslaw type salad, but drenched in fresh lime juice instead of mayonnaise. It's the *combination* that makes it such a tasty and irresistible dish.

