



KYLE AND SARAH
Life Skills Staff



IHM HIGHLIGHTS

- Finishing the 2009 budget year with \$1,500 in the bank—and \$2480 in rent due the next day
- One of The House residents has been accepted into the Professional teaching year at Trinity Western
- Iris—an accountant who recently began offering her skill set to us on a regular basis
- Construction of the Life Skills office almost completed in the garage—thank you Bob and George!

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THE BIGGER PICTURE - THE LARGER STORY

This past week included an unexpected trip “home” to Ontario for me. While there I took the opportunity to hunt up a former house resident and her young daughter who relocated last summer from Vancouver to Toronto. Elena* left our house on a bad note, and bitter and angry with God. As our contact had been extremely limited since her move, I was unsure of how welcome a reception I would receive. To my delight she was thrilled to see me, and to my even greater delight she is once again seeking ways to put God first in her life. She spoke excitedly of the local church she has been attending on Sundays, and how she has been reading her Bible (which I bought her) every day. Before we ate, her daughter prayed for our dinner, including the lettuce, and thanked God for her pet fish. A few bites into our meal Elena began peppering me with questions about Easter and the resurrection of Jesus, and for once I was the last one done my food! After I brought the two of them back to my parents for a night, Elena and I stayed up until 2:30am talking, mostly about God, her desire to live for Jesus, and how that is playing out in her life right now. It was encouraging to hear her express how much The House, and things such as eating dinner together as a family, and treating each other with love throughout the day, had meant to her. Eventually she said to me, “well, we’d better pray and go to bed.” Amen to that!

My visit with Elena was a strong reminder that the story being written is so much bigger than the chapter we see. It can be incredibly difficult in our ministry to give our everything to youth who oftentimes reject our love and disappear. It is painful to see teens come to know the Lord and then turn their back on Him and return to their former self destructive ways. A few days before my trip to Ontario another former House resident began a new chapter in her life; after a 14 month journey, including 4 months in a residential treatment center, her two young boys were returned to her full-time care. We have walked with this young mom through good chapters and bad, and her life is another reminder that the ‘seeds’ planted in our ministry often take many years of nourishment to grow and flourish. When she gave her life to the Lord on our Mexico Missions trip back in 2006, I had no idea that her journey to wholeness would take us all down such a difficult path, and many times the situation seemed hopeless. But the Lord did not give up on her, and when she reached the end of herself and turned to Him, He met her in powerful ways. Even in the face of these miracles it is painful and scary to lose the weekly contact with her two little boys who we have cared for as our own during the last year. We give thanks to the Lord for allowing us to be instruments of restoration for this family during this chapter, and trust that this same God of miracles will continue to hold each and every one of “our” (His!) children in his hands.

Carla Dickinson, Director of Development and Life Skills

*name changed

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