



Sharon Wilcox

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Location: Ecuador



What I do: Working with people with learning disabilities, teaching them life skills and seeking to enable them to become independent.

Hello everyone,

I am sure that most of you, if you live in the UK, will have enjoyed the lovely summer weather, and a Jubilee event or two. When I was reflecting on the Queen's recent passing, I was so glad the country celebrated her Platinum Jubilee and that she was able to watch it. If you read my last letter, you will know that I was involved in organising a big lunch event on 5 June for the Jubilee. Some people felt that I was being very optimistic suggesting we do lunch for 500 people, and when I saw the rain at seven o'clock in the morning, I wondered if they were right. However, the rain stopped before the event started, although it remained a bit cold. There were football competitions, community stalls, a children's choir, The Sense (a Youth for Christ band), Crown and Jubilee Cake competitions and lunch. We had a band of burger chefs who set about cooking 500 burgers and it soon became apparent that we needed to send out for more, as over 1000 people came through the gates! Not everyone stayed for lunch but we served almost 800 people. The Youth for Christ band then stayed for the week and went into the local secondary school teaching and witnessing to every year group. On the Friday evening they put on a concert for the youngsters, and 175 turned up. What a wonderful, blessed week! Let's pray that it produces fruit, and that God will continue what he has started in each one of them.



Jubilee fun

A couple of weeks later I managed a holiday in the Lake District and Morecambe, which was blessed with several days of sunshine. Then I had a couple more church visits, visited my mum, who was in good spirits, and then went to North Yorkshire to visit some friends in Harrogate and Scarborough for a few days before returning to Ecuador (or that was what I had planned). Before I went, I had started packing up all the things I had stored at my friend's house, as her children will now sell her bungalow. My siblings and a friend now have my things. I am glad that I had done most of it. When I arrived in Scarborough I was not feeling too well, and three days later found myself in Scarborough Hospital, very unwell, and was there for 17 days. That meant that my flight back to Ecuador had to be changed, I needed to get back home to

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regain strength lost while in hospital and pack the rest of my things. (I am still lacking a bit of energy, but my muscle strength has recovered). One benefit to staying longer in the UK was that I got to celebrate my birthday in the UK and my sister made me a chocolate birthday cake.

I arrived back in Santo Domingo on 24 August, to the news that Jill Ball (former CMS mission partner), who was visiting The Life in Abundance Trust school that she set up, had been admitted to hospital for tests. Sadly she passed away in the clinic, with her sons by her side. She had helped so many people over the years that the First Baptist

Church had three thanksgiving services for her.

I started back at the Orchid Project and was blown away by the welcome. Somehow the volunteers had managed to get the youngsters to put on a drama for me of the Good Samaritan. It was brilliant. They also put on a feast for everyone including the mums and siblings. I now know that Gloria took very seriously her responsibility of leading the project in my absence and keeping things going. I have asked her to continue doing so, even though I am there, as hopefully she will continue to do it in the future when I won't be there. I would appreciate your prayers that she will want to do it and that we can find more volunteers to help her when I need to go off to train people in different churches to start new Orchid Projects.

I can also report that the hotel work experience went so well that they are continuing with it. We are now in the process of preparing an Open Day on 3 December. Please pray that plenty of people will want to come to see what we have been doing.

Thanks for all your support and encouragement, in so many ways. It was lovely to meet up with so many of you during the spring and summer.

Every blessing,

Sharon



Photos from top to bottom: The Sense Christian youth band; enjoying the Lakes; welcome back to the Orchid; drama group



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