

# Feed My Lambs International

*But let patience have its perfect work...*  
-James 1:3

December 2019

Dear loved ones,

There's really only one conclusion that I can make; I am not good at waiting. Yet. Terrible could be another way to describe it. If you are good at waiting, my hat is off to you! Seems like I've been waiting and waiting...and waiting lately. 2019 has been a year of waiting. Much of the waiting has been over the land purchase next door. The waiting started several years ago, but really has amped up when the opportunity to purchase presented itself anew early this year. We knew it would be a unique situation and process, but oh how little did we know! Four, yes four down payments

a monthly *Feed My Lambs International* newsletter sent by Gary and Minnie Sandmann

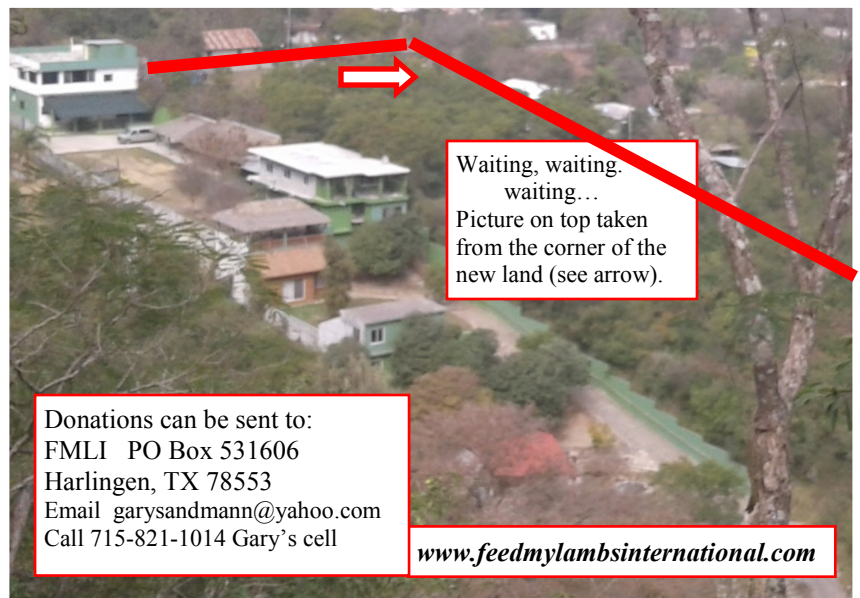
over the last 8 months, contract after contract, building a little house for those that had lived on the land, remember the 21 dump trucks of debris? All part of the process, and we still wait...to close and to move forward. And try it in a foreign language with so many different laws! Ok, that's probably enough for you to get the idea. It's been uncomfortable, very uncomfortable. It feels risky, vulnerable...and what we need to do if we want to get it.

Although waiting is not a strength, staying focused on a goal is something I am good at. And there is something that has helped me all of my life when I feel my worst, or when circumstances seem overwhelming. It helped me even before God delivered me from the pain and loneliness of alcoholism. I thought upon the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Baby. The manger. The humble scene. Back then, it was light shining hope into my dark world. Now, thinking on it brings peace in the midst of all types of storms. In one aspect, it makes me always ready. It's like Simeon. God revealed to him that he would not die until he saw Christ! (See Luke 2:25-35) Once he saw the Savior, met the Baby Jesus, he was ready! I know I've met Him. I know Him now. Peace with God, even when sometimes there are so many questions, even doubts, about His plan. That scene brings life, and death to self, right back into clear focus.

The piece of land represents so much potential for us as we move into the future. However, the future, with or without it, is secure. Seems like we have plenty of opportunities to wait in this life doesn't it. Since there are so many God-given chances to learn, we know it is important that we become better at it. Maybe in 2020, we don't have to wait long for that! Or for eternity for that matter, they are both rapidly approaching.

I wonder how good Simeon was at waiting; my guess is that he mastered it. Many of you are waiting for something. Test results, health to improve, someone else to improve...some are simply waiting to go home. It can be tough here, very tough. I understand and wait with you knowing that, truly, the best is yet to come. May God bless you this Christmas with peace in your heart in the midst of your trials. We do not have to wait for what is most important; we do not have to wait like Simeon waited and wondered. The announcement was made some 2,000 years ago to shepherds by a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

*"Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*



Waiting, waiting.  
waiting...  
Picture on top taken  
from the corner of the  
new land (see arrow).

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When we arrived in Cuernavaca on our 2 week mission in November, I could see almost immediately that we were not going to get the roof poured just yet. A little more process, a little more waiting. There was one last footing that needed to be done. The hardest one. In the corner of the property stood a little room where our project foreman and “night guard” Octavio was living. Although he knew it had to happen, he wasn’t altogether ready when we hired the backhoe in to destroy his little apartment. It was time! They’d been working around the inevitable for too long already. (pictured above right) “You didn’t think of me.” he lamented to Pastor Chayo, ready to quit.

Yes, we did. Brother Rod and I went to work again and while we built a temporary house and tool shed for the site (pictured right), the crew was building a little bathroom as well. While we were doing that, we ordered in some fill and some more backhoe work, totally cleaning and leveling, transforming the job site and working conditions. Within days, Octavio’s new digs took shape as we loved on the crew. The young man’s countenance transformed as well and we connected with him and them. We are pictured above left with the last footing poured and the last of the foundation being prepped. The work they are doing is nothing short of amazing and we enjoyed the time together. Looks like I’ll need to get back to Cuernavaca next month or so for that roof! In the mean time, we left a strong testimony to Octavio and the part of the crew that has yet to come to know the saving grace of Christ. Pastor Chayo was thrilled with the help and the massive push that we gave during our visit. As I thought about what Octavio said, I couldn’t help but parallel it with the times in our lives when we see things seemingly destroyed and just cannot understand in the moment just how much God has our individual lives and all the details on His mind. Since we’ve thought upon the manger, maybe we should conclude at the cross, where all seemed lost. He was thinking of us. And is.



**Praise report/ Thanksgiving:**

Of course, Thanksgiving is a U.S. holiday. But at our facility we have it in Mexico too! We thank God for this beautiful celebration of our lives and family here in Mexico. Many friends came over to enjoy a time of thanks together. Pictured are pastors from our family, camps, Berea, a coming marriage conference in December, our friends and family... So much to be thankful for as we press ever closer 2020 and to glory. God bless you all for your support of our lives and ministry in 2019.

***Merry Christmas! and love from Gary and Minnie, Sophia, Elian and Jackelyn too along with all your family in Mexico.***