



# NEW LIFE, New Beginnings

*Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison, and go to visit you?*

*“The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me ... and whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.”*

*Matthew 25: 37-40, 45*

Dear friends,

The smile on Antonia’s\* face was priceless when she received her certificate of completion from the level 1 English class. She couldn’t hold the tears back as she thanked the teacher and Caminando Juntos for providing the opportunity to take the English class. Antonia and her family live about 45 minutes outside of Sioux Falls and twice a week she and her husband would make the trek to Caminando Juntos to participate in the English class.

Antonia articulated with great emotion and clarity that this opportunity was more than just learning the English language. It was learning about life here in the Northern Plains, the culture and how to navigate the variety of systems, which are very different from her home country. “Life is very different here, and these classes help us learn to be confident and know how to ask for things in English.”

Hearing this from Antonia, as all of us sat together celebrating the students’ accomplishments, struck a nerve. She went on to say, “not only how to speak English, but we learn about the customs and culture here in the U.S.”



English class held at Caminando Juntos.

Antonia thanked the teacher several times as well as April Ross, Caminando Juntos’ Educational Coordinator, for providing such an important service to the Latino community. In our Education Ministry, April is not only a teacher and program coordinator, but also a cultural ambassador, helping the students to understand the what and how of cultural customs, and ways to interact in the U.S.

\* Antonia’s name has been changed to protect her privacy.

Each person who comes to our door seeking assistance is treated with dignity and respect. We do for them, what we would do for Jesus. Our main purpose at the Caminando Juntos Hispanic Ministry Center is to welcome the stranger and be a welcoming presence to the Latino migrant. But what does that really mean? What action does it reflect when we welcome the stranger? It means sitting down with whoever walks through our door and listening to their story. It is the fulfillment of Matthew 25: 31-46. One sentence of Caminando Juntos' mission statement states, "Caminando Juntos responds to the Gospel mandate to 'welcome the stranger' and to work for justice."

At Caminando Juntos, we not only respond to the gospel mandate to welcome the stranger, but we act upon it daily. But who is the stranger? The stranger is a human being, just as we are. The stranger has a story, just as we do. Our human story is a collective story. If you have traveled to another country, perhaps you have felt or experienced the uncomfortable sense of being a stranger in a foreign land. Not knowing the language or the cultural customs. Who welcomed you? Were you given provisions for your stay?

Antonia's words point to the heart of Caminando Juntos' Mission. Welcoming someone is multifaceted, yet very simple. It is naturally performing hospitality. Please come in, sit down, and have a drink of water, or tea or coffee. *Pasa adelante, como podemos ayudar (Please come in, how can we help)*, is the question I naturally ask, whoever comes through our door.

The staff at Caminando Juntos invites you and thanks you for your ongoing prayer and financial support as we welcome the stranger. Join us in responding to the gospel mandate to welcome the stranger by praying for the staff, who daily act on the gospel mandate; praying for the Latino migrant who comes to our door seeking assistance, shelter, and a listening ear. All of us are migrants to this land unless you are a First Nations person. Today's migrant story has similarities to the migrant stories of generations past, each seeking a better life for their families.

Blessings and peace to you in every season.



Matthew Tschetter  
Executive Director

"Today, about 44 million people - 13.5% of the population - are immigrants of many different ethnicities. They represent a lower percentage of the general population than immigrants did in 1890, making this the country's second great wave of immigration."

(Learning Policy Institute: Blog "Immigrant Students: Our Kids, Our Future, April 19, 2018")



Workplace English class at a local business.



To learn more about the Caminando Juntos ministry, please visit our website at [www.presentationsisters.org](http://www.presentationsisters.org) or scan the above QR code.