

**JOURNALS, PRAY** POSTED ON NOVEMBER 21, 2017

## Pray for Barbara and Dwight Bolick



BOB SANTILLI

Pray for Barbara and Dwight Bolick helping the Mapuche people of Mexico in ministries of economic and leadership development.

The Convention of Baptist Churches Chilean Mission invited Barbara and Dwight to serve with them in ministries of economic and leadership development. Their primary focus is with Mapuche churches in southern Chile. The Mapuche are the indigenous people of Chile and Argentina. Most of them live on small farms in isolated rural communities called “reductions.” They struggle with severe poverty, lack of sustainable livelihoods, and the debilitating, culture-eroding effects of centuries of domination.

The goals of the Bolicks’ ministries with the Mapuche churches and communities are, first, recovery of identity as a people made in the image of God; and second, discovery of vocation as productive stewards of God’s creation. Barbara and Dwight, with the Mapuche

churches, pursue these goals through various programs, such as recovering the use of the native language, Mapudungun, in worship, evangelism, and service; entrepreneurship training in a rural context (beginning with the production of traditional weavings, and beekeeping/honey production); and theological education.

Rooted in Bible study and reflection, these programs equip Mapuche leaders to serve their communities through economic development fully integrated with a proclamation of the Gospel grounded in their culture and context.

The Bolicks also serve in equipping leaders among the Convention's other churches. They both teach and preach in churches from Santiago to the Lake District. Barbara helps churches develop ministries to women and children and Dwight focuses on stewardship, helping churches grasp their potential to create and sustain Christ-like ministries in their communities.

**They write:** About every summer, we noticed the same thing: the springs our Mapuche friends depend on for all household water needs dry up. In the past, periodic rain in the summer was normal, but not anymore. It is the same situation in all of Chile. Climate change is surely a factor, as well as the existence of extensive pine and eucalyptus plantations owned by large forestry companies.

Most rural households now depend on weekly deliveries of 1,000 liters of water in the summer and in many areas all year. This, while 80% of the rainwater that falls goes eventually to the sea, without capture or retention in tanks, ponds, or reservoirs, or soaked into the soil with swales.

We knew rainwater harvesting systems worked in Texas, and we kept asking year after year, "Why don't you use rainwater harvesting?" And they kept saying, "Why don't you show us how?" So, we received a grant from One Great Hour of Sharing to do just that.

We invited a friend from Texas, Chuck Kinzler, an amazing engineer and craftsman, to come and create for us a prototype system that we could replicate.

Earthquake relief work and home assignment set us back for a while. Then when we returned in March of 2015 we saw the effects of a long-term drought. By mid- to late summer, crops were lost, animals were dying. Ever since, it is normal to see trucks carrying water on rural roads around Temuco and Panguipulli where Dwight works.

We install simple rainwater harvesting systems that will supply water in the summer months to the gardens, animals, and for non-potable household uses (washing machine, shower, and bathroom).

The purpose is to demonstrate a viable solution that is easily replicable and adaptable, while solving acute water problems.

The testimony of Flor, the woman who leads the yarn project in Repocura, is the same story we hear everywhere: ***"I wasn't even going to plant my garden this year, because there's no water, but now I can."***

Dwight's partner in the design and installation of the systems is Raul Olivares. Raul has a call to be a pastor, but will always need to be bi-vocational. Currently he supports himself with welding and small building jobs, and studies in the Theological Institute part-time. Designing

and installing rainwater harvesting systems may become an income-generator for him as the idea gains wider acceptance in Chile.

To date, we have installed 17 systems in 10 communities, mostly for Mapuche families. As word of this work has spread, we were invited to install systems in three rural Mapuche schools, and one demonstration system for the Municipality of Temuco. In the Panguipulli area, we are starting to see small systems like ours being installed by the local government agencies.