

# thewhitesinspain

Dec 2016

Dear St James,

I will start with a Christmas story and some good news! I mentioned previously that I had given some business advice to the Alex (the ex-owner of our house, pictured right) and his 3 friends. They are a cashpoint repair man, 2 builders and a sculptor whom, due to the crisis, were out of work. They came up with the idea one Friday evening, when we were having a drink and tapas, to make an 8m high Santa Claus and to give it to the city council to display as a showcase for their abilities and also to sell advertising. We came up with the idea to have him skiing off the top of 'Veleta' (a famous mountain behind Granada) and to have a sack with wooden boxes falling out upon which they could sell advertising space. These men are amazing and the following Monday they were already making it! I was able to visit a few times and help out while they worked non-stop for around a month. At the start of the December it was unveiled in Granada centre with the president of the city present and several TV crews as their story of un-employed friends starting something new had made national press! I am so pleased for them and it has been exciting to use my design/making skill as well as have great times connecting as we worked together. The project covered material costs and made a small profit too. I hope to do more with them in the future.

## Messy Church

Last Saturday we had our first 'messy church' event at our home as we had shared in the last e-mail. Thank you for your prayers, amazingly everyone came which never happens in Spain! We had 31 come and excluding our 2 families and 3 helpers there were 20 parents and children from our town. We had some games, a short time of worship, various Christmas crafts and Dave did a short Christmas message with the children involved (see below).



It was the fulfilment of everything God has promised us to have a house full of un-churched people feeling at home and opening their lives to us and Jesus. It was a lot of work, was messy, raw and chaotic but in a good way! Church should be 'messy' if we are really opening our doors



and lives to real people. We had a program but the important stuff was everything that happened outside of that as we talked and shared with our friends. It was so good to see these families interacting with each other and seeing a community starting to form.

We have also hosted our cell group community from the church we are connected to in the city. We had 16 round for a woodfired pizza party (pictured below) using the wood oven we have in our kitchen. It was a good evening and Corin & Carmen our friends from the town came and really enjoyed it! It just reminds me again why I don't like the concept of 'seeker friendly', this was a full-on cell group event and our atheist/catholic friends loved it because they encountered love, and authentic community. We must never hide who are, the challenge is just to be consistent and get rid of this sacred/secular mindset. Church is how we live our whole life not just a few hours on a Sunday.



### Spanish Christmas

Dave and Kelly left today for the UK to spend Christmas with their family. We are staying this year to be around our new community and to use the holidays to share meals and time with people. We are also planning a road trip to Valencia after New Year to see friends, neighbours and some of the people from Naquera.

As we now live on the side of a mountain surrounded by mountains we will have a White Christmas! There is already deep snow on the high Sierra (see photos below taken a few weeks ago!) and we have been several times with our friends to toboggan with our boys. We are praying as a team over Christmas for God's direction regarding the next steps. As we have said before there is no rush to formalise things and we want to keep using houses as the main meeting places. However, we find ourselves already with a large community of people to disciple and invest in so we need to hear the Father's strategy for this.

We want to use this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year. Thank you so much for believing in us and being part of our adventure here in Spain!

Love Chris, Liz, Leo & Samuel

