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Living Like Jesus

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Living Like Jesus

BY BECKY ST. CLAIR

“At the end of last school year, I wanted a summer activity that was uplifting spiritually,” says Wandile Mthiyane, junior architecture major at Andrews University. “I realized that, although I’ve been here for two years, I still faced a bit of culture shock and felt a little out of place. I wanted to combat that by finding a hands-on way to increase my spiritual life.”



Wandile Mthiyane

Growing up in South Africa, Wandile was not used to the individualistic society of the U.S. For example, he noticed that many times when people ask “How are you?” they don’t really want to know — they’re simply asking as a courtesy.

“We’re good at acting humble but not necessarily at being humble,” he says. “So, my biggest question to God this summer was whether I could be authentically humble — if I could ask how people are and actually mean it.”

Shortly thereafter, Wandile was presented with an opportunity to accompany a group from Pioneer Memorial Church on a mission trip to Pichucalco, Mexico, in July and August.

“The people who took me from the airport to the hotel were so humble and genuinely loving,” says Wandile. “I could barely speak Spanish, but we were able to put some words together, and you could tell they were genuinely happy to have us around.”

By observing the locals interacting with each other, it was clear to Wandile that Pichucalco had very loving, genuine people. Through translators, Wandile presented 17 sermons, some of which he, with the help of native speakers, translated into Spanish for the less-fluent translators to simply read while he spoke.

Despite setbacks and challenges, Wandile was determined to deliver his sermons, feeling God’s calling to bring these messages to the people of Pichucalco. As a result, Wandile’s church had more visitors during his time there than any of the other churches at which the missionaries ministered.

“The biggest lesson I learned was not to let your circumstances determine your life or your joy,” says Wandile. “Those people had nothing — sometimes only enough food for those of us they were hosting — and yet, they served us with a smile and went to bed hungry and happy. They genuinely loved like Jesus did. That’s the whole message he brought of humility and love. And if we live our lives like Jesus did, everything else will fall into place.”

Becky St. Clair is the media communications manager in the Division of Integrated Marketing & Communication at Andrews University.

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