



Every seed carries a silent promise. Picture from Jubilee's orchard soil.

JUBILEE PARTNERS REPORT

Fall 2026

***“Let no one seek their own good, but the good of others”
– 1 Corinthians 10:24***

This summer at Jubilee, a volunteer family joined us from Bogotá, Columbia. Miguel and Johanna and their two young daughters spent three months joining in the rhythms of our life together, teaching English classes, working in the garden, organizing donations for our clothing store. Just before they left for home, we asked Miguel to write a reflection on their experience. We were so struck by his impressions that we would like to share them with you as our fall newsletter. If you want to read Miguel's reflection in his native tongue, you can find the Spanish version online at <https://jubileepartners.org/connect/newsletter-archive/>

Part One — What a Seed Can Teach Us About Life

Every seed carries a silent promise. Held in the palm of a hand, it looks small — almost insignificant. But anyone who knows the soil understands that a tree already lives inside it, or a harvest, or the shade that will one day give someone else a place to rest.

All it needs is the right ground, time, and the patient care of people willing to believe in what they cannot yet see. Perhaps that is why I have come to think Jubilee Partners is better understood through a seed than through a definition.

A few months ago, my family and I arrived from Colombia to spend a summer here as volunteers. We believed we had come mostly to serve — to step away from the city's relentless pace and to see, up close, what life in community actually looked like. We also carried a very human worry: that our English might not be enough to build the kind of deep conversation we hoped to find along the way. As the days passed, we understood that this had never been the real question. The conversations came anyway — some in words, others simply in watching. Because before we could learn a new language, Jubilee asked us to learn a new way of seeing.



Our family, under the trees at Jubilee.

Because before we could learn a new language, Jubilee asked us to learn a new way of seeing.

UNDERSTANDING

We discovered that a community is not born simply because people share a piece of land. A community is born when everyday decisions stop answering only to individual comfort and start, almost naturally, tending to the lives of others.

Here, the land doesn't only grow food; it grows encounters. Lunch at the K-House stops being a meal and becomes the moment when the community remembers itself. On Fridays, when each family brings something to the potluck, no one seems to keep score of who contributed what — what matters is that there is always enough for everyone.

Even the plainest tasks — cooking, cleaning, readying a house for a new refugee family, fixing a car, feeding the animals — stop being chores and become small ways of tending to someone else's dignity.

Not because people are perfect. Not because disagreements never arise — the partners themselves speak honestly about how hard it is to make decisions together, to voice differences, to fit personal dreams into the needs of the whole. But that is exactly where one of Jubilee's deepest lessons appears: community isn't about thinking alike. It's about continuing to choose each other, even when thinking differently demands more patience, more listening, more love.



The blueberry harvest doesn't belong only to those who planted the bushes—when summer comes, the fruit is shared as a simple act of hospitality.

THE PEOPLE WHO GAVE IT A FACE



Another Partner seemed to know every corner of the land—the difference between working hard and loving deeply what you've chosen to give you life to.

A young partner, who had come here right after finishing college, shared a line from one of her professors that will likely stay with us for years: great decisions are rarely made all at once — they are the sum of many small decisions, lived with consistency. Watching her work the land with such evident joy, we understood this wasn't a theory to her. It was simply how she lived.

We also met a mother from another continent who had arrived with her children looking for a safe place to begin again. As she learned English, she was also learning to recover the calm every family deserves. Her story was a reminder that dignity begins long before a job or a paper is settled — it begins the moment someone feels safe again.

One weekend, another woman came to visit. She had lived at Jubilee as a refugee child, nearly twenty years earlier. She returned with her own children to show them the place where, in her words, her life had truly begun. Walking through the small school where she once learned English, tears of joy and gratitude made any explanation unnecessary. Some harvests take decades to fully understand.



Devotions in the library—decades after planting this community, the founders still walk its paths with the same quiet simplicity.

And finally, there were Don and Carolyn, the founders. Talking with them was a lesson in how the most extraordinary lives are often built quietly. They understood something time eventually confirms: the most important seeds rarely carry the name of the one who planted them. They stay alive in the families who found a home here, in the children who grew up feeling safe, and in all those who, long afterward, come back only to say thank you.

CLOSING THOUGHT

Every transformation begins long before the fruit appears. It begins with a small seed of understanding that, tended with patience, slowly becomes a life lived with consistency.

Part Two — When the Seed Also Transforms the Sower

Every meaningful experience leaves behind a question. Jubilee left several. We arrived believing we would find answers about how to live in community. We left understanding that the most valuable answers rarely arrive all at once — they surface slowly, once experience has had time to become wisdom.

We discovered that time can be lived differently. That a day doesn't need to be full to be meaningful. That listening to birds at dawn, eating without rushing, reading a bedtime story to our children, or having a conversation without checking the clock aren't small luxuries — they may be among the deepest expressions of a dignified life.

We also came to understand that work can stop being only a way to produce and become a way to serve. During these months we did tasks that had never been part of our profession: planting, weeding, tending animals, cleaning shared spaces, cooking for others, preparing a house for a new family's arrival. None of that work made us smaller. If anything, it reminded us that any task done with love carries the same dignity.

We learned, too, that consumption stops sitting at the center of life once you discover the value of enough. Here, many things have years of use behind them. Clothes, tools, furniture, vehicles — they keep serving their purpose without needing to be replaced by something newer. It isn't about living with less out of obligation, but about discovering that once we stop chasing what we lack, we begin to truly enjoy what we already have.

Perhaps the word that best sums up everything we lived is one that came up again and again during our stay: coherence. We didn't find perfect people. We didn't find a community without difficulties. We found



My daughter feeding the calf that was new when we arrived. She called him "Girasol," which means "Sunflower."

something far more valuable: people who, in the middle of their differences, keep trying to live according to what they believe is true.

We learned that coherence isn't about getting everything right. It's about choosing, again and again, the kind of person you want to become. Maybe that is why one doesn't leave Jubilee with certainties. One leaves with better questions. And that, too, is a gift.

TO ANYONE WHO ARRIVES HERE

To anyone who arrives here one day — as a volunteer, a refugee, or simply a visitor — I would say just one thing: don't try to understand Jubilee too quickly. Live the experience first.

Let the land teach you patience. Let shared meals teach you gratitude. Let the stories of those who found a new beginning here teach you hope. Let this place's unhurried rhythm remind you that life doesn't always need to run to move forward.

Listen less to the speeches and watch more closely how people actually live. Because the deepest lessons rarely happen in meetings — they happen in someone cooking a meal for the whole community, in someone cleaning a house to welcome a family they've never met, in someone sharing the harvest with people who will never be able to repay the gesture.

SEEDS NEVER GROW FOR THEMSELVES

As we left, we understood something that will likely stay with us for years. Seeds never grow for themselves. A tree never enjoys its own shade. Fruit almost always feeds someone else. Maybe the same is true of a life.

The decisions that seem small today become, with time, the place where other people will find rest, hope, or a new beginning. That, perhaps, is the most beautiful harvest there is. Because in the end, a life isn't remembered for everything it gathered, but for what it chose to plant.



*Thank you, Jubilee, for reminding us that
communities can also plant people.
And that people, when they live with coherence,
can change the world without making noise.
- Miguel Basabe*

**Above and left: Jubilee kids learn firsthand, hands-on
from the land and inspire us with their delight.**

Who we are

Jubilee Partners is a Christian service community in rural Georgia. Our primary work is to offer hospitality to refugees who have experienced violence or persecution.

We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization; donations are thus tax-deductible. Your donations and support of our work are most appreciated.

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**Back-to-back
weddings!**

**Four of our
neighbors got
married here at
Jubilee this
summer.**



**Below: Two more
Volunteers—Miriam
and Rene— joined
us from the
Bruderhof
community this
summer. They
helped us pick
and sort a lot of
blueberries!**



**Raindrops or ketchup on your burger?
Russ and Christina brave the rainstorm at
our annual trip to the lake.**



View Jubilee's newsletter in color online at www.jubileepartners.org!

Jubilee Partners
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Our newsletter this fall features the writing of two of our Summer Volunteers who visited us, with their two daughters, from Colombia. Here many of us are sending them love and gratitude on their way home.