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THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS, WORLD MISSIONS

Where in the world are we going?

Mission Trip to Piedras Negras

By John Barrett, Assistant Rector, Christ Church, San Antonio

Christ Church went on a week-long mission trip to Piedras Negras in July. Some eighty parishioners and staff members went down to work with El Buen Pastor, the Anglican church led by Father Miguel and Mother Marie Elena. The team helped El Buen Pastor conduct a couple of Vacation Bible Schools, paint parishioners' homes a vivid Mediterranean blue, and put on a couple of roofs. Other churches from the diocese were there doing similar work in different locations, such as St. Peter's Kerrville and St. Luke's San Antonio. Christ Church is thankful for the efforts of Bobby Hausser of St. Luke's for his great help in facilitating this trip.

Through the helping part of the mission, there was much time spent developing relationships with the people of Piedras Negras. We thank God for the many ways He shaped us to be more deeply called into being missionary people and people of compassion and action.

Following is a testimonial written by Katherine Norvell, a member of the youth group at Christ Church, which captures how the trip impacted her.

Going to Mexico was an eye-opener for me. It has shown me that I have so much compared to some kids. I get excited over getting an I-pod, and they get excited over a water bottle. I get stressed if my air condition isn't working, and they don't have a stable roof. I think the biggest thing I've learned is to be thankful. I thank God for everything He has given me and another day to live. Down in Abajo some kids are really sick because they haven't eaten in days. When you go and help them, it feels good inside because you're helping someone's life, until you run out of food and water. It's not enough; it is never enough for them. I can only wish and pray that one day it will be enough. What we try to teach them is that God's love will never end. He will always be here for us.

Mark your calendars for the ARTS FESTIVAL & MARKETPLACE, Saturday, October 18. Over 30 artists from around the diocese will feature their jewelry, oils, cards, enamels, prints, ceramics, watercolors, metal works, glass, weavings, sculptures and more. The event is at the Bishop Jones Center at 111 Torcido Rd. in San Antonio and is from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Admission is FREE and proceeds will support World Mission initiatives of the diocese.

Staffing a Clinic in the Colonias, Part II, by Dr. Bill Smith

St. Mark's (San Antonio) has a rich history of sending medical teams to Central and South America. We have sent teams to three locations in Honduras and to the Amazon River in Peru. These previous trips provided a strong group of experienced team members on our first trip to Mexico. We were fortunate to have three capable partners on our mission. Constructores Para Cristo, in addition to building homes in Piedras Negras, has built a wonderful community clinic. We were able to see patients in their clinic and to leave records at the clinic. This will enable future teams to follow up on our work. El Buen Pastor was an amazing partner. This Anglican Church in Piedras Negras has a very strong outreach program. The Rector and Senior Warden of El Buen Pastor used their church bus to bring patients from all the colonias to the clinic. Our patients would not have been able to reach the clinic without the help of El Buen Pastor. Our third partner was HEB. They donated both prescription and over-the-counter medications to our team. Without the medicine provided by HEB, we would not have been able to treat the 650 patients we saw during our week-long mission.

Our week started with the St. Mark's Parish Picnic. After our team was commissioned we left for Piedras Negras. A staff member for Constructores Para Cristo met us in Eagle Pass and led us across the border to the motel. All five of our vehicles got the "green light" at the border, so our medicine crossed intact. We attended a briefing for the construction team and then went to the clinic. The construction team helped us unload all of our medications. Early the next morning we unpacked the medicine and set up the pharmacy. We were very fortunate to have a pharmacist on our team from the Health Science Center in San Antonio. Her parents live in Piedras Negras, and she commuted from their home every day. Once the pharmacy was ready, we began to see patients. The rest of the week revolved around the arrival of the El Buen Pastor bus. Padre Miguel would bring a full busload of patients, and as soon as we were able to see all of them, a new group would arrive.

El Buen Pastor prepared lunch for the construction and medical teams every day. Our lunches with the members of El Buen Pastor really made us feel a part of their parish. With lunch together at the church, we got a chance to get an update from the other team. Once lunch was over we would head back to see the rest of the day's patients. Wednesday night we had supper with El Buen Pastor. Wednesday is their family night, and we felt very welcome.

Our team included a wide range of backgrounds. We had two pediatricians, a family practice physician, an OB-GYN, an ENT, a general surgeon, a podiatrist, a dietician, a medical student, two future medical students, and three registered nurses. We covered the patient from head, ENT, to toe, podiatry. This meant that we would have someone to cover almost any problem.

The patients had a wide variety of complaints. The patients' problems ranged from a thorn in the hand that the patient had been unable to remove for three years to a young woman with changes in her hearing and vision on one side, almost certainly a tumor. We gave advice about infertility to a 14-year-old, removed tumors and infected cysts, removed wax from ears restoring hearing, and discussed diets with diabetics. With each patient, we listened, examined, got advice from fellow team members, and did what we could. We gave advice about future care when the medicine and techniques we had available were not enough.

Our team is currently in a wide-ranging discussion about the future of the clinic in Piedras Negras. We would like to see Constructores Para Cristo develop a stronger relationship for their clinic with the local churches and medical facilities. We would also love to see the Diocese of West Texas send medical teams to this clinic, which is practically in our backyard, on an every three month or every month basis.

Our week in Mexico was wonderful. We served our patients and became a part of the El Buen Pastor family. We are ready to go back.

Upcoming Missions Happenings:

Sept. 16. Texas Water Mission board meeting.

Sept. 18. Arts Festival & Marketplace committee meeting.

Sept. 20-Nov. 4. **Harry Gunkel**, missionary to Israel, will be in the US for needed R&R.

Sept. 29-Oct. 5. World Missions Week, St. Christopher's,

Bandera.

Oct. 9. DWTX World Missions committee meeting.

Oct. 18. Arts Festival & Marketplace.

Oct. 18-25 **Alison Barfoot**, missionary to Uganda, will be visiting and ministering throughout the diocese.



Showers of Blessing

Last month we mentioned the need for uniforms for students at the girls' school in Gulu, Uganda. These girls are victims of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and are now being given the opportunity to attend school while receiving counseling/psychotherapy. With school beginning soon, there are still many girls who do not have uniforms and cannot attend. For only \$10.00, you can provide a girl with a school uniform and open a door of hope. Our thanks to Linda Pate (Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi) for bringing this need to our attention. Please send your check marked "school uniforms" to: Diocese of West Texas, PO Box 6885, San Antonio, TX 78209, ATT: Betty Chumney.



Upcoming Mission Trips: Prayer List

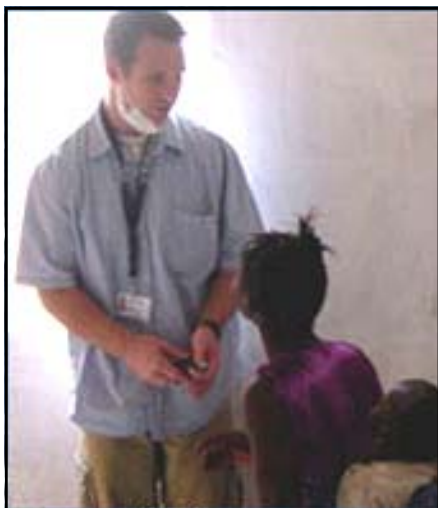
September 1-9. RUSSIA, ST. PETERSBURG. Russian orphanages. Mark Fowler, Team Leader (Christ Church, San Antonio). Cynthia & Woody Hopper, Stacy Oelsen.

September 9-23. HONDURAS. Evaluation of projects. Elisabeth & Peter Englefield.

September 28-October 2. MEXICO, PIEDRAS NEGRAS. Constructores Para Cristo. Gary Fuller, Chris & Wayne Godsey, Jack Horton, Julie Ogan, Larry Pirmantgen, Ed Prather, Gary Swearingner, Joe Tidwell—all from St. Helena's, Boerne—joined by Daniel Bellows, Manny De Los Santos, Gail & Paul Montessoro, Stephen Rupp, Rev. Stephen Sanders, Alfredo Seguro, Andrew Toy, Sara Wallace, and Frank Weis from Spring Creek Methodist, Boerne.

October 16-25. HONDURAS. Water Ministry. Drilling, Hygiene. Curt Mowen, Team Leader (210-493-5057, ccmowen@satx.rr.com). *Need team members (Spanish speakers would be helpful.) Please phone or write Don Lee if you are called to work on the team traveling to Honduras (210-219-8585/cell; 830-460-4656).*

News from the Field: Long-term Missionaries



Dr. Keith Chapman (St. Luke's, San Antonio) has been overseeing the construction of a new dental clinic in Monrovia, Liberia. Opening for the clinic is now scheduled for October.

Keith is finishing details for outfitting the clinic and installing equipment as well as overseeing construction of the staff house. Additionally, he volunteers part time at the Mercy Ships' clinic, performs surgeries, and works with the new long term Mercy Ships dentist.

To learn more about this ministry, go to www.trinitydental.org.

Pray for Keith and Kristin and their family.

George and Ginny Olson and their children (Christ Church, San Antonio) are packing up their belongings in Manila and shipping them to Palawan where they will be living with the tribe

and sharing the Good News. Son Isaac will be boarding at Faith Academy. Pray for the Olsons during this time of transition. Read more about their



work at <http://reachthetribe.com>