

Report of the June 2007 Foreign Mission to Honduras



The Cumming First United Methodist Church team of 11 adults - 6 men and 5 women - journeyed to Guaimaca Honduras from June 12 – 19, 2007. The team would like to tell you a little about our work and experiences in the children's home during our trip. But first, we extend our thanks to those who gave money and items to support this work with Faith Journey Missions, Inc. We especially thank those of you who prayed for us during the trip.

Our American English speaking missionary hosts, Terry and Pam Newton, met us at the airport with a 14 passenger van and a pick-up truck to load the 1100 pounds of luggage in which we carried: (1) Spanish language Bibles, (2) used and new (mostly) baby clothes, (3) tools for building concrete house foundations, (4) Bible school crafts, (5) candy and treats for the children, and (6) our own bare essentials for a week of mission work.



The setting of the mission was in the beautiful mountains northeast of Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. The children's home, owned by several churches in Ohio, cares for 17 orphans age 11-19. A young couple, John and Ruth Eicher, and a single woman whom the children called 'Mamucha' are in charge of the two houses where the children live.

Prior to our arrival Terry Newton and the two young men from the orphanage whose homes are being built, prepared the work sites. We spent the week digging trenches and installing plumbing and pouring over 60 cubic yards of concrete to complete the foundations and floors for two houses. The front-end loading tractor, donated by CFUMC last year, was a tremendous help for the project.



Two 19 year old Hondurans raised at the children's home - Oscar and Willie - will be the new "OWNERS" of the homes we worked on this trip. They saved their allowance and money from odd-jobs to buy the land and start the houses. Several other Honduran men worked along with the Americans as we ALL worked 9 hour days. We helped the Hondurans with their project – it is not ours – and together we accomplished the goals. Two young women on our team of

volunteers assisted by twisting re-bar ties by hand for these two houses.

A school near to the children's home has 39 students who are taught by Alan, a young man who grew up at the orphanage, and two young women from the community. The school teaches grades 1-6. The students are taught both in Spanish and English. The women of the mission team spent one morning with the children on the front porch of the school. They took photographs of each of the beautiful children at the school. The children then made their own photo frame and decorated it



with stickers, markers, buttons, and other items CFUMC sent with us. As a gift, they sang two songs for us before we left.



The children's knowledge of the Bible demonstrated the faith, discipline, commitment and love which the leaders at the Eicher Children's home have demonstrated! During our stay with them, they were ministering to us! It is clear that involvement in this Children's Home will bear much fruit and help provide role models for the people in Guaimaca.

The Newtons are quite fluent in Spanish. They took on this full-time mission work after Terry retired from a very successful international company in Georgia. Pam went back to school to earn a degree in nursing and become qualified to fill that need during their tenure in Honduras. They wanted to do more than travel, talk, and eat too much during their retirement years. They are such an inspiration to us.

Language was not a barrier. Smiles, welcomes, and hand directions sufficed. Mamucha, a single woman in her early 30s who came from Kansas, raises five girls ages 11-19. All speak English as their primary language. The 11 year-olds washed our clothes (for a small price) in a wringer washing machine on the back porch of their house. They could crochet, sew, cook, and read and write in both English and Spanish.

They are currently home schooled by Mamucha. Part of our project work was to divide the donated clothing into sets for children and youths. Mamucha's girls were tremendous help in sorting and bagging the clothing. We also prepared rice and beans to distribute to the poorer regions in the mountains. The weather did not cooperate, so we decided not to chance the drive up the slippery dirt roads to the mountains. The children will distribute these for us when the roads dry.



Meals were communal at either the Newton's home, or La Chichita, the restaurant owned by an older Mennonite couple, Vernon and Katie Schmucker. We had local foods: mangos oranges, beef, beans, tortillas, plantains, as well as canned drinks and bottled water and plenty of helado (ice cream).

Worship on Sunday morning was at the community chapel near the restaurant with at least 125 Spanish speaking people and a few crying babies in attendance. The minister is a son of the Schmuckers. He was raised in Honduras and educated in the USA. He gave the sermon in Spanish and then translated the message into English for the benefit of the "visitors". All of the children from the orphanage were in attendance as well as their 'parents'. The most notable of all of the worship was the beautiful unaccompanied singing resembling the Sacred Harp style. Men, women, and children sang with enthusiasm about being children of God with many blessings to count even in times of trouble or want. We loved hearing them sing and worshipping with the family groups with their sleeping children on their laps and shoulders during the sermon.



Late Sunday afternoon, after a community soccer game, the Eichers and their charges hosted a popcorn, vegetable pizza, and ice cream party. The usual afternoon rain did not dampen our spirits as the 35 people in attendance ate, sang, talked, and laughed on their porch and living room. One last CFUMC project was brought out and the children made personalized sailor hats with fabric markers.



After leaving the children's home compound on the way back to Tegucigalpa for our return home we visited the Valley of the Angles, a village with stores that aft in hand-crafted items. We picked up some one-of-a kind crafts for the next missions auction. Get ready to buy!



around the world.

Our team's relationship with the kids and leaders at the Eicher Children's Home continues to grow. We hope to host several of the kids as they visit the United States this year, plus we have a long list of their "needs" to meet! We are fully aware of how richly blessed our lives are because of the great country in which we live. Our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world need our help. This mission team will be listening closely to God for our call to extend a hand to others in need