

Minutes
New Castle Presbytery Guatemala Group

The Guatemala group met by conference call on June 22, 2015 at 6:00 pm. Those participating were Bill Reed, Cathy Higgins, Carrie Saathoff, George Hall, Cindie Moore, Lorna Granston, Edwin Estevez.

Cathy Higgins opened with prayer.

Introductions and welcome to Lorna Granston from Community Presbyterian. Lorna will soon be announcing the possibility of a prayer partnership at Community to see if some women would be interested in joining in. Edwin Estevez of the Riverfront Church was also welcomed.

Cindie Moore reviewed her recent Guatemala trip. She had circulated a summary of the results/observations from that trip. It is attached as a second page to these minutes. Cindie continually emphasized the Guatemalans are in the leadership roles in these various efforts. Her next trip will probably be in November.

Edwin Estevez reviewed the project that several folks from the new, Riverfront church will be involved. Two dates are being considered one this November, one in May or June of next year. This will involve work with the Chico Mendes Foundation, planting trees in an area near Xela. This group also collects garbage and recycles it into Eco-cabins. Two dates are being considered in November and may/june next year.

There was brief discussion of the Guatemalan section on the New Castle Presbytery website and the possibility of more of a social media presence.

Cathy has been informed that the balance left in MDU/Guatemala account for this year is \$800. Higgins and Reed plan to attend the Big Tent in late July. Cathy will attend the CEDEPCA-PCUSA network meeting, Bill to attend the Guatemala-PCUSA network meeting. There was brief discussion of taking some of that remaining \$800 to help with the cost of these trips to Big Tent. Cathy and Bill attending Big Tent will confer further.

George Hall, on behalf of the Mission Development Unit thanked everyone for their efforts and spoke a concluding prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm with an agreement to meet again in August at a time/date to be determined.

Respectfully submitted, Bill Reed, Recorder

HIGHLIGHTS OF CINDIE'S MAY/JUNE 2015 TRIP TO GUATEMALA TO VISIT ROSARIO DIAZ AND THE ASSOCIATION OF MAM CHRISTIAN WOMEN FOR DEVELOPMENT

I will provide details about each of the items below during the June 22, 2015, conference call.

MDU-Association Agreement

I delivered funds in amount of \$5000 to a new micro-loan group called La Cruz. The funds are part of the Agreement signed in March between the MDU and the Association. The group has 15 members, will raise cattle, and does not have a prayer partnership yet. They will begin purchasing their cattle shortly.

Filter Monitoring

The monitoring involves the inspection of the 248 filters installed. Thus far, 120 have been inspected. The inspection offers a chance to review the operation of the filter with the user and to resolve any problems with the filters themselves.

Sewing Schools

The school in San Juan Ostuncalco is at capacity this year. Eighty students are enrolled. The facility only has 20 machines, thus each class has a like number of students. Each class meets all day. So there are 4 classes per week, as opposed to 3 last year. The new school in Las Barrancas has 14 students. The facility has 6 machines and offers 3 days of classes per week. A North Carolina church established a prayer partnership with the Las Barrancas students.

Prayer Partnerships

Linda Williams of the Georgetown Presbyterian Church organized a prayer partnership with the members of an Association group called Los Pinares. The MDU provided funds for the group last year. Some group members raise cattle and others manufacture soap, as described in the PPT you received.

Other Projects of Interest

Latrines: I saw a solidly made latrine that will serve 8 people up to 5 years – still no final price, but given the high quality construction, they will be rather expensive.

Training: Thus far this year, Association members attended workshops on leadership, environment and disease, and mental health, including relaxation exercises (by Dottie and Stan Foster of Nacoochee GA); intrafamily violence (by Betty Carrera of CEDEPCA, the Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America); and the shelter and feeding of livestock (by Guillermo Santizo, Heifer International). In addition, Association member Humberta Carrera provided a workshop on self-esteem to Association Aq'ab'al. The women, who live in the community where the water filters are made, are not Mams, but from the K'iche indigenous group.