

MICAH MESSENGER

Mission Newsletter
September 1, 2019



White Bear Lake
**UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH**

Nourishing the Hungers of Life

*He has told you,
O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD
require of you
but to do justice,
and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly
with your God?*

- Micah 6:8 -

"UP and OUT of POVERTY" COMMON HOPE

LIFE IN GUATEMALA

Despite the country's beautiful landscapes and joy-filled people, living in Guatemala is challenging:

- ◆ More than half its 17+ million citizens live below the national poverty line; 25% live in extreme poverty earning less than \$2/day.
- ◆ For families living in poverty, education takes a back seat to earning a living: survival comes first! In Guatemala, the average number of completed years of education for adults is 3.5 years. Only 70% of children graduate from sixth grade, 32% from junior high and a mere 18.6% from high school.
- ◆ Access to health care is a challenge with only nine doctors for every 10,000 people. Care is cost prohibitive for many. Major causes of death still include treatable illnesses such as pneumonia, diarrhea and malnutrition. Malnutrition is a serious issue among children.
- ◆ Inadequate housing affects learning and health. Many people live in inadequate, unsafe conditions with 67% living in homes without roofs and sufficient living space. Homes in rural areas are crafted from scrap metal. It's also common to see homes built with cornstalk walls and dirt floors. Many dwellings don't have potable water or sanitation systems. These conditions lead to parasitic food contamination, life-threatening disease and family strain.

For these reasons, Common Hope has spent 30+ years partnering with children and families in Guatemala to help students gain a high school diploma and families break the cycle of poverty through education, health care, housing, and family development.

Common Hope strives to be a bridge to the resources and services needed to overcome the challenges facing families, and it's working: *Common Hope students are graduating at three to four times the Guatemalan national average!*



**"The future looks
bright for Guatemala
with these kids
leading the way."**



In the Beginning . . .

In 1986, Minnesota natives Dave and Betty Huebsch became involved in human development planning in Guatemala and founded and incorporated "The Godchild Project" as a Minnesota Non-Profit Organization. Following Betty's untimely death in 1989, Dave was joined by his son John working directly with the poorest of God's people in the highland villages in Sacatepequez, Guatemala. The organization was renamed "**Common Hope**" in 1992 and over the course of the next seven years John designed and constructed many of the permanent structures of Common Hope in and around Antigua, including the Family Development Center.

What does 30 years of HOPE look like?

- ◆ 1991: Programming expands to include Health Care, Housing, Social Work Services.
- ◆ 1994: First "Vision Team" hosted in Antigua.
- ◆ 1996: First high school graduate sponsored by Common Hope.
- ◆ 1999: New Hope Village construction begins and serves as home for victims of Hurricane Mitch.
- ◆ 2004: 500 homes have been built and 200 Vision Teams have traveled to Guatemala.
- ◆ 2006: Antigua Clinic celebrates 10 years of service to the community.
- ◆ 2010: Common Hope develops a new education model called the PARTNER SCHOOL PROGRAM.
- ◆ 2011: 1,000 high school graduates!
- ◆ 2013, Early Literacy and Reading programs are launched.
- ◆ 2016: 30 Years of Hope celebration!

Fighting Poverty with Diplomas in Guatemala

Did you know . . .

- ◆ White Bear Lake UMC Is a Common Hope Faith Community Partner?
- ◆ Congregation members have traveled on four Vision Team volunteer trips to Guatemala with Common Hope, with a 5th trip being planned for 2020! Vision Team trips allow for members to see Common Hope's work first hand in Guatemala through volunteer projects and cultural immersion activities.

- ◆ Our church and members **sponsor 16 students** in Guatemala! Luis is the church sponsored student, a 10th grader who is studying Business Administration for his career path. While in Guatemala in 2019, Pastor John and Lori McBride had an opportunity to visit Luis in his home (photo below), meet his mother, extend greetings from the congregation, and learn all about his hopes and dreams for the future.



September is "**Sponsorpalooza**" month, a time of year when Common Hope celebrates its sponsors and partners (like White Bear Lake United Methodist!) and shares how to Be The Hope for students in Guatemala. This year, Sponsorpalooza is extra special as Common Hope has an angel sponsor who will match the first month's donation of any new sponsors who sign up in September! What a great time to sponsor!

On Sunday, September 15, 2019, Avi Mylrea from Common Hope will join us in worship and have a display in Fellowship Hall where all can learn about Guatemala, Common Hope, and students still needing sponsorship for their future education. If you are already a student sponsor please be sure you plan to attend the Sponsorpalooza activities on September 15th.

Until next newsletter, peace to all.

Lori McBride

Missions and Faith Formation Minister

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