



Honduras Trip - April 2017

Carlisle Presbytery and the Church in Honduras: House Family #12! Tomasa and Ishmael (centered in the photo) have owned their land for 18 years and raised their family in a one room wooden home. A few years ago construction began on a brick home, which is seen in the background of the photo. When Ishmael was laid off from his work two years ago, they were unable to complete the work. Much of the brick structure has no roof while the portions of the wooden home you see are rather rotted and termite ridden. In April Carlisle Presbytery partnered with the Presbyterian Church of Honduras to change the life of this family. Together we began building a new home for them. Tomasa and Ishmael have 12 living children ranging in age from 24 to 42. The youngest, Kelbin, attends the University and lives in the house with several of his sisters and their children. In total 8-12 people live there regularly.

Also, Tomasa is a pastor in the Presbyterian Church of Honduras. She serves a church in Las Botijas, which is about an hour north of Tegucigalpa where her family lives. Regularly, she makes the journey by bus to be present to both the church and her family. Recently, her husband Ishmael secured a new job as a night security guard. The family is grateful for Ishmael's work. Pastors in Honduras, at least in the rather poor Presbyterian Church, do not receive payment.

Empowering People! Our work with the Presbyterian Church of Honduras seeks to empower families as much as possible. When we work with families to build homes, we invite them to indicate how they would like the home to be designed. In this case, the family wanted a larger home than the wooden one in which they lived, which was about 6x6 meters. The family works with a representative of the Honduran Church to develop a plan and an agreement for what our home building partnership will provide, as well as, what the family will be expected to provide in addition to their labor on the home. Kelbin drew the plan for the family's new home and the family asked us to provide all the outer walls, roof, new floor, windows and doors. As they are able, they will subdivide the house with interior walls of drywall. Also, the church is a part of the process with members helping to build as they are able and with groups in the churches, particularly Presbyterian Women, raising money for blocks. All have found a way to contribute to the work our churches are doing together.



Tomasa and Ishmael's home was a project for the April team from Carlisle Presbytery.

Many Lives Changed!

This April not just the life of this family was changed. Those of us, who traveled to Honduras, are also changed. The Spirit goes before us, paving the way for our own transformation as we serve. The Honduran people see those of us, who come to them from the United States, as extraordinary, because they think we risk a great deal going there. They see us giving of our time and money. The truth is we give so little compared to what we receive. We tell them repeatedly, "If you see us as extraordinary, it's only the Spirit you are seeing working through us, we pray." We tell them, "You are extraordinary, because we experience the Spirit in you in the way that you live, love and witness to Jesus." We are ordinary except that the power of the Spirit, who is working in and through us together, makes us extraordinary.

The extraordinary thing isn't our travel or the homes we build – that's the easy part. What's extraordinary are the relationships we build, the ways we witness to each other about God's love, the ways we work together, talk together, laugh together, despite all that could separate us – country, language, economics. The Spirit doesn't care about any of those things. When we're willing to put them aside on our worksite, as the Hondurans do with us, and we with them, then the Spirit does extraordinary things. My personal experience is that no matter how I feel when I arrive in Honduras, I leave empowered, emboldened, and alive again, because of my experience of the Spirit of Christ while there.



Congregation blessing new wall



The wall at Pena's house that our Presbytery helped to fund last year.

Update on Pena's House

Presbytery provided funding for a third home to be built last year. You may recall that Peña and his family were suddenly awakened one night last October during a heavy rain-fall that caused a landslide to collapse their home. Our Presbytery sent funds to rebuild his home and to build a heavy, well-drained retaining wall to keep the earth in place. That work is finished and the church in Honduras held a worship service there in April to bless our work and Peña's family. The picture above shows the new retaining wall. On the left the congregation blesses gives thanks for the new wall.

You Can Be A Part of Our Presbytery's Work!

Trips are planned to Honduras each April. Next year's tentative dates are April 9-16, 2018. Anyone with an open heart and mind is welcome to come; an information session will be held for interested people toward the end of 2017. Your church can also raise money for housing, sponsor our mission co-worker (search is ongoing), and sponsor our partnership's efforts to further theological education for both pastors and lay leaders in Honduras. There is more information about all these parts of our partnership available from the Presbytery office. Please continue to hold our Honduran sisters and brothers in your prayers as well as our partnership with the Presbyterian Church in Honduras.



Members of the April Mission Team enjoy a farewell meal together.

Church Mission Work Displays at May Presbytery Meeting

The Mission Advocacy Committee will be featuring local mission work at the May Presbytery meeting. Please visit us at the display table for information about all the work our churches are doing in our local communities. Handouts with local contact information are available in your Presbytery packets.

For more information, please visit the Carlisle Presbytery Mission Yearbook online at the Presbytery website:
www.carlislepby.org.



Mission Trip to Honduras for High School and College Aged Students

In partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Honduras, our presbytery is planning a June 2018 trip to Honduras for high school and college aged persons.. Mission work would be done in the city of Tegucigalpa. Participants would work directly with a joint mission committee of the Honduran Presbyterian congregations in that area. This committee is responsible for all aspects of the home construction ministry. More information was in the May presbytery packet and will be available at www.carlislepby.org. Contact f Rev. Mark Englund-Krieger at 717-737-6821.