

JULY 2011 MISSION TEAM REPORT

Greetings dear family and friends!

We hope and pray that all of you are doing well. We are doing fine.

The current report has the purpose of informing you of a recent mission team that came to work with us here in Guatemala. Their visit was a true blessing to us and we are thankful for their work, love and sacrifice.

The team of **20** arrived to Guatemala on **Thursday, July 7**, greeted at the airport by **ITL students** and **Linda Vista members**. The team was made up of five from Indiana, 11 from Florence, Alabama, two from Minnesota, and two from California. This year we had from Indiana **Melvin Denny, Rashad Gold, Henry** and **Candace Shelton**, and **Lesha Colglazier**, the team coordinator. From Alabama, there were **Kerry Williams** and his daughter, **Reann, Joshua Wear, Buddy Baker, Raymond Voigt Jr, Ashley House, Austin Penter**, and the **Krieger family –**



Joey, Kelli, Luke and **Brandon**. This year, Hi's sister, **LaVaughn Booker** came with the team. Her son, and Hi's nephew, **Joey** was able to make his second visit in a row. They are the two that live in Minnesota. From California, Byron's mother, **Aralee Hernandez**, and niece, **Ashley Figueroa**, came again this year. The evening of their arrival we met for dinner with the team to share information they would need to know about their time in Guatemala.



Friday, July 8, the team got a touch of the local culture by touring **Guatemala City** and shopping at **Central Market**, which is underground. Most of the team did very well at haggling. Be careful if they try to buy something from you! ☺ That evening Byron and Hawatthia hosted the team and others from Linda Vista for dinner in their home. The evening was filled with fellowship, singing and the annual Jenga game. *We are*



sad to report that the men lost to the women this year! ☹

As in years past, **Saturday** is the day we have a seminar at Linda Vista. Each year we have the blessing of having other congregations in attendance. This year's theme was **"Don't Worry – Trust in God!"** All the lessons for the week looked at this theme from various aspects. The seminar began with a lesson from us to a combined audience. After this initial lesson, the audience was divided into different groups: children, teens, ladies and men. Several members of the mission team presented lessons at this time. We were especially impressed to see the teenagers who came from the Sherrod Ave. congregation and from Minnesota teach and assist in teaching. **Arelee, Ashley, Byron, Benjamin Montejo** and **Johania Reyes** served as translators.



Theme: "Don't Worry...Trust in God!"



Classes for Teens

Classes for Men

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The **Lord's Day** was special with a bi-lingual worship service for both the morning and evening times. **Kerry William**, the full-time evangelist for the **Sherrod Avenue church of Christ** in Florence, Alabama, spoke for the morning service. **Joey Krieger**, also from Sherrod Avenue, led songs in English. **Rashad Gold** spoke for the evening service and **Henry Shelton** led the songs in English. Both are from the **Kingsley Terrace church of Christ** in Indianapolis, Indiana. Other young men on the team helped with other parts of worship in English. After the morning worship, Bible classes were taught by **Raymond Voigt**, youth minister at Sherrod Avenue, for the teens, **Kelli Krieger** coordinated the classes for the children, being assisted by **Reann Williams** and **Ashley House**. We were given the adult class.



We had lunch at the home of **Adela Ramos** again this year. It was wonderful. This is our usual stop on our way to visit the **Amatitlan National Hospital** on Sunday afternoon. The team and Linda Vista members were able to deliver care packages to the patients and were able pray with them. So, as you can see, the Lord's Day was a full day of worship, service and blessings.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the team had the opportunity to work on 3 families' homes to make much needed improvements. **Cesar Tovar**, a member at Linda Vista, served as our foreman on these projects. It was great to see him able to work after having suffered a serious illness that almost took his life. On **Monday**, we worked at the home of **Siria Reyes** for our first project. She is an older member of Linda Vista that really needed work on her home. We replaced half of the house's tin roof because it was leaking severely. In addition, most of the rooms in the house were painted a nice light blue, to match the color Siria already had in her home. With many hands that were available and ready to work, most of the work was done by the time we went to lunch. Each afternoon, all of us ate lunch at the church building, where **Isabel Tovar** and her helpers served delicious meals. As a result of finishing most of the work in the morning, the team was able to go back to the hotel early to rest after having been in the strong sun during the morning.



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On **Tuesday** and **Wednesday**, the team worked in two other homes. These belong to **Maritza** and **Lorena Garcia**, sisters in the flesh and sisters in the Lord. At Maritza's house, we were able to place new tin roof over one of her rooms and we laid concrete where dirt had previously served as the floor. At Lorena's house, we worked in her kitchen, replacing the tin roof and also laying a concrete floor over the dirt. These two sisters and their families were grateful for the efforts done on their behalf.

On **Monday** and **Tuesday evenings**, **Joey Krieger**, a song leader and music teacher, worked with the Linda Vista congregation to teach four-part harmony. It was a treat to see the members singing their parts proudly. By the end of the seminar, the Christians who attended these two nights sounded great! Although we understand that God is interested in the heart more than the harmony, it sure was nice to hear how the church improved in harmony in just a short time. Thanks Joey for your help!



On Wednesday evening, we were blessed to have **Melvin Denny** give our devotional. It was especially encouraging to see him before the church because this was Melvin's first time to give a lesson. Great job, Melvin! After the devotional, **Kelli**, **Reann**, and **Ashley** taught the children, **Lesha** taught the ladies, and **Kerry** taught the men.

On **Thursday**, all of us went in the rented bus to the city of **Chichicastenango**. Market days are Thursdays and Sundays, so the group was ready to haggle once again. We contracted a tour guide on this occasion, who gave us good insight on Guatemala's history and the places we passed on the way to Chichi (what the locals call the city). We were able to see the variety of the country's landscape—volcanoes, mountains, farmland, and various towns. Because we are in the rainy season, there is always a chance that the rain will catch you while you are out and about. Well, the rain did catch us on this day, but it did not stop us! ☺ It was interesting to see all the creative solutions that were made to try to stay dry.

The trip is not complete without a visit to **Antigua Guatemala** for sight-seeing, shopping and lunch at the restaurant **Fonda de Calle Real**. Our first stop was to a



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coffee plantation just outside the city limits, where we got a tour of the facilities and of their music museum. Next, we ate lunch at the restaurant mentioned. Finally, the essential shopping stop was made so that our U.S. brethren could contribute to the Guatemalan economy. ☺ As the sun set in the west, we loaded onto the bus and made our way to **Linda Vista** for a **going-away celebration**. If we had to summarize the tone of the event, it would be with the words “mutual appreciation.” The mission team had many kind words of gratitude to express to the church for hosting them, and the church likewise expressed many thanks for the team’s decision to come to share ten days with them. The night ended with lots of hugs, plenty of Spanglish, loads of pictures, and a good deal of love.



There were a few challenges during the week, but the team was able to accomplish what it had planned. The new ones learned on more than one occasion the key words for the trip: *be flexible*. Lesha, the team coordinator, said that she knows that each of the team members were grateful for the time they were able to spend in Guatemala and have a better appreciation for their brothers and sisters here! A sincere thank you goes out to each team member for all your efforts and a special thanks to the team nurse, Candace Shelton, for your extra efforts to keep everyone moving. Much to our sadness, the team members boarded their plane on Saturday to fly back to the United States.

Thanks again to Lesha for a superb job in directing once again our July team. Your expertise helps to make everything go much smoother. Also, thanks to the team for coming to Guatemala to share your faith and your love. You all made a BIG difference in the lives of your spiritual (and physical) family here. We must also mention that Lesha helped us this year to write this newsletter. Thank you! The idea was to get it out sooner, but in spite of her efforts, we still managed to get this newsletter later than we had hoped. Sorry!

We will close for now. However, we cannot close without saying thank you to all our supporters, family and friends who read our reports. If possible, why not make a visit yourself to see the work first hand. Our July team, Lord willing, will return next year **July 5-14**. Hope to see you on that team!

¡Que Dios los bendiga! (May God bless you all!)

Hawatthia
Byron

“Teaching the CENTRAL MESSAGE in CENTRAL AMERICA!”