

HERE I AM, LORD, SEND ME MISSIONS MINISTRY

May 2014



The Holy Spirit Brings Life to Faro del Este Church Costa Rica

By Ann Littleton



“Back home again in Costa Rica,
Where the cane and coffee grow,
And the moonlight shines tonight on
the volcano,
Take me back to my Mansiones Home.”

Many of us VIM team members who go to Costa Rica every year sing this song to the tune of “Back Home Again in Indiana”. We were excited to be back home again in Mansiones this year, especially since it was the 10th anniversary of the dedication of the Faro del Este church built from funds donated to FUMC Birmingham as a memorial to my son, Geoffrey.

We returned this year to build sidewalks, put up ceilings, paint walls and fences, and make new friends. Bishop Palomo appointed a new

pastor to the church just two months before we arrived. After a strong start, the church had been floundering during the past few years. Most of the founding families left the church and the attendance was down to about 20–30 people each week. What would we find when we arrived?

The anniversary celebration was set for March 9th, and in addition to the 24 team members, we would have 16 additional people flying in to attend the celebration. The work team attended Sunday services on March 2nd in order to present a Sunday school program for the children but to also find out what was going on before we started

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The Holy Spirit Brings Life to Faro del Este Church

Costa Rica

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work the next day. We met the new pastor and his wife, and they certainly were gracious people. We took our places in the sanctuary to spend about 30 minutes singing hymns before we would leave to start the Sunday school program with the children. At first, we looked around and saw about 20 or 30 Costa Ricans at the service – similar to last year - but as we sang, the cars rolled in, the people walked in, and soon men were going to the fellowship hall to bring in more and more chairs. By the time the singing was over, there were well over 150 people in the sanctuary. My eyes were filled with tears as so many of the original members walked in. Time after time, I got up and hugged those wonderful people I had not seen in so many years. Yes, there was a new pastor and there was a new life for the church.

The theme for the Sunday school lesson was the “Tree of Life.” Vera Ugalde, who created all the stain glass windows in the church, came to talk to the children about the largest window that depicts the tree of life. The children colored stain glass windows, made bungee cord bracelets with a tree of life charm, and glued their pictures and pressed their fingerprints on a large tree canvas.

On Monday morning the heavy work



“...as we sang, the cars rolled in, the people walked in, and soon men were going to the fellowship hall to bring in more and more chairs.”

began with loads and loads of cement for the sidewalk and buckets of paint for the walls and fence. Two team members started the earsplitting work of attaching metal braces for the new ceilings in the bathrooms. By the last day, all of the cement workers would join them to finish installing the ceiling boards. Our team master gardeners cleaned up all the flower beds and planted flowers and filled pots for the anniversary celebration. Four members kept the team happy with delicious meals and snacks. During the week, we met with ladies from the church and the surrounding area to pray together and paint tote bags and prepare banana bread to serve after the Sunday service on March 9th.



Easter Joy for Foster Children

Methodist Children's Home



Finally the big day arrived. All the Americanos gathered in the front of the church for a group picture. During the service there was dancing and singing and a tremendous amount of joy. Dr. Jack Harnish and Dr. Bill Ritter offered up prayers and Will Faircloth, the missionary we help to support in Costa Rica, preached the sermon. The pastor introduced the team and presented each member with a plaque expressing the church's gratitude for their commitment. The pastor introduced our family members who came to celebrate what a gift this church has been to us. Everyone who was present had to feel the tremendous power of the Holy Spirit working to bring life and joy to this church.

Thank you, God, for sending Pastor Jorge as your anniversary gift to Faro del Este.

For more information on Costa Rica, please contact Ann Littleton at 248.723.1929



Multiple FUMC groups rallied to help prepare Easter baskets for 63 foster children at the Methodist Children's Home. Baskets were provided to groups such as the Parents of Teens and College Students, GRIP groups, and the Monday night Bible study group. They provided the items and stuffed and wrapped the baskets. The baskets were then delivered to the Children's Home where they were given to foster parents to give to the children on Easter morning.

Methodist Children's Home Society helps hundreds of children each year by providing safe havens, creating forever families, and raising responsible young adults. The youth range from infants to teenagers, and come from all across the state of Michigan. Some children stay for a short time and then return home. Others need to find new families.

A new transitional housing program is soon to be introduced that will house small groups of 18-22 year old young men who have aged out of the foster care system. The young men will be provided secure housing, support and guidance, while they begin working or going to school full time. Watch for upcoming information on how you can help make this a reality.

For more information on the Methodist Children's Home, please contact Nancy Overman at 248.646.5360

Frightful Weather Doesn't Deter Creativity

Art & Soul

By Susan Greenhalgh



The weather outside was frightful, but it was warm, cozy and VERY busy in the Art & Soul studio at the Central UMC in Detroit. Participants and volunteers alike were working on a myriad of projects throughout the winter. There were days when we extended the tables into the halls in an effort to accommodate everyone. Together, we created greeting cards from watercolor paintings we had done, created sun catchers, and glazed bowls for Empty Bowls at both Central UMC and at Birmingham First UMC. In addition, the group collaged, beaded, sketched, did many types of needlework, and was creatively happy. Ideas and thoughts are constantly flowing within the studio. We are blessed, too, to have student help from our partnership with the Wayne State University School of Graduate Art Therapy.

An up-coming project is a commission from the retiring senior

pastor at Central, Reverend Edwin Rowe, and his wife, Nida, for decorative tiles to adorn a room in their home. The Rowes have asked that the tiles represent a "Detroit theme." The group is looking forward to this project.

Mission Sunday in February was special for us all. Several of our A&S artists were represented in the sale of their artwork at FUMC on that day. Three of the artists, Denise Dotson, Marie Jenkins, and John Kuykendall, were there to represent all of the A&S



artists. The response to the sale was wonderful! Fellowship Hall was buzzing with shoppers around the A&S booth. Total sales and donations was \$570. The artists' proceeds are 80% of the sale of their artwork.

One of the pieces sold that day, painted by Twiana Odom, was purchased by church member Ann Windley. Ann has gifted the art piece to Birmingham FUMC where it will be displayed in Thomas Parlor. Twiana is very proud and happy and eagerly looks forward to having her family come with her to see the picture in its new home.

To top off the big day, the three artists were taken to lunch. The ride back to downtown Detroit was filled with talking, laughter, and appreciation for the Birmingham First members who made them feel so welcome. They were brimming with pride and asking when they could do it again! Marie was the last to get dropped off. As many of you know, Marie does live on the streets of Detroit. But, fortunately, the winter has driven her into the Cass Warming Center at Cass United Methodist. As she was walking toward the church door, she turned around with a big smile and said, "I had a BLAST today." What more could we hope for?

For more information or to participate in our Art & Soul ministry, please contact Susan Greenhalgh at 248.613.7674



Swishing Basketball Nets for Bed Nets

Children's Missions



The Piston's Flight Crew, an acrobatic basketball team, came to visit Unite 3 on 3. They put on a show by slam dunking and doing basketball tricks with trampolines. The Flight crew interacted with the kids, showing them basketball tricks and techniques and signing autographs.

They also helped us raise money for Imagine No Malaria. Pastor Laurie was our special guest that day and she, along with the Flight Crew, helped lead a "lay-up challenge" where Unite coaches and parents



made as many lay-ups in 3 minutes as they could. Each lay-up was a \$5 donation from Unite and was matched personally by Pastor Laurie and Pastor Gary. Then the Unite kids got a chance to do a lay-up challenge as well. We raised enough money to purchase 66 life-saving insecticide-treated bed nets.

For more information on Children and Families Missions, please contact Kelly Willian at kwillian@fumcbirmingham.org

A Fire and a Free Store

Brightmoor

By Jean McKeehan

On Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2014, a Fire and a Free Store met head on. The Fire: Just 4 blocks from the Brightmoor Campus of Redford Aldersgate United Methodist Church, a 4-alarm fire broke out at 6 a.m. and quickly engulfed an apartment building where approximately 100 individuals lived. The fire was so intense that the residents could only escape with their lives. The day was very cold and many wore only their bed clothes. No time for coats or shoes, let alone prized possessions. Enter the Free Store: Some of the first responders to the fire victims were the staff of the Brightmoor Campus. By 7 a.m. Rhonda Fadoir, Program Director of Read, Seed, Feed, unlocked the church, put on the coffee pot, and quickly mobilized community and church volunteers who sprang into action. Within a short time, the church doors were opened to shelter at least 50 persons and provide space for law enforcement, fire, medical, city and federal officials to coordinate their efforts. But the doors were not opened to just an empty church building. All week, staff and volunteers had been preparing for the Free Store to be held on Saturday. What was available in the Free Store? Clothing of all sizes, shoes and socks, personal care items, and household goods. Just what was needed “for such a time as this.” Throughout Wednesday and into Thursday, additional goods flowed into the church. Food was prepared and distributed, and monetary donations



came from all over the Detroit area. Immediate needs were being met.

By way of background, the Free Store had its beginnings in the Fall of 2013 when Read, Seed, Feed board members visited a program in Ohio with the idea that perhaps a similar plan could be instituted at the Brightmoor Campus. With some modifications to fit their unique situation, the Free Store was set up and opened in January 2014. After an appeal went out to local congregations, an avalanche of goods began flowing in to the church. Many willing volunteers made themselves available to sort and organize clothing, household goods, and books and be present for the opening day. The result was an overwhelming success when approximately 60 families from the Brightmoor community came to make selections for needed items. For those of us who were there, the atmosphere was friendly and charged with

excitement as we met people living in the community. Everyone involved agreed that the Free Store was off to a great start!



Since that beginning in January, the Free Store has continued to be open on the second Saturday of each month with equally successful community participation. Forty to sixty needy families have come for assistance. Several women who live in the community have faithfully begun providing leadership for the Free Store. From all appearances, the

Worshiping & Serving at Cass Student Missions

Free Store has been a huge success! However, in order for this effort to continue, volunteers and donations are a necessity. Here are some of the ways that you can help. (1) Volunteers are needed from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the Wednesdays and Thursdays before the store opens on Saturdays to sort, organize, and set up donations; (2) Assistance is also needed on the day of the Free Store to assist with a variety of tasks (helping shoppers make selections, restocking, serving coffee, interacting with shoppers and their families, and teardown in preparation for Sunday services); (3) The need for donations is also ongoing. Visit the website at www.ReadSeedFeed.org for a list of suggested contributions.

Who knew when fire broke out in an apartment building on March 5, 2014 that the Free Store at the Brightmoor Campus would be poised to step in within minutes to aid the fleeing residents? Did planners of the Free Store ever envision how God would use “for such a time as this” to open doors in the Brightmoor community? That is how God works in the hearts of those who have a passion to serve and a willingness to step out in faith to aid those in need. The Free Store continues. Volunteers are always welcome.

For more information on Brightmoor, please contact Mary Pickett at 248.646.7238



The 2014 Confirmation class worshipped at Cass Community UMC in February. Following worship they served at Cass Community Social Services, a United Methodist agency in Detroit that fights poverty and creates opportunity. The students worked in the Green Industries building and helped in the kitchen.

*“I saw God at work that day when there was such a big group of people helping out and making a difference in other people’s lives.”
–Kaylee, middle school student*

“I enjoyed helping others and seeing the smile on their faces when they got the food.” –Julia, high school student

In March, 34 youth and 11 adults participated in a mission day at Cass Community Social Services. They made cookies and prepared a hot meal, served lunch for over 200 people, and worked in the Green Industries building shredding paper and riding bikes to produce energy.

For more information on Student Missions, please contact Pastor Lindsey Hall at lhall@fumcbirmingham.org

Chili and Pies

Henderson Settlement and Costa Rica Children's Home

By Kris Kettering

Unfinished Christian Women is a book study/fellowship group that meets on Thursday nights. That is how we define ourselves, but over the years we have evolved into much more. We are also labeled as prayer warriors, and now, bakers and crafters. We have soft spots in our hearts for underprivileged children, so we have provided a little extra help for Henderson Settlement and the Methodist Children's Home of Costa Rica. It started with a visit from the Costa Rica missionary, Will Faircloth, then listening to mission moments from Henderson representatives and their continuing struggles. As a result, our group created Pie Day which benefits these two missions.



Our members donate their time, energy, and monetary contributions so that the profits all go to these two worthy causes.

Every time that you buy one of our pies, you should feel good, knowing that your purchase provides "sweet" extras for those precious children. We couldn't do it without your help.

The church calendar was so busy this year that we couldn't fit in both of the Pie Days that we normally do. So we only did one, and instead, we sponsored the Chili Cook-Off. Again, our ladies made many of the food contributions, but many other wonderful chefs from our church provided pots of chili on that extremely chilly January Sunday. There were 28 pots of delectable soup for us to sample. Approximately 225 people attended and gave monetary donations. The weather was horrible that day, but with God, an amazing and supportive church staff, and the generous members of FUMC, it ended up a great time for all. We had so much fun that we intend to do it again next winter.

Some of the talented ladies in our group knit and craft beautiful things that we also sell to provide additional funds for Henderson Settlement.

We do what we can. That seems to be a general theme at FUMC because so many have a heart for missions. Thanks for helping us!

For more information on Unfinished Christian Women, please contact Kris Kettering at 248.203.7760



"Kris and her marvelous group of selfless women of UCW have been a sheer Godsend to our group. The funding they have provided to Henderson youth, as well as the countless prayers for us and the children, cannot be measured. They are the hands and feet of Christ at home to help us provide the youth of that community the love and support they so greatly deserve. We are so grateful for their unwavering support!!"

Deb Roy, Sue Walters and the Henderson Settlement VIM Team

“We are so grateful for the support from the Unfinished Christian Women to the Costa Rica Methodist Children’s Home. After returning from Costa Rica this year, we gave the members of UCW wooden cross necklaces to signify that they really are members of our team. We are planning to initiate a “Guardian Angel” program to help raise operating funds for the Home and the Unfinished Christian Women are our first guardian angels. Mucho Gracias, Angeles!”

Ann Littleton and the Costa Rica Team



Science Museum Proves Big Hit Cass Community Social Services

In February, FUMC volunteers took 11 children to the Detroit Science Museum. Both adults and children had a wonderful time inspecting the exhibits and seeing the show.

In February and March, several volunteers went to Mom’s Place to work with the children in an afternoon program. The children had snacks, completed an art project, played games, and participated in outdoor activities such as basketball and chalk painting. About 10 moms and several children from little ones to a fourteen year old boy participated in the fun. This was

an especially appreciated time together since we had such a hard winter and the children had been inside so much.

The After School Program will take place again September 23 - October 21 and we welcome anyone who would like to join us. We leave the church at 4:00 p.m. and return by 6:30 p.m.

The Cass Annual Dinner was held in March at St. John’s Inn in Plymouth. It was a lovely evening with great food and a silent auction. Rev. Faith Fowler was stunning as Marilyn Monroe. She provided an update of activities at

Cass over the past year. The Antisdale Apartments were the highlight of the year. This apartment building has been completely renovated and provides 41 permanent apartments to previously homeless adults. It is currently filled to capacity. Mitch Albom gave a talk to open the apartments.

For more information on Cass Community Social Services, please contact Nancy Keesee at 248.645.0424 or Marsha Wester at 248.647.0492

Providing for Urgent and Emergent Needs

Haiti

By Jill Wilkinson



Preparation for our 2014 Jeremie, Haiti trip began pretty much as soon as we recovered from the 2013 trip. Nancy and John Smith, our fearless leaders and FUMC Missions chairs, met with the other coalition churches to assess priorities and dole out responsibilities.

Eight volunteers, including 5 veteran volunteers, prepared for the trip by collecting donations. We gathered pharmaceuticals for the clinic from St. John Hospital and computers for the Methodist high school from St. Joseph Mercy Oakland. Fluoride kits were donated by dentists Marc Cammarta, Daniel Mashni, Glen Maylath, and Nathan Mutch. Eyeglasses along with many cases were gathered from Berkshire Middle School students, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, the patients of Wilkinson Eye Center, the Birmingham Republican Women's Club and members of The Village Club. United Methodist Women donated funds and the Jean Dasch school

children donated infant kits for the Malnourished Mom-Infant Program. FUMC accepted monetary donations for the purchase of reading glasses, fabric for curtains for the Good Samaritan Senior House, vitamins, surgical gloves, t-shirts and mattress covers. The St. Kieran Usher's Club of Shelby Twp. donated funds to

purchase surgical supplies. Advanced Medical Technologies donated prosthetic tissue to use in surgery. Joyce Britt, a Cairn terrier breeder in Virginia, donated funds for pharmaceuticals to meet ophthalmology needs. Of course the FUMC seamstresses came through in flying colors (literally) with dresses, skirts, and baby blankets.

The packing commenced, and just when we thought our 17 bags were full, a new need arose. Rubin, a good friend



and musician at the Methodist church in Jeremie, lost his living quarters and possessions in a house fire that took out four houses in downtown Jeremie. As word went out about the tragedy, another flux of donations came in to be transported to this wonderful young man. This was the spirit of the whole trip. We dealt with the urgent, emergent, and ongoing needs of our friends in Jeremie.

This year we welcomed nurse practitioner Shawn David, Nancy's sister Lynn McKheen and Roland Smith, Nancy and John's son and our trip photographer, to the team. This never-say-die crew did an enormous amount of work.

Sunday started with church service at a chapel by the sea. The service was several hours long with each variation of a singing group performing and worshipping Jesus as well as the Rev. Cristnel preaching an exhorting sermon. After the service the congregants stayed to have their blood pressures taken and a quick eye exam. Glasses and some meds were distributed and some people were encouraged to come to the clinic for more extensive care.

On Monday the team divided and went to Chiraque, the new school building adopted by FUMC, to the general medical clinic at Gebeau, and to the Eye Clinic. There was a trip to Good Samaritan Senior house, affectionately called Good Sam. Previously there had been a request for curtains for doors

and windows, which we brought. Upon arriving at Good Sam, the team was upset to find that things were not in adequate shape. There were serious plumbing problems and unacceptable living quarters. A plumber was hired to make repairs and supplies were purchased to rectify the issues. During the course of the trip, the curtains were sewn and installed, leaving Good Sam in very good shape!

Shawn threw herself wholeheartedly into the clinic work and was often found with several children attached to her. The clinic's staff was very appreciative of our help. Fluoride treatments were provided and dresses were distributed to the children. They faced some frustration, but there was much joy as teeth were protected and beautiful new outfits were had.



The eye clinic was swamped with patients, many with very serious problems. We saw a 10-year-old boy who had a serious eye infection from a rock fight. We also treated patients with glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetes, and infections from STDS. We saw almost 400 patients in the five and a half days. Fifteen operations were performed for cataracts and pterygiums. We were able to do more cases with the benefit of the prosthetic tissue. At the end of the day, we usually gave our surgical patients a ride home. With the help of the donated meds and glasses we were able to send most of the patients home seeing and feeling better than when they arrived. Unfortunately, there were more patients than we could see in the week.

So, as we recover from this year's trip, we strategize on how we can do more next!

For more information on Haiti, please contact Nancy and John Smith at 810.678.3327



Upcoming Events

June 14	Cooking with Cass
June 14	Brightmoor Free Store
June 22-28	Henderson Settlement Trip
June 24	Catch the Fireworks with Cass
July 12	Focus Hope Delivery
July 19	Cooking with Cass
July 19	Birmingham in the Garden Tour
August 3-10	South Oakland Shelter
August 16	Cooking with Cass
September 13	Focus Hope Delivery
September 14-20	McCurdy Trip
September 15	Cass Golf Outing
September 20	Cass Make A Difference Day
September 23-October 21	Mom's Place After School Program

The projects in this newsletter and many more are supported by your generous contributions to the Partners in Mission fund. Please consider making a donation today by filling out a deposit envelope at church or going to our website and choosing Partners in Mission.

Our Missions Ministry equips disciples of Christ to share God's love through gifts and service, creating hope and sustainable opportunities for those in need.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said,

"Here I Am, Lord... Send Me"

For more information on any of our Missions Ministries, please contact:

Bev Richardson, Missions Coordinator
brichardson@fumcbirmingham.org
248-646-1200 ext. 3156

Missions Ministries, Co-Leaders
John and Nancy Smith, 810.678.3327
Laura Dickerson, 248.539.1925

Our Purpose: To gather, nurture and equip disciples of Christ for ministry and mission in the world.



1589 West Maple Road
Birmingham, MI 48009
248.646.1200
fumcbirmingham.org

