



Students in the Service Club from Thurmont Elementary School with their cards, 2.16.



This year we have had many local Maryland children who collaborated with CARP by donating shoes and supplies. In February I spoke to the **Service Club at Thurmont (Maryland) Elementary School**. We want to thank their instructor **Tammy Woodward**, a frequent CARP team traveler to El Salvador, who facilitated this particular meeting. We listened to Latin American music, ate *pupusas* (tortillas stuffed with cheese and fried), and learned some Spanish phrases to make cards for the CARP students in El Salvador. In addition, these students donated enough soap and hand sanitizer for all those in the CARP Project, and later collected shoes for them. They are pictured here with their cards.

We also want to thank students at **Frederick Country Day Montessori**, Frederick, MD, for collecting shoes for the younger children in El Salvador. This year they collected over 100 pairs (photo at left). The **middle and high school youth groups at El Shaddai Congregation** sponsor a child. Thank you for making birthday cards each year!



Pastors Francis and Zulma Batarsé, Iglesia Cristiana Cristo Centro San Salvador, are directors of the Central American Relief Project in El Salvador.

Proverbs 31 describes a virtuous wife and the way she cares for her husband. If we can see ourselves as this woman – the Body and the Bride – and the Messiah as our Husband, then it makes sense that we should care for Him and His house, our congregation. **Verse 23** says, “**Her husband is known in the city gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.**” How is our Lord known by the things we do and the care we take of His house and His sheep, the *mitzvot* or good deeds we do for Him? God will add to the number of our congregation when we can take care of them. The Word in **Ephesians 5:27** says, “**...Yeshua will return to present His glorious Bride, the Body without spot or wrinkle, to Himself.**” A song by Chris Tomlin goes like this: “*Like a bride waiting for her Groom, we’ll be a bride ready for You. Every heart longing for our King. We sing, even so come, Yeshua come. There will be justice, all will be new, Your name forever, faithful and true, Yeshua is coming*” (**Even so Come**, Chris Tomlin, ©2015).

We can learn so much from the examples of others. As we continue waiting for His return, “**Let us not grow weary in well doing...**” (**Galatians 6:9**), remembering that our ultimate goal is to glorify our Lord in all we do with faithfulness to edify the Body and become perfect in the work of the ministry. Thank you for giving to the Lord through the CARP Project, and please remember us in your prayers.

God bless you all,

Patrick & Ginger Powers

Pastors & CARP Project Coordinators

“Those who trust in the Lord are like Mt. Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.” Psalm 125:1

Central American Relief Project

WINTER 2016



A MINISTRY OF EL SHADDAI CONGREGATION



Dear Friends,

Greetings to you in the name of the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus)! We are celebrating fifteen years of CARP’s work in El Salvador. Strengthened and supported by the effectual, fervent prayers and giving of sponsors and friends here in the U.S. and abroad, and together with Pastors Francis and Zulma Batarsé and Luis and Susy Paz, we purpose to build up the **Iglesia Cristiana Cristo Centro** congregations through school sponsorship and compassionate, honest spiritual support to the flock. All of us believe the Lord is at work in the hearts and minds of these young people, and that a godly witness is valuable in their ever-widening circle of influence.

Most of our readers know that El Salvador (the Savior) currently suffers economic, political and social challenges. Students are growing up in an environment that is increasingly violent; some have experienced “toxic stress,” trauma that scars children for the remainder of their life, and affects the brain and spirit. Delinquency is high in El Salvador; ninety percent of those incarcerated (most are male) are between the ages of 19 and 36 – the most productive years of life. Indeed, “**...the needy shall not always be forgotten, and the expectation and hope of the meek and the poor shall not perish forever**” (**Psalm 9:18**). Their need is for liberty of opportunity to fulfill their God-given calling, equitable health care, equal treatment, peace, and protection under the law. Our hope is that an education and their relationship with Yeshua will provide a vehicle for a brighter, independent future, more stable families, and a more productive nation.

The families involved in our project continue to see evidence of God’s hand of provision in their life. The School Sponsorship Program was designed to meet the educational needs of the children. This year twenty-two students are participating in the School Sponsorship Program, and in 2017 we will add four more students selected by the pastors in Sonsonate and Agua Santa. To date thirty-seven have graduated from high school, nine are at the university level, and five have college degrees. A sponsored student receives tuition in a Christian school, school supplies, a monthly *canasta básica* (food staples), and vitamins. In addition, on each mission trip we rotate visits to their homes to pray with them and their family, and check on their health and academic progress.

With Pastor Francis we often reflect on the challenges and achievements of the project, and we look forward to CARP’s goal of helping *even more* students in the future. Not all students excel in every subject, but on the whole, they have inquisitive minds and a thirst for *continued...*

Fifteen-year-old Nancy Martinez (center), with her mother and her sister, is new to the CARP Project this year. She attends Sunday school, likes to watch TV, color, and do housework. Nancy will enter ninth grade in 2017 and wants to be a nurse.



University Graduates



knowledge, together with the learning experience and the discipline of study and forming good habits for an independent future. We are happy for the three who graduated from the university this year: Morena Aguilar, Gabriela Alvayero, and Marisol Alvayero, as well as the high school grads this December: Karla Sosa, Gustavo Parada, and Elías Montecinos.

We are grandparents! That's what Patrick always says about our home congregation, El Shaddai. The older members of the congregation have been faithful to model involvement and service to the Body. Now the ripple effect is touching the young adults, who have caught the vision and purpose of God for this day and are mobilized to serve. We see the same thing happening in El Salvador at Cristo Centro Congregations: The young people are taking ownership of various jobs and ministries for the effective working of God's Army at Cristo Centro.

There is a very complete book about the ministry of helps by the Rev. Dr. Buddy Bell, *The Ministry of Helps: Finding Your Place in the Body of Christ...and Thriving in it!* This subject was part of my Bible school curriculum. At the time I was studying, El Shaddai and two other congregations were collecting clothes to send to Mexico; and so I was gratified knowing that we were doing something – no matter how seemingly insignificant – to benefit the Kingdom of God! In **1 Corinthians 12:28** it says: **“And God has set some in the body, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”** The ministry of helps seems like such a small part of the overall picture, but it is essential to the smooth operation of a congregation. **Ephesians 4:11-12** puts it this way: **“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Messiah.”**

God gives pastors a vision for their congregation, and it is our calling as the saints – and as a means of perfecting us – to help fulfill it. Furthermore, it is the pastor's job to pray and hear a fresh word from God for the Body. He can't do that if he is cleaning, painting, and repairing the church (even though he may enjoy that work)! Moses (**Numbers 11:10-17**) was not able to administer and carry the heavy burden of the Israelite people. In verse 14 he says, **“I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me.”** God promised to take the Spirit that was on Moses and put it on the seventy elders so His servant wouldn't have to bear the burden alone. God provided the prophet Elijah the man Elisha to collect wood and keep the fires burning, hunt, cook and pray. After Elisha had served his master ten years, he received a double portion from the Lord. When Jesus fed the 5,000 (**Matthew 14**), His job was to pray, bless the food and thank God. The disciples' task was to distribute the bread and fish and pick up the leftovers. **Ecclesiastes 9:10** says, **“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might....”** And be faithful, as **Proverbs 28:20** says, **“A faithful man will abound with blessings”** – health, happiness, and honor in God's eyes.

Here are some of the areas in which the Iglesia Cristo Centro youth have blossomed:

HEALTH FAIRS

CARP teams began conducting health fairs at the San Salvador and Sonsonate churches in August 2013 and in Quezaltepeque in August 2014. The nursing and medical school students, along with some health professionals, have now taken the responsibility of coordinating these clinics.

Paty, Gaby, Deni, Francis, Jr., and Fátima help conduct health fairs in San Salvador, 12.15.



High School Graduates



“Happy is the man who puts his trust in the Lord.” Proverbs 16:20b

This is a valuable service, as many people have limited access to medical testing. Some don't have time off work to visit the doctor; others begin to queue up at 3 a.m. to be seen by the doctor at a clinic.



WORSHIP TEAMS

“I will give to the Lord the thanks due to His righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most High” (Psalm 7:17). With the addition of a donated trumpet, saxophone, and flute, the worship team has doubled in size. Some take lessons from professional musicians, and everyone shows up to practice on Saturday evenings. There are now two worship teams. Ever and Tatiana share the operation of the sound booth.



Far left: Carlos and Manuel practicing the sax and trumpet.

Above: Geovanny, Marisol, Francis, Jr., Erasmo and Josué.

Left: Tatiana in the sound booth.



Walter and Gustavo help keep the sanctuary swept and clean, San Salvador, 7.16.



CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CHURCH

In Dr. Bell's book, he explains the importance of keeping God's house attractive and orderly. He told the story from **2 Chronicles 9:1-3** about the Queen of Sheba who had heard of the Wisdom of Solomon and the beauty of his temple and traveled to see it because there was LIFE in it! We don't need to keep a palace, but if “cleanliness is next to godliness,” and if we want to have an atmosphere that encourages visitors to stay and hear the good news of Yeshua, then we take an interest in keeping the sanctuary, bathrooms, kitchen and classrooms tidy, the decorations fresh, the parking lot and landscaping neat.

YOUTH LEADERS

Two young couples in Sonsonate stand out in their work with youth and in the ministry of the congregation. Gilma was the first high school graduate from the CARP Program in 2005. She and her husband Adonay Herrera collaborate in Sonsonate and Agua Santa, preaching and sharing the Word of God. Her husband's brother, Néstor and his wife Isela co-labor in a Cristo Centro affiliate congregation in nearby Nahualingo, preaching and working with the children. Néstor also helps the pastor in Sonsonate with worship.



Above left: Adonay and Gilma Herrera with their daughter, Sonsonate, 7.16.

Above right: Néstor and Isela Herrera with their son, Sonsonate, 7.16.

Far left: Pastor Salomón rounds up the soccer players to pray, 4.16.



QUEZALTEPEQUE

In addition to teaching the youth group in San Salvador, Pastor Salomón teaches Bible studies and leads youth activities for the soccer team and local children in Quezaltepeque. Many of these at-risk children come from severely disintegrated homes devoid of the Spirit and wracked by hostility, but Pastor Salomón's teachings about Jesus are creative and easily understood by the youth. I was touched by the ring of friendship as they circled up to pray. The Mission Sports School ministry emphasizes loving your neighbor, fair play, sportsmanship, and non-violence.