

Presbytery of Baltimore

Guatemalan Partnership Committee

Minutes of March 19, 2003

The Guatemala Partnership Committee met in a regular meeting in the home of Peg and Bob Ferguson on March 19, 2003 at 5:30 p.m. Present: Bob Ferguson, presiding, Tom Eastman, Bill Clarke, Bonnie Clarke, Millie Kreider, recording. Excused absences: Mike Weddle and Steve Tisinger. Guests: Peg Ferguson, Linda Black. The meeting was opened with prayer and a devotional by Bob Ferguson. The agenda was adopted.

2003-2004 Guatemala Mission Trips: Steve Tisinger is willing to serve as tour leader for three trips in 2003-2004. He provided proposed dates, and the following were recommended by the Committee: October 23-October 29, 2003; February 6-February 13, 2004; Youth Trip July 10-July 16, 2004. Recommended group size for October and February trips not to exceed 20 individuals. Recommended group size for July trip not to exceed 10 individuals.

Report to March 27, 2003 Presbytery Meeting: The Committee recommends that Ken Kovacs give the report if his workload for the meeting permits it. It was suggested that the report include showing the cross which was given to the Presbytery from the Kaqchikel Presbytery, formal presentation of the signed agreement to the Interim Executive Presbyter, Ann Philbrick; dates for the Service Trips for the coming year; dates for the visit of Margarita, Josefina and Layla in June. It was also suggested that the Presbytery be informed that Steve Tisinger will serve as Tour Coordinator during the coming year. It was suggested that the Partnership Document be translated into Spanish, and a copy be provided Margarita and Josefina on their visit to the Presbytery of Baltimore.

Financial Reports: Bill Clarke distributed a financial statement for the Guatemala Partnership which was received from Judy Forrester, detailing expenses for the calendar year-to-date, and balances in accounts as of February 28, 2003. Checks in the amount of \$14,568 and \$10,835 were sent on January 13 and March 6, respectively, to cover costs of the clinic, Mayan School, sewing project, Lorena stoves, internet café and travel for the June trip. Balances in the presbytery accounts as of February 28 are clinic: \$90,485; education projects (including Mayan School and scholarships) \$18,322; economic projects, \$0.

Bob Ferguson distributed an accounting of the January 2003 Mission Trip. Expenses were covered, and a check for \$960 was returned to the Presbytery Guatemala Mission Trip Fund. Net surplus from the November 2001 trip was \$1,351.37; for the February 2002 trip the surplus was \$6,532.47 (attributed to a break on the cost of tickets); for the October 2002 the surplus was \$1,287.50, with \$569.00 retained in quetzales and \$718.50 retained in U.S. dollars.

The \$2784 cost for Margarita, Josefina and Layla's travel in June was taken from the surplus in this fund.

June trip of Margarita, Josefina and Layla: Millie Kreider distributed copies of the proposed schedule. The schedule had been received by Ronaldo, who reported via email that Margarita, Josefina and Layla reviewed it “with good eyes.” They request an opportunity for Layla to speak with youth and children about the life of Mayan children in Guatemala; also Margarita and Josefina request information on the issues they should address in their meetings. It was suggested that the meeting with women pastors focus on the lectionary, thus giving an opportunity for different perspectives on scripture. Bob Ferguson suggested an overall theme for the trip focusing on “Building the Peace.”

Educational Scholarship Program: Millie Kreider reported that with Alice McGee’s assistance, the database is set up for tracking donors and recipients for the scholarship program. The procedure is as follows: Donors send checks made out to “The Presbytery of Baltimore, memo: Guat Education” to the Presbytery Office with the form from the scholarship brochure. Judi Forrester enters the income in the account for education, and passes the brochure on to Dot Sanchez, who sends a letter to the donor, acknowledging receipt of the funds. The brochure is then mailed to Millie Kreider, who enrolls the information in the database and assigns the recipient. Unofficial tally shows \$5430 received to date for scholarships. Funds for 34 scholarships from ten churches in the presbytery have been received. The Kaqchikel Presbytery awarded 24 scholarships for the year 2003. The remaining scholarships, and new funds received for scholarships, will be applied to scholarships for the year 2004.

Sewing Project: Linda Black reported that income has been received in the amount of \$600 to cover some costs of the project. Margarita and Josefina plan to bring some of the bags with them in June. Tom Eastman will check with a Customs Lawyer to determine whether this will present any problems for them on entry to the U.S.

Committee Structure: MOTION: That the Chair of Global Mission Committee be an ex officio member of the Guatemala Partnership Committee (Bob Ferguson/Tom Eastman) Unanimous approval. It was noted that Steve Tisinger has assumed responsibility for Mission Tours from Bob Ferguson.

Website: There may be an individual at Catonsville PC who will assist in setting up an active website and perhaps be webmaster. We need to check with Ken regarding this.

The next meeting tentatively will be a Wednesday in May, at the Clarke’s home. Date to be selected with Ken Kovac’s input.

Meeting closed at 9:25 with prayer by Bob Ferguson.

Respectfully submitted,

Mildred S. Kreider, Recorder