

## **Presbytery of Baltimore**

### **Guatemalan Partnership Committee**

Minutes of November 17, 2003

The Guatemala Partnership Committee met in a regular meeting in the C-Larke Restaurant in Monkton on November 17, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. Members of the Committee and guests who were present were Linda Black, Bill Clarke, Bonnie Clarke, Tom Eastman, Ajax Eastman, Bob Ferguson, Peg Ferguson, Millie Kreider, Sally Sherrill and Steve Tisinger.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Steve Tisinger. The agenda was approved.

Reports: Guatemala Network Meeting in Louisville, September 25 – 27 Partnership participants from 12 presbyteries came together with resource people from the PC(USA) and the IENPG. Participants shared information on current activities and problems of partnerships, current status of the national church and country of Guatemala, and some ways to access information and help. This was the first of three meetings. The second meeting will be held in Guatemala with Guatemalan participants in partnerships. The third meeting will bring both groups together in Guatemala for further planning. A more detailed report of this meeting is available.

October trip to Chimaltenango. There were frank and open discussions held with our Guatemalan partners. The Baltimore delegation left with the sense that this trip further strengthened bonds in the partnership.

HDV Medical Clinic The clinic has functioned well during the past year. The “My Healthy School” program which was started by Dr. Patricia was highly successful. The sixty children of the primary school in the Labor de Falla community were given daily supplements of vitamins and a soya drink. In the first nine months of the program each child gained an average of ten pounds. In 2004, the program will be expanded to cover 300 children in Labor de Falla and two other villages.

Educational Scholarship Program: Ronaldo reports the 23 scholarship children completed the year in good form. A school family worker, Ivon, has been hired to work with the children and their families, to help children and their families understand what it means to be successful in school, and to give preventive counseling to avoid problems. The number of scholarships for the 2004 year is tripled. Members of 19 churches in the Baltimore Presbytery have participated. At the Presbytery meeting on November 20 it will be announced that scholarship funds for the 2004 year will be sent to Guatemala the first week in December, and that anyone wishing to participate this year, will need to send funds in by Thanksgiving.

Waxaqui Noj School: is virtually complete in construction. \$2000 will be applied to the new budget to install a drop ceiling and electrical lights in the three spacious classrooms.

Part of the space in the new structure is dedicated to expanded activities for Felicita, for her natural medicine program.

This year the curriculum in the school focused on understanding the political process. Students were on the UNRG ticket with Margarita. Instruction in civics and negotiation were addressed.

Lorena Stoves: Fifteen stoves were built in the village of San Jacinto this year. Installation was primarily by the women of the village, who are delighted to have stoves which do not pollute their homes and sicken their children. Seventy five additional women of the San Jacinto cooperative hope to have stoves in the future. The stoves are being made in Chimaltenango.

Gift bags: Sets of five gift bags are being sold for \$20, with \$10 being retained by the selling group. Roland Park PC will sell 40 sets, and plans to return the \$10 profit to the Guatemala Partnership Effort. Linda shared a book by Richard Fenske, Sister Parish Movement that addresses a different approach to partnership.

Website: Is up and running. We need to find ways to publicize it.

#### New Business

Anonymous grant: Bill Clarke shared a letter received from the Capital Trust Company of Delaware regarding a grant from a private foundation in the amount of \$50,000, payable to the Presbytery of Baltimore, to be applied to the mission in Guatemala as the Baltimore-Kaqchikel Partnership Committee may determine. In approximately nine months the Capital Trust Company will follow up in writing regarding the allocations. Use of these funds will be discussed at a future meeting.

Health promoters: Health promoters are selling medicines, in order to provide some income for themselves and their families. Since many medicines are being given with the understanding that they will be distributed free of cost, the GPC needs to address the problem. Sally Sherrill will research how health promoters are reimbursed in other programs. Mike Weddle has sent some resources to help us understand the situation. We need to understand so we can recommend how changes can be made. Some information by the February trip will be helpful.

Reimbursement for pastors: It has come to our attention that Josefina does not receive any reimbursement for her work in the villages. Some expenses are covered but apparently not in a timely way. An approach might be to find out how (and if) pastors are reimbursed through the IENPG. We may wish to address how pastors are or should be supported.

Personnel needs: We need to involve more people at this end. We will attempt to identify the skills needed, and look for people with those skills. An immediate need is for a skilled webmaster for the Guatemala Partnership site. A request was made to consider supporting (at least partially) travel for individuals who have already made one

Guatemalan Mission Trip. It was felt that this should be negotiated, and relate to the skills that are needed to further the work of the partnership.

February Mission Trip: Twenty individuals are scheduled to make the trip. Peter Nord , new Executive Presbyter, will be a member of the group. Scott Calkins and four members of the Presbyterian Church in East Jordan MI will be joining us. We recommend that members of other presbyteries, after they have accompanied the Baltimore Presbytery on their first trip, be encouraged to arrange their subsequent trips at other times. A motion to provide a scholarship for Steve Tisinger for the February trip was unanimously approved.

Youth Mission Trip in June: Steve Tisinger is looking for four experienced adults to serve as chaperones for this trip. Please forward names to him. The trip is scheduled for the same time as a Youth Gathering in the Kaqchikel Presbytery.

October 2004 Mission Trip: Will be October 22 to 27.

Budgets 2004: A budget for 2004 was distributed. The budget for the clinic will remain essentially the same. Money for the health promoters in 2003 will go to the “My Healthy School” program in 2004. Approximately \$5000 will go to Ivon, as a specialist in the school program. The Waxaqui Noj School budget is essentially the same.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with prayer at 9:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held in January.

Respectfully submitted,

Mildred S. Kreider, Recorder