

El Salvador Mission Update September 2020

July Mission Trip Moved to October

The El Salvador Mission Team was hopeful that even with the pandemic continuing to cancel travel and keeping everyone at home, things would improve allowing for a July trip. Unfortunately, due to CDC guidelines and all of the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 outbreak, July's trip had to be postponed. Plans are in the works for a few team members to travel the first week in October to El Salvador and work up in the northern mountainous region of Chalatenango.

The October trip will be very different from any of the past trips. To maintain the safety of the team (both the gringos and Salvadorans), medical clinics, playset builds, and VBS at area schools will be delayed until it is deemed safe. Our hope is that the February 2021 trip will allow for these. Until then, we will continue to pray that God provides the wisdom needed to serve our brothers and sisters in El Salvador.

New Church in Citalá



Since members of Calvary started serving in El Salvador back in '01, the doors to Iglesia Bautista Citalá Chalatenango were opened to welcome teams and serve as a home base. Beginning in 2005, Pastor Mejia and his family began serving as full-time missionaries in Citalá and have become like family to team members.

This past February, leadership at the church was notified that the property the church sat on which also provided a home to the Mejia's would be going up for sale, and no longer be available to rent. Since the church sits in a community where unemployment exceeds 60%, money was not available to purchase the property. A deadline of mid-June was given for eviction. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the date was pushed to July 31st.

Pastor Mejia was never concerned. He and his wife, Silvia, knew that God would come through...and He did! In mid-July, a businessman offered property to the church at a discounted rate because he appreciated the work the church was doing in the community. A loan secured the property. The church's movable steel support structure, which Calvary's team helped construct in July 2019 and complete in January 2020, was disassembled and raised on the new property. Thanks to a donation which was presented this past January for a new wall (which had not been started) concrete for the beams and roofing material were purchased. Everything has begun falling into place for the new church and it's no coincidence.

Pastor Mejia and Silva are now living in a home they have rented from a church member. It is big enough to store their personal items as well as the team's eight duffel bags of medical supplies, medications, playset materials and tools which are left in El Salvador after each trip. Again, God continues to provide!

October's trip will be used to fund a construction project for the new church and provide some needed hands. In addition, a children's ministry will be held each morning in the plaza where children will be allowed to gather for Bible stories, arts & crafts, songs, and games. All precautions will be taken to ensure social distancing and prescribed hygiene is followed.

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Calvary's Team Provides Medical Scholarship

Salvadoran team members become like family to many of Calvary's team members. The youth that assist in January and July are students attending a local university. Some receive funding from family members in the States and some have parents that work extra jobs to help fund their education. There are many students who attend a semester, take off and work a semester, and then repeat the cycle until they receive a degree.

For the past three years, our medical team has been assisted by Dr. Rebecca. She is a medical student at the national university. On some days, she would see as many as 125 patients before quitting. Her father lives in the United States and has been providing support for her family in El Salvador as well as for Rebecca's education. Unfortunately, the support stopped earlier in January of this year. During January's trip, a friend of Rebecca's shared with the team that she would be dropping out of medical school for a semester to work so that she could pay her semester fee and monthly assessment. All that was left for her to complete were two semesters of clinicals and her year of service. El Salvador requires all graduated doctors to serve the country in a medical capacity for 12 months before receiving their diploma.



Thanks to Calvary's team members, Dr. Rebecca is finishing up her last semester of clinicals and

will be ready to begin her year of service in January.

Salvadoran Team Members Help with Food Distribution

Many areas in El Salvador have always been in need of food and clean water. These needs have become more critical after the country shut down in March due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Although the government assisted with a \$300 stimulus for residents who are registered, it didn't go very far for those who were placed under a 90 day house quarantine. Businesses and public transportation are just now re-opening.

Thanks to a donation from the Outreach Ministry, our Salvadoran team working with Christ for the City will be distributing food and water in several communities. They will be handing out a week's worth of food until they run out. One of the young ladies assisting with this project thanked Calvary and said, "It is because of the example the team has set year after year that we too serve."

Thank you, Outreach and Calvary, for your support of the El Salvador Mission.

Prayers for El Salvador -

- ~ Good health & safety for all Salvadorans, including guidance for the government to protect its people through the pandemic
- ~ For Dr. Rebecca, that she finishes strong with medical school and God guide her coming year of service
- ~ That God provide willing hands to help with the church construction in Citalá and funds to supply construction materials as well as the purchase of the new property.
- ~ That God bless the ongoing ministry through Pastor Mejia and his family to grow the Kingdom