

VIM EL SALVADOR

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San Salvador

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New Direction in Ministry

The ordination to the diaconate of Mario Núñez in November marked an era of new possibility in the Diocese of El Salvador.

Núñez has long served as lay minister in the Church of San Pedro y San Pablo, and heads an active team of lay evangelists and ministers working in the area.

The ordination extends the active diocesan evangelists program begun two years ago. Local lay leaders receive encouragement and support to move into new levels of ministry. Of 12 trained evangelists, four have moved into the advanced theological programme. (CAETS)

Mario's mother, Mercedes, took a lead role as lay member to educate the children of the community and found the Church in this refugee hamlet about 30 years ago.



Partners in Mission

A reflexion by Ed Schmitt



People of all ages worship

Living in partnership with our brothers and sisters in the Church of El Salvador has been a vital experience for both of us. As Volunteers-in-Mission we have been afforded a hospitality that comes in recognising Christ in one another.

Many aspects of the life and experience of the Church in El Salvador is remarkably different than our previous life in the Church in Canada. The economic and civil-political situation seems alien. Yet, the basic human strivings reveal the presence of the same Spirit.

As we entered more deeply into the hopes of our companions, we were struck by the connexion between our privileged situation and the constantly present struggles of living in a country where even the most basic health and educational services are simply not available.

By our Christian fellowship we are awed by our mutual inter-dependance in Christ

Gracias a todos

Schmitts return to Canada

Giving thanks is an ongoing process in Christian living. However, the need for this gratitude comes in sharper focus at times of change. We are now completing our commitment to our partner church in El Salvador and our church in Canada. In this work we have experienced an aspect of the reality of Christ's Body in differing forms and cultures.

Thank you to our brothers and sisters here in El Salvador. You have been witnesses to the joy of Christ in your personal lives and the life of the community. Yes, we are aware that, for many in the church here, life is difficult. At the same time, thanks for allowing us to walk with you in this brief time.

Special thanks to Bishop Martín Barahona, to the parishes that received us in love, and to all leaders and people in all the programmes in which we have worked.

We are grateful for the receiving church, the Diocese of El Salvador, for the patience and support that the people have offered us in our three years here, and for their sharing with us their ministry in a tragic time of devastating earthquakes, continued social disruption and violence. This has been an experience in which we see that there are no easy answers. But, the Church continues to witness to the love of Christ made known in sharing with others in a

Gracias continue pg. 2

Update on El Salvador

Santísima Trinidad

Completion of the building

continues, the patio garden, the sacristy, a protective wall above the church, cabinets for the kitchen, additional storage space, and a ceiling for the upper floor.

Visual Health Project

Clinics continue on a monthly basis to provide eye examinations and inexpensive glasses. Isabel Claros has graduated from high school and is prepared to start the training in January at the National University to oversee the project in San Martín.

Women's sewing co-operative

At this time the number of women does not meet the legal requirements to form a co-operative; however, with one machine and some training it is possible for some individual women to develop micro-businesses. The continuation of this project will be in the hands of the future incumbent of the parish.

Children's and Youth

Programme continued with the traditional Summer Bible School that takes place each year during December. Members of the youth group, helped by Evangelist Flor de María, put on a great programme for 25 children. The program finished with a grand drama Monday, 21 December.

San Pedro y San Pablo

Farewell Event at Playa del Oro

Cuilapa is located about 2 kilometres from a lovely stretch of beach. The people in the parish, being locals, have access to an almost unoccupied open beach near the Church.

As a farewell party members of the parish hired a large truck and went down to the beach to play fútbol, bathe in the warm Pacific waters and share a picnic.

This little celebration gave Ed and Kay a chance to say goodbye in a fine setting while the young people were enjoying themselves.

¡Adiós!



Compañeros

Gracias continued from page 1

Jubilee vision that finds ways to serve even when the resources are limited.

We return changed by our interaction with our brothers and sisters in celebrating the joys and struggles of life in Christ.

CAETS

Final Session 2003

Kay and Ed were able to participate in the final residential session of CAETS, (The Anglican Advanced Theological Education Programme), in November. This programme serves the Province of the Centre of America. (The Anglican Church from Panama to Guatemala.

This first year of the new class marked a new approach in education which employs the teaching expertise of our ecumenical partners in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of El Salvador.

The Sound of Music

The varied squeaking of plastic flutes reminded Kay of Grade 5 (beginning) band, but music class students quickly gained breath control. Soon all were tooting along in the same register and gaining skill in fingering.

The use of flutes will aid students to learn and teach music in their churches - without having to rely on their own sense of pitch.

A Publication of Ed and Kay Schmitt

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