



## **ATONEMENT NEWS**

### **WHY A SPRING MISSION TRIP TO GUATEMALA?**

In 1996, after 36 year of civil war, the 1996 peace accord was signed in Guatemala. The trauma and loss in terms of human lives lost and the consequences of two generations without schooling has left Guatemala with many significant challenges. Think of the devastating consequences of our own four year civil war and multiply that by 9 (!) and you begin to grasp the enormity of healing that has yet to happen. There are many groups of Americans who generously give of their time and resources to assist this very poor country to meet the basic needs of the citizens of Guatemala. The Mayan indigenous people were particularly victimized during the civil war. They were pushed off of the fertile soil in the valleys to the steep mountain slopes where the soil yields meagerly results, where fresh water is scarce and where the cooler temperature creates much misery. The ecological consequences are that more trees are cut down on the steep slopes for firewood for warmth and cooking, shaping the conditions for dangerous mudslides when the rains are heavy.

On March 6, a diverse group of local citizens will depart for Guatemala and join with Mission Impact ([www.missionimpact.com](http://www.missionimpact.com)) for a week of service projects. Mission Impact is a faith based organization providing the structure for volunteers to use their skills in service of the Guatemalan people. The group will travel with personal belongings in carry-on bags so that each participant can check two 50-pound trunks full of medical and school supplies. Staying each night in Antigua, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the group will venture forth each day transported by Mission Impact staff to different Mayan villages to build stoves, dispense water filters and conduct literacy and hygiene projects in schools. Antigua was founded in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, 1500 meters above sea level in an earthquake prone area and was largely destroyed by an earthquake in 1773. The many preserved ruins add a charming ambience to the city.

Some of the group will build stoves in the rural Mayan village of Santa Maria de Jesus under the direction of Margarito Vasquez who founded Appropriate Technology, a division of Mission Impact. His mission is to focus on building fuel-efficient wood burning stoves. Traditionally, Mayan families cook their

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**Ann Pride**  
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**Helen Ailabouni**  
Director - Worship and Music

**Pam Loden**  
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## THE MESSAGE

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meals over an open fire within the confines of their unventilated dwelling. These fires require enormous quantities of wood that must be gathered by the children. In the quest for firewood, the mountain slopes are denuded of trees creating treacherous conditions where devastating mud slides can bury whole villages during a heavy rain. The pollution caused by the trapped smoke in the dwelling is toxic to the whole family, leading to respiratory diseases, burns and blindness. The fuel-efficient stoves improve health, free children from labor to attend school and allow more trees to stand on the slopes and prevent mudslides. A single stove makes an enormous impact on the health and well being of a family. Our goal is to build four stoves at a cost of \$100 each.

Barrington Breakfast Rotary Club has generously designated funds to bring water filters to the 150 families (over 1,000 people) that reside at the dump in Sumpango. Dr. Oscar Peredes, a Mayan physician who works to bring social and physical healing to his community, will help us dispense the filters and educate villagers on their proper use and care. Water-borne diseases take a huge toll on the health of the village. Chronic diarrhea prevents children from attending school and adults from their daily work.

Another focus will be literacy activities with the girls attending Proximos Pasos, a Christian Primary School in Santa Maria de Jesus. These are girls who cannot attend public schools because they did not enroll at the appropriate age of 5, either because they

were working gathering firewood or because, in a society where 75% of the population lives in poverty, educating girls is not a cultural priority. The school is four years old and has 100 students.

We will also do projects at Vida y Esperanza, a Christian school of 250 students in the village of Santa Lucia and Nueva Vida, a school for special needs children in Santa Maria de Jesus.

You can support this endeavor with donations of personal hygiene products including soap, lotion, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes and band aids. School supplies such as spiral notebooks, construction paper, pencils and pens are also needed. In addition, monetary donations to fund the cost of building four stoves would be very much appreciated.

Please remember us in your prayers during this week in March. Thank you!

- Mark & Suzanne Gibson





**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**The next Atonement  
Progressive Dinner  
will be held on  
Saturday, May 1.**  
**Watch for more information  
in the next issue of  
The Message!**

### **MANAGING YOUR MEDICATIONS**

The next meeting of the Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital's Senior Breakfast Club will be held on Wednesday, February 24 from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Learn about medication safety. Mary Pubentz, Pharm.D of Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, will discuss what you should know about your medicines, where to store them, how to dispose of them, and much more. Register by calling (800) 323-8622.

### **STEPHEN CORNER**

The Lutheran Church of the Atonement has a lay ministry – The Stephen Ministry. A Stephen Minister is one who has an open, loving, caring heart. One who believes that hurts are to be healed. An open ear to listen with love. A companion on a painful walk. One who believes God's love is all encompassing. While we care - - God cures. For more information or a Stephen Minister, please call Sue Hitchcock at (847) 381-8252 or Liz Fjortoft at (847) 658-7024.

### **NEWS FROM THE ATONEMENT CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL**

Registration for the 2010/2011 school year is underway at Atonement Christian Day School. We are so excited that many of our families will be joining us again. We still have limited availability in all our part- and full-day classes.

ACDS hosted their annual Dad's Day on Saturday, January 30. The children of ACDS and that special guy in their lives had fun as they played their way down the Midway. We had carnival games, a blind-folded obstacle course, face painting and spin art for the children and their Dads.

February will be the start of the Lent season. All classes will have a special Valentine's Day party.

We are looking forward to a good month sharing the love of God with each other and our families.

