

Summary of Grace Presbyterian Church Activities in Honduras 2000-2021

Grace Presbyterian Church has been sending mission teams to Honduras since 2000.

During the 18 years of sending mission teams into the Agalta valley, we have adopted seven different villages and have sent over 270 missionaries from the USA. We have worked with over 5000 villagers and provided Sunday school lessons and hygiene kits to over 1300 children. We helped provide water to several villages, built a large, beautiful church, helped build a medical clinic, built a preschool, built hundreds of concrete floors and latrines. The construction projects were not the most important things that we did. We brought hope and love to a third world country that desperately needed help.

From the beginning, the villagers in large numbers provided most of the work. All members of the Honduran family are actively involved in helping complete the tasks, and it is extremely exciting to see the enthusiasm of the whole family working as a team and also helping other families finish their projects. This was quite different from the first trip to the village where many of the villagers would stand around and watch. Later the villagers took the lead in building a house for their family. A true transformation of the village was accomplished with the help of the Holy Spirit. With God's help for our Mission Team's nurturing as Disciples of Christ, the village was transformed, in a noticeably short time, into teammates working together to improve their own lives. I cannot think of any better way to spend my time than sharing God's love and peace for mankind.

Sue Church, Executive Director of HOI, put it all so succinctly when she described the transformation as follows:

At first, the villagers observed that we loved each other for no apparent reason.

Then the villagers observed that we loved them for no apparent reason.

Then the villages observed that they loved us for no apparent reason.

And at last, the villagers found that they loved each other for no apparent reason.

The Honduras Mission at Grace Presbyterian Church 2000-Present

In 1987, the World Outreach Foundation was approached with a unique request: a church group who had taken summer mission trips to Central America wanted to purchase a working ranch in rural Honduras. They hoped to use Rancho el Paraíso (Paradise Ranch) to establish a mission outpost for visiting North Americans to connect with Hondurans, pursue better healthcare, and assist in faith initiatives.

The World Outreach Foundation decided to fund the project, and a year later a small group of American executives affiliated with the World Outreach Foundation embarked on a journey to visit the “little Christian mission” in the rural Agalta Valley. Despite the many difficulties of their trip, the visitors knew the Holy Spirit was moving them to address the overwhelming poverty they had witnessed. As the vision grew, Honduras Outreach, Inc., was established as a faith-based, nondenominational 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for the people of Honduras.

Over the years HOI has established several strategic partnerships with like-minded people and organizations which have helped them promote their mission and achieve their goals.



In the late 1990s, Pastor Jay Click of the Grace Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Virginia, came to the Mission Elder, Nelson Thurman, and asked the mission committee to look into the possibility of going on an international mission. In late 1999, members of the Grace Presbyterian Church started researching the possibility of going on an international mission. One of the members knew a contact in Atlanta, Georgia, who was connected to Honduras Outreach Incorporated (HOI). HOI is a Christ-centered mission organization working alongside people of developing countries who desire to implement sustainable development partnerships. In 1999 they organized trips to Honduras. HOI's vision is to create life-changing relationships between the people of developing countries and North Americans while promoting community directed and integrated spiritual, physical, educational and economic

development of men, women, and children in the developing world through the promotion of dignity, cooperation, and self-sufficiency.

In 2000, Grace Presbyterian Church became a partner of HOI. A small group of 10 from the Grace Presbyterian Church ventured into Honduras to explore adopting a model village. The HOI model village program supports a selected village by helping missionary teams from the United States travel to the adopted village in Honduras so improvements to the village can be achieved. The model village program's goal is to equip each dwelling in the village with a concrete floor, a chimney, a latrine, and additional rooms and roofs as needed. Some villages ask for additional support to help build a school and church.

Grace Church, through the leadership of Charlie and Conoly Barker and Jerry and Jeannie Patee, decided in 2000 to review a Honduran village through the HOI model village program. The following year in 2001 the village of El Quebrachal (Pronounced: El Kay-bruh-shal) San Esteban (SE) was formally adopted by Grace Church. The SE is placed at the back of the village name to identify this village since there are other villages named El Quebrachal in Honduras. In 2001, our driver made a left out of the ranch; he should have made a right. After about 20 minutes, he was contacted via his radio that he was going the wrong way. It was discovered that he was traveling to another El Quebrachal village and not to El Quebrachal SE.

In 2001, the Grace Presbyterian Church committed to the three-year model village program for El Quebrachal SE, which was solely sponsored by Grace Church through HOI. Additional support was given to HOI through the Scholarship Program and through special donations to help HOI continue to fund the ranch facilities in Honduras. The Scholarship Program provides monetary support to talented and needy middle school and high school children in the HOI support area of Honduras. Grace Presbyterian Church initially sponsored ten scholarship students. The government of Honduras provides education for students in villages through the 6th grade. HOI decided that if they had the funding, they could provide additional education through middle school and high school. Many villagers' children, through the support from partners like Grace Church, have been provided a high school education that they would normally not receive. This allows some of these children to ultimately attend college.

Where is Honduras?

Located in the continent of North America, Honduras covers 111,890 square kilometers of land and 200 square kilometers of water, making it the 103rd largest nation in the world with a total area of 112,090 square kilometers.

Honduras became an independent state in 1838, gaining its sovereignty from Spain. The population of Honduras is 8,296,693 (2012), and the nation has a density of 74 people per square kilometer. The currency of Honduras is the Lempira (HNL). As well, the people of Honduras are referred to as Honduran. Honduras shares land borders with three countries: Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. See maps below.

Our trip to the Ranch in 2001 begins with a flight into Tegucigalpa, the capitol of Honduras. Once in Tegucigalpa, we take a bus to Juticalpa to spend the night. (See the third map below. In the middle of the map is Olancho, and Juticalpa is in Olancho. Olancho is the largest of all the 18 departments into which Honduras is divided. Juticalpa is the capital of Olancho Department in Honduras, which is situated in a broad river valley alongside the Rio Juticalpa. On the next morning, we travel to the Ranch.





We travel to the Agalta Valley of Olancho Honduras shown below.



Expected Itinerary

Day 1 (Saturday). Fly to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, via Miami or other airports; The team spends the night in Juticalpa.

Day 2 (Sunday). The team completes the journey to the Ranch located in the Agalta Valley, arriving mid-day.

Days 3-5 (Monday-Wednesday). After breakfast at the Ranch, the team and their Ranch liaison travel to the village. The group is broken up into work teams and paired with villagers to work on specific projects, with a break at noon for a hot meal.

Day 6 (Thursday). On the last day in the village, there is a farewell party (Fiesta) hosted by the Ranch and the team.

Day 7 (Friday). The team packs up and heads back to Tegucigalpa for a luxurious last night, arriving in time for a hot shower, some shopping, and a farewell dinner.

Day 8 (Saturday). Fly from Tegucigalpa, Honduras, through Miami or some other airport to DCA.

Villages Adopted by Grace Presbyterian Church

The following villages were adopted by Grace Presbyterian Church from 2000 to 2017

1. El Quebrachal SE in 2000, Review for Model Village.
2. El Quebrachal SE in 2001, Adopted as Model Village
3. El Quebrachal SE in 2002, Model Village Program
4. El Quebrachal SE in 2003, Model Village Program
5. Corral Viego Barrio El Sauce in 2004, Adopted Model Village
6. Corral Viego Barrio El Sauce in 2005, Model Village Program
7. Corral Viego Barrio El Sauce in 2006, Model Village Program
8. In 2007, Team did not go because of Truck Accident
9. El Quebrachal SE in 2008, Model Village Program
10. El Quebrachal SE in 2009, Model Village Program
11. Rio Chiquito SE in 2010, Adopted Model Village
12. Rio Chiquito SE in 2011, Model Village Program
13. El Tunal in 2012, Adopted Model Village

14. El Tunal in 2013, Model Village Program
15. El Tunal in 2014, Model Village Program
16. La Floresta Village in 2015 (we no longer adopted villages)
17. Ocotal De Dos Rios SE Village in 2016
18. Portillo Coyolito Village in 2017
19. El Pedrero SE Village in 2018
20. El Pedrero SE Village in 2019
21. HOI Partnership Intro with trips to Northern and Southern Honduras
22. Mission trip to Southern Honduras

Nelson Latona related the following about his trips to Honduras: "I have many fond memories of Honduras over the last thirteen years. I can go on for many hours, but I know I would put you to sleep. I began going to Honduras to help the people of Honduras. I have learned over the years that God was working on me to be a better, wiser, compassionate Christian. God is still training me to be a better Christian. With my age and experience, God has revealed to me many of his beautiful and thoughtful plans. I thought that I had a better plan, but God has outdone this for me many times over the years. I will only discuss two Honduras experiences." "God had talked to me many times when I was in Honduras. God has talked to me by the people that are around me and at times directly. The direct interaction with God is very emotional and is something that you will never forget. One night in Honduras, I asked God to give me guidance on what he wanted me to do after Honduras. God's message to me was direct and clear."

The Honduras Mission has been an inspiration to Grace Presbyterian Church and many others who were associated with us. Seventeen mission teams composed of 296 missionaries ventured into the Agalta valley of Honduras from 2000 to 2017. These teams provided building assistance to many villages including support in the schools.

2019 marked the 20th Anniversary of Grace's partnership with HOI (Honduras Outreach International) doing God's work in Honduras. Over these 20 years, Grace Church has...

- Adopted 8 different villages in the Agalta Valley of Honduras to construct cement floors, latrines, pilas, stoves, and tin roofs for their homes.
- Built 1 large church where the village families of El Quebrachal can meet to worship God in their church, just like we do at Grace!
- Built 1 medical clinic in a village and provided medications, bandages, vitamins, and medical equipment to the Agalta Valley region.
- Built 1 Kindergarten and painted over 7 other schools, and encouraged children to stay in school, as the average Honduran has a 3rd grade education level.

- Provided 1 water project to bring fresh clean drinking water to a community instead of them having to drink dirty water from their river.
- Sponsored 79 Honduran high school students with 185 years of education through the HOI scholarship program at Grace, since few villages in the Agalta Valley have a high school.
- Sent 236 Grace Mission team members on 19 annual week-long mission trips, including 90 Members of Grace Church and 146 friends and family of Grace, to spread God's love.
- Taught over 1,300 Honduran children about Christ's good news through Vacation Bible School lessons, and brought them school supplies and hygiene kits of toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, and combs for improvement of their health.
- Built relationships of love and compassion with over 5,000 Hondurans working side by side, hand in hand on their projects and in their communities.
- And God has transformed a Countless number of lives of the Grace mission team members, our church, and all the Honduran families by his grace, as we saw the face of God and experienced joy in the encounters.

The Honduras Mission is actually more than just the Mission trip that we take every year. There are 4 major components of Grace's Honduras Mission:

1. **The On-site Mission to Honduras.** This mission sends a group from Grace once a year to help villages be more self-reliant.
2. **Grace provides the support of Honduras Children through the scholarship program** that Judy Riekse manages. We have supported students through HOI for the last 19 years. We are supporting 9 students this year. We have supported up to 21 students at one time.

For over two decades, parents and students alike have chosen to pursue their education with HOI. Through kindergarten, elementary school, and middle school, HOI educates nearly 415 students from over 30 villages across the Agalta Valley. The HOI kindergarten program has created 44 classrooms, which have provided education to over 900 students! For less than \$2 a day, you give hope and opportunity to the life of a child. Grace's support helps pay the tuition of a student, provide them with scholarship opportunities to attend HOI partner high schools, and pay for all their school supplies

3. **The support of Pastor Selvin Elvir, Director Spiritual Development Program, at Rancho El Paraiso/Olancho.** We have supported Pastor Selvin for the last four years. He provides pastoral services to all of the villages in the Honduras Outreach Sphere of Influence.

The goal of the Spiritual Development Program is to bring the Gospel to every family by expanding the kingdom. HOI Spiritual Development works in 3 ways:

Missionary Work

Mission teams travel to communities to pray with families or individuals requesting

prayer, give children vacation bible school classes and worship with HOI staff during the week.

Marriage and Family Therapy

HOI's Marriage and Family Therapy Ministry is designed to decrease family problems and bless marriages in Christ. HOI equips local pastors with the knowledge needed to provide counseling to families within their congregations. Pastor and Spiritual Development Director, Selvin Elvir, along with these trained pastors work to strengthen families and marriages through workshops and counseling. Since its creation in 2016, our marriage ministry has touched 3,500 lives! HOI also disseminates a marriage and family radio talk which reaches many more communities unable to attend in-person sessions.

Young Life

With young men and women normally completing their public education at the end of sixth grade, there is a shortage of employment and community involvement for young people. Our desire is to provide biblical leadership and instill Christian values in young men and women in order for them to become leaders in their villages and country.

Through partnership with Young Life, HOI has transformed the lives of 200 vulnerable teens!

4. **Grace provides financial support to Clementina's Kitchen**, which provides year-round support to children in Honduras

"I saw children faint from hunger and I started to help them,"

-- Clementina Martinez

Clementina Martinez Lizardo is 84 years old and almost half of her life has been dedicated to feeding children from poor families in their place of residence in Cane, La Paz . With her soft, breathy voice, Clementina reveals how she decided to start her work. "I was a first grade teacher and several times looked at children collapsed suddenly and did not know what was happening. I started to ask what was going on and ended up discovering it was because there were days without food came because their families could not afford. I saw children faint from hunger and then decided to help them and that it never happened."

Clementina says she has been exactly 41 years doing this work and never thought to stop.

Special Activities We Do for the Village

One of our teams spends the morning in the elementary school (grades 1 through 6) and provides Bible school lessons, crafts, and English lessons. During the first morning at the elementary school, hygiene kits are distributed to all the students. The other teams help the villagers mix cement and construct cinder block walls for the latrine holes.

In recent years, we have been providing eyeglasses to the village.

Last year we provided a nurturing parenting program to the villagers.

OUR MORNING HYGIENE PROGRAM

One of the greatest lessons we can pass on to our Honduran friends is improved hygiene and its resultant improved health. We put a lot of effort into training in the communities on this subject. Teaching daily hygiene routines to children is not a family custom in the Honduran area of influence. To that end, we have developed and implemented a Morning Hygiene Program in the village schools.

This is a simple, fun program that can have long lasting effects. Many of our schools have already participated, but many have not. Even if a community has participated, it is good to review the program yearly and what better time to do that than when the mission team is in there to work!

Things for the hygiene kit are collected before the trip. Hygiene kits can be made up before you start work in the village. Collecting the items needed is a good way to involve your entire church, especially the children, in the mission team effort. To include the Sunday school children in this activity, we have an annual hygiene kit build as part of our Sunday school class. This activity can make the mission trip “come alive.” While the team members may be the ones handing out the packets, the whole church, is, in reality, in mission. We buy items listed below at Dollar Tree and bring them to class so the Sunday School children can construct the hygiene kits for the Honduran children. During the class, we show them where Honduras is and what a village and school looks like. We tell them what we do with each part of the hygiene kit contents. For example, in Honduras, we put a clothesline across the Honduran school room and use the cloths pin to hang the hygiene kit so the Honduran students can see the contents through the zip locked bag every morning when they come to school. Every morning in Honduras, we take the toothbrush and paste out of the bag and show them how to properly brush their teeth as each student in the Honduran school follows along. We show them how to comb their hair and how to use the soap to keep clear.

Each hygiene kit consists of a one-gallon, heavy duty zip-lock freezer bag which holds

- a one-quart heavy duty zip-lock freezer bag.
- a bath-sized bar of soap with the wrapper removed.
- a wooden, not plastic, clothespin.
- a child-sized toothbrush.

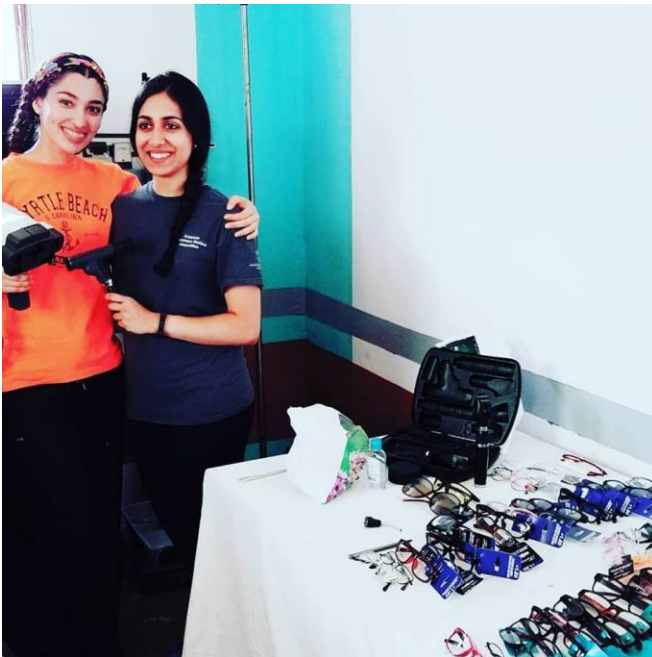
- a 4.6 oz. tube of toothpaste removed from the box. Please don't send a larger tube as it makes the packet too heavy. We will replenish the toothpaste as needed.
- a 7-9 oz. sturdy plastic cup. Please make sure the cup will not crack or break too easily and that the cup meets the size requirements so that it fits into the plastic bag.
- A comb without a pointed handle for a child.

For every 25 hygiene kits, we include one clothesline and permanent marker. The teacher will hang the clothesline at the Honduran school and suspend each child's packet using the clothespin. The marking pen will be used to write each child's name on the respective packet.

OUR EYEGLASS PROGRAM

"The most memorable part of working at Portillo Coyolito was seeing Audelia and Sofia provide the villagers with eye exams and eyeglasses. Sofia is an eye doctor and Audelia is a certified technician. Access to healthcare and doctors is extremely limited in Honduras, but eye doctors are even scarcer. Your vision is not an immediate life-threatening issue, so the villagers have to live with their vision problems. They are not able to afford an eye exam or eyeglasses. There are no words that can describe the moment when Audelia and Sofia would give the villagers eyeglasses and their faces would light up with happiness. Some would smile really big, and others would just look around surprised, like they were seeing the world for the first time."

"It was truly a blessing to have Sofia and Audelia carrying out this mission."



THE INITIAL HONDURAS PARENTING PROGRAM

In 2019, the Grace Mission Team provided a Parenting program to the El Pedrero SE village, which is about 85 kilometers from the ranch. The population of the village is 540 with 120 families. We were asked by Pastor Selvin of the HOI Ranch to provide a two-day parenting program to the village adult population. So we decided to do a two day seminar (Tuesday and Wednesday starting at 1 PM) on parenting. The first day was Tuesday. We set up tables and chairs out by a large shade tree in front of the school. At 1 PM, only one woman had arrived, so I thought we were going to have a limited audience. I have a limited Spanish vocabulary, so I had an interpreter with me. As time went on, more people started coming in. One lady said we should have told everyone 12:30 PM as a start time and then they would arrive by 1 PM. By 1:30 PM, we had more than 40 villagers at our gathering. I knew then that the village was interested in parenting. We broke down the two days of classes as follows:

Day 1 (Tuesday)

1. Getting comfortable with the class (called the" ice breaker" in the US)
2. The primary lessons

Communication

Empathy – what does your family member want?

Different ages of child development

3. A craft

The craft was easy to do and something that they could take home with them to reinforce the lesson being taught.

Day 2 (Wednesday)

1. Getting comfortable with the class (called the" ice breaker" in the US)
2. The primary lessons

Knowing the needs of your family members (about 15 minutes)

Understanding our feelings (about 15 minutes)

Establishing self-esteem in yourself and others (about 15 minutes)

Taking care of yourself and others (about 15 minutes)

3. A craft

The craft was easy to do and something that they could take home with them to reinforce the lessons being taught.

Testimonies

Coretta Ross said the following about the trip:

"I have loved reading about other cultures since I was a little girl. Sitting on the floor of our family kitchen and reading about people who lived all over the globe instilled in me a respect for diversity and a burning desire to be an advocate for those underserved.

I know now no matter what age, circumstance, or level of spiritual maturity one can always grow. As I have grown in peace with God, I have grown in the joys of loving others, waiting on God with hope, and trusting him fully. Whether one is just beginning a relationship with Jesus or been a follower of Jesus for a long while, many of us have a hard time translating the truths we believe in our mind to the reality of our everyday life. Given my tendency to wander away from God, I need both encouragement and tools to keep the gospel at the center of my actions.

God is doing incredible work through me. My first mission trip to Honduras with Grace's support truly represented a time and a place where God worked in and through my life. More than a mere trip, it anchored my faith and propelled me forward in my relationship with God. The importance of evangelism has been minimized. My experience energy, authenticity, fresh perspective, and passion will be a vibrant addition to the church in sharing the gospel."

Marvella Lewis said the following about the Honduras Mission trip:

"I want to go on this trip so that I may show God's love for one another through physical contact. I want my neighbors in another country separate from my own to see that God's love exceeds cultural differences, country boundaries, language barriers, and physical abilities. This is only possible for me when I am a part of a mission team that is working together and traveling together.

The power of the Holy Spirit lives in my heart and strengthens my faith with each breath that I breathe and every moment that I awake from sleep. Just thanking God with the ability to enjoy his works on this earth, such as seeing the beauty in nature and the different types of animals, plants and people, makes me appreciate him. Getting to know different people and their walk of faith and how they came to know God and his love shows the ministry of God's love and how not everyone has an easy or rough path to Heaven but that we will be together in the end if they accept him. The power of the Holy Spirit lives when I hear my children laugh and when I see the love and support my family and friends provide to each other using God's word as a basis for our joy and healing."

Sofia Ahmad said the following about the Honduras Mission trip:

"Last year's mission trip has made a lasting impact on my heart and mind. We take so many things for granted here. I saw how little some people have there, but they seem to make so much out of it. It is truly an eye-opening experience. I want to help make a difference in someone's life, no matter how big or small--whether it's helping them build a latrine to giving someone a pair of reading glasses. I am so thankful for everything I have and I want to give back to the world.

During the mission trip last year, I went on the home visits and I saw how, even in such tough times, they still kept their faith strong in their hearts. After witnessing this, I realized that any of my difficult times were no comparison to what some of the people of Honduras face on a daily basis. Their strong faith keeps them going, and I know I can always turn to God to give me the strength to move past the difficulties. I now find myself turning to God more, even during grateful times because I am so thankful for all of the blessings in my life, and I know many people do not have nearly as much but they keep their faith strong."

Eva Turcios said the following about the Honduras Mission trip:

"I think this is an important verse in the Bible because it reminds me that the Holy Spirit lives in me. Sometimes I forget to take the time to pray and make time for God, but when I go to Honduras, I feel closer to Him. The Honduras Mission reminds me to stay humble in life and serve others and God."

"The most memorable part of working at Portillo Coyolito was seeing Audelia and Sofia provide the villagers with eye exams and eyeglasses. Sofia is an eye doctor and Audelia is a certified technician. Access to healthcare and doctors is very limited in Honduras, but eye doctors are even scarcer. Your vision is not an immediate life-threatening issue, so the villagers have to live with their vision problems. They are not able to afford an eye exam or eyeglasses. There are no words that can describe the moment when Audelia and Sofia would give the villagers eyeglasses and their faces would light up with happiness. Some would smile really big, and others would just look around surprised, like they were seeing the world for the first time. It was truly a blessing to have Sofia and Audelia carrying out this mission."

Flannery Collins said the following about the Honduras Mission trip:

"The past three summers have been absolutely life changing for me. I was introduced to Joe and Greta Miller and some of the other missionaries for the first time in the Summer of 2015, when I attended an information meeting about the trip. At first, I had reservations about traveling to rural Central America, which I knew to be one of the poorest places on this side of the world. But very soon, I would learn that God had put me exactly where I was supposed to be.

My three mission trips in Honduras have been the most humbling experiences of my entire life. Each trip has been vastly different and unique, but all three have been amazing. Before I had gone on a mission trip, I had the mindset that I was giving up a week of my

summer so that I could go. Now I realize that my "sacrifice" of giving up a week of my summer is nothing compared to the sacrifices that people make during everyday life in Honduras. Some of the things that I have seen there have made me understand how fortunate I am to live in the United States. I never realized how many things I was taking for granted. The fact that I have running water and floors in my house, not to mention job opportunities and access to healthcare, are things that I thought that I was entitled to. You really realize how much of a privilege those things are when you are helping a family build a cement floor in their 1-room house.

The community members of the villages that we visited have honestly given me more than I could have possibly given them. Even though I give the construction projects 100 percent of my physical effort while I am there, this could never compare to the kindness and love that the Honduran people have shown me. Our mission teams have been embraced with open arms and hearts. The villagers love us simply because we are there to help, and the members of our teams always return this love as much as we possibly can. Greta Miller has truly shown me what it means to "love thy neighbor". She treats every Honduran person like they are her own child. She is the perfect example of how all of us should treat other human beings."



Join HOI for a fun night of reflection,
celebration of partnership, and
mission service with the people of
Central America.

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

The Hellenic Center
2500 Clairmont Road
Atlanta, GA 30329

Silent Auction & Reception: 6 p.m.
Program Begins: 7:30 p.m.

To purchase tickets or participate in the silent auction,
please visit:

www.hoi.org

You do not have to be present to bid.
Limited seating available



With Guest Speaker:

Tim Tebow

On October 23, 2019, Greta and I traveled to Atlanta Georgia, to celebrate Honduras Outreach Inc (HOI) 30th anniversary gala event. We meet many of our old friends and made a few new ones. It was nice seeing Sue Church again. Tim Tebow provided a very nice speech and the food was great. The wine was free and plentiful.

We spent the night at the Hamilton Inn, about 20 miles away from the Hellenic Center. Becky Rhoades suggested that we stayed there because some of the other HOI staff people were staying there. We got up on Wednesday morning and went down to eat breakfast and there were all of our favorite HOI staff people, including Dr. Dan, Sue Church who was on our first mission to Honduras, and Jose who is the director of the ranch in Honduras. We had a great time reminiscing the Honduras trips. The photo shows all of us seating together.

Jose Mondragon, HOI Director, Rancho el Paraiso, Honduras
Joe Miler, Leader, Grace Prebyterian Church Honduras Mission
German Jimenez, M.D., HOI Director Heathcare, Honduras

Susan Church, HOI Board of Directors
Nelson Zeleya Echevarria, HOI Director of
Argiculture Honduras
Dr. Daniel Lohnes, HOI Board of Directors
Greta Miller, Leader, Grace Prebyterian Church
Honduras Mission



In 2020, Greta and I sponsored two Honduras students. These students names are:



Isabella Alejandra Padilla Nolasco

Community
HOI Elementary School

Location
Agalta Valley, Honduras

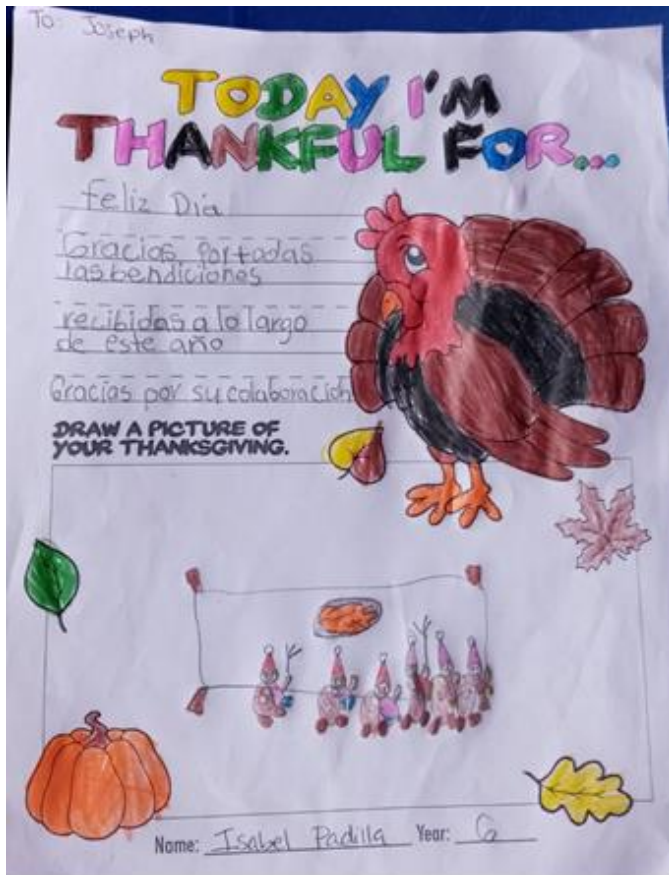
Gender
Female

Birthday
June 26, 2014

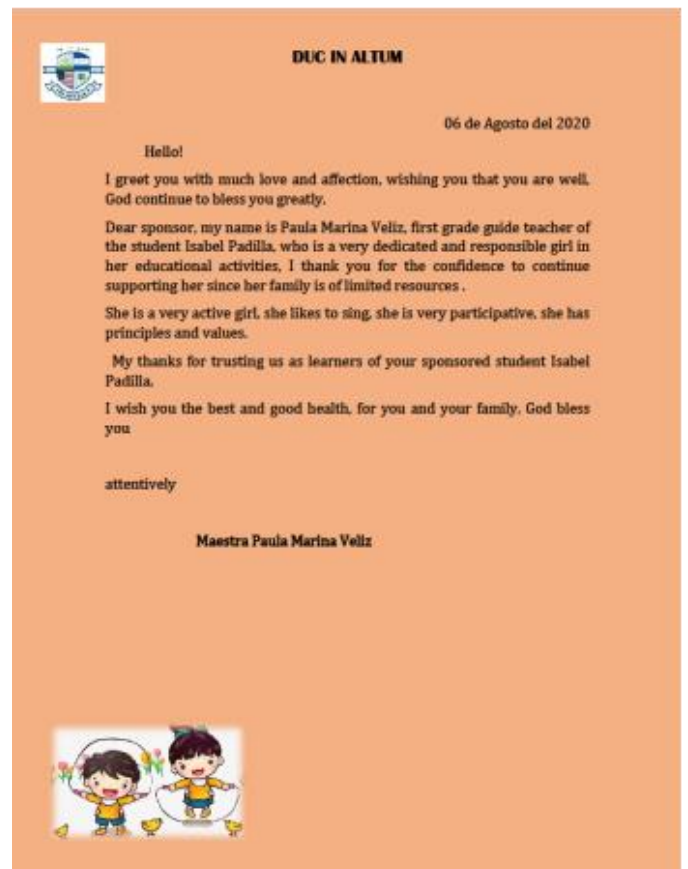
Age
6 as of 2020

ISABELLA'S STORY

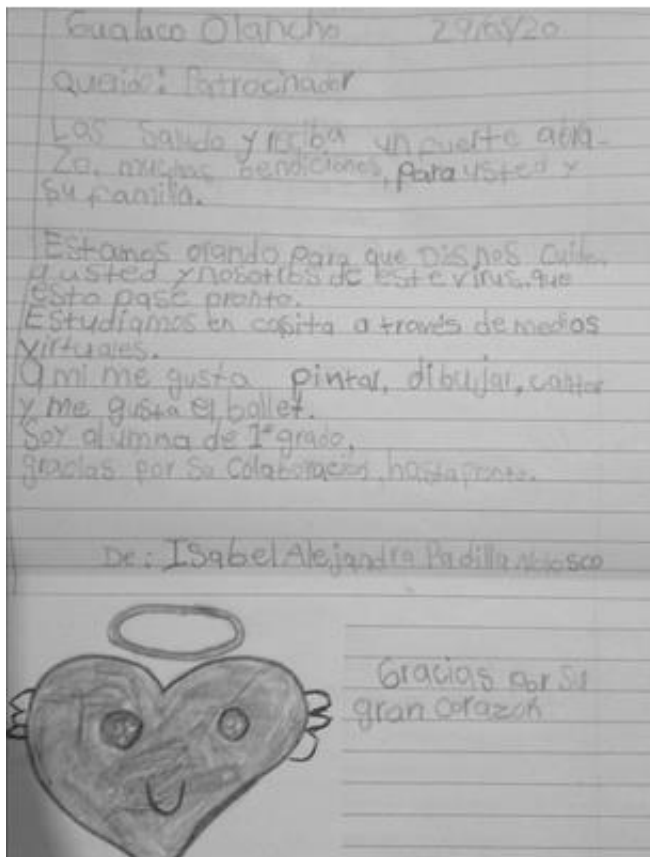
Isabella has one sister and one brother and she loves music. She enjoys playing the guitar with her dad and she loves dancing. In her free time, she enjoys playing soccer with her friends. Her favorite subject is Spanish and she hopes to be a veterinarian someday.



We received a letter from Isabella. We sent it to you on 12/8/2020.

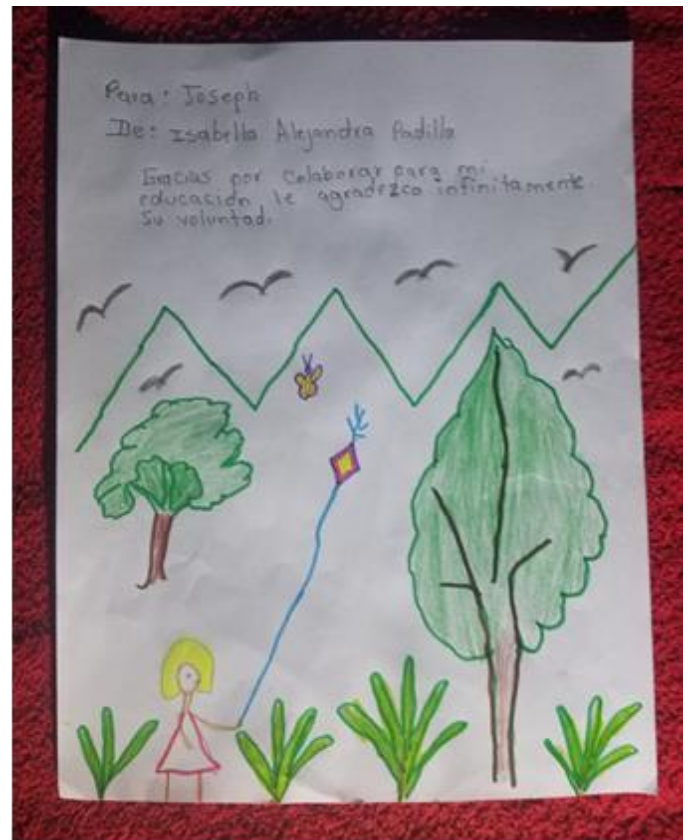


We received a letter from Isabella. We sent it to you on 11/10/2020.



We received a letter from Isabella. We sent it to you on 10/28/2020.

ISABELLA'S LETTERS



We received a letter from Isabella. We sent it to you on 7/24/2020.



Norma Yajaira Quintanilla Ramos

Community
San Esteban High School

Location
San Esteban, Honduras

Gender
Female

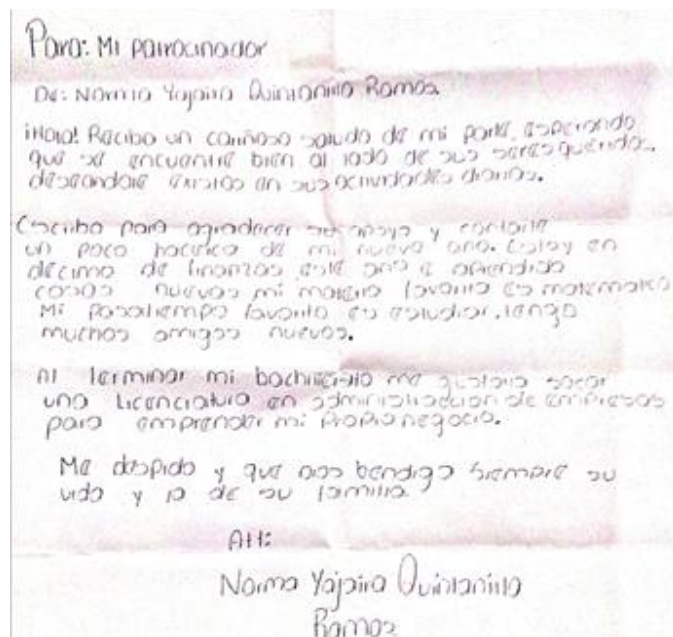
Birthday
March 22, 2005

Age
15 as of 2020

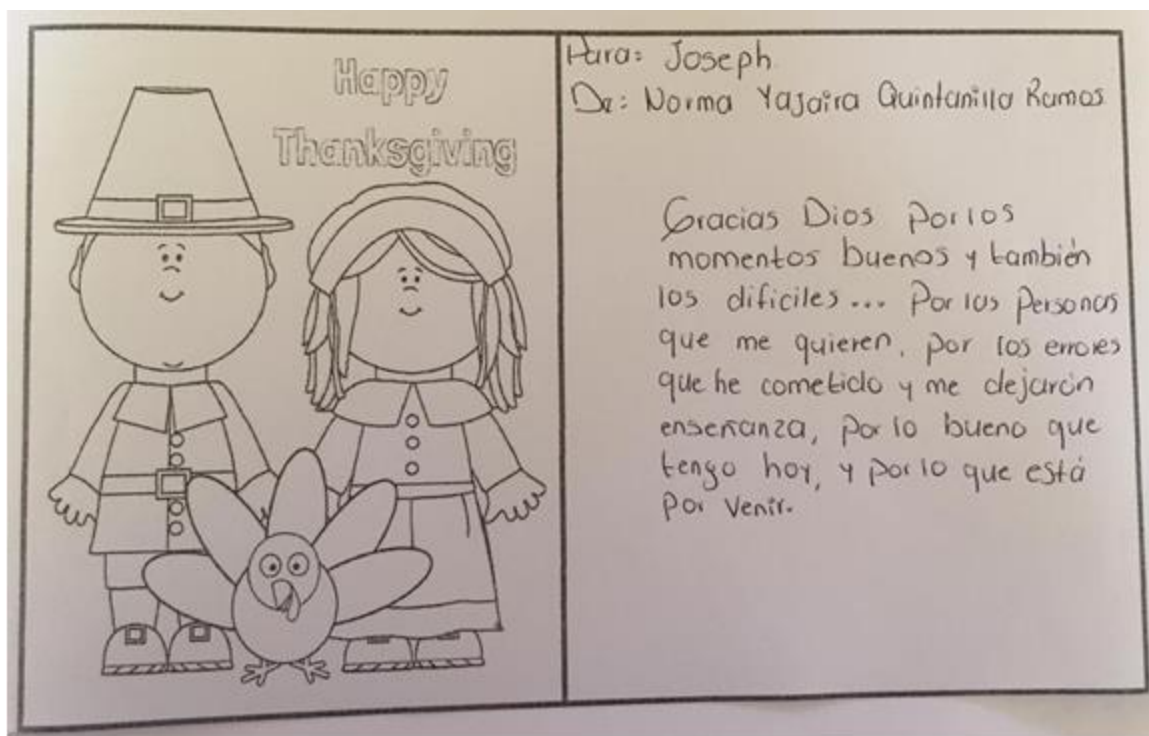
NORMA'S STORY

Norma's family is from San Martin. She has two brothers and helps out around the house by doing the sweeping and mopping. Her favorite subject in school is Science. Pink is her favorite color and she loves Chinese food. Norma enjoys playing soccer with her friends in her spare time. She would like to become a clothing designer.

NORMA'S LETTERS



We received a letter from Norma. We sent it to you on 7/24/2020.



We received a letter from Norma. We sent it to you on 12/8/2020.

October 30- November 6, 2021 Mission Trip

Greta and I took a trip to Honduras on October 30 through November 6, 2021. We travelled with board members of Honduras Outreach Inc. including their CEO and Chairman of the board and 13 other pilgrims traveling to Honduras. We got to visit the northern part of Honduras, which included San Esteban and the Southern Part of Honduras including Choluteca. These are shown on the attached map.



The mission team consisted of people from Georgia, Texas, Virginia and Tenness. Three people from the HOI board, which included the HOI CEO, HOI Board President and the HOI Director of Development. The photo shows the team, which also include Marti, a ranch team leader, was also on the trip. The list below provides the names of the team members.

- **Andy Weyenberg** has served on many HOI mission trips with his family through North Point Church. Andy serves as the chairman of HOI's board and is based out of the Atlanta area.
- **Greta Tosi-Miller** and **Joe Miller** will be coming from Virginia and represent Grace Presbyterian Church. They have led many trips to Honduras over the years.
- **Ellen** and **Timothy Boyer** are joining the team from Washington (state) and are active at Bear Creek UMC. They have led mission trips to the Ranch from their church.
- **Sandy Harris** is coming from San Angelo, TX and has led mission groups from her church, Sierra Vista UMC, in recent years.

- **Nolen Wood** and **Steven Day** will be joining from Life Church in Athens, GA where Nolen serves as the pastor and Steven is on staff. They have been introduced to HOI in the past few months and this will be their first trip with HOI.
- **Lenn Chandler** is with Watkinsville First Baptist (GA) and this will be his first trip with HOI as well.
- **David Elrod** is joining from Tennessee. David is with Lipscomb University and he has led many student engineering groups to the Ranch. Most recently, they have built the bridge that connects the HOI elementary and middle schools and installed solar panels at the middle school to help off-set energy needs/costs there. David will spend most of his time on the trip following up on the solar panel installation.
- **John Burrough** (HOI's CEO), **James Gleghorn** (CDO), and **Tselan Kunian** (Director of Development) will all be coming from the HOI Atlanta offices. All attend North Point Church.



We received the following from Morgan Leary, the HOI director of missions trip coordinator:

HOI Partnership Trip Intros
Morgan Leary <morgan.leary@hoi.org>
Wed 10/20/2021 10:44 AM

To:

John Burrough;
James Gleghorn;
Tselan Kunian
Mission Team

Hello Everyone,

Two weeks from now you'll be in beautiful Honduras!

Thank you to everyone who has submitted their HOI paperwork, COVID vaccine cards, flight info, and made their payment. If you have any questions about any of these items, please let me know.

IMMIGRATION FORMS

Your airline should email you a link to fill out an immigration pre-check form. You'll need to make an account and then follow the instructions to fill out the forms. Please print them and carry them with you while travelling to Honduras on the 30th. If you do not receive the link from your airline, you can access the login page [here](#).

ENTERING HONDURAS (covid policy)

Honduras no longer requires a negative COVID test to enter the country and your COVID vaccine card will allow you to enter. If you'd like to read more about Honduras' COVID policies, please click [here](#).

WIFI

There was a question about WiFi while on the trip and I wanted to let everyone know that all accommodations do have WiFi: The HOI Ranch, La Casona (where you all will stay in Southern Honduras), and the Clarion hotel in Tegucigalpa. Please remember that the WiFi can go in and out at any time, especially at the Ranch.

BE THINKING...

On Sunday you all will take time as a group to discuss best practices at your church regarding mission trip planning, recruiting, fundraising, team building, spiritual preparation, how to engage your congregation with missions, etc. This will be a time to ask questions, share what works for your church, and hopefully get ideas from others that will serve your mission program well. We are excited that Greta and Joe will be leading this conversation. If you have any topics that you'd like to send in ahead of time, please email them to me.

I am here to help you! Call or email me at any time with questions, I know HOI staff are very excited for this trip, we hope you are too.

Best regards,

Morgan Leary
Director of Missions
www.hoi.org
PO Box 920745
Peachtree Corners, GA
30010

The trip itinerary is shown below:

ITINERARY

You'll find a detailed itinerary attached, as prepared by my coworkers in Honduras.

Lenn and David, it is not reflected on the itinerary but you all will be dropped off in Tegucigalpa on Tuesday afternoon. You'll take your COVID tests then and we have arranged a private driver to take y'all to the airport on Wednesday morning.

IMMIGRATION FORM

Please remember to fill out the [immigration form](#). I've attached a screenshot of the form answers to help you complete it.

ARRIVAL IN HONDURAS

- Everyone will be on the United flight out of Houston except for David, Greta, and Joe who will arrive on the American Airlines flight from Miami. I'm sharing this so you all can be on the lookout for one another in Houston and Miami.
- We have arranged for you all to go through the "Diplomat Line" in customs, this is the line to the far right (there is a sign as well). This should allow you to exit the airport faster. HOI Honduras staff will meet you all outside the airport as non-travelers cannot enter the airport.
- I have been told that the food court at the airport is still closed (due to COVID). You all will stop at the Mennonite Bakery for a snack but in the case that you would like to eat something sooner, please pack something in your carryon.
- Should anyone have a delayed or cancelled flight, please text me so that I can inform HOI staff in Honduras. My cell is 757-345-9154.

OTHER REMINDERS

- It is HOI policy to wear masks when around HOI staff and community members (this includes when riding in vehicles). We also ask that you follow the lead of those around you when it comes to greetings. Right now, everyone has different comfort levels with sharing a hug, handshakes, fist bumps, or none of the above. In addition to using hand sanitizer, it is also custom in Honduras to sanitize your shoes prior to entering businesses. You may have to do this when entering gas stations/the hotel/etc. They will have a shallow tray for you to step in.
- If anyone begins to feel unwell, please notify an HOI staffer immediately.
- COVID tests (required for re-entry to the USA) are not included in the grounds fees you have paid. The testing lab accepts credit cards and the test costs ~\$25.
- Remember to pack enough masks/personal items/medications/anything you might need in the (unlikely) case that you test positive for COVID and need to follow a 2 week quarantine at the Ranch.
- Everyone is registered with the US State Department for the trip.

- Someone asked about tipping.... it is customary to leave a few dollars at restaurants and tip \$1-2 per bag if someone helps you with your bags at the hotel (about \$20 for the week should cover this). Every restaurant/the hotel should accept USD and smaller bills (\$1, \$5, \$10) are preferred. Please bring bills in good condition (no tears, no writing, or extreme wear). If you would like to tip HOI staff, there is a box located in the dining hall to leave tips for them. These funds go towards team dinners and outings.

Finally, *thank you all* for joining this trip. We realize there is a lot going on in the world right now and for you to make time to travel to Honduras to (re)connect with everyone there is incredible. Should you need anything else, please email/text/call me.

Saturday, Oct 30

12:00 am	Approximate time of arrival in Toncontin and then travel straight to the Ranch
1:30 pm	Leave from Toncontin to the Ranch
5:30 pm	Stop at the Mennonite Bakery and time for bathroom
8:00 p.m.	Arrive to the Ranch
8:20 pm	Dinner at the Ranch

Sunday, Oct 31

7:00-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00-10:00 a.m.	Worship service with staff (who are able to join)
12 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch at the ranch
4:00Pm -6:00 pm	Breakout sessions 4-6-6 Mission Model (John) time for the group leaders to connect (Greta)
6:00 p.m.	Dinner at the ranch (the staff that participate in the meeting will have dinner)

Monday, Nov 01

6:30-7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
7:00 -7:20 am	Join Ranch Staff around the cross for introduction and devotional time
7:30-8:30	Clinic Tour, Dr German Jimenez
8:30 am	Departure to the village Community Development and Economic Development Programs.
12:00	Lunch at the Ranch
1:00-2:30 pm	Education tour
2:30-4:00 pm	Agriculture tour
6:00 -7:00 pm	Dinner and Spiritual life tour Pastor Selvin
7:00 -8:00 pm	Bonfire in front of the cross

Tuesday, Nov 2

6:30-7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
7:20 a.m.	Departure to the South
12:00 am	Stop and have lunch at the Mennonite bakery
5:00	Approximate time of arrival to La Casona
6:00	Supper at La Casona

Wednesday, Nov 3

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m.	Going to visit HOI/Agrolibano community Altos del Estiquirin, community in Valley Community board gives a general overview of their community (what they are proud of, their challenges, what they are doing about it, where they need Agrolibano and HOI to join them)
	School tour, school teacher gives us an overview of the school, current challenges, and challenges for 2022, how could we join them at improving their quality of education for their children. Visit to the local church: the pastor gives us a little history or the church, what are the current challenges, what are the main areas of spiritual need, how could we join them at doing God's work.
12: 00 am	Lunch at Restaurant Brisas del Golfo
3:00	Going to visit HOI/Agrolibano community El Tamarindo, community in Valley Community board gives a general overview of their community (what they are proud of, their challenges, what they are doing about it, where they need Agrolibano and HOI to join them) School tour, PTA member gives us an overview of the school, current challenges, and challenges for 2022, how could we join them at improving their quality of education for their children. Visit to the local spiritual leaders (place to be determined): they give us a little history or the church, what are the current challenges, what are the main areas of spiritual need, how could we join them at doing God's work.
6:00	Supper at La Casona
6:30	Presentation of What Agrolibano does and why we partner with them


Thursday, Nov 4

6:30 a.m.	Breakfast
7:00	Traveling to Choluteca
8:00	Visiting HOI/Agrolibano community El Porvenir, community in Choluteca Community board gives a general overview of their community (what they are proud of, their challenges, what they are doing about it, where they need Agrolibano and HOI to join them) School tour, the teacher gives us an overview of the school, current challenges, and challenges for 2022, how could we join them at improving their quality of education for their children. Community leaders share about their perspective on the spiritual situation of the community, what are the current challenges, what are the main areas of spiritual need, how could we join them at doing God's work
12:30	Lunch at Fusiones Gourmet Restaurant
2:00	Visiting HOI/Agrolibano community San Agustin, community in Choluteca Community board gives a general overview of their community (what they are proud of, their challenges, what they are doing about it, where they need Agrolibano and HOI to join them) School tour, PTA member gives us an overview of the school, current challenges, and challenges for 2022, how could we join them at improving their quality of education for their children. Visit to the local spiritual leaders (place to be determined): they give us a little history of the church, what are the current challenges, what are the main areas of spiritual need, how could we join them at doing God's work
5:30	Estimated time of arrival to La Casona
6:30	Quiet supper at la Casona

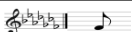
Friday, Nov 5

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast at la Casona
9:00	Traveling to Ojojona
11:30	Lunch in Ojojona
12:30 – 2:00	Souvenir shopping...The place is small but a typical Honduran town...we could go back ASAP into Tegus to get the COVID Test done
3:00	Driving into Tegus and going to Hotel
4:00	Going for COVID test
6:00	Supper at the hotel

Friday, Nov 5

Undecided	Breakfast
Undecided	Going to the airport
11:30	Lunch at the airport (on their own)
	Leaving on a jet plane 

Saturday, Nov 6

Undecided	Breakfast
Undecided	Going to the airport
11:30	Lunch at the airport (on their own)
	Leaving on a jet plane 

On Oct 30 we flew into Tegucigalpa on Oct 30, 2021. We were late because the plane was 3 hours late and the other team who came in from Georgia via Houston was waiting for us at the Tegucigalpa airport. We finally got together with them and made it to the ranch about 8 PM. HOI does not like to drive at night but they did.

We travel first to the ranch, which is located about 305 kilometers (190 miles) north of Tegucigalpa. On Tuesday, November 2, we travel to small town in the South. On Thursday we would be in Choluteca, which is about 147 kilometers (91 miles) south of Tegucigalpa.

While we were at the ranch we got reacquainted with Pasto Selvin, Jose, the ranch director, Marta, Ranch team leader and Leslie the Team Leader for the Southern HOI communities.

On Sunday morning we were planning on attending church the Ranch's chapel, to our surprise the chapel was being used by the ranch to inoculate the surrounding communities with the COVID vaccine. (pfizer vaccine). The Honduran government asked HOI to vaccinate the

communities that were in their influence. I think Dr. Jarmon said that half the communities had received the first inoculation and half had received the second inoculation.

We took a tour of the ranch, which included their new dairy system and their new irrigation system. The previous dairy system was milking the cows by hand in the old barn on the hill. This was done for many years. Doctor Dan started coming to the ranch he decided to help them become more modern. Through several years of negotiation and fund raising he convinced HOI to build a new dairy barn and milking system. While we were there, we toured the new facility. It contained a new 12 milking station for a pipeline milking machine. The photo shows the station. There are about 50 head of milking cows in their dairy heard so after about four rotations through the system they were done milking. This is a gigantic advancement from where the were 4 years ago. The photo shows the new system.



We also toured their land in the area. About 30 years ago some people from Georgia went to Honduras and bought 1300 acres of land, which they called the ranch. From this meager beginning, they built the ranch with all the dormitories and eating facilities. In the back of the ranch there are about 70 acres, which are cleared where they raise cattle. Growing corn is a challenge in Honduras. It is usually too wet or too dry to nurture a crop to maturity, so the Ranch staff has devised a drip irrigation system. They have a water source near the mountains where they pipe the water to the 25 acres that they are irrigating. The difference between the irrigated and non-irrigated corn crops is startling. The irrigated crops are much larger with large ears of corn. They are currently negotiating with the Honduras Government to get another 75 acres of drip irrigation piping system so they can develop another large field to irrigate. They are doing this so they can make money from the ranch.

Another project that they are working on is a solar system for the Middle School. David Elrod, the Dean of Engineering at Lipscomb University has been working on the solar system. When we took a tour of the school, he showed the system. Over the last few years, he would bring students to Honduras to work in the system. The reliability of the power to the school is not good. When they lose power, the information is lost in their laptop, so they want the solar system for backup power to the laptops. While we were at the school Greta, and I were surprised by our two scholarship students that we support. We got a chance to meet the two Honduras students that we sponsor in Honduras, Norma, age 16 and Isabella, age 7. The one photo shows us with Isabella with the special pillowcase that her mother made us. The trip was very rewarding.



On the last night at the ranch, we built a bonfire and sang songs.

Next, we went to the South. The trip to the South took most of the day.

The second portion of our week in Honduras was spent in southern Honduras, where HOI is partnering with another Non-profit organization called the Agrolibano Foundation. Agrolibano is a melon producer (known as "Mike's Melons" in the US) and a major employer in Southern Honduras. Agrolibano teaches leadership skills, helps the community develop a written community plan to identify their needs and improve their health and education in the region, where each community had a large map showing every home with indicators of which homes needed a cement floor, latrine, eco stove, and so forth. Agrolibano has strong programs, but they knew they were missing the spiritual growth component and they needed help carrying out the

community development projects. HOI was the perfect partner.

HOI has been partnering with Agrolibano for about 6 years in southern Honduras where the needs are great. There is no ranch in the south, but Agrolibano provides lodging and meals in

their gated foundation compound in San Lorenzo. Agrolibano has been helping in Southern Honduras for about 12 years. Located in San Lorenzo, Valle in the south of Honduras; Grupo Agrolibano is a corporation formed by Agropecuaria Montelibano dedicated to agriculture, Industria Camaronera del Sur dedicated to aquaculture, Ornamentales del Valle dedicated to ornamental production and Bosques Cuyamapa dedicated to forestry. With everyone of its 500 permanent and a temporary employees focus to exceed customer needs and to obtain a high performance through excellence in every step, Grupo Agrolibano has been able to grow and diversify even though it competes in a industry that is oversupplied, affected by weather conditions and highly regulated.

We met with the community leaders and Agrolibano liaisons in 4 rural communities ranging in size from 74 families to the largest of 1,500 people. Their community leaders were the school principal, schoolteachers, the community pastors, if there was one, their PTA leadership, their Water Board, Rural Bank representatives, and Early Childhood Development leaders. Most of the leaders, except for the pastors, were women and mothers, except for the largest community where there were several men leaders.

The Early Childhood Development volunteers are responsible for weighing all the babies, from birth to 2 years old, monthly because malnourished babies generally have underdeveloped brains. They send the information to WHO (World Health Organization) and if the babies are underweight, they share recipes with the family to teach them to cook with higher nutrient foods and they receive nutrient supplements.

The Water Board volunteers help to determine the condition of the water in the community, and recently HOI was able to support that village with \$10,000 and helped them to drill a well so that the 95 homes in that community now have fresh abundant water. But they need water basins (pilas) to hold the water and they are hoping for US teams to help build them.

The Rural Bank program teaches financial responsibility. If HOI provides a new latrine at your home (which has a value of \$100 and is free to you), you are required to deposit 8% - or \$8 into YOUR account at the Rural Bank – over any time that you commit to, including \$1 per month. The Rural Bank also provides emergency loans. The Rural Bank is an alternative to the big banks. Each community develops their own bank so they can loan money to their community. Their interest that they charge is about 2 % for members and 4% for non-members. Jose said that the ranch is trying to implement something similar for the communities in the North.

The ratio of students to teachers in the Honduran government schools is 45 students to 1 teacher and most communities only have a school from kindergarten through the 6th grade. The parents and PTA want a better education system for their children. In one community of 74 families, Agrolibano funded the hiring a young teacher for the 7th, 8th and 9th grade kids, who during the pandemic, when schools were closed, went out to their homes to work with them in small groups and encouraged them to finish their schooling. In this community, there was only 1 baby born last year – these youth are seeing HOPE and other alternatives for a better future other than having babies as teenagers.

In all 4 communities, their hopes and dreams for their families were consistent – to provide a better life, better education for their children and to have greater job opportunities for them. The same hopes and dreams that we have for our kids in the US.

At the end of each community visit, we encircled the community leaders, laid hands on them and prayed for them.

Throughout our trip, Grace Church was celebrated. Our Honduran brothers and sisters send their fondest and warmest greetings to You, Grace Church and their deepest appreciation for the immense generosity of YOUR support of the August HOPE for Honduras fundraiser, for YOUR support of so many scholarship students, for school supplies, medications, and support for Pastor Selvin's spiritual life ministry.

On Sunday morning, Pastor Selvin led us in a worship service at the Ranch, outside facing the cross and he asked us –

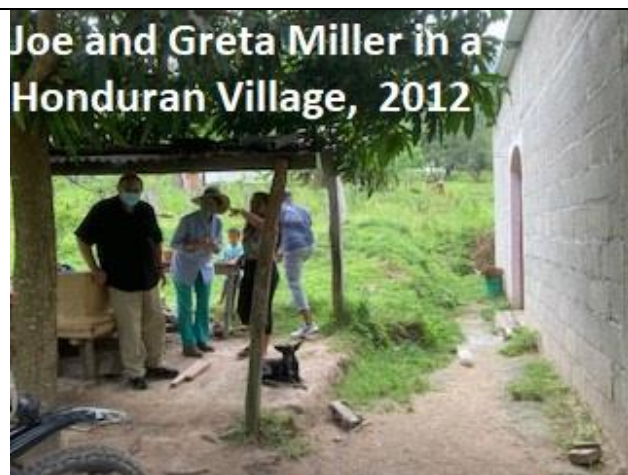
- What are we doing in this place?
- Who are we?
- Why are we here?

Those questions are as important whether we are sitting outside in front of a wooden cross in Honduras or sitting inside worshiping with Grace Church. As Christians, how are we living out our lives to magnify God?

This is a question I continue to grapple with each day.

We learned much about the various communities of Honduras. One thing that we found that most people in Honduras are being vaccinated for COVID19. The trip was very rewarding.

Some photos of the team are attached.



HOI is establishing the 4-6-6 initiative. The components of these initiatives are shown below.

Mission:

Strengthening communities through faith and partnership

4-6-6 Imperative:

Four Fundamental Relationships: God, Self, Others, and World
(Creation/stewardship)

Six Outcomes:

1. Inspire people to follow Jesus and grow in their relationship with Jesus
2. Empowered, equipped, and engaged leadership
3. Unity
4. Access to quality healthcare
5. Access to quality education
6. Access to economic opportunity

Six areas of impact:

1. Individual
2. Family
3. Community
4. Area of communities
5. Region
6. Country

Reflections on the 2022 Honduras Mission Trip and Updates from **Leslie**

Leslie Bobadilla de Echeverria lesliebobadilladee@gmail.com

Sat 8/27/2022 6:11 PM







Hello dear friends,

We pray this email finds you well. Life has ups and downs and as we walk this life we will always have good and bad going on at the same time. My prayer is that you may LOVE The Lord with all your heart, soul and mind. When we love HIM, everything (good and bad) works out for our best; that is his promise and He never lies (Romans 8:28).

As part of the HOI policy, and also because I love my people, I went back with Eva to check on our friends and to make sure everything was finished. Sometimes people get discouraged or something comes up and they are unable to finish their projects. We want to be there to encourage and help.

I am sharing a few of the pictures of the finished projects but also a few pictures that they wanted to send to you just to say they love and miss you.

Eva and I went to visit Tina; she was sitting on a chair outside her house. She said she felt better and happier. The fact that she was outside and chatting with her family was a good sign. She said she had found peace of mind and wanted you to know she appreciates all your prayers for her. She was sure you cared for her and also sure you are still praying for her.

I feel so honored and blessed to be a small part of the HOI ministry. God could have chosen any other person, but for some reason HE chose me... I will always be grateful for that. I am so grateful I got to see some of you again and I got to meet and serve with some of you for the first time. It was my joy and honor. Isaac sends his greetings and love. Please keep us in your prayers and we will keep you in ours.

Love from him,

Leslie

PD. This is not an official HOI email... It is just a friend's email