



## Honduras Highlights in Church & Leader Development

from Ellen & Paul Van Tongeren  
Christian Reformed World Missions

**June 30, 2009**

### **Dear Friends in Christ,**

What a blessing it is to have your partnership in the ministry in Honduras. In the last two months our partners, the regional groups of the CRC of Honduras and Red Viva Honduras have been praying, reflecting and developing their plans for this coming year. We are especially excited about opportunities to minister to families and youth, in new programs designed to help Honduran Christians have homes that shine with the love and power of the gospel in struggling communities.

It is with very mixed feelings that we are officially announcing our departure from Honduras. After much prayer and thought we've decided that it's best for our family to leave Honduras and relocate to live near Ellen's sister and her family for a while. Our hope is that God will provide a job there for Paul and that Ellen will be able to be at home with Grace and plug into ministry opportunities.

While we will deeply miss the people we've worked with and the other friends we have grown to love in our years in Honduras, it's time for us to have work that doesn't involve so much travel and that allows us to continue to support Lynn and her family in her recovery from cancer. We will also miss serving with Christian Reformed World Missions. It has been such a wonderful organization to be a part of. This has been a very hard decision, but we trust that God will open doors so that our gifts and skills can be used for His glory in North Carolina.

From the beginning of August through the beginning of November we hope to visit as many of our supporting churches as possible to report on the work of this past term and to thank them for the ways they have participated in the ministry. During that time, our home base will be in Grand Rapids, and while there Ellen will also lead the Bible Studies for the CRWM Conference Ground camp week, work with Joel VanDyke on curriculum for the Strategy for Transformation, and prepare sermons and other special presentations.

Because World Missions' financial commitment to us extends into December of this year, we ask for your continued financial support through the end of this year.

### **The Strategy for Transformation**

On May 29 & 30, 35 leaders from numerous churches and agencies met for the second course of this three-year training program. The course was entitled "In But Not Of: Understanding the Grammar of God" and challenged participants to reach out to people in their communities with the gospel, contextualizing its message without compromising it.

The training was led by CRWM missionary Joel VanDyke, Guatemalan pastor Edwin Solis and a youth specialist from the Dominican Republic, Mario Matos. During the course we wrestled with the challenges of demonstrating God's love to people who have been rejected by their families and communities.

We also heard testimonies of participants who are already putting into practice what they learned in the first course. It was so exciting to hear a young woman talk about how she got the young people in her church to organize a camp for at-risk kids in their town.

Please pray:

- 1) that these leaders are able to continue the third course in late 2009.
- 2) for the 10-12 trainers that Joel and Edwin will be training to reproduce the training throughout Central America.

### **Prayer for Protection**

*Please pray for Pastor Beto Flores who was the president of the Clasis (region) of Mangulile this past year. Recently a neighbor threatened him over a land dispute; another neighbor was shot. Beto and his family have relocated temporarily to the main town in the area and informed the police of what happened, but so far there hasn't been a resolution to the situation. Please pray that God protects Beto and his family and that the situation can be resolved soon.*

### **Update on Ellen's Sister**

Ellen's sister Lynn has now completed her fourth of seven weeks of radiation and chemotherapy. We thank God that the side effects have been manageable. Please pray that this continues and that the treatments will be completely effective. Thank you for praying for her!

## **The Multiplication Network**

We praise God for a safe trip for Ellen, Pastor Francisco and Pastora Martha driving from Tegucigalpa, Honduras to Managua, Nicaragua and back for the Multiplication Network (MN) Conference.

The MN is an organization that provides free on-line materials for three excellent workshops:

Integral Church Growth  
Let's Plant Healthy Churches  
Church Planter's Retreat

In Honduras we've been able to give the Integral Church Growth workshop to over 300 leaders from over 40 different congregations.

The vision of the Network is to promote healthy church growth and church planting by having its materials available in over 10 languages and workshops being given in over 100 countries. Check out their website for more information:

[www.multiplicationnetwork.com](http://www.multiplicationnetwork.com)

Please pray for God to open up opportunities for Pastors Francisco and Martha to continue blessing churches and leaders with this valuable training.

Ellen has been working with the Network on the English translation of its materials. Please pray that God expands the reach of this helpful ministry.

## ***Political Situation in Honduras***

*On Sunday, June 28, the president of Honduras was removed from office for disobeying a court order to stop a national survey that he did not have the authority to conduct. Opponents claim that the purpose of the survey was to start a process to radically change the Constitution and to allow the president to be re-elected, similar to what has happened in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador in recent years. The situation in the country has remained calm, although there's a lot of uncertainty. Please pray for a peaceful resolution to this serious conflict.*

## **Financial Update:**

**Min. goal to raise by June 30: \$66,000.00**  
**Raised as of June 26, 2009: \$71,148.79**

**We are so grateful for your generous giving for the ministry in Honduras.**

**Amount to raise July 1 - December 31, 2009:  
\$ 33,862.50**

**The address for contributions is below and the code to note on a check for our CRWM account is:  
WM 802195**

## **Programs in Honduras**

Each Spring CRWM's partners draw up their plans for the following fiscal year and apply for grant funds to help them fund the programs. This coming year we are excited to help support programs such as:

- leader training for family and youth ministry in the South
- theological education programs for approximately 70 students in several regions of the country
- spiritual retreats for youth in San Pedro Sula
- evangelistic campaigns and church plants in several regions of the country

Please pray for the success of these programs!

*Thank you so much for supporting us and the ministry in Honduras through your prayers, financial support and communications. We praise God for the ministry we have been able to do and for your partnership in it! We hope to see many of you during our time in the Midwest to thank you personally. We'll continue to update you on our church visits and family situation.*

*Yours in Christ,  
Ellen, Paul & Grace VanTongeren*

Mailing address August 1-October 31 & for Contributions:

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