In 1994, Vera Wiatt stood in the narrow hallway of the Obras* that led to the shabby dental clinic. The hallway was lined with small wheelchairs carrying disabled children. Vera’s responsibility: examine these children, readying them for the dentist. She writes, “José was about 9. Blind and mentally retarded, when he was placed in the dental chair, he immediately began to roll his head back and forth and moan. His arms were flailing and we had to hold him down. I was terrified. I kept saying ‘Abre tu boca, José,’ open your mouth, José. All to no avail. Not knowing what else to do, I placed my hand on his face and rocked with him. We breathed in the same warm breath, keeping time with each other.

After a few moments, José’s little hand slowly came up to my face and held my face just as I did his. Then we rocked some more with our hands on each others’ faces. Then he stopped rocking, opened his mouth and looked straight at me with eyes that did not see. Touching my cheek softly, he allowed me to examine his teeth, which were badly decayed and must have been hurting for a long time. When I finished, I placed my hand back on José’s face and we held each other for a moment. Looking into his face, I saw the face of Christ.”

Nearly two decades later, Dr. Ernie Rehnke knelt before María, gently holding her foot that was twisted by the large tumor. She was 18, spoke only Quiché, and was afraid. He knelt before her to tell her he had a daughter her own age and would treat her just as he would his own daughter. His words were translated from English to Spanish to Quiché. But no words were really necessary. María saw this man kneeling before her, his face filled with compassion. We saw Jesus as he knelt before his disciples.

Much has changed over the past 20 years. The first trip had 12 volunteers from Houston, supplies were scarce, equipment marginal, patients limited to those living at the Obras. In 2014 more than 1,200 US volunteers served. They were joined by more than 750 Guatemalan volunteers. Now, we coordinate supply shipments, match patients from the villages to surgeons by specialty, support and organize follow-up care. Our volunteers come from all across the United States and we are serving the poor who live throughout Guatemala.

Much has changed. One thing shall never change. In 1994, there was a deep and abiding faith that God was in the work. In 2014, as we stand on the threshold of the next 20 years, we have a deep and abiding faith that God is in this work and that God will lead us forward in surprising and miraculous ways. Then, now, and always, Christ beside us, leading us, loving us as we seek to humbly serve in his name.

In this knowledge we give thanks for the past 20 years and joyously look forward to the new thing that God shall surely do through Faith In Practice in the future.

*Las Obras is home to more than 300 of the incapacitated and abandoned of Guatemala. It also provides medical and surgical care for the poor from across Guatemala. Faith In Practice built five state-of-the-art operating rooms at Las Obras in 2006, and the majority of Faith In Practice surgical teams serve there.
Our Volunteers: Hugs, Laughter and Love

The tropical storm and volcano eruption closed the airport. Half the surgical team already in Antigua said they were staying to help. Half the team that was coming in from the States rerouted through El Salvador. The two halves made an incredible whole. Notwithstanding the disaster, no surgeries were canceled. Nothing was going to stop them from keeping their promises to those who had been waiting for months, years, for their one chance at healing. That is who our Faith In Practice volunteers are.

For 20 years, they have come from all across the US, beautiful in their uniqueness, so different from one to the other. Yet they have one thing in common. A deep and abiding faith and commitment. They will do anything, go anywhere, to serve ‘the least of these’. And they do so with humor, tenacity, flexibility and great joy.

For those who have served on teams, we hope the following will bring to mind your own memory of Guatemala. The joy that made your heart sing. The hugs, the laughter, the love. For those of you who have supported us throughout the years, we hope the following will allow you to glimpse the dedication of those you have supported, for they could not do what they do so well without you.

How many hours spent packing pills, organizing trunks, gathering supplies. How many hours waiting patiently, or not so patiently, in Customs.

How many boat rides on the ocean to Sarstoon when the waves roared and the rain came down.

How many flat tires, how many hours on the bus, how many times the bus started to roll backwards on the dusty mountain road, how many thousands of songs sung.

How many sleepless nights as the neighbor snored through the thin hotel room walls.

How many devotionals held before dawn, the cups of coffee steaming in the cool air, the sun rising over the mountains, peeking through the mist.

How many stories that make us laugh so hard our stomachs hurt.

How much love, how much respect, how much gratitude.

Our volunteers. Beautiful in their uniqueness, bound together with a shared history, a shared future. A beautiful family. For their heart, their dedication, and their laughter, we give God thanks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of US Volunteers</th>
<th>Number of Patients Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>13,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1994: US states represented by volunteers and Guatemalan areas served
2014: US states represented by volunteers and Guatemalan areas served
Estela: Color of Sky and Heaven

The village medical clinic bustled around them. Even though it was only 8:00 am, hundreds of patients had already been waiting for hours. Translators and doctors sought out their clinics, organizing their day. The first dental patients had already been seen. The translators leaned forward to listen carefully to the concern, “I have a hernia.” “My baby has had a fever for over a week.” “Do you have a wheelchair for my little girl?” The clinic bustled around them, and yet they spent a few quiet, sacred moments together.

Estela Velásquez, one of Faith In Practice’s Guatemalan volunteer leaders, had just learned that her beloved father had unexpectedly died. Wendy Robinson, one of our US volunteer leaders, went to her side as she wept. Even in the midst of the noisy clinic, there was a quiet which comes in the sacred moments of deep loss shared. Estela spoke of her father, how he had raised his three daughters alone. Of how, even though they had little themselves, their door was always open to anyone who needed food, a bed, clothing. Her father always welcomed them in, the door always open. Wendy witnessed Estela’s heart breaking, as Estela shared with her stories of her father, this giving man, who had shown her the secret to a rich life.

The next morning, Estela was at the medical clinic, making sure that everything was running smoothly, her more than 40 volunteers were in place, and the medical team had all they needed. Only then did she leave to attend her beloved father’s funeral. Estela’s presence at the clinic, in some ways, was a tribute to her father, doing what he had always done, serving those in need with her whole heart. Keeping the door open. Making him proud.

Later that evening, Estela returned to the clinic, despite her sorrow, to thank the US Faith In Practice volunteers on behalf of her community and the more than 2,000 patients the team had treated throughout the week. At this celebration, Estela presented Wendy with a huipil (traditional weaving) that Estela had woven (see photo banner below). Estela explained that the huipil was blue for the color of the sky and heaven and that the woven figures represented all the patients that had received care. Estela wanted Wendy to have this gift as a reminder of the good that she and the team had brought to Guatemala. Wendy shared, “Estela makes me want to be more giving, more forgiving.” Estela’s strength and compassion, an inspiration to us all.

Faith In Practice is blessed by more than 750 volunteers from across Guatemala. These 750 are led by about 80 volunteer leaders. The dedicated volunteers have little, and yet they seek to serve those who have even less than they. They tell us that Faith In Practice gives them the opportunity to do what has always burned in their hearts, to serve God and their neighbor.

We wonder at their unflagging commitment, their tireless desire to serve. Their strength to set aside their own pain to place the pain of others first, to give thanks even in the face of personal tragedy. To welcome us into their hearts, teaching us to be more giving, more forgiving.

Our Guatemalan volunteers gather the sickest patients in their communities, organize the remote clinics, work beside the US volunteers as they treat patients, and accompany those in need of surgery to Las Obras or Hilario Galindo hospitals. There they pray with the patients as they wait for and recover from their surgeries, finally bringing them home. We are honored to call these humble servants Faith In Practice volunteers.
In 1999, the Board of Directors affirms and confirms the Christian nature of Faith In Practice.

In 2001, Founder Joe Wiatt develops the Share The Mission volunteer fundraising program and David Weekley underwrites the first Gala.

In 1994, Faith In Practice is incorporated as a non-profit and Founder Rev. Dr. Todd Collier is appointed first Executive Director. MDPC lends initial and critical support.

Joe and Vera Wiatt move Faith In Practice’s office from their back bedroom to space donated by Memorial Hermann in 2000 under the leadership of Dan Wilford, then CEO of Memorial Hermann. Dr. Gary Card continues to serve as Board Chair during this transition.

The Casa de Fe patient guesthouse construction is completed in 2003 with the expertise and guidance of Tom Forney and Larry Barker.

Steadfast Love: Celebrating 20 Years

See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

—Isaiah 43:19
Gay Van Osdall and Laura Andrews Wortham co-chair the First Annual Women’s Luncheon in 2008. Faith In Practice completes renovation of ORs at Hilario Galindo Hospital.

Rev. Linda L. McCarty becomes Faith In Practice’s CEO in 2007. The first Guatemalan volunteer leadership conference is held in Antigua.

The Cervical Cancer Screening and Teaching Program is developed and launched by Dr. Peter and Nancy Thompson in 2005.

In 2006, Faith In Practice completes the construction of five new ORs, Pre/Post Op Area and Break Room at Las Obras, made possible by the fundraising efforts of Campaign Chair Dr. Brian Parsley and many supporters.

The campaign to expand Hilario Galindo Hospital is completed and construction begins in 2013.

In 2012, initial planning for the Traditional Birth Attendant Training Program under the guidance of Felicity Thompson, Richard Rosenthal, and Patty Baiza begins.

Forty-four teams prepare to serve in Guatemala, knowing that they stand upon, and are supported by, the faith of those who have gone before even as they look forward. Past, present, and future, all confident in God’s steadfast love that endures forever.
“I am amazed by God’s love for us such that he allows us to be instruments of his love.” Franciscan priest, Padre José Contran spoke these words with quiet wonder. Trust and surprise were intermingled upon his humble face. For more than 40 years, Padre has faithfully been an instrument of God’s love in Central America, the past 20 as Director of Las Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro Hospital in Antigua, Guatemala.* There is a peace and joy in Padre. Peace and joy that come when living a life close to the heart of Jesus. Peace and joy that reveal the sorrow that comes when one follows in the footsteps of Jesus. To see Padre’s face is to glimpse the face of Christ.

“The joy of my life is to be sent forth like the disciples, without anything. We have nothing, but God gives us everything. In our poverty, we find a deeper richness.” Padre speaks of the miracles he has seen, when there was no food, a problem with the roof, and yet, the right person appeared offering exactly what was needed. He speaks of the joy he has seen in those who made the offering without having known of the need. Padre walked out of his office into the courtyard, saying, “I was standing right here when Joe and Vera [Wiatt] asked me if I wanted Faith In Practice’s help to build new operating rooms.” Trust and surprise intermingled upon his face once again.

Faith In Practice has worked beside the Obras from the beginning. Throughout the years, Padre has inspired us to a deeper faith as he walks in the footsteps of Jesus. As he gently touches a child who is trapped in a twisted body, as his tears flow when one of these little ones dies, as his face becomes illuminated when he lifts up the host in the tiny church. Padre embodies the transforming love of God. A life lived close to the heart of Jesus.

Faith In Practice came to Guatemala in response to God’s call to serve those in need. Padre José considers Faith In Practice an answer to prayer. We consider Padre an answer to our own prayer as we glimpse the face of Christ in his.

It is with gratitude that we honor Padre José at our 20th Anniversary Gala.

*Santo Hermano Pedro Hospital is home to more than 300 of the incapacitated and abandoned of Guatemala. It also provides medical and surgical care for the poor from across Guatemala. Faith In Practice built five state-of-the-art operating rooms at Las Obras in 2006, and the majority of Faith In Practice surgical teams serve there.

Padre José Contran

Sergio López: Servant Leader

Sergio speaks of the sacrifices others have made, the gratitude and pride he feels to work with those who give so much to Hilario Galindo Hospital. What Sergio fails to acknowledge is that there is no one who gives more, has poured more of his heart into Hilario Galindo, than Sergio López.

He is a servant leader who gives all he has for others. It is we who are grateful and proud to work beside this faithful young man, to call him family.

Sergio López was there when the hospital reopened in 1998 on little else but faith. In 2006, he accepted the position of Administrator when the hospital was on the verge of closing. Rather than shy from the challenge, Sergio embraced it out of love. He believed in the future of the hospital when it did not make sense to believe, and he backed that belief with his own dedication and hard work.

Sergio was there when Faith In Practice first came to the hospital in 2007 and he has journeyed with us every step of the way as together we seek to build the hospital into a health center for all of Guatemala. Sergio, ever constant, ever faithful, always present at the door welcoming us in, come what may.

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Dr. Jorge Méndez: Living Into His Calling

Jorge Méndez was 13 when his little brother, Rodrigo, died of cancer at age 6. At 13, Jorge could find no purpose in it. No meaning. Then that all changed.

Jorge’s parents brought him to see Brother Guillermo Bonilla, the then Director of Las Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro Hospital in Antigua.

Brother Guillermo, in turn, introduced him to Faith In Practice. Soon, Jorge, who attended a Guatemalan bilingual school, was translating for Faith In Practice physicians on both surgical teams at Las Obras and medical clinic teams in the villages. As Jorge grew, he knew that he was meant to be a physician. When it came time for his residency, Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital and Faith In Practice volunteers, Drs. Huebner, Daily, Walker and Card stepped up and hosted Jorge for a rotation. And, Faith In Practice later assisted him in obtaining specialty training in colposcopy. Jorge is now a well-respected gynecologist in Guatemala.

At 13, Jorge was a gift to Faith In Practice, and so he remains. Jorge serves on the board of directors of the Asociación La Fe en Práctica*. And, he is the Director of the Faith In Practice Cervical Cancer Screening and Training Program, having worked closely with Dr. Peter Thompson, the founder of the program, and Dr. Patty Baiza for years. To see Jorge before a group of eager students, his competence, his compassion, is a blessing. Pure gift.

In 2006, Faith In Practice dedicated the new operating rooms at Las Obras. One of those rooms bears the name Rodrigo Méndez, the little boy who died too young. When asking Jorge to share his story, he said, “I could find no purpose in my brother’s death. But soon I could see something good coming from it.” Jorge has dedicated his life to saving lives. He does so with compassion and grace. We are grateful that he has chosen to fulfill part of this calling through Faith In Practice.

We cannot always anticipate how God will bring life out of death or how God will gather community together and give us the gift of each other, intertwining our lives in amazing ways. We cannot anticipate the ‘how,’ but we can trust that it shall be so.

*La Asociación La Fe en Práctica is the Guatemalan counterpart to Faith In Practice USA.

Drawn Together by God’s Love

What love God has for us that God allows us to be instruments of love. Padre José captured it perfectly. The miracle of the Spirit weaving us into one across the years. Intertwining our lives. Creating a family. Transforming us into God’s instruments as imperfect as we are. Each of us realizing, slowly at first, and then with a dawning of gratitude, as we feel our hearts changing, as we find our own healing. The healing that comes when God uses us as instruments of love. Yes, what love God has for us....

Throughout these pages, you have read about those who have served faithfully across the past 20 years, unique and beautiful instruments of God’s love.* Drawn together from across the world to become an unlikely and yet beautiful family. Standing together as we look to the future trusting in the Steadfast Love that has brought us this far.

Absent in these pages, however, are two incredibly important members of our family. It is to them that we dedicate this 20th Anniversary Newsletter. To all of the patients, who in truth, have been God’s instruments of love ministering to us. To all of our supporters who do not receive the patients’ hugs or thanks and yet continue to journey with us year after year all the same. For them, for you, we give God humble thanks.

— Rev. Linda L. McCarty
President and CEO

*It has been impossible to name all who have played integral roles in this mission. Please forgive any omissions and know that this newsletter was created lovingly with each and every one of you in mind.
Twenty Years of Miracles and Stories

"This patient’s story takes me back to the desert of Guatemala to the sleepy little village of Rio Hondo. The heat of the day close to 100 degrees. A long line of patients waiting to see a doctor. Volunteers growing weary. One of the doctors called us to a private meeting. He explained that the patient was in his early 40s with a wife and several children and was in his final stages of cancer...."

To continue reading Joe Wiatt’s moving patient story, please visit www.faithinpractice.org/20years.

Please share your story with us so we may post it on our website. Email it to Seth Romo at sromo@faithinpractice.org.

All stories will be reviewed for length and content.

Please consider making a gift to support the next 20 years of life changing medical care.

$1,000 Orthopedic Surgery
$750 General or Gynecology Surgery
$500 Medical Trunk Filled with Surgical Supplies or Clinic Medicines
$250 Visit to a Medical Village Doctor or Dentist for Five People
$100 VIA/Cryotherapy, Cervical Cancer Screening for 10 Women
$50 Room & Board for a Recovering Patient at Casa de Fe
Other amount $__________

Faith In Practice is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

Faith In Practice has earned Charity Navigator’s 4-star rating for 9 years in a row. This honor places Faith In Practice in the Top 1% of all charities rated throughout the nation.