FAITH IN PRACTICE

A Unique Community
FAITH IN PRACTICE HOLDS GUATEMALA NETWORK DIRECTOR LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

They came from El Estor, the Eastern Caribbean coast of Guatemala. They came from Poptún, the jungles of El Petén and from Retalhuleu on the Western coastal plains. They came from San Carlos Alzatate, Jalapa, from Guadalupe, Mazatenango and from Oratorio, Santa Rosa. They came from all across Guatemala to serve. They are our wonderful Network Directors. Our Guatemalan volunteers who have stepped out of the crowd and answered the call to serve their communities, communities found throughout the distant corners of Guatemala.

What a beautiful sight it was to see all of these volunteers, crowded in the Casa de Fe, there to listen and to learn about updates to Faith In Practice’s Village Medical Clinic program. They discussed setting up clinics in local schools, churches and community buildings, advertising in surrounding villages so that everyone would know that the Faith In Practice jornada was coming, and the intricacies of the surgical referral program, so that patients seen in the villages would later travel, accompanied by these dedicated Network Directors, to one of the four locations where Faith In Practice sends surgical teams. They asked questions and participated in making the system better so that more patients would be served, and served well. For two days, our Directors received instruction and asked questions and laughed and cried, coming together as one in this common mission.

On Sunday morning, Padre José Contran preached, saying that each volunteer present was the Good Samaritan—each refused to pass by when he or she saw a neighbor in need. For our Network Directors, to stop and reach out to a neighbor in need is nothing short of sacrifice. They have very little themselves, most living without electricity or running water, and yet they have committed themselves to helping those in need of medical care. Faith In Practice is honored to call them partners in mission and thanks them for their vital contribution to Faith In Practice’s network of care that reaches all across Guatemala.

At the end of the conference, one by one, the Network Directors rose to share why this mission means so much to them. One by one they marveled at God’s presence in this work and thanked God for Faith In Practice’s supporters and volunteers. Vitalina Cerdeño said it best when she said, “God has sent us to work for Faith In Practice...God has sent all the volunteers from the United States to help the people of Guatemala. I pray for all the doctors and their families.” And then she said, “Have courage brothers and sisters, we must work with love and loyalty...May God bless you and protect you.”

VITALINA CERDEÑO, Network Director

“Have courage brothers and sisters, we must work with love and loyalty...May God bless you and protect you.”

Guatemala Network Directors at the Casa de Fe, November 2008 Leadership Conference
We arrived by bus early in the morning to set up the clinic in the colégio at Los Paracaidistas, a small village 30 kilometers north of Rio Dulce. We were greeted by crowds of people, waiting patiently for the clinic to open. The teen-age students from the colégio were given the day off from school to help set up the clinic, manage the crowds, hold babies, and act as translators.

Large drapes covered the windows of two classrooms that would become the pediatric clinic and the family medicine clinic. The porch connecting the two rooms became my open-air laboratory. As I set up my instruments, some of the students gathered around to watch. They were both curious about my instruments and how I would collect blood for testing. They were eager to practice their English skills and when I had free moments between patients they asked me questions, in English, about my family and my home in America. They, in turn, described their families and their life as Guatemalan teenagers.

One student in particular, a handsome young man named Luis, was fascinated with my English-Spanish phrasebook. He proudly pronounced the English words that he recognized and asked me for help in correctly pronouncing unfamiliar words. He encouraged me to practice my Spanish, politely and patiently correcting my pronunciation. We laughed with each other as we made mistakes. I learned that day that a language difference is as big or small a barrier as we make it.

As we packed up the clinic I watched the students prepare the classrooms for the following school day. The girls whispered quietly among themselves. The boys joked and wrestled each other playfully. I thought about my three teenagers back home in Oregon and realized that when we immerse ourselves in another culture we will discover that there is far more that unites us than there is that divides us.

Kathy Blaustein is from Corvallis, Oregon and has been a Faith in Practice volunteer for 3 years.

The Greatest Gift of All

She lay on a bed at the Casa de Fe, Faith In Practice’s patient guest house, recovering after orthopedic surgery. She lived in a small village in Guatemala—no running water, no electricity. But, what she said was poetry. “For years, we have been in so much pain. So much pain we thought it would be better to die. But now, we are living. Thank you for giving us our lives back.”

His face was gentle and kind. The long years of hard work had left his skin creased, but his face was filled with peace. He had been thrown off the finca where he had served most of his life, because he was too old to work. He had no place to go. Standing in the Casa de Fe, he said, “I like it here. Here you are treated like a human.”

Each of the six women carried a small baby in her arms. Each baby had large brown eyes and a cleft lip. Dressed in the colorful clothes of the Quiche, the mothers were on their way to the Casa de Fe. They had come because the doctors could fix their babies’ mouths. They touched my arm and asked God’s blessing upon me. Their smiles were filled with joy. Not happiness, but joy which somehow carries a depth to it—both laughter and tears all mixed together.

Joe Wiatt told me once that he meets Jesus in Guatemala. I could not agree with him more. Christ was in the faces of those I had the privilege of meeting this past week.

As we move toward receiving once again, the gift of the Christ child, let us recommit ourselves to reaching out to others in service in all that we do and are, whether it be through Faith In Practice or in some other way. Let us remember that it is in moments of service that we see the very face of Christ, the greatest gift of all.

Merry Christmas.

REV. LINDA L. MCCARTY, Executive Director

www.faithinpractice.org
May God Bless You All

ARMANDO NAJERA, GUATEMALA NETWORK DIRECTOR, SAYS THANK YOU

Armando Najera shared his life story with us at our Annual Gala. Armando lives on a mountain top in Jalapa in one room with his wife and four children. It was our honor and privilege to listen to the words of this man who was once a patient and now has chosen to serve as a volunteer with Faith In Practice, so that others, too, may receive life-changing medical care and surgeries. The following is a portion of his letter of thanks.

To the Directors of Faith In Practice and everyone in the United States, I send a cordial greeting, a hug, and a Merry Christmas on behalf of my wife and children, thank you for giving me the opportunity to meet with you. I hope when this reaches you, it finds you well and the all-powerful God will fill you with many blessings for all the good being done unto others. These are my best wishes. The experience I had traveling to Houston was unforgettable and I will always keep it in my mind and heart.

... The Gala arrived and I will never forget it. To see the people of this grand organization and meet all the friends who shook my hand and appreciated me was wonderful. When the program began I felt nervous but my heart was glad. I could share my message with everyone. As I finished they applauded and I remembered that I was treated and cared for at the Obras Hospital through Faith In Practice who continues to support and encourage me. The light sticks on each table were then illuminated to represent all of the patients in Guatemala. In this instance, tears ran down my face.

... I received many hugs and congratulations. They said, “Thank you for coming. We love you very much and we hope to see you again.” Thank you so much for the space you made for me and for giving me the opportunity to meet with you all. Let’s not say, “Goodbye”, but “until then”, and may God, the creator of the universe, bless you all.

Your dear friend, Armando

Thank You for Your Generosity!

Thank you for making the 2008 Gala Celebration, A Heart for Mission, a success! The evening was filled with special moments such as Armando’s moving story, the tribute to Guatemalan Vice President Dr. Rafael Espada, and Madeleine Moorhead’s beautiful rendition of Amazing Grace.

Thanks to your support, we raised over $340,000! We are so grateful to all who participated. A special thanks to our 2008 Gala Co-Chairs, Karen and David Cecil, Julie and Cary Moorhead, and Lorri and Walter Wolff. Your heart for mission made this event possible.
Looking for the perfect gift for a loved one that will truly change a life in Guatemala? This is a wonderful way to honor those you love and to support medical mission at the same time.

How does it work? Go to www.faithinpractice.org, click on “Giving” then “Alternative Giving.” Once you enter your online payment, we will send a card to the recipient you designate in the “notes” field. Please make sure to include their full name and complete address. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Gift Giving Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equipment for New Regional Surgery &amp; Clinic Sites</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gynecology or Orthopedic Surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleft Lip and Palate Surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trunk of Medical Supplies or Village Medicines</td>
<td>$ 200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Via/Cryotherapy: Cervical Cancer Screening</td>
<td>$ 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dental Care: 10 Extractions</td>
<td>$ 75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visit to a Medical Village Doctor or Dentist</td>
<td>$ 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antibiotics for 5 Patients</td>
<td>$ 25</td>
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</tbody>
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* This is a guide; all contributions received will be unrestricted. Payments received after December 20th will be followed with a note for Best Wishes for the New Year.
Yes, I want to support the life changing medical mission of Faith In Practice.

I am giving a gift of $________ to support:

- General Contribution (unrestricted)
- Share The Mission Program (mission team fundraising)
- Casa de Fe tile ($125 or $1,000)
- Carol King Nurse Education Scholarship

Enclosed is my check made payable to Faith In Practice or:

Please charge $_________ to my credit card:

- Visa
- MasterCard
- AmEx
- Discover

Card Number:_________________________ Exp Date:________ CC Verification Code:______

Name on card: ___________________________ Signature: _____________________________

Billing Address: ________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______________________

Telephone: ______________________________ Email: ________________________________

Please help us update our records and fill out your contact information above.

Optional Gift giving: This gift is offered

- in memory of
- in honor of
- Share The Mission

Please notify:

Name: ________________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: __________ Zip: ___________________________

Email: _________________________________________

Share The Mission Program: Volunteer ID# ___________ Trip# ____________

Please contact me about how I can include Faith In Practice in my Will or Living Trust.

Yes, I have already included Faith In Practice in my Estate Plan.

Please DO NOT include me on the Faith In Practice mailing list.

Faith In Practice qualifies for many corporate matching gifts. Please include your company’s gift form.

Thank you for making a difference in so many lives!

www.faithinpractice.org | 713.484.5555 | info@faithinpractice.org

Faith In Practice is a 501 (c)(3) organization and all gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
Israel 38:10

become like noonday.

afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your night will

If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the

Postage Required. Post Office will not deliver without proper postage.
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Enclosed is my check made payable to Faith In Practice or:

Please charge $_____________ to my credit card:

- O Visa
- OMasterCard
- OAmEx
- ODiscover

Card Number:_________________________ Exp Date:________ CC Verification Code:______
Name on card: ___________________________ Signature: _____________________________
Billing Address: ________________________________________________________________
City: ___________________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______________________
Telephone: ______________________________ Email: ________________________________

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Name: ________________________________________________________________________
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