

# Faith In Practice

Life Changing Medical Mission



## Advent Glory

**Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together.**

**Isaiah 40:5**

They began to sing. First Dominga, then Julian, then Armando. One song, then another, then another. Their voices rose, swelled, as one after the other joined their voices in song. Some with their eyes closed, others with palms open, faces lifted, they offered their reverence and awaited the gift that surely was present. My eyes filled with tears. I could feel my heart opening, expanding to receive the elusive gift. As I breathed it in, I could feel the Spirit moving among them, carried on their song, and in that moment, the glory of the Lord was revealed to me.

At that same time, I knew that without them, without their voices, their song, my heart would have remained constricted, unaware. I would not have seen the Spirit moving, the Spirit that is always present to me, if only I could meet each day, each moment, with an expectant heart. So, I gave God thanks for them, they who brought the gift to me in their song.

They had gathered from across Guatemala to share a time of reflection and prayer, our Guatemalan volunteer leaders. Separated from each other for much of the pandemic, I could see the wear on their faces, tired and worn. And, yet, in them was deep and reverent gratitude. They seemed almost illuminated. I had missed them so. They who know what it is to await his coming in the darkness, to feel his presence in the darkness even as they await his light.

In that moment, I knew that I was home. Not only because I was with them, but because with and through them, I knew I was with the One who loved me before I could remember, the One who will welcome me home once my days on this earth are done. The glory of the Lord revealed, and we had seen it, experienced it, together. Pure gift.

We are now in the Season of Advent. The season that acknowledges the darkness into which his light shall come. The season that creates space, if we let it, to find moments where we might open our hearts to receive the gift that awaits in the darkness, that leads us to the light. Advent, not as a sentimental precursor to Christmas, but rather a rich and fertile time that holds within it the truth of our lives. The darkness and the light of our lives. The gift of the Spirit and the gift of those God has placed in our lives through whom we might glimpse his glory. To feel his presence together. Jesus, the Child. Born into poverty and darkness, born into our own poverty and darkness. He, the Child. Leading us into his light and our salvation. God with us. Always with us, in both the darkness and the light.

So, during this rich and expectant time of Advent, this time of waiting, my hope and prayer for each of you is that you might see this season as something more. A way through which the Child might speak to you through the presence of those you love. Reminding you of the One who has loved you before you could remember, who shall be there to welcome you home at your journey's end. God with us. Always and forever with us.

In gratitude to God for placing you in my life as we journey together, as we encounter the Child together, through this mission that is truly God's own.

Rev. Linda L. McCarty

President & CEO

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and all people shall see it together.**

**Isaiah 40:5**



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