

Compassion in Action



Exciting events with the El Salvador Mission Group – just completed and coming in July!

El Salvador – Twice!

[This article is written by Greg Palmer who was part of the May trip to El Salvador, and Kelly Sasser, representing the youth who will travel to El Salvador in July.]

A group of eight adults just returned from a visit with our sister church, Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel (IBE), in San Salvador, El Salvador. The focus of the trip was to learn about and film activities that minister to the needs of youth education. The group also strengthened its bonds of friendship with the members of IBE through worship and leisure time together.

The trip began with a visit to the Emmanuel School which is affiliated with the church and educates students from elementary to high school. The curriculum is centered around the Culture of Peace, a set of seven guiding principles that seeks to promote harmony among all people. Teachers weave the principles into their lesson plans to teach peace and practical subject matter at the same time.

One good example of the Culture of Peace program in action is the Hacedores de Paz (Peacemakers), a group of trained student leaders at the Emmanuel School. The group organizes various activities to encourage trust and respect among students. It also serves as an honor council, a peer-run organization that handles discipline issues. Instead of expelling students for poor behavior, the school seeks to educate the

students to move towards more positive outcomes.

Our delegation also visited youth centers that are linked to IBE mission churches in the communities of Soyapango and Alegria, where we have supported students with scholarships for many years. Both focus on trying to provide alternatives to gangs, alcoholism, and drugs in their communities. Activities at these centers include Bible school and arts classes.

Finally, the group spent much time at Cal Pipil, an after-school youth center that is operated by IBE. Cal Pipil offers classes in a variety of areas, such as screen printing, music, drawing, and cooking. Not only is it a resource to keep kids off of the streets and out of gangs, but it also is a place for community members to gather and enjoy activities in a safe space.

Teddy Leinbach led the film crew and will be working with others, including Rebeca Olmedo who is transcribing the interviews, to produce a documentary on the youth centers and schools. The quality and quantity of experiences to film far exceeded expectations. As a result, it will take some time to put the film together. Think of it as "coming soon to a WSBC theater near you! ..."

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El Salvador (continued)

The next visit to Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel will take place July 22-28, when a team of 16 senior high youth and adults will travel to El Salvador. The primary focus of this trip will be developing relationships with the youth at our sister congregation in San Salvador. There will also be service projects, recreational activities, opportunities to learn about the culture and history of El Salvador and the life and impact of Archbishop Oscar Romero, a visit with the children in Alegria who receive scholarships from WSBC, and worship with our brothers and sisters in Christ at IBE. In addition, we hope to learn about God and about ourselves as we see the world from a different perspective. Thank you, Watts Street, for your prayers, words of encouragement, financial support, and the opportunity to participate in this beautiful covenant church partnership. We look forward to sharing our experiences with you during worship on Sunday, August 14.



Jack Leinbach, Teddy Leinbach, and Rebeca Olmedo interview Pastor Miguel Tomas Castro Garcia at the Wall of Remembrance in San Salvador.

Join Durham CAN Accountability Session on School Counseling

At the Durham CAN Metro Council meeting held at Watts Street in April, Durham CAN youth were urged to move forward on the issue of improving school counseling services. Watts Street members are invited to show their support by attending an accountability session to be held on Wednesday, June 15, from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at 4907 Garrett Road.

Durham CAN youth will report on agreements made by the DPS School Board, County Commissioners and Durham Technical Community College to expand school counseling services for next year. For additional information, contact Bob Kruhm at 919-544-3719 or by email at rkruhm@nc.rr.com.



Watts Street hosted the April Durham CAN Assembly.

Alliance of Baptists Annual Gathering

[WSBC is affiliated with The Alliance of Baptists, American Baptist Churches USA, and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Our connection with these denominational bodies keeps us informed on what we, as Baptists, are doing in our country and in the world to further God's Kingdom. We encourage our members to participate in these denominational meetings to learn from and give input to our Baptist beliefs. This year's report is written from the perspective of WSBC member Fran Langstaff.]

The Annual Alliance of Baptists Gathering was held at Kirkwood Baptist Church in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 8 – 10. Walking into an Alliance Gathering is always such a good feeling - one of acceptance and love of all; deep and interesting discussions of current events in Baptist life and the world as a whole; interesting and invigorating Bible study and sermons; great music, and, most of all, meeting again with old Alliance friends and making new Alliance friends. This year's session, "Bearing Courage: Rooted in Hope," was focused on women and began with a Festival of Young Women Preachers.

On Friday morning an outstanding panel presented their very engaging stories of "Bearing Courage: Rooted in Hope," followed by a vigorous and enlightening Q&A session. Odja Barros is a Baptist pastor in Brazil where the churches are experiencing very difficult times. Kyndra Frazier, a graduate of Candler School of Theology at Emory, is also a therapist and finds her work lies at the intersection of spirituality and therapy; she is currently doing research on religious trauma syndrome and the effects of Christian fundamentalism on the mental health of the African-American LGBTQ community. Allyson Dylan Robinson is the first openly transgender person to be ordained by a Baptist Church and recently served as transitional pastor of Washington, DC's Calvary Baptist Church. Ken Sehested is an author and editor of "Prayer and Politics" and the founding director of the Baptist Peace

"...spiritually invigorating and soothing at the same time. I always feel I am among my people."



Fellowship of North America. Nancy Hastings Sehested is co-pastor of Circle of Mercy Congregation in Asheville, NC, and also serves as a prison chaplain at Swannanoa Correctional Center for Women.

Very interesting table discussions followed the session where we shared our reactions to the panelists and their stories emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. These discussions were pursuant to "Ground Rules for Creating Brave Space in Conversations," i.e., controversy with civility, own your intentions and your impact, challenge by choice, respect, and no attacks.

On Friday and Saturday afternoons, there was a choice of workshops - 13 in all, most of which I wanted to attend, but had to make choices. On Friday, I chose "A Queer Call: Reveling in the Gift of LGBT Ministers," facilitated by Cody Sanders.

On Saturday, my workshop choice was "#BlackLivesMatter and/as the Church" led by Ben Sanders, III, a professor at Eden Theological Seminary.

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Alliance of Baptists Annual Gathering (continued)

I could have listened to this outstanding young teacher/preacher all day. He had the entire group actively engaged in analyzing the #BlackLivesMatter movement in social and historical perspective paying particular attention to the ethical and theological challenges the movement poses to the Christian Church in the United States. He also gave us a good history lesson and had us delving into our pasts, remembering race relations and the important actions of various individuals and courts that have gotten us to where we are today.

Three worship services were led by outstanding preachers. Tracie Blackmon is nationally recognized as a prominent voice in organizing the Black Lives Matter movement. Phyllis Tribble is an authority on feminist interpretation of Biblical texts and an author. Kyndall Rae Rothaus, is pastor at Lake Shore Baptist Church, Waco, TX., (Dorisanne Cooper's former church) and is also an author.

With Community Meetings, I was interested in all seven but, again, had to make a choice. I joined the community on Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel. I had joined this Community at previous gatherings and continue to be interested because of the education I have received from Ralph and Emily McCoy and our Watts Street involvement in providing a clean water system to some schools in Palestine.

The Bible Study on Saturday morning was on two passages of the same story, Matthew 15:22-28 and Mark 7:25-30, in which Jesus saves a woman's daughter because of her faith. I particularly enjoyed Micah Bucey, Associate Minister at Judson Memorial Church in New York. The presentation was very good and the

discussion was quite lively and brought me to places I had not considered before.

Statements on Voting Rights, Clean Power, and Palestine and Israel were adopted. The Voting Rights statement advocates for the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 (S. 1659/H.R. 2867), a substantial legislative step to restoring and strengthening the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Clean Power statement urges every state to create a strong and effective state implementation plan that successfully meets carbon reduction targets without shifting costs to economically vulnerable communities. The Palestine and Israel statement proposes that the Alliance support the recommendations of the Kairos document with several recommended actions, including BDS (boycott, divestment, and sanctions) action. The Alliance operates on a consensus method, and all were in consensus on these three statements. I would be happy to share copies of those statements with any who wish to read them.

There was also a business meeting, including thanking members of the Board, particularly those whose terms were expiring, and the introduction of new oncoming Board members.

I recommend that any who can attend an annual Alliance of Baptists Gathering. The Alliance is by far the smallest of our Denominational Partners so there is a more personal feel to the gatherings. While it may be physically tiring, it is intellectually stimulating and spiritually invigorating and soothing at the same time. I always feel I am among my people.

For more information about the American Alliance of Baptists Gathering, contact Fran Langstaff at franlang@msn.com.

Missions Committee: The Missions Committee is in the process of vetting all organizations and groups that receive funding from WSBC. Watch for information about other needs from these groups (volunteers, event planning, etc) in the August *Compassion In Action*. 2015-2016 Missions Committee Members include: Paula Januzzi-Godfrey, Chair, Susan Brooks, Juliana Caldwell, Marcie Fisher-Borne, Kirsten Kruhm, Fran Langstaff, Jenny Leinbach, Bill McCraw, and Ginny Wiggins. **Ideas for Mission Baskets? Contact Susan Brooks or Bill McCraw. Ideas for Minute for Missions? Contact Fran Langstaff.**

Mission Baskets for Book Harvest

Many thanks to everyone who donated books for Book Harvest, our March/April Mission Basket collection. Book Harvest is a nonprofit organization that provides books to Triangle children in need. WSBC collected 162 books that will help provide reading materials to low income families in Durham and beyond! Having books at home helps children start kindergarten ready to learn, combat summer learning loss once they are in school, and self-identify as readers. Again, thanks to all who contributed to this book drive!

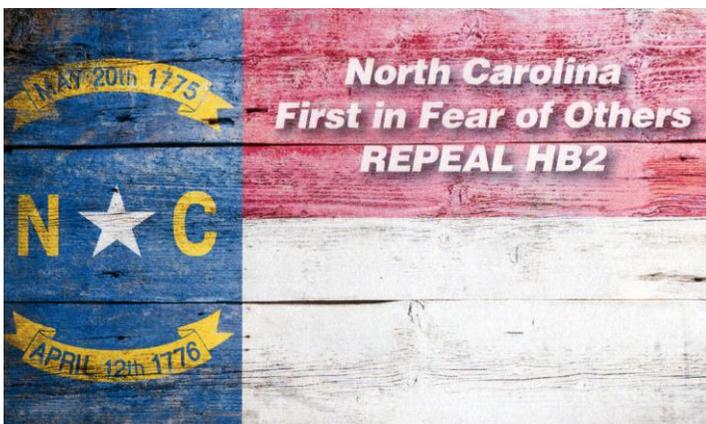
For more information about Book Harvest, please go to <http://bookharvestnc.org/>. For more information about WSBC Mission Baskets, please contact Susan Brooks, Susan.Brooks@dpsnc.net



Susan Brooks delivered 162 books to Book Harvest on behalf of WSBC.

How Can People of Faith Respond to HB2?

On Sunday, April 17, the Adult Education Committee sponsored a gathering of WSBC members for a conversation about House Bill 2. Jim Drennan provided a summary of the bill and people raised concerns about its effects. The WSBC Peace and Reconciliation Mission Group has developed suggestions for responding to HB2, including a card that can be used to start conversations and raise awareness. The bill summary, suggestions for responding, and the card are available at <http://wattsstreet.org/responding-to-hb2/>. Hard copies are available in the Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary foyers. Contact information for state legislators can be found at <http://www.ncleg.net/representation/WhoRepresentsMe.aspx>.



HB2 makes it clear that discrimination against LGBT persons is permitted in NC.
Tell the Governor and Legislature that is bad for all persons.

HB2 tells the nation that LGBT persons have no legal protections in NC.
Tell the Governor and Legislature that it is bad for tourism.

HB2 tells cities they can't protect their own citizens and guests.
Tell the Governor and Legislature to let cities govern themselves.

HB2 forces transgender persons into bathrooms where they are not safe. If you want safe bathrooms, **tell the Governor and Legislature to repeal HB2.**

If bathrooms need to be safe from predators, punish the predators, not transgender youth who get bullied already. **REPEAL HB2.**

NC — FIRST IN FEAR OF OTHERS. REPEAL HB2.

Prison Ministry Holds Baptismal Service

[This article is written by Bill Salyers, a member of the Prison Ministry Mission Group.]

"...baptizing each in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

On Sunday, May 29, 2016, Prison Ministry volunteers went to the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women for a baptismal service. Six ladies had completed baptismal instruction. Each of them participated in leading the worship service. One sang "Come Lord Jesus" beautifully and with great feeling. Another read the scripture from Isaiah Chapter 1. One gave the benediction. Each of them shared a scripture verse dear to them as they approached the baptismal waters.

Chaplain Sarah Jobe began the baptisms by asking each lady in turn, "What is your name?" Upon receiving the answer, Chaplain Jobe addressed each by name and asked, "Do you renounce evil and all paths that lead to

it?" Each strongly affirmed, "I do," whereupon Chaplain Jobe asked, "What is your confession of faith?" Each answered strongly, "Jesus is Lord." Each was baptized by sprinkling or pouring the water three times, baptizing each in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

One of the ladies early in the service shared a longer witness about the life journey bringing her to this place at this time. Truly you should have witnessed the testimony. Let me provide a summary that does not begin to capture the emotion and power. She told us of an abusive father, of a mother who resented her and did not want her, of a series of men who had taken advantage of her including additional abuse. She concluded with words like these, "I now forgive my father. I now forgive my mother. I now forgive each person who took advantage of me. And I now forgive myself!"

And new life begins with a new path to follow and a new Lord to guide the way. These ladies have accepted that God cares about where they are going and what they are becoming, leaving behind what they were and what happened to them.

To participate in worship services at the prison, volunteers need first to receive training and a Blue Card. To learn more, contact Jennifer Garst at jennifer.garst@duke.edu or Bill Salyers at salyers1932@yahoo.com.

The Scripture from Isaiah captured the spirit of the moment.

Isaiah Chapter 1:

- 16 Wash yourselves,
make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil;*
- 17 Learn to do good;
seek justice,
rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.*

Families Moving Forward Update

Families Moving Forward (FMF) continues to make progress toward consolidating its facilities at the renovated structure on Queen Street. A housewarming celebration took place on May 25th at 300 N. Queen St. The new rotational model will begin on Monday, July 4 with volunteer groups working about one week each quarter. WSBC's next scheduled volunteer service is July 25 – 28 – more details to follow.

Volunteer training opportunities will be available in June and July. Volunteers from any congregation who will be working with children and have not attended a Safe Sanctuary class in the last five years are encouraged to attend one of the Safe Sanctuary training sessions. The first opportunity for this training will be held at Mt. Sylvan Baptist Church on Sunday, June 12, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The second training will be held at Families Moving Forward at 300 N. Queen Street on Saturday, June 25 from 10:00 – 12:00 a.m. and will be taught by

Margie Burton from Immaculate Conception Church. Please use this link to sign up for either of these sessions: <http://cerv.is/m?0201gWdDBwY> (only one location – Queen Street – is given on the website, but Mt. Sylvan is the site for the June 12 gathering).

FMF will offer a workshop on Trauma Informed Care as an in-service training several times over the next year. Many FMF parents have experienced some kind of abuse either as a child or as an adult. Therefore, FMF is recommending this training to all volunteers who want to understand best practices for working with people that have undergone trauma. The first workshop will be offered on June 9 and another on July 21. Use this link to sign up for one of the sessions: <http://cerv.is/m?0201gpsTc73>.

For more information about FMF and Watts Street's involvement in this program, please contact Stuart Wells, stuart.wells@duke.edu, or Elizabeth Forshay, Elizabeth.Forshay@unchealth.unc.edu.

Training opportunities for FMF volunteers

Rebound: Recent News

- 1) Rebound provides mediation with a high success rate. With support from the Elna B. Spaulding Conflict Resolution Center, 28 students have successfully completed mediation at Rebound this year.
- 2) Rebound was part of the discussion with Durham Public Schools to revise its discipline policies to include more alternatives to out-of-school suspension, i.e., peer mediation, conflict resolution, counseling, and conference.
- 3) Rebound's Board of Directors is looking for new members.
- 4) For more information about Rebound, an organization supported as a WSBC Mission Partner, go to reboundnc.org or contact the Watts Street Rebound liaison Amy Rublein at arublein@mindspring.com.

Rebound: providing a supportive environment for high-school students on short-term suspension

Words of Thanks

The Missions Committee recently received several thank-you notes for donations to mission partners seeking to help those in need in the Durham Community. Excerpts are below; to read the complete correspondence, please go to the Missions Bulletin Board in the hallway behind the sanctuary.

End Poverty Durham: ...sincere thanks for your recent \$500 contribution...your gift provides much encouragement to various anti-poverty initiatives sponsored or endorsed by End Poverty Durham.

Senior PHARM Assist: Thank you so much for putting your values into action by making a \$1,000 gift to Senior PharmAssist. Your investment is providing older adults with the information and care they need to be as healthy, engaged and connected as possible – for as long as possible.

Durham Crisis Response Center: ...thank you for your contribution of \$1,700...Your financial support helps us to continue our mission and to assist those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault in our community.

W.E. Stanley Mission House: Thank you for your kindness and generosity. It was very much appreciated. May God richly bless you. The DeMatty Family

"Where every member is a minister"



Watts Street Baptist Church
Missions Committee
 800 Watts Street.
 Durham, N.C., 27701
 Phone: 919-688-1366
 Fax: 919-688-7255
 E-mail: wattsstreet@nc.rr.com
 Web: www.wattsstreet.org

Meals on Wheels

A group of six Watts Streeters gathered at Meals on Wheels on May 24 to pack meals for seniors in need. Beyond the nutritious meals, MoW enables social contact that many seniors may not otherwise receive. The delivery allows volunteers to identify other needs such as necessary home repairs and changes in physical appearance allowing intervention sooner rather than later. WSBC packs meals at MoW four times each year and more volunteers are needed. Contact Bob Kruhm at robertkruhm@gmail.com for more information.



Final Count on 2016 CROP Hunger Walk: \$3,108!