

Mission to the Children

News Update

Website: www.missiontothechildren.org

Email: info@missiontothechildren.org

June, 2018

PASTOR'S CORNER

Jonah 3:6–10 (NIV) *When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. 7 This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. 8 But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. 9 Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." 10 When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.*

Jonah was not a willing prophet. When God called him to preach law and gospel to the enemy nation of Nineveh, what did Jonah do? He tried to run away! But God had other plans for Jonah. He controlled things so that a whale brought Jonah to his senses and back to Nineveh. At last Jonah grudgingly preached God's law and gospel to his geopolitical enemies.

Jonah probably expected the inhabitants of Nineveh to remain in their pagan ways. He may have even wanted them to remain unbelievers so that God would follow through on his threat to destroy their city. Yet God's law and gospel had the opposite effect. Everyone in Nineveh, from its king to its lowest inhabitant, realized what they deserved for their sins. They repented and turned to God for salvation. And what did God do? He relented from his anger, withheld

their destruction, and forgave them of their many sins.

God can bless the gospel ministry in spite of our errors. While I pray we never react as Jonah did to his call – to run away from the people that we are to witness to – there are times when our efforts seem to block the gospel ministry. The friendly invite is interpreted as overbearing or pushy. The constant forgiving of particular sins becomes a license to sin that way all the more. Thinking on our feet accidentally puts our foot in our mouth. But no matter how our human errors may get in the way of the gospel's spreading, God will work his will as long as the Word is present. For it is through his Word that the Holy Spirit creates and strengthens faith. May we strive to let God's Word shine in all we do so that, in spite of our human errors, many more will come to repentance and faith as did Nineveh and her inhabitants.

Pastor Tim Patoka,
Spiritual Advisor to MttC.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Dear friends of and ongoing supporters of Mission to the Children,

How often do you think or say to yourself, "Where did the time go?" If you are like me, you do it way too frequently! Easter was just here, then Ascension and now Pentecost. Where did the time go?

Mission to the Children board recently had an opportunity to ask this question of ourselves and do some reflecting. This was precipitated by a communication that appeared to suggest that this mission was more of a humanitarian

aid agency than a ministry. So we wanted to share with you what YOUR MINISTRY has accomplished over the last 30 years. We say YOUR because donations from WELS individuals, schools, ladies guilds, LWMS groups, families and churches have made this ministry what it is today. This also includes hours and hours of preaching donated by WELS pastors from all over the U.S. who have traveled to Northern Sonora where we joyfully serve.

Since the very beginning in La Ladrillera, a small squatter's village of brick makers, God's Word has been provided on a regular basis. Sermons in Spanish, delivered by Spanish volunteers, along with food and humanitarian aid were provided to that area. As we expanded to Sasabe and then surrounding villages, at their request, either one of our volunteers or a Mexican volunteer read the service and volunteers taught Sunday School.

Spanish-speaking friends, students from our Lutheran Schools and Colleges came by the hundreds to hold Sunday School and Vacation Bible School for days on end. The students were no longer allowed to come by WELS when the cartels invaded our areas as it was considered unsafe for them. Our Tucson volunteers never wavered in coming, but had to abandon some villages after we were held at gunpoint by masked men.

Services were conducted in multiple villages by Pastor Ralph and Roxanne Martens when they were sent to our area by the LATTE Team. Spanish-speaking pastors came from the Phoenix area on a regular basis to do services, baptisms, and Posadas at Christmas in multiple pueblos. We hosted the WELS Conference of Presidents and the Latin American Board along with Tucson pastors who visited almost all of our villages.

Four of our Board members spent three days traveling to Torreon, Mexico and back to meet with Missionary Mike Hartman and the

LATTE Team and seminarians for a full day. Professor Olson of MLC and Teacher Karen Kilchenmann of WISCO have come several times to our area to conduct services and classes. Pastor Ted Bodjanac was hired by us to do services in Sasabe when we did not have a pastor for that church.

Mission to the Children funded Pastor Ron and Karen Baerbock for four and half years when regular services, baptisms and confirmations were done in multiple villages. John Bolm and I traveled regularly to the small town of El Ocuca for a few years to do services and Bible Class. For two years I did the Bible Study in Spanish with the women of Saric and Cerro Prieto. We also utilized WELS Missionary Lawrence Retberg and other visiting pastors to do services. Synod President Karl Gurgel visited our area three times. We have been committed to sharing God's precious Word from day one. We rented spaces in Sasabe for the ministry and purchased and repaired the parsonage in Atil. We also purchased and repaired the church La Iglesia del Buen Pastor in Altar. Last year, through volunteer donations by WISCO, we added a new chapel to the existing building in Altar.

When our Board was under the leadership of Jeff and Lori Hauser they worked for more than two years with the WELS World Board and the IELC (The Mexican Lutheran Synod) to obtain full-time Mexican Lutheran pastors to shepherd the people we are blessed to serve. There are two fully funded Mexican Lutheran churches, pastors and ministries in Sonora-----all from YOUR donations. A very special and unexpected blessing has come in the form of quarterly trips by Spanish-speaking pastors from Phoenix and Tucson to Sonora where they meet with the Mexican Lutheran pastors for study and fellowship!!!

And, yes, when funds were available, we have done humanitarian aid in the form of building homes, repairing roofs,

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paying for medical care or medicine, transporting an organ and furniture, helping schools be painted and having computer labs in Tubutama and Saric and even running an after-school program in Sasabe where children got snacks, watched Christian videos and were helped with their homework. Some students were helped with high school and college tuition and many families had sponsors in the early years---again all from YOUR donations.

While the above paragraphs represent only a part of what has happened in the past 30 years, I hope it fills in some of the blanks and also reinforces that this is a vital and living ministry. I would be remiss if I did not mention the wonderful women in Mexico who volunteer to do so much, even to the point of purchasing and packaging food for the poorer remote areas and delivering clothing and quilts to them. We have been so blessed by these people! With God's continued blessing on the ministry, we hope to continue and remain in the area for many more years. To God be the Glory!

Ruth Schaller, President



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

MttC is again packing school supplies for close to 1,000 children aged 3 to 15. We are asking if they can be mailed to us by the middle of July so we can take them to the villages by the end of July and get them to the families before school starts. Items are similar to what you would buy for your own children. The only requirement we ask is that spiral notebooks all be college lined as they want those in Mexico and not the wide lined pages (even for the little children.) Please send the supplies to Ruth Schaller, [3829 W. Cetus St., Tucson, AZ 85742-5016](mailto:info@missiontothechildren.org). Thank you for participating in this event that the teachers, students and parents eagerly wait for every year!!!!



VOLUNTEERS:

With the recent deaths of three of our major volunteers, we are actively looking for Spanish-speaking people who have a passport and could perhaps once or twice a year make a three-to-four-day trek to Mexico with our other volunteers. You would be helping with Sunday School lessons or Vacation Bible School or distribution of items to the families like school supplies, quilts, food

coupons and Christmas gifts. You would be staying in our parsonage dormitory in Atil and going to villages from there.

Please contact the office at [520-791-2129](tel:520-791-2129) or email our office manager at info@missiontothechildren.org. She will see that the information gets to the proper persons.



What Does It Take?

What does it take to be a Mission to the Children volunteer? Kindness, compassion, love, a little time, hope, and a willingness to be an MttC volunteer. Do you speak Spanish? Do you speak English? Can you lift bags of school supplies or Christmas toys into a van? Can you sort things? Can you count? Do you like people? Do you like kids? Can you drive a van? If you can do one or more of the above then you can be a volunteer for Mission to the Children.

I started out by saying yes to being the secretary for the Board. It was only going to be for a year. I'm still on the Board as secretary. It's been a long year. Over twenty years long. I keep telling myself that I need to slow down-I'm not listening. And I'm also the Office Manager for MttC. I have taken breaks during the twenty years and find out that I am always returning to MttC for our Lord.

Being a volunteer does something to you. Being a volunteer changes you. Remember you saying how busy you are and you don't have the time? Well, you will find out that you will always have the time for volunteering. It becomes a need for you. Many of us are very busy

raising our children, working, taking care of our spouses or parents and yet we continue to volunteer for Mission to the Children and other projects. Not because we have to but because we want to. John Bolm, Gisela Kittle, and Maryann Rosas dedicated their lives to helping others in so many ways. They knew how important the children of the world are to our Lord. Please consider helping us anyway that you can; for it will always be greatly appreciated.

I always try to remember the following from Isaiah 6:8 (NIV) when I am thinking about saying yes: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" "And I said, Here am I. Send Me!"

God's Blessing Always.

Karen Manning, Secretary and Office Manager for MttC

