



# Jeff & Christa Mills in Guatemala

Final Harvest Ministries, Apartado 10, 03901 Antigua, Guatemala, Central América

February 2017

## The Church Without a Roof Appeal



You will remember in our last two Newsletters our appeal for financial help to complete our church by building a simple roof costing approximately **\$8,000**. So far only one lady has given 1,500Euros, as well as some people from Face Book who have also promised to give \$300. We are nowhere near to hitting the target before the rainy season starts in April. Now I know people like to give when it involves children or the poor, and I understand that, but, I want to try and explain to you that our church building will not just be used for our two church services a week, but for many other uses. We reach out to the poor. Some people have come to us when they have not single piece of food on their plates. They come to us when they are sick and cannot afford medicine. They come to us when they cannot afford clothing for their children, or even for themselves! They

come to us when they need funds to send their children to school. They come to us when they cannot afford a wedding. They come to us in the middle of the night when their teenage child is expecting a baby. And the list goes on and on.



We intend using the new building as a place for women's meetings, men's meetings, teenagers meetings, and even a music school. We also see our building being used in the future for medical and dental campaigns. Our church in the past 7 months has grown to over 50 and we are extremely squashed for church services in a building for 20. We want to give you some idea of what life is like here in Guatemala and please forgive us if this is long, but it is important that you know why we urgently need a larger building to reach these people.

In Guatemala, 75% of the population lives below the poverty line. This situation affects most severely the children of minorities. Poverty has many consequences on the lives of children: health problems, malnutrition, and obligation to work to the detriment of their education. In 2009, half of children in Guatemala suffered from chronic malnutrition, and the percentage is even higher for native children. This is where God comes in through US and through YOU!

### Right to health

Guatemala doesn't offer sufficient health services to meet the needs of the entire population. The fact is that many people are dying of simple sicknesses because they cannot afford the medicines.

Three weeks ago I took a man and his sick baby to the emergency station at the local hospital at 11pm, by 3am the baby had not been seen, so he went home. Remember, this was the emergency station! The next morning I gave him what money I had to buy medicine from the pharmacy. The situation is so bad that the national hospitals have run out of medicines! If someone is due an operation they have to buy what is needed for the operation before it can take place! People on Kidney dialyses have now been sent home to die. Life is cheap!



I thank God for our supporters, because when the call has been made, you have been generous and have sent what is needed. Our pastor- Juan Carlos and I, when we were in hospital, is a prime example of you giving generously!

### Child labor

More than 20% of Guatemalan children are forced to work to contribute to their family's income. This situation is one of the worst in Latin America. Employers take advantage of the youth and ignorance of these children, having them do the most dangerous work. They work in many different sectors: polishing shoes, night work in factories, washing cars, street vendors, construction workers, maids or even garbage collectors using their bare hands! They are exploited ruthlessly in strenuous and sometimes dangerous situations. The repercussions are serious: they suffer from many health problems and cannot receive normal education.



### Exploitation and Violence towards Children

Guatemala is home to much illicit and dangerous trafficking. Children are the first victims of criminals who use them without hesitation. As in many countries, poverty proliferates activities such as; drug trafficking, prostitution, pornography, child trafficking, organ trafficking, and illegal adoption. Children are confronted by violence and insecurity in the streets; they are targets and the means of action necessary for traffickers. The prevailing crime and impunity ensures that little is done to prevent this.

Young girls are the main victims of these criminals. They are seriously abused, and exhibit much evidence of torture and sexual abuse. Violence is very destructive in Guatemala and it affects many children. In the streets, it creates a climate of insecurity and danger. The rate of child murders is alarming and very often the criminals remain unpunished (98% of cases). Children's right to protection, guaranteed by the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is not properly ensured. Thus, Guatemalan children constantly risk their lives and are sometimes confronted by extreme and cruel violence.

In addition, violence can also be seen within families as well as at school. Thus many children are abused and end up on their own, with no secure place to go. Neither their family, nor their school saves them from it. They end up on the streets and then eventually join gangs.



## Guatemala's Gangs

Guatemala's criminal organizations are among the most sophisticated and dangerous in Central America. Some of them have been in operation for decades. They include former members of the military, intelligence agencies and active members of the police. Transporting illegal drugs north comprises the bulk of their activity, but organized crime is also involved in marijuana and poppy cultivation, as well as human trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, money laundering, arms smuggling, adoption rings, and other illegal enterprises. They often work with groups from Mexico, Columbia and other Central American nations.



As you see, we cannot save the whole of Guatemala, but we can do our own little bit with YOUR help. **You have helped us now for 23 years** in the help of planting two other churches, and we believe you will help us with this new church. **Our own support has dropped 50%** in the past 3 years. We would like to ask you if you would also like to contribute and make a monthly support. We are now asking you to dig deep in your pockets until it hurts, to complete the church building, and if possibly, a monthly support for us personally. Please, please give generously so we can reach the people of Guatemala. You can make your payments to the address given below.



## Prayers

**Finances for completion of church.**

**Our health and personal finances.**

**Safety. Guatemala is now the 2<sup>nd</sup> most dangerous country in the world.**

**God bless you all for your giving and for your love.**

*Jeff & Christa Mills*

*Globe Mission Missionaries*



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### Our website:

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