

Grace of Giving



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Things I Learned in Mexico

by Lola Williams

Lola Williams, the computer systems specialist on the campus of Clifton Intermediate School, joined her husband, Ben, on our house building mission trip to Mexico this year. She agreed to share her thoughts on the trip with you in this edition of our newsletter.

There is No “I” in Team

Whether you were a builder, a painter or a cook, you were an integral part of a team. There were no egos on this trip. If a job needed doing, you did it. What a joy it was to see men and women engaged in a joint enterprise, working together to build a house. The building crews worked hard, but the kitchen crew was invaluable. They rose at 5:30 a.m., fixed breakfast, got the lunches ready, and made sure that each crew had coolers of water and Gatorade, along with cups and a cooler of drinks. Then they shopped for more food and cooked dinner for 30-40 hungry workers. Every person was part of a team working for the Glory of God, not for the praise of man. And it showed!

Love in Any Language – Thoroughly Spoken Here

How awesome it was to worship in a bi-lingual service in Jimenez on Wednesday night singing “How Great Thou Art” in English and Spanish – at the same time!! How awesome it was to sit on wooden benches in a church with peeling plaster walls, bare rafters overhead, sparse lighting from a noisy generator outside and sing praises to our God and hear from His Word! I thought to myself, “What language will we speak in Heaven?” and then it came to me. “Love” will be spoken in Heaven, just as it was in the Jimenez church, not with spoken words but with smiling eyes, smiles, hugs and handshakes. Our spirits spoke to one another when words could not.

‘Tis Better to Give Than to Receive

Some gave money to pay for the building supplies, some gave prayer support, and some of us, who were very fortunate to actually go, gave of our talents, our tools and our time (many took time off from work). One lady, who could not go this year, made colorful curtains and pillows for each family. Everyone gave freely, asking nothing in

return. However, no matter how or what we gave, we all had the tremendous privilege of being God’s servants to minister to these families. In the end, we all received more than we gave.

One other thing about giving — when Grace of Giving began, the first contact was with Charles Knaack of Voice of Mexico Ministries in Del Rio. Despite great need, Charlie didn’t distribute what he received only to his congregation. He gave some of what he received to others who had needs. Then Grace of Giving began to supply those needs as well, and the ministry kept expanding as God revealed needs. What a testimony and an indictment to those of us who tend to cling to what we have. May we all have hands and hearts that are as open as Charlie’s.

This year Grace of Giving was able to build three houses in Jimenez, Coahuila, Mexico:

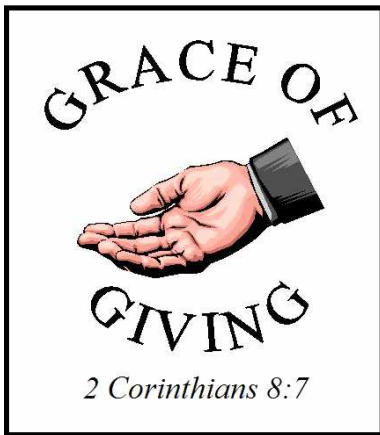
- For Maria, who cares for four young granddaughters;
- For Leticia and her two young sons; and
- For Teresa, a single mother who also has two young sons.

With the Lord’s Blessing, Grace of Giving plans to build at least three more houses next year. It is impossible to convey the enormity of the needs of the Mexican people. Grace of Giving helps to meet tremendous needs. Pray that God will open our hearts and our hands to support this ministry.

Editor’s note: We’re already starting to pray for God’s guidance in respect of house building projects in 2007. In 2005, God provided the people and financial resources for two houses. This year, He trusted us to build three. Is a goal of four houses in 2007 too ambitious? Our God is certainly big enough to provide all we would need for four houses, if it is His will for us to continue to grow this area of ministry. Please join us in praying earnestly for His guidance for 2007. In the meantime, our deepest thanks goes to all who provided money, willing hands, and especially the prayers that made our 2006 trip such a success!



Leticia and the building crew at the dedication of her new home



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Please visit our website!
www.graceofgiving.org

Grace of Giving

Grace of Giving is a non-profit, charitable organization that is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c)(3) organization. Accordingly, the Internal Revenue Service has advised that all contributions to Grace of Giving may be deducted for federal income tax purposes as specified in section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our priorities for using your gifts are to purchase food and to purchase fuel to deliver the food. The officers of Grace of Giving accept no compensation for their services and currently cover all of their travel expenses.

Officers

Greg Beard — President & Treasurer
Dara Beard — Vice President
Pastor Keith Blanton — Secretary

In Honor of Others

Since our last newsletter, Grace of Giving has been blessed with a number of gifts either in memory of loved ones or in honor of the efforts of devoted servants of God!

- From the Bosque Baptist Association WMU in honor of Murray and Betty Wise for their work on the African continent with Texas Baptist Men.
- From Maudie Monroe, our organist at FBC Clifton, in memory of her parents, Ernest and Norene Ragsdale, on the occasion of their birthdays.
- From Mike and Jean Finney to honor the memories of Brownie Cranfill, father of our dear friend, Jo Atkinson,

and of Graham Vandiver, father of FBC Clifton member Bill Vandiver.

- From Tom and Dana Henderson as a memorial for Dwayne Bronstad, father of FBC Clifton member Kelly Finney.
- From Betty and Herman Barrs as memorials for Jim Arnold, brother-in-law of their friends Mr. and Mrs. Duane Davis of Jasper, Georgia, and for Jarbo Wright, their friend from Kermit, Texas.

We are honored to be able to serve others in God's name as well as in the name of these precious souls!

Ministry Needs

One of the wonderful blessings of this ministry is to see how you, our team of supporters, always step up and provide the funding needed for special projects we wish to undertake. Let me give you a few examples:

- The recent house building mission trip to Mexico — we made known to you the needs for \$15,600 to fund three houses, and you provided *more than* 100% (we received just over \$16,100, which enabled us to cover some of the miscellaneous expenses of these projects). We also had the *perfect* number of volunteers for the trip!
- Hymnals and school supplies — as mentioned in our last newsletter, when we made these needs known to you, they were funded 100% within two days of the newsletter mailing date!



Team members praying over Maria's house at our dedication ceremony

I cannot tell you how grateful, humble, and blessed we are by your unfailing generosity and prayerful support.

We've another project now on which we need your help. Year-to-date, Grace of Giving has received contributions which cover about 60% of the monthly costs for

purchasing the food and personal items we deliver on a regular basis (year-to-date costs are \$67,473; year-to-date contributions, excluding those for the building projects/trip are \$40,842). We also spend about \$500-600 for fuel on each trip; this cost is not included in the figures set out above.

Please don't misunderstand. You have been wonderfully supportive of our ministry; we could ask no more of you financially. Our request is this:

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD!!

We are convinced that if we are able simply to spread sufficiently far the word of what God has us doing, He will faithfully move the hearts of His church to provide the funding we need.

Our project for you now is — find *just two* people who don't receive this newsletter and send it to them! Alternatively, send us their contact details, and we'll add them to our newsletter mailing list. We would also welcome the opportunity to visit your church to share personally the wonderful ministry opportunities God has given to Grace of Giving. However you see fit, *please*, just help us spread the word!!!