

# MISSION4GUATEMALA 2015 PLANNING GUIDE

Week 1: November 19 – 30, 2015

Week 2: November 29 – December 8, 2015

## Mission Programs Leadership

- Mission4Guatemala Leader Ervin Brown
- Mission4Guatemala Assistant Leader Janis Keener
- Nursing Program and University Status Leader Phil Hunt
- Evangelism and Christ Centered Outreach Leader Ignacio Silverio
- Children's Evangelism Meetings Leader Yvette Ramos
- Facilities Planning/Construction Leader Steven Hinger
- Medical Outreach Leaders Ardel and Jenny Gorospe
- Health Education Leader Pattie James
- Research and Registration Data Coordinator Lynne Caples

## Mission4Guatemala (M4G) and the Instituto de Capacitacion Adventista del Petén (ICAP)

Early in 2011, the *first* investigative trip was made to God's Helping Hands Clinic near Poptun, Petén, Guatemala. Next a four-member team made a trip to prepare the site for the first mission trip scheduled in November of 2011. It was through God's leading that these pre-teams were taken to visit ICAP. There the teams met Ed Thompson who had recently retired from Vanderbilt University. He and his wife were fulfilling their plans to live out retirement in Guatemala when he was approached to become principal of ICAP. The team learned that ICAP is a thriving Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) boarding school for secondary studies in Guatemala with a current enrollment of nearly 400 students where a variety of vocational and scholarly educational programs are offered. ICAP (**pronounced ECAP**) was started by Pastor Ira Nations, president of the Guatemala Mission in collaboration with Jim Bechtel in 1972. International Children's Care (ICC) currently provides administrative oversight for ICAP. They also operate Hogar Los Pinos, an orphanage located next to the school. The land for both of these facilities belongs to the SDA Guatemala Union Mission. ICAP is a highly respected educational institution that provides students with academic excellence and spiritual guidance. The stellar reputation of the school attracts the very poorest families as well as wealthy families and those of high-ranking government officials.

It was during that first visit to ICAP while eating lunch in the cafeteria that the pre-teams learned of urgent needs at the school. As they toured the kitchen facility they found broken stove burners in the smoke filled kitchen. The need for a new stove, sinks, tables, a mixer and other kitchen equipment was critical. It was with a sense of urgency that they believed God

was guiding them to provide assistance that would promote the mission of the school and would increase its financial stability. They were further inspired when told that a significant number of new students are not Adventist and that a large percentage of students accept Jesus and are baptized before graduating.

The pre-teams returned to Tennessee and shared the story of ICAP with a group at the Madison Campus SDA church. Dr. Andrew Boskind and his Sabbath School Class caught the vision and raised \$20,000 to buy new equipment for the kitchen facility. Six months later equipment was purchased, installed and was being utilized.

There were 60 participants on the first Mission Trip in 2011. Eighteen members of the team were under 18 years of age. Individuals were blessed as they worked with the medical, construction, vacation Bible school and evangelism teams. Much was accomplished during the ten-day stay in Guatemala. The entire team visited ICAP that year and the decision was made to build a new kitchen facility for ICAP as the 2012 mission trip project.

Word spread about the needs at the school and how God was leading the team in its efforts to bless ICAP and surrounding communities. The Highland SDA Church in Portland Tennessee and the Madison Campus SDA Church in Madison Tennessee area joined the Ridgetop SDA Church for the 2012 mission trip. There were also team members from other churches in the area and from states such as Maine, Texas, Arizona and Iowa. ICAP served as home base for 80 team members during the 2012 mission trip. The construction team built the new ICAP kitchen. The evangelism and outreach teams conducted successful evangelism, outreach and Vacation Bible School programs with more than 40 baptisms on the last Sabbath. The medical team saw 1300 patients in less than 10 days.

Each of the following years, the Mission4Guatemala team has been involved in similar activities. In 2013 there were volunteers from other churches and conferences joining in this mission outreach. Pastor Gary Blanchard, Youth Director for the Texas Conference brought a group of thirteen young people. Dr. Rick Marden, his wife and three (3) children flew in from Maine. David and Yaneli Diaz came from Virginia. Team members also came from Alabama and Guatemala. Mission4Guatemala is very blessed to have three (3) young adults from Guatemala City as part the mission team. These young people have served as interpreters in all areas of mission outreach for three (3) years. The focus for the evangelism and outreach teams working in the city of Poptun grew as relationships between Mission4Guatemala leadership, the local conference, churches, and ICAP strengthened. Bible workers were engaged to prepare the people for the reaping meeting that was held during the mission trip. Vacation Bible School sessions were conducted in the morning at various sites and again at night in conjunction with the adult evangelistic meetings. The Medical Team which included medical doctors, nurse practitioners and physician assistants, conducted outreach clinics in several very remote villages. The team treated over one thousand patients. Prayers continue that the Lord will use the M4G team to support the ICAP faculty, staff and students as they continue God's work with the young people of Guatemala.

For the 2014 mission trip, Pastor Armando de Leon was the speaker for the night-time evangelism meetings. Pastor de Leon is a well-known pastor throughout Guatemala and the Lord blessed with a total of 96 baptisms. A new and innovative step was taken as the medical

team, the VBS team and the newly formed health education team worked together to offer a variety of services and activities for the families living in the remote villages in areas close to Poptun. The medical team saw over 1100 patients during this collaborative service effort.

It was following the 2012 mission trip that the medical team members began to express serious concerns regarding the brief impact that short term health care provides when compared to the long term medical needs of the people in the rural regions. As ICAP leadership and the Mission4Guatemala team continued exploring the needs of the school, the urgent medical needs of the people throughout rural Guatemala became a recurring discussion. As a result, the vision for the development of a school of nursing at ICAP was born. With a school of nursing, ICAP could provide dedicated Christian nurses to help meet the medical needs of the people throughout the country of Guatemala, particularly in rural areas, and at the same time share the love of Jesus with their patients, families and the communities they serve. With much prayer, discussions regarding the development of a nursing program continued. Ultimately the academic dean for ICAP approached the University of San Carlos extension staff in the city of Flores regarding the potential for a School of Nursing at ICAP. As the university official discussed the potential for the program with the dean he ultimately acknowledged that some of the top students studying at the university were graduates of ICAP. Because of the excellent reputation and ranking of ICAP, he indicated that support would be given for starting a school of nursing.

L. Phil Hunt, RN, EdD, with specialized study in curriculum development, is the former Dean of Nursing at Southern Adventist University. He has facilitated the development of several Seventh-day Adventist nursing schools in the international community. He was approached about the need in Guatemala and he agreed to investigate the potential for a collegiate level nursing program at ICAP. He and four (4) team members made a trip to ICAP in August 2013 to meet with ICAP faculty and officials at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala City.

As a result of the work done by ICAP faculty and the meeting with Dr. Hunt and others, the university officials gave approval for ICAP to offer a professional nursing program with specialized focus in rural health nursing. This is the first nursing program with this focus to be approved in the country of Guatemala. A question was raised at the meeting with university officials regarding the need for religion classes as shown on the projected curriculum. As the importance of spiritual training for students was explained, it was wholeheartedly agreed to keep the spiritual emphasis in the curriculum. The reason for starting this college level nursing program is for ICAP educated nurses to be proficient with patient diagnosis and treatment so they will be able to staff local health care clinics in rural areas throughout Guatemala. The mission and goal is to educationally equip Christian nurses to lead people to Jesus Christ while providing excellence in health care where little or no health care services currently exist.

During 2014, Dr. Hunt made two (2) trips to ICAP as he continues to collaborate with ICAP administration and faculty for the development of the nursing program. Late in 2014, it was learned that opening of the ICAP School of Nursing was delayed again. There have been disagreements within the Guatemala government entities as to the correct approving agency and other issues that have caused delays. But the fact that God is leading in the development of the School of Nursing is evidenced by the doors that He continues to open. An opportunity to apply for university status either through the government or as a private university has been

discussed. Private university status is considered a very important initiative as God continues to guide towards that goal. Currently the nursing and the agricultural programs would be eligible for university level studies. This would provide many future students opportunity for higher education. This is an opportunity that is not currently available for those in remote areas of Guatemala and to those Sabbath keepers who currently are unable to complete their college education because of Sabbath classes and testing requirements. This opportunity is being very aggressively pursued by ICAP and the Mission4Guatemala team. Meetings are being scheduled in the near future with leaders from the Inter-American Division, Guatemala Union Mission, International Children's Care, ICAP and Mission4Guatemala.

As M4G has worked with ICAP since that first introduction in 2011, they have learned that the faculty and staff consider the school their mission field. They are dedicated to giving each and every student the opportunity to dedicate their lives to Christ before they graduate and leave the campus. They learned that many of the teaching staff serve at ICAP for missionary and/or stipend wages. The faculty meets each school day morning for group devotional and prayer for the school and the students. Additionally, two weeks of prayer are held for the faculty each year. They come together at 5:00 A.M. for these special meetings. Two weeks of prayer for the students are also held each school year. One of the teachers conducts a Sabbath afternoon Bible study for interested students. The school principal and others study with students as they request or have questions. There is a close connection with the local pastor as he teaches a Bible class for the students. During the 2014 school year, approximately 50 students were baptized. The teachers place special emphasis on spiritual training for students and work earnestly with them throughout the year. The Mission4Guatemala team is very blessed that the Lord has made it possible to work with these local mission minded individuals.

### **Mission4Guatemala Focus for 2015**

ICAP and surrounding rural communities are the 2015 mission destinations. The plans for the 2015 mission trip call for Evangelism/Christ Centered Outreach, Vacation Bible School/Children's Evangelism Meetings and Medical Clinics with Health Education for local and remote villages. The Facilities Planning and Construction Team will continue the School of Nursing Facilities Complex construction. The focus this year will be the nursing administration/instructional building. It is important to remember that you serve an important role as a member of the Mission4Guatemala mission team. Because of the importance of team work and the focus of our mission it is important that each volunteer (mission team member) work closely with each team leader and not participate in other activities of the local school, church or other without explicit permission from the Mission4Guatemala group leader while in Guatemala. Unity, safety and completing our mission tasks are the primary goal for each team group!

The following is a **SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE** for the 13 day trip that was used as the guide for the teams in 2014. This is only a sample for information purposes. The number of days and other changes will be made for 2015 and shared when finalized.

**Day 1:** - Travel Day

**Day 2:** - Mission Work Day 1

- \*Build Team: Begin Construction
- \*Medical Team: Organize, assign team members, plan for clinics and prepare medications.
- \*Children's Programs: Organize, assign team members, plan programs and prepare handouts
- \*Health Education: Organize, assign team members, plan programs and prepare education materials.
- \*Outreach Team: Visitation and flyer distribution
- \*Evening Vespers / Dinner

**Day 3:** \*Church at ICAP or ICC (International Children's Care -Orphanage)

\*Afternoon

**Day 4:** - Mission Work Day 2

**Day 5:** Mission Work Day 3

**Day 6:** - Mission Work Day 4

**Day 7:** - Mission Work Day 5

**Day 8:** - Thanksgiving!!

Tikal -- Thanksgiving Meal -- Evening Meeting

**Day 9:** - Mission Work Day 6

**Day 10:** \*Sabbath Service with Baptism (Pray For This)

**Day 11:** Return to Honduras

Hotel:

**Day 12:** Travel Home

## **Tentative Daily Schedule for Regular Mission Activity Day**

The following is a general plan for routine team activities on a daily basis. Group leaders will make adjustments for their team according to the needs for the day.

6:00 A.M. Group devotional/announcements (Girl's Chapel)

6:30 A.M. Breakfast

7:00 A.M. Construction team begins work

7:30 A.M. Bus for Medical Team/Children's Daytime Evangelism/Health Education loads

8:00 A.M. Bus for Medical Team/Children's Daytime Evangelism/Health Education leaves ICAP

Vehicles for Outreach leave ICAP

12:00 Noon Lunch (Lunch on Sabbath will be served at 12:30 P.M.)

1:00 P.M. Team activities resume as directed by team leaders

5:00 P.M. Team Leader debriefing and updates with Ervin (If Possible)

5:30 P.M. Supper will be served for team members headed to town for evangelistic meetings @ 6PM

6:00 P.M. Supper will continue to be served for remaining team members.

7:00 P.M. Evening meeting in Poptun

7:00 P.M. Group Devotional for those remaining at ICAP

## **INITIAL GUIDELINES FOR MISSION VOLUNTEERS TO GUATEMALA**

### **Travel Overview**

Airplanes leave on schedule (or don't leave on time at the discretion of the airlines). Make very sure that you are in place and on board according to the stated schedule. If the airplane is overbooked and you are not checked in at the scheduled time, your seat may be given away. Additionally, the plane will not be held for you if you are not on board when it is ready to leave even if you are in the airport.

**DO NOT BE "LEFT BEHIND" as any change in flights will be very costly for you. You will be responsible for any additional travel costs if arrangements must be made for missing your airline flight!**

The Mission4Guatemala team from Nashville flies into San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Team members from other areas of the country will meet the team in San Pedro Sula so that all travel together from the airport to ICAP. The flight from Nashville is a very early morning flight with arrival in San Pedro Sula in the early afternoon. Group caravan transportation will be provided via bus and/or vans to ICAP. The drive to ICAP usually takes 9-10 hours with few rest and bathroom stops.

The cost of the trip for each team member follows:

- Adult: \$1,425.00 per person
- 18 y/o and younger: \$1225.00 per person
- The cost for participating in both the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the 2015 trip will be an additional \$300 for adults and/or the 18 y/o and under group.

This fee includes airline tickets from Nashville (or other city approved by M4G leadership) to San Pedro Sula, Honduras, group ground transportation from the airport to ICAP and return to San Pedro Sula, room and board at ICAP and at least one (1) nights lodging at a hotel in San Pedro Sula upon return to the city the final night of the mission trip. Flights from other cities may result in additional fees. Please check with M4G leadership for final costs. Information regarding flights from Nashville and other cities will be provided as arrangements are finalized. You are responsible for any fees or additional costs incurred because of missed flights.

Other Costs: You must provide your own food and snacks while traveling from your home until you reach ICAP and after leaving ICAP until you reach home. You are also responsible for the cost of souvenirs and for the purchase of tickets for tourist attractions. The school has a small snack shop on campus but is located approximately 11 km from the nearest town/store. While it is possible to purchase some snacks and other needed items, there are no regularly scheduled visits to town.

Sometimes there is a small fee for using the restroom while traveling. Most restroom facilities in Honduras and Guatemala have no toilet paper. This is usually true even in the airports. Take toilet paper with you at all times while traveling and when going out to local villages from ICAP. Do not flush paper down the toilet while traveling in rural Guatemala and while at ICAP.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

### **About Guatemala:**

Guatemala is located in Central America, bordering the Pacific Ocean to the East and the Caribbean Sea to the West. It is bordered by Belize to the Northeast, Mexico to the north, and Honduras and El Salvador to the southeast. Much of Guatemala's population is rural and except for the coastal areas, it is mostly mountainous. Most of the cities and population are situated in the southern half of the country. The country is divided into 22 states called *departments*, each with a capital. The department of Petén (our destination) is the largest in the Republic of Guatemala.

More than half of Guatemalans are descendants of indigenous Maya people and mestizos (a mix of European and indigenous ancestry). Guatemala is the only Central American country where the indigenous Indian people are in the majority. Their culture is vividly conveyed in their bright, often hand-woven textiles. The agricultural sector exports, coffee, sugar, and bananas and occupies one half of the labor force. The majority of villages depend on contaminated water for all of their needs. Acute diarrhea illness from amoeba and e-coli are major and pervasive health issues. Villages in the area are desperately in need of the clean water which in most cases is only 300 feet beneath them. **Water for Life, an organization out of Spokane, Washington** also uses ICAP as the base camp for mission outreach in the department of Petén. For several years, this group has spent 2-3 months at the beginning of each year drilling fresh water wells for the people in the villages around ICAP.

The predominant religion in Guatemala is Roman Catholic, but in recent years Evangelical religions are on the rise. Both Protestant and traditional Mayan religions are practiced. Guatemala has a history of revolutions, coups and non-democratic governments. The last guerilla war ended in December 1996 with the signing of the peace accords, which ended 36 years of civil war, leading to successful democratic elections in 1999, 2003 and 2007.

### **Language:**

The official language of Guatemala is Spanish, but it is often the second language among some the indigenous population. The medical and outreach teams many times encounter the need for dual translators: English – Spanish – Mayan. Mission4Guatemala is currently collaborating with **It is**

**Written** to research the potential for providing Bible translation into the Q'eqchi language, one of the more common Mayan dialects in the area.

### **Climate:**

The climate in Guatemala varies according to altitude. The coastal regions and the northeast are hot throughout the year with an average temperature of 68°F and sometimes rising to 99°F. For the Peten area, the normal rainy season is June through October and the dry season is March through May, but it is variable. Late October through February are the cooler months, with December through February temperatures getting as low as or 51°F, if only for a few days. Average humidity for Petén is 85%.

October and November generally see the end of the rains and a return to cooler temperatures. Guatemala's annual rainfall ranges from 70 inches in the North to almost 200 inches in the South. ***In recent years global weather conditions and changes are making traditional predictions somewhat invalid.*** The weather is usually pleasant but it rained many days during each of the recent mission trips.

**Time/Sunrise/Sunset:** Guatemala utilizes Central Time with no daylight savings time  
November 20, 2015: Sunrise – 6:06 A.M. Sunset – 5:30 P.M.

### **Electricity:**

Electricity (110 volts) is available. This is the same as US electricity. No adaptor is required.

### **Currency/Banking:**

Guatemala's currency is the Quetzal, named for its national bird, the Resplendent Quetzal.

### **Entry/Exit Requirements:**

- A **valid U.S. Passport** is required for all U.S. citizens, regardless of age, to enter Honduras and Guatemala and to depart Guatemala and Honduras for the return to the United States. Even if dual citizenship nationals are permitted to enter Guatemala on a second nationality passport, U.S. citizens returning to the United States from Guatemala are not allowed to board their flights without a valid U.S. passport. Certificates of Naturalization, birth certificates, driver's licenses, and photocopies are not accepted by Guatemalan authorities as alternative travel documents. ***While in Guatemala, U.S. citizens should carry their passports, or a color photocopy of their passports, with them at all times.*** Visit the Embassy of Guatemala website for the most current visa information.
- **Visa:** U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of 90 days or less.
- **Lost or Stolen Passport:** A U.S. citizen whose passport is lost or stolen in Guatemala must obtain a new passport at the U.S. Embassy as soon as possible and present it, together with a police report on the loss or theft, to the Guatemalan Immigration Agency (Dirección de Migración), Sub-director de Control Migratorio (Sub-director for Migratory Control) in order to obtain permission to depart Guatemala. The agency is located in Guatemala City at 6a Avenida 3-11, Zone 4, Guatemala City

### **Luggage Allowance:**

More information regarding luggage allowances will be distributed after flight arrangements have been finalized. As a general rule, each person is allowed one (1) checked bag weighing no more than 50 pounds and one carry - on bag and 1 small handbag **or** 1 camera case. Fees charged for an extra bag or any bag weighing more than 50 pounds are the personal responsibility of each volunteer.

### **Health/Immunizations:**

Each person is financially responsible for personal medical insurance and medical care for this trip. A basic travel and evacuation insurance purchased through Adventist Risk Management will be provided for each individual participant as part of the participation fee.

The CDC recommends that you consult your physician **at least 2-3 months** prior to any trip outside the United States for specific information regarding needed immunizations/medications for your trip. Check the CDC website <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/guatemala.htm> for specifics.

Travel information and alerts can be viewed under international travel at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). This is a quote from that site. *The Department of State strongly urges U.S. citizens to consult their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to determine whether the policy applies overseas and whether it covers emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. Many hospitals in Guatemala require payment prior to treating patients, even if personal insurance will cover the treatment. They do not typically enter into payment plan agreements. Travelers should be aware that they may have to pay in advance and seek reimbursement.*

### **Insects and Other:**

There have been few to no mosquitos during previous visits to Guatemala but at other times of the year, there are mosquitoes. *Check with your travel physician regarding the need for anti-malarial medications.* Roaches and other insects are prevalent, especially, in the sleeping areas. You may want to bring at least one container of repellent to ward off any unwanted insects.

### **Accommodations:**

The Mission4Guatemala team stays in ICAP dormitory rooms and/or campus housing. Each dorm room has 2 twin- size bunk beds (sleeps 4 volunteers). All accommodations are assigned by the Mission4Guatemala leadership.

### **Meals:**

Vegetarian meals are provided for breakfast, lunch and the evening meal on site at the ICAP cafeteria. Sack lunches will be provided for those involved in all day outreach, medical clinics and other off campus activities. Beans and rice are regular fare for the Guatemalan population so it is recommended that you bring snacks such as peanut butter crackers for children and others as supplements to the regularly scheduled cafeteria and/or sack meals.

Water on the ICAP campus is considered safe for bathing and washing clothes. Filtered water will be provided for drinking and teeth brushing. You may bring a personal water filter or purification tablets if desired. It is important to carry a water bottle with you so that you drink water frequently and regularly. Assure that your children drink, drink, and drink. If you are thirsty -- you are dehydrated.

### **Clothing/Culture:**

Cool, loose-fitting cottons with a sweater and or a light jacket for evenings are suitable for most occasions. A blanket is needed as it can be very cool at night.

**Modesty in dress is highly regarded in Guatemalan culture.** The students at ICAP are **not allowed** to wear shorts with thighs uncovered. No tight jeans, dresses or skirts are allowed. For Sabbath, the girls wear skirts and blouses (with sleeves and no low cuts).



Mission4Guatemala team members should wear neat and modest clothing. Please no short shorts. A suit and tie are not necessary for Sabbath. Bathing suits should be modest. You may want to bring some clothing that you can leave for students and/ or others when you leave. Please leave only nice things that you would be pleased to wear at home.

**Telecommunications -Telephone/Cell Phones/Computers:**

Telephone, cell phone and internet service is very unreliable to non-existent at our destination (Poptun, Petén, Guatemala). There can be no guarantees that any of these services will be available.

**What to Bring:**

Passport (*It is recommended that you make a color copy to be kept in a separate location from your passport*)

Personal medications (prescription and over the counter drugs)

Anti-malarial and diarrhea medications as determined with your personal physician

Bedding - pillow, pillowcase, light blanket, twin sheets, twin air mattress if assigned to the dorm

Flashlight or head lamp

Mosquito net, if desired

Towels, wash cloth, toiletries, soap

One roll of toilet paper for use at ICAP

**Toilet paper/tissue to carry in your purse/pocket for travel stops.**

Portable camping shower bag (*luxury item -- if hot water showers desired – not required*)

**Snack food and food for traveling.**

Light clothing, light jacket or long sleeved top

Sabbath clothing - a suit is not necessary

Sturdy walking shoes

Work shoes, clothes, gloves as needed for your team

Cap/wide brim hat, sunscreen

Laundry soap – if desired for hand wash

Personal first-aid kit – insect repellent

Modest swimwear

Rain gear

Camera

Bible and Reading material

Water bottle: Carry water with you at all times...and drink water frequently and regularly.

Work gloves

Boots for children and for adults going to remote villages

**Safety and Security:**

As with any mission trips there are risks involved. Over 70% of Guatemalans live in poverty and 35% live in extreme poverty.

- Keep all important documents (passport) and money in an underclothes money/security belt.
- Never leave personal items unattended, as things quickly seem to vanish into thin air when no one is looking.
- Do not bring anything to Guatemala that you cannot live without. More information can be found on the *United States Department of State Website*.

**Other Information:**

Addition information regarding the trip schedule and travel information will be provided as more details are known.

**NOTE:**

**As with any mission trip, team members must remain flexible and subject to change. The information in this document represents what is known at this point and time.**

3/26/2015