

Mission Paraguay

2016 and Spring 2017 Report



Working together, changing lives, growing in faith

The two storey building completed by Mission Paraguay in 2011 at the rear of Redeemer Church at Zeballos Cue on the North Eastern side of Asunción, was the base for the group of 11 people representing churches from across England who spent three weeks in Paraguay in August 2016. They shared their love of Jesus while using their skills and experience working alongside local believers to build and strengthen cross cultural relationships by assisting the ministry of the local Anglican Church. While some of the team had visited Zeballos Cue in the past with Mission Paraguay, this was the first time that we had stayed there and it proved an ideal base for visiting different communities in the Asunción area.



Since 2009, over 6,000 pairs of second-hand spectacles sent from the UK have been distributed for a nominal cost of approximately £1 each to people who cannot afford to visit local opticians. The money raised contributes towards the support we give to children's work. This includes the mobile toy library operated by FEISA the Anglican Teacher Training College which visits eight communities in the Asunción área to enable children who have few toys of their own to learn through play. We are committed to fund all costs of the toy library until August 2017.



Each afternoon the Anglican Church operates a small school in a building next to the church at Zeballos Cue which was formerly used for storage. Gloria one of the church lay leaders is the teacher. She has a paid teaching post in the morning but works voluntarily in the school every afternoon. The school has limited resources and the classrooms are very small but it is planned to enlarge and rebuild the premises to meet local demand as soon as funds are available. During our visit we were able to build a large sandpit play area and fund major repairs to the children's sit on roundabout. Catalina one of the helpers at the school lived nearby with her family in a small wooden home with earth floors situated at the bottom of steeply sloping ground. During wet weather water ran down the slope and through her home bringing with it rubbish and frogs. Catalina had been having a small single roomed brick home built at higher level but had only been able to pay for the walls. Fortunately our funds allowed for a metal roof, cement floor and secure door enabling her to move into better accommodation. We plan to work with Catalina to further improve her home during our 2017 visit as funds allow. As in 2016, this year we will again provide further materials for self-help home improvements to some of the poorest families in areas where we visit.



The riverside community of Ipvu, an area of high deprivation where a number of members of Redeemer Church live, regularly suffers severe flooding. One family whose toilet had been washed away was provided with materials for a self-help replacement installation. The area has little medical expertise and during this year's visit CPR and basic first aid training was provided. Clothes, blankets and toys donated in the UK were distributed to needy families.



Members of the church at Roque Alonso where we have been based in the past had recently started a small nursery using a variety of furniture and equipment. It was very encouraging to see this initiative develop and we were able to assist with repairs to cots and other wooden furniture during our visit.

Chaco Projects

Each year Mission Paraguay provides funds for a variety of projects in the Chaco area of North West Paraguay to assist the indigenous Indian communities and promote the ministry of the Anglican Church. Last August a team of builders from Annaghmore Parish Church, Northern Ireland built a new church at Laguna Carpincha, La Patria. This is the twelfth new church building or major church extension which has been funded by Mission Paraguay in different areas of the country and it is planned to fund the building of another small church during 2018 in the Chaco. Missionary Chris Hawksbee who provides spiritual support and teaching in the communities, oversaw the 2016 building work. For many years Chris has encouraged self-sufficiency projects in areas characterised by poverty and harsh living conditions. Honey production is a well-established local industry which Chris recently expanded into new villages. In 2016 Mission Paraguay was able to fund the construction of a small building for the local processing and storage of honey. We also paid for essential repairs to a number of rainwater storage facilities in areas where if there is a shortage of stored water then using infected swamp water for all domestic purposes is the only alternative.



When Indian people travel to Asunción, for example to seek medical assistance, many have relied upon using an albergue (hostel facility) near the Anglican Diocesan Offices and Cathedral complex. As well as not being very conveniently located when travelling by bus from the Chaco, the building has proved inadequate to meet needs. During early 2017 a new larger albergue was completed at Remansito, a community on the northern edge of Asunción. Mission Paraguay contributed a major part of the cost of this new building which being next to the only road from the Chaco, provides a much more convenient base for the visitors.

Mission Paraguay is about changing lives and bringing people into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who visit invariably speak about how much they have been blessed through their experience. Upon her return last summer Michaela wrote:

Did you enjoy your holiday, they will ask. What holiday, I could say: building your own beds; sleeping in a dorm with strangers; getting up early; going to bed early; cold showers, cold feet; ant infested bed, broken locks, broken keys; cockroaches, frogs in the sink; lost luggage, forgotten sleeping bag; devastation as only seen in movies; feeling exhausted. Some Holiday!!

BUT this will be my response:

Making new friends; meeting old friends; great food prepared with loving hands; worshiping in new ways; going to your limits; receiving more than you can ever give; teaching for a better life to learn to be a better you; losing your comfort zone to find a stronger faith; touching people to be touched by them; a roller coaster of emotions to count your true blessings.

This wasn't a holiday. This was a Mission Paraguay experience - the journey of a life.



During summer 2017 another Mission Paraguay group will be visiting Asunción. While all of the group members fund their own travel and all other costs associated with their visit, we rely upon the generosity

of our individual supporters and supporting churches. Since Mission Paraguay started, over £223,000 has been donated towards our work. We are so grateful to everyone for their ongoing support. We anticipate funding a full programme of projects during 2017. Some projects are ongoing with funding being provided on an annual basis while owing to their nature others are completed over a two year duration.

Grateful appreciation is expressed to Bishop Peter Bartlett, Pastor Luis Echeverria at Zeballos Cue and members of the Anglican Church for their hospitality and assistance in enabling Mission Paraguay 2016 to take place. We also thank Silvia Torres, Mission Paraguay’s official driver and translator, for her dedicated assistance. Thank you to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for including items for us in their containers sent to Paraguay.



CPR training



Selecting the suitability of new glasses by threading a needle



One of many sewing workshops for both children and adults



The new albergue at Remansito nearing completion in February 2017



New hats and scarves from England for sisters at Zeballos Cue

Mission Paraguay works through the South American Mission Society UK and Ireland to support the ministry of the Anglican Church in Paraguay, share the love of Jesus and change lives by providing funds and a volunteer work force for:

- **practical projects, usually buildings;**
- **activities with children and young people;**
- **community based work to relieve hardship and encourage self-sufficiency.**

Thank you to everyone who supports our work through your prayers and generosity.

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