



Clinic Days

Over the last two years, the clinic team has held clinic days in three villages in the Petén area every three or four months. October found us ordering extra medications and packing everything into boxes for the twelve-hour trip. The road was bumpy and curvy, and the air got hotter and more humid the farther we went. Every now and then the driver missed a speed bump and everything went flying—including the people—and we all sighed with relief when the van rolled to a stop in front of Dean and Jodi's house.

The clinic team consisted of Priscila as nurse, Andrea as nurse assistant, Nora as pharmacist, and Mariela as secretary. But we could never have done it without the help of the missionaries living in Santa Rosita. They put a lot of time and effort into finding a building for us to use and announcing the dates we would be in each village. One day Brother Jonny and a man from the village drove around on a motorbike with a speaker announcing that we had arrived.

On an average day we see about twenty patients. Many others come to stock up on vitamins and medications. Many villages do not have any pharmacy or clinic anywhere nearby, so people bring their sick children or ailing parents from three or four hours away, while others come to buy medication for the coming months. Many of the patients have chronic illnesses like diabetes, blood pressure issues, or vitamin deficiencies, especially iron. Our prices are much lower than those of other pharmacies in the towns, making it easier for people to buy the medications they need. But there are always those who simply do not have money. We do our best to use cheaper or donated medications for these

patients, and the balance is paid with donated money.

On the last day of our most recent clinic, we had a small emergency. After doing some testing we found the man had a very elevated blood sugar level. We gave him the best attention we could offer, but as it was our last day there, we do not know how he is doing or if he followed up with a doctor like we advised. The family struggled to accept the fact of a possible chronic sickness. We find that many do not accept the reality of a chronic sickness, whether from a reluctance to change their lifestyle or from a lack of knowledge.

As more villages learn to know and trust us, they ask if we can come to other villages too, and when we are coming to stay. While we would love to be able to do that, we are not currently equipped for it. Being away from the main clinic in Oratorio for two weeks is growing more difficult. We are looking for a way to have at least a pharmacist stay in the main clinic, but because we do not have enough staff, it has not been possible so far. Having a permanent clinic in the Petén would be great, but we only have one nurse, and she is needed in Oratorio.

And so, while it is necessary for the team to know at least a little about sickness, medications, and preventions; it is also necessary to know and understand this culture. Our vision is not only to attend to people's medical needs, but to also show them Jesus' love. Keep praying for this work, for those who prepare and coordinate with village leaders, for the team who goes, for wisdom to help efficiently, and for the people of the villages that they may learn to know Christ.

Priscila Muñoz and Andrea Dyck

General Institute 2022

A clear blue sky, cool air, green grass, an old chicken farm converted into a "resort" with a view of several volcanos in the distance . . . that was the opening scene for the first MAM Bible Institute in three years, held on December 6-8, 2022.

What exactly is an "institute?" The MAM institute is somewhat like a Bible school, revival meeting, and family reunion all in one. While the primary focus is on preaching and teaching from the Bible, another significant activity is visiting with brothers and sisters

in Christ. Most of the MAM staff have seen each other in recent months, but many of the native believers have not had the privilege of visiting with those from the more distant congregations for about three years. The fact that these dear brothers and sisters were somewhat isolated from other believers for such a long time made the fellowship that much sweeter.

One of the great benefits for families at Institute is that the children between four and twelve have their

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EDITORIAL

Justin Zimmerman

The Best Kind of Growth

Have you grown in the past year? No, I am not referring to your physical stature or waistline. Rather, have you grown spiritually, mentally, relationally, and in usefulness to God?

We can see growth all around us. We plant seeds in our gardens, watch the growth of vegetables, and try to curb the growth of weeds. Babies quickly grow to be toddlers, who soon become capable children and teenagers. Calves soon grow to outweigh the farmer who feeds them. The grass grows and needs to be mowed again. Cities and towns grow. Businesses grow.

Growth is an indication of health, but growth toward maturity also indicates a certain incompleteness. When some plants reach full maturity, they stop growing and soon die. But although this is true for biological life, is it true for spiritual growth? While the growth of plant and animal life is constrained by physics and genetics, spiritual life is different. As Christians, our standard of maturity is Jesus Christ, and we can gauge our spiritual growth by how we measure up to His perfect example. This is a standard that no human will ever attain in this life, yet God expects us to grow toward this standard of perfection. And that is why God has given to the church evangelists, pastors, and teachers!

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children . . . but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ (Ephesians 4:11-15).

Has your church grown in the past year? No, not only in the membership count or weekly attendance, but in unity and knowledge and love for God? Clearly, we should grow, but how? The Apostle Peter gives us some advice. *Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation (1 Peter 2:2 [ESV]).*

Growth is impossible without the intake of nutrients. Plants find their necessary nutrients in the soil. Plants must also have water, air, and sunshine to produce energy and process those nutrients. Christians find their nutrition in the Word of God. If we are not absorbing God's Word daily, we will not grow. Neglecting the Bible will soon lead to the suffocation of the Holy Spirit.

Growth doesn't just happen, especially in the human spirit. It requires discipline. Like babies, we need to seek out the life-giving milk of the Word. *Jesus said, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after*

righteousness: for they shall be filled (Matthew 5:6).

Hunger for the things of God is developed by regular feeding and exercise, and there is a direct correlation between appetite and growth. With time, one can develop a great appetite for something as simple as plain corn tortillas, especially when working hard, as any Guatemalan can confirm! In his second epistle, Peter shares additional pointers for spiritual growth as it relates to spiritual exercise.

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of (Jesus) . . . so that . . . you may become partakers of the divine nature . . . For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:3-8 [ESV]).

Notice that growing in these things requires effort! If these qualities are present and increasing in your life, then you are becoming spiritually mature. Growth in these areas produces effective service for Jesus.

Each of us, whether on a foreign field or close to home, must grow individually for the church to grow corporately. We have been given all the things that pertain to life and godliness, and we must make the effort to study, practice, and teach them. This world is growing further from the truth and increasing in wickedness. Will we make every effort to grow into the image of our Lord? It is through the growth of the church, which results from the growth of individuals, that the lost will be effectively reached.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God (Psalm 92:12, 13). The cedar, like the palm tree, is an evergreen, and the largest trees in the world belong to the cedar family. The comparison of the righteous to a cedar tree speaks of what God wants us to be. He doesn't want just a little growth from His people; He wants us to flourish exceedingly in goodness! Doing so will cause us to point people to our Creator and Redeemer.

The Apostle Peter was particularly concerned for the spiritual growth of believers of his day. His final admonition was *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Peter 3:18).*

General Institute 2022 . . . continued

own activities during the daytime sessions; the youth volunteer for various time slots and direct the classes and outdoor activities. This allows busy parents to focus on the teaching and energetic children to put their energy into something constructive!

The program, food, and maintenance committees had had little responsibility during and since the pandemic lockdown of 2020, so there was perhaps more than the usual stress on those preparing for this event.

December 6 was a beautiful sunny day, excellent for traveling. Pickups and vans stuffed with people and their bedding and bags arrived at The Farm near mid-day. The sleeping quarters soon filled and overflowed, so some families stayed at the mission in the city while a few others stayed at nearby hotels.

The first afternoon and evening were well-attended, and the following two days brought even more people. The large tent held well over 160 people in the evenings, and willing hands brought in extra benches as needed. Various brothers from Guatemala preached on subjects related to holiness (the theme of this institute) during

the day, while Ernesto Glick from El Salvador was the evangelist for the evening services on Wednesday and Thursday.

The cooks worked long and hard to keep the crowd fed with physical food too. It takes many hours to make the hundreds of tortillas necessary for such a large group! This Institute was a great encouragement to many Guatemalans and missionaries alike to keep on growing in holiness and obedience to our holy God.

Anonymous



Teaching Session



The Cooks



Children's Class

Staff Changes

Welcome to Jolynn Martin! She joined the team in Santa Rosita in November and will assist with domestics. She is a member of the Strasburg Mennonite Church and is returning to the land of her birth after living in Virginia for the last few years.



Jolynn Martin

Nathan and Delores Graybill recently moved from the mission headquarters to Joya Grande to help with the church there.

Prayer and Praise Items

Pray for new staff to serve at headquarters in Guatemala City.

Pray for Guatemalan brothers who will faithfully lead their homes and local congregations.

Praise God for a very good and well-attended Bible Institute!

Praise God for His faithful protection and provision for the daily needs of our staff this year!

Financial Statement for Mennonite Air Missions

January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022

Beginning balance		\$ 78,820.12
Income		<u>791,772.26</u>
Actual Operating Income		\$870,592.38
Total income		<u><u>\$870,592.38</u></u>
Disbursements		
Literature	\$	0.00
Newsletter		9,691.19
Travel		22,374.71
Retirement and medical		3,000.00
Worker allowance		191,412.00
Bank & miscellaneous charges		79.90
Transfer to field		542,892.87
Supplies		6,008.66
U.S. checks for Guatemalan funds		<u>0.00</u>
Actual Operating Disbursements		<u>\$775,459.33</u>
Ending Checkbook Balance		<u><u>\$45,133.05</u></u>
Beginning Savings Balance	\$	<u>170,170.52</u>
Transfer to Savings Account		\$100,000.00
Transfer from Savings Account		\$50,000.00
AF Interest Income		<u>\$0.00</u>
Ending Savings Balance		\$220,170.52
Anabaptist Financial Savings Account Balance		\$220,170.52

To all who labor with us in generosity and prayer,

Thank you for another year of generous support for the work in Guatemala. We have been blessed at God's provision of personnel with a heart for the Lord and the necessary funds to continue the work in 2022, and we enter 2023 praying for His continued provision for these needs.

We are also grateful for the various work groups and willing individuals who have supported the work with their time and labor. The school construction project in Oratorio is well on its way to completion, a testament to the many gifts of time and resources given by God's people.

May the Lord bless His work and those who partner with it.

Amos Hurst, Board Treasurer

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Visit our website at mennoniteairmissions.org to sign up for digital newsletters, or email your request to mennoniteairmissions.eey@gmail.com.

Please make donations payable to "Mennonite Air Missions" and send to Mennonite Air Missions, c/o Amos Hurst, 116 Rothsville Station Rd., Lititz, PA 17543.

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