



July 2021

Greetings from Guatemala!

We continue to work from home, connecting regularly with the 10 partner organizations / denomination in the 5 countries where CBM has partners in our region. Like all of you, we have adapted to COVID imposed restrictions, and are getting tired of it 😊. While we have more frequent connections with many of our partners, we miss the joy and encouragement that comes from being physically present in the churches and communities.

COVID update (July 2021)

COVID infections remain rampant in all our partner countries. Bolivia has probably been the hardest hit – we personally know so many people who have been infected, and many of those who have passed away. Guatemala has relatively high infection rates, but it seems that life just moves ahead regardless. We had begun meeting with people and visiting churches in late March and early April. We met with a group of pastors (outside, distanced, masked...) and were shocked when we met with the same group a month later. Five of the 10 in the first meeting were sick and a few days later, Diego Tzina, Pastor of la *Iglesia El Buen Pastor* in Santiago, Lago Atitlan passed away! Today with a low vaccination rate of less than 4% and with most of the country in the red zone, we remain cautious as well as optimistic as more vaccines arrive in all Central America.

Cuba update

We will always remember our Cuban friends welcoming us for a prolonged stay in Cuba as we got to know one another saying “Once you have understood the Cuban context, please do let us know what that is as we also would like to know!” This past week, for the first time in recent history, we have seen some Cuban people demonstrate against the current government. While the pandemic, economic crisis, food and medicine shortage, lack of electricity, overwhelmed health system have all added to the misery the people are facing, it is the first time that people have taken to the streets to protest

against the government. Our FIBAC partners have not been involved politically, rather focusing on helping people who have been physically, emotionally, and spiritually affected by the challenges of managing daily life while lacking work, food and health care. For more please see CBM statement of solidarity <https://www.facebook.com/cbmin.org/photos/a.211942715486098/4880521401961516/?type=3>

Guatemala update

CBM’s partners have all been active in supporting the needs of children, especially around education, during this past year and ongoing. Here in Guatemala, we had the opportunity to visit one of our newer partner churches that has used CBM funds to augment the care they have been providing for families in their area. During Saturday school at the church, we met 10-year-old Jose Luis. We could not help but notice that his hands were black, hoping he would wash them before lunch! We were shocked when we found out that his hands were permanently stained from picking tomatoes for 5 hours before coming to class at 10am! His little sister Adelaide at 8 is just learning to read having missed more than a year of school. Their mom is illiterate and there is no dad at home. We found these kids to be motivated, enthusiastic and committed and we believe it is because they know that they have people in a local church who care about them and are working for their good.



Jose Luis & Adelaide

Pastor Felicito and his wife Irene, Iglesia Sinai, Ipala, Guatemala lead this project, also providing workshops for parents on important topics around discipline, nutrition and how to support children's education.



Sonja teaching grade 5 students

Parents attend because of the care given to their children and they too benefit from the care the church provides especially during times of hardship. During all the heartache and challenges that covid has brought, we see such signs of hope in these families. Check out CBM's Active in Mission with funds supporting children's education.

<https://www.activeinmission.ca/kathleen-soucy?fbclid=IwAR03gbdsOybun6qCPCJnS9T2nXuoXFuEhQTBW1MXU9nyG7Sds9mOdIt1G28>

Bolivia update

We don't want to neglect sharing about Bolivia as so many of our supporters maintain meaningful connections to this beautiful country. We are thankful for our colleagues Tim and Kallie Hutton, living in Cochabamba and well placed to give meaningful insight. For a view of Bolivia from their perspective, please check out their latest blog

<http://www.timandkallie.com/blog/come-hail-or-high-water?fbclid=IwAR3PLbhvgDYqVamUtqiXp9HVR8rrvOQ6V7vT49zcA3u-Fqttai5fDPxN3ss>

Gratitude and Prayer Requests

Please pray:

- For the leaders and members of our Cuban partner FIBAC as they serve in a difficult context, that the church can be a beacon of hope. Pray for peace in the country and for wise leadership.
- Please pray for safe recovery for FIBAC president Zaida Hernandez Gutierrez who is COVID positive.

Sadly, her husband Remberto passed away this week.

- For our colleagues in Bolivia, Tim and Kallie Hutton, and Patty Nacho for their health and safety as they support our partners.
- For Children's education in Guatemala, and all CBM partner regions as leaders fill in significant educational gaps and share the love of Jesus. Consider supporting CBM's Active in Mission as people around the globe walk, run, swim, bike... to raise funds for children's education

We thank God for his care for our families in Canada and for us in Guatemala.

Habakkuk's Complaint

How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

The Lord's Answer

Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.
Habakkuk 1:2-5



Thank you!

Blessings!

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