

Christmas 2012 Mission Letter from United Methodist Missionaries, Nan and Miguel

Dearest Friends:

This Advent we wish you a spirit of wonderment as we prepare ourselves anew to commit to being part of the construction of the Kin-dom of God here on earth. May we let the spirit move us to bring good news to the poor, the oppressed, the prisoners and the outcasts – the good news of the example of Jesus who came to bring abundant life for all people. In God’s extravagant love, Nan and Miguel

Support of Missionaries

Thank you so much for your support of missionaries in Miguel’s name (Miguel Mairena ADVANCE # 12877Z) and/or Nan’s name (Nan McCurdy #10801Z). There is still a shortfall in church support for all the missionaries – so please check with your church to see if your 2012 Covenant gift has yet been sent. Thank you so much!

We also encourage you to consider an **alternative Christmas gift** to someone by giving to one of the programs through ADVANCE for Christ #13285A, Women & Community. 100% of your gift goes directly supports the programs described below. Thanks also for your program support.

The following five programs described below are part of the Women and Community Association.

Building Just and Equitable Relations: *Human Rights, Prevention of Violence and Promotion of Gender Equity with Women, Youth and Children:* Leadership development with 50 women who are legal advocates; and training of 300 other women is crucial in the struggle to build just relationships. Women, youth and children who have been abused are counseled and accompanied by the advocates and by our psychologist, social worker and two lawyers. This W&C program also trains women in violence prevention and gender equity so they can do this work in their communities and accompany victims of violence in their legal and healing processes. The team also trains teachers and students, health workers, police and others to understand the roots of violence against women, the laws that prevent and sanction violence and how to use them. Ten mutual support groups of women in the villages meet weekly and intensive group therapy for women who have recently begun the process to get out of a violent relationship help women know God’s love.



Economic Independence of Women and Cows in Women’s Hands

\$300 covers the cost of a cow, \$120 covers the cost of a workshop in a village about cattle-raising, nutrition, human rights or women’s health; \$400 covers a month’s salary for the agronomist.



Through a rotating loan fund women can receive a first loan for a cow, interest-free, and loans for another cow (\$300 to \$400) or for a small business for amounts ranging from \$100 to \$500 (depends on experience and history of loans and payments). Women form solidarity groups of at least five women – they commit to be responsible for the loan payment of everyone in the group. So far all the women pay their loans and in a timely manner! It’s an amazing program and the women are incredibly grateful. If you visit you will hear the stories of economic empowerment that have contributed to the emotional wellbeing and greater ability of the women to stand up for their rights This program is a great alternative to Heifer! 100% of your giving goes to this program.

Women’s Health and Work with Pregnant Teens

\$120 covers costs of a workshop with 20 girls on self-esteem, pre and post natal care, parenting, reproductive health, prevention of violence, etc.; \$100 covers the cost of ten cervical screening readings by a pathologist; \$100 covers the cost of repairing the woman’s cervix if she has abnormal cells; \$400 covers one month of the nurse/educator’s salary and benefits; \$120 covers a year of birth control for one woman.

The Women’s Clinic provides attention to women by a female physician and nurse and encourages women to take responsibility for their health. Goals include: prevention of cervical-uterine cancer and sexually transmitted illnesses, family planning, and monthly check-ups for pregnant women. With years of education and cervical screening full-blown cancer is almost a thing of the past. **Page 1**

Women and Community is in its fourth year facilitating reflections with pregnant teens in 35 villages of San Francisco Libre. We have worked with 165 girls between the ages of 14 and 19. A recent analysis found that when the girls began the workshops 85% were not using contraceptives, while after the training 89% use contraceptives and go for regular check-ups.



Youth Scholarship Program

\$650 covers a college scholarship for a year to study Saturdays in Managua; \$240 covers a high school and \$180 covers a primary school scholarship. \$400 covers one month of salary for the program coordinator, Gloria Mayorga.

The program prioritizes girls and youth from remote villages. They also participate in training workshops with Women and Community and tutor children in their villages as a way to give back to the community. Copy this link to watch the video about College Scholarship students made by the Youth Network: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66y9VPlcurE>



The Following Three Programs are not part of the ADVANCE. To donate to the Youth Network, Baseball Ministries or the Little Snails School, please **make your check to Women and Community, and mail to APDO 4169, Managua, Nicaragua.**

Youth Network for Gender Equity and Against Violence.

\$300 covers costs of one training workshop in town with 50 youth. \$1375 covers multiplication of the workshop by 50 youth with 300 other teenagers in 25 villages.

Leadership development with Youth led to the formation of the Youth Network. The youth are promoting their citizen rights and elect representatives to attend town council meetings and town commissions on violence, education and the environment. They are promoting recycling efforts and sports. They learned to make community videos about the lives of the youth and to make radio spots to educate other teenagers throughout Nicaragua. To see the video on Gender Equity: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5c2QAAK3v0>



September 14th Baseball Academy and Little League teams

The Academy teaches kids to play ball and organizes about 400 kids on 20 to 24 teams in three age groups to play year-round. The kids are from impoverished families around Managua and playing ball is not only fun, but also they get good attention from coaches and learn organization and discipline. They are also working to get parents more involved.

The Little Snails School provides three levels of preschool and first grade to children from the impoverished Managua eastern market. The children also receive a hot lunch, health and dental care and can stay all day if need be. There is an accelerated primary school for older children too!

