

ship

S U M M E R 2 0 1 9



Photo courtesy of Bob Morris

NEWS FROM SHIP'S PRESIDENT

Robert Horton

Summer is finally underway, and I hope you've gotten the chance to rest or take a vacation or maybe even join us on a trip to El Salvador to see all of the work that, with help from you and God, has been and is being done on our little mountain. In case you didn't join us on a SHIP Trip in Summer 2019, this newsletter will give you a glimpse of what your gifts of time, prayer, and financial assistance have contributed to.

Your gifts have meant so much to us and to our Salvadoran community. This time last year, we only dreamed of a school—dreamed and worked really hard. This year, that school is a reality. Our mission teams wake up early each morning so they can greet the students and parents on their way into school.

Our students and teachers at Escuela Luz de Jesús amaze us every single day. They come to school full of excitement for learning and start each day with songs and prayers. Those songs and prayers continue throughout the day as our 27 little ones receive a challenging education in a school where there is no doubt that they are loved by their teachers, community, and a whole lot of people they may never meet. And, never doubt, those lessons of peace, patience, and God's love follow our Luz de Jesús students home each day, and those lessons are transforming lives and families.

Thank you so much for helping make this dream a reality as you've partnered with us and joined us in dreaming big.



Photos courtesy of Erin Berkey

ESCUELA LUZ DE JESÚS

a dream coming to life in El Salvador

This time last year, SHIP had an idea. Or, rather, Robert Horton, SHIP's President, had an idea. He just had to get everyone on board with it. This idea had been brewing for a while, but each time he'd bring it up, he was met with skepticism. It wasn't that it was a bad idea. It's that it meant a lot of work because Robert Horton's idea was that SHIP should start a school.

Would parents even send their children to a school that had just opened and was run by a group of people who'd never run a school? Where would we find teachers?

One year later: It turned out that, yes, people were willing to send their kids to this new school, Escuela Luz de Jesús (Light of Jesus), serving K4 and K5 students. In fact, we had more applications than we could handle but, fortunately, only had to turn students away for being too young. We'll see those "too young" ones next year. We have two amazing, loving, godly teachers who challenge our students to learn and show them how much they are loved by God. And we have another teacher who heads up our tutoring and who manages all of our tutors who work with our kids in older grades in other schools. Our plan and hope is to expand the school by one grade each year until, eventually, all of the children SHIP sends to school will be students at Luz de Jesús.

This new adventure hasn't been completely without struggles. Starting a school comes with a huge learning curve. We had to learn about Salvadoran education—laws, building codes, hiring practices, the proper size for chairs (yes, chairs!). But, as every struggle or question arose, God gave us answers.

Our needs have been met at every turn. When we knew nothing about starting a school, we met Salvadorans who'd done it before and were more than happy to show us how to do it. When we weren't sure if teachers would even come to our neighborhood, we found strong, capable teachers who wanted to teach our kids, no matter where they were. And, when we wondered how the local government would react to our starting a school, we were introduced to a group of city council members who welcomed us.

Escuela Luz de Jesús officially opened on January 10, 2019. These first two classes of students have shown great promise and continually amaze us with their capacity to love each other while they learn and to take the lessons of faith and prayer home with them each day. Among these classes of four- to six-year olds, we see the future of this Salvadoran community, and that future is full of hope.



Photos courtesy of Erin Berkey

SUMMER AT SHIP

There's really no adequate way to express how amazing this summer has been at SHIP El Salvador. Three separate mission teams visited, and their work and dedication constantly blew us away. This summer, teams were able to:

Work on our young women's home: They added plumbing and shelving, assembled beds, walked up and down the staircases of SHIP El Salvador at least a million times, each time carrying equipment and supplies. This home will house young women who are working hard to make a good future for themselves while growing in Christ. It truly is an oasis of safety for these young women, and SHIP is so humbled and blessed to be able to provide it and so grateful for all everyone who worked on it.

Reorganize our El Salvador SHIP Shop: One group took the SHIP Shop from drab to fab and made it shopper friendly. Things are color coded, separated by type of clothing, and now we have a space where women will easily be able to find goods to sell and to support their families. SHIP Shop El Salvador is part of our work to create more financial opportunities in our neighborhood. There are few opportunities, especially for women, so the work that this mission team did will truly bless not only individual women but also entire families.

Sew, sew sew: We were so fortunate to have some trippers with sewing talent. They were able to help Janise Crumpler in her sewing ministry. The women in this ministry are creating beautiful bags that are being sold at stores throughout Texas. We hope to expand this ministry both to enable more of our neighborhood women to have a way to support their families and to help support SHIP's work in El Salvador

Build a beautiful new playground: Our neighborhood kids are pretty sure they now have their own personal Disneyland. Thanks to the generous donation of an amazing new playground setup from Grace Bible Church in College Station, TX, kids in our neighborhood have a safe place to come and have fun. (Grace even sent a bunch of people to put the playset together, which was a huge blessing as the instruction manual for it was incredibly long and the process super involved!) The new playground is our most popular spot, and kids were climbing all over it before it was even completed. To add to the beauty of this spot, the next mission team had a group, led by Suzy Childers of Lufkin, TX, which designed and painted a colorful, fun striped wall near the playground. This area truly says that this is the place to come and be a kid.

Share Jesus' love: Most importantly, in all that we do, SHIP wants to show and share the love of Jesus with our neighbors in El Salvador. Without His love, we would not be there, and we want to glorify Him in all that we do. Each SHIP Trip hosts a Monday night outreach and dinner, and the whole neighborhood is invited. The turnout for these events was phenomenal, but, even better, our trippers were able to speak individually and connect with the people of El Salvador in meaningful ways. In addition to the Monday night outreach, each team hosted Vacation Bible School and shared skits, crafts, Bible lessons, and scripture memory with the children of our neighborhood and school. For older girls and guys, there was teen Bible study, and women and men each had Bible studies hosted for them.

This summer SHIP was blessed immensely by each group that visited, and we know our little piece of El Salvador felt this blessing, too.

STITCHED TOGETHER WITH LOVE

In a small room in El Salvador, dreams are being stitched together. A group of Salvadoran women gathers to learn sewing techniques, trade stories, and find ways to support their families through their new trade. These are the women of Janise Crumpler's sewing class.



Between cutting out patterns and threading needles, something wonderful happens. This group of women comes to know that they are loved by their teacher and by God. Janise speaks almost no Spanish, but she's managed to teach sewing and, more impressively, teach lessons of love, hope, and forgiveness to her women's sewing class. Janise came to El Salvador four years ago after hearing about it from a friend. She cautiously boarded a plane, heading to a country she'd never visited to join a group of people she'd never met. Since then, she's made 16 trips from Sulphur, Louisiana, sometimes toting a sewing machine and always carrying more luggage—filled with supplies—than most airlines probably allow. This sewing class shows once more that language, culture, and country of origin aren't barriers to sharing the love of God and that, while those who serve in El Salvador don't always feel equipped, they are able to fulfill God's purpose for them despite all the evidence that says they shouldn't be able to.



Keep an eye out in the next couple of months as SHIP launches an Etsy shop to showcase and sell its made-in-El Salvador brand, Liberty + Luz. The brand's name brings together two of the dreams SHIP has for its Salvadoran neighbors:



Liberty: Freedom from fear and violence in their community, financial freedom that comes from the hard work these women put in, and the freedom found only in Christ.

Luz: The Spanish word for "light." This word is also found in the name of SHIP's Salvadoran school, Escuela Luz de Jesús, "Light of Jesus." Luz represents the hope these women are finding, like the words of Isaiah: "The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end."

Photos courtesy of Erin Berkey

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

We love El Salvador. For almost fifteen years, El Salvador has been our home away from home and the focus of our work. We've come to know and love the people in our neighborhood. All the children of our neighborhood have a special place in our heart.

Over the years, the girls in our neighborhood have grown up, as children do. Now, we have many young women in the neighborhood, and they need places to live. For most of us in the US, this wouldn't seem like a big problem. There are options—live with parents, rent an apartment with friends, live on campus in a dorm. In our part of El Salvador, those options don't really exist.

So, what does a young woman do if she is able to attend university but is so far away from the university that it takes hours on a dangerous city bus to get there? Or, what if she isn't able to live with her family? That's where SHIP is stepping in.

And, SHIP can step in because, like Esther, we are where we need to be "for such a time as this." SHIP is in a great location to be able to host young women who need a place to live. We're close to a university, many secondary schools, hospitals, churches, stores. We have a built-in tutoring ministry that university women can work with. There is the sewing ministry for young women who might have an interest or talent. And we have a school, available to any young women who may have young children needing a place to go.

This all sounds ideal and like it should come together easily. Life never works out that easily. The idea for this home has been on SHIP's heart for several years. But, there have always been obstacles in the way—no place to build, no person who could oversee the home. However, something started to change. Over the past few months we've been able to carve out a perfect spot for the home; we've found people who can help. We are starting to see growth from the small seed God planted when we started falling in love with this country, this neighborhood, and this group of young women.

Please continue to pray for the work we're doing in this area. The work is hard, but God is good, and we see the promise unfolding.



Photos courtesy of Erin Berkey

IF I HAD A TICKET

Lexi Coyle

Holding a plane ticket is probably my favorite feeling in the world. Plane tickets are the paper embodiment of a belly laugh, a freshly baked cookie, and the shock of jumping into a pool for the first time each summer. They symbolize unlimited possibility, adventure, and undeserved blessings. If I could have a ticket right now, with any destination, it would say San Salvador, El Salvador.

You might be thinking to yourself, "Well, that is obscure. Why not Santorini, Rome or Paris? What is in El Salvador that is so special?" And those are all valid questions. I agree, that San Salvador is obscure, and I'll be honest, there is not a lot to see that you could not find somewhere else.

But I would also say, you will never find a more welcoming, endearing, and deserving group of people. My junior year of high school I visited San Salvador for a leadership course during Spring Break, and I can honestly tell you that in one week the trajectory of my life was altered.

Today, I would go back to El Salvador in a heartbeat. I would go back to those people. I would spend more time with the children and the teens. I would help on work projects and build another house. I would learn how to cook authentic pupusas (corn tortillas stuffed with beans and cheese). I would soak in more of their beautiful culture and try to improve my Spanish more. I would go back; and I am certain that my life would be changed over and over again.

I miss them; my heart breaks for everything they have suffered and continue to suffer. It would be my greatest joy to return to them; to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. With all my might I would try to be part of a new narrative and a new normal for the people of El Salvador.

Lexi Coyle visited SHIP El Salvador with her classmates from KOR Education School in College Station, Texas. While in El Salvador, KOR students worked with Vacation Bible School and helped build a house for a mom and her son. She brought so much fun and light to the trip.



Photo courtesy of Lexi Coyle

WHY I WENT BACK (AND BACK AGAIN)

Hannah Brock

It isn't often that SHIP Trippers make more than one trip in a summer, but SHIP is so glad that Hannah Brock did. Back home, Hannah is an elementary school teacher, and her patience, bright smile, and love of Jesus make her a favorite of both our school and neighborhood kids. We think she's pretty great, too!



How do I even begin to express how amazing SHIP is? I returned from my second trip to El Salvador last week, and I still feel so happy.

Everyone who works for SHIP loves what they do, and more importantly they love Jesus. Their light shines in the darkness, and they do it all because of Him. And they allow others to come into this place and help spread the Great News! When people come to help, SHIP lets them choose where to serve. I got to use my God-given gifts in the area I'd best serve in. SHIP is doing amazing things in the name of Jesus for the people in this amazing country, and I'm so lucky to be a part of it.

I get to go back in a couple of weeks, and I absolutely cannot wait. I keep leaving pieces of my heart there each time I go. Thank God for this amazing place!

SALVADORAN SPOTLIGHT: RAQUEL DE MORENO



We get asked all the time, "How do you get work done in El Salvador when you're in the US?" The answer is right above. The wonderful woman in the center of that photo, surrounded by her sweet, brilliant daughter and loving, supportive husband, is our very own Raquel.

It's not overstating it a bit to say that SHIP wouldn't be able to function without Raquel. It would take less time and space to give a list of what she *doesn't* do than to try to explain everything that she does. But, to give a little taste of what she does, Raquel is SHIP's Salvadoran administrator. That means she oversees the running of most every aspect of SHIP. The containers we send? Raquel is on their end making sure everything gets done properly. The SHIP Shop? She helps there, too. Everyone who works for SHIP in El Salvador? The scholarship students? The construction? There really is no part of SHIP that Raquel doesn't help with.

She is amazing, and we have been so blessed to have her on our team. As much as we love her for all the hard work she does, we love her even more for the love and friendship she and her family have shown us and the people we work with. And, it truly is work that Raquel's whole family participates in. We have been fortunate that, beyond being a talented craftsman, Raquel's husband, Walter, is also a gifted preacher. Both of them have brought weekly church services to our community, and they have given so much of themselves to this neighborhood. We are beyond grateful for this family.



Photo courtesy of Bob Morris

Save the Date!

SHIP's Annual Luncheon

October 29th
College Station Hilton

Program: 12-1 pm
(Doors open at 11:30 am.)

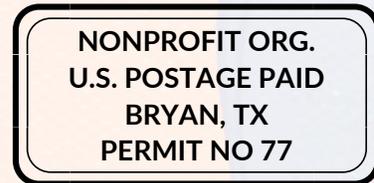
Email or call the SHIP office for information about how you can be an underwriter, table host, or attendee.

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Get ready to meet...

Each year, we've been fortunate to bring a few of our Salvadoran friends to the US for our annual luncheon. We plan to do the same this year, and we're excited to announce that two of our tutors—Marlene and Betsy—have been asked to join us in October. Raquel, who has visited several times, plans to come as well. Please be praying that everything goes well when they visit the US Embassy in San Salvador to request visas. We would love for you to meet these amazing young women. We just have a few administrative hoops to jump through before that can happen.

