

SHIP

CHRISTMAS 2022

wishing you
peace, love, & joy



A Season of Light

The Christmas season always feels like a season of light. We're surrounded by light—the lighting of the town tree, the lights on our neighbors' houses, the lights lining our own rooftops (for those of us brave enough to climb up there).

The light of this season seems fitting, as Jesus had beautiful words to say about light. Matthew 5:14-16 records Jesus saying:

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

He is the light. His light shines through us. And, if we let that light be seen, it will show the world the glory of God.

Throughout our 18 years of working in El Salvador, the glory of God has been evident. We see the work that God has used to shine His light on our little mountain—clean water, good education for the community's children, Bible studies with our neighbors, homes made habitable. Just this week, we saw seven young people baptized in Jesus' name.

He has used SHIP's work to show His goodness and love in a community that often was shrouded in darkness. The work is difficult, and it isn't finished.

As we move into 2023, we reflect on the work He has already accomplished and anticipate the work to come. We have big plans for the near future:

- In January, we will welcome 15 new Kinder-4 students into our school and add an additional grade. For this to happen, we must **provide scholarships** for those new students, **hire a teacher** for our new third grade class, and **hire an additional teachers' aide** to help with daily administrative duties.
- We need to **make repairs to our existing water well and drill an additional water well**. These expenses will cost at least \$50,000.
- Our **new classroom building** has been growing rapidly, and each day brings a new building-related project. We still have much to do to complete the building, and expenses for the building will cost around \$120,000.

At first glance, these numbers and the scope of the work seem overwhelming, but His light shines in the darkness, and He has given us a community of people, like you, who join with us to bring His light where it's needed most.

Would you help us continue God's work in El Salvador? Would you carry His light into the new year by giving a one-time donation, by becoming a monthly donor, or by sponsoring one of our students? Thank you for the blessing you've been to SHIP this year. We pray that your Christmas season is full of peace, love, and joy!

A Dream Fulfilled

In 2012, SHIP began its adventure in education. We were surprised to learn that school attendance was mandatory and free for children through the eighth grade, but after that, most of the cost fell to the parents.

Visiting with neighborhood children, Robert Horton talked to a young lady about her plans for the upcoming school year. She told Robert that her education was over, because her mother simply couldn't afford to send her to school. Her mom was the sole support of four children and didn't have a source of income that would allow for paying for school.

That didn't sit well with Robert, and plans were made to provide scholarships at safe, private Christian schools for 6 children. One of those children was Ana, and on Monday, November 27, 2022, we joyfully watched as Ana received her university diploma. She earned a degree in Tourism with a minor in Languages (she speaks Spanish, English, and French). She has a good job, and we are incredibly proud of her.

This would not have been possible without the strong support of her sponsors, Jack and Gloria Matthews, who have encouraged and prayed and funded her education from high school through university.

When asked about their experience with SHIP's sponsorSHIP program, this is what they had to say:



Sponsoring Ana was both a blessing and a joy for us! When we met Ana on our first trip to El Salvador, we were immediately drawn to her because of her sweet smile, her shyness, and her delightful sense of humor. God definitely led us to sponsor Ana! There was never a doubt in our hearts or minds about what we were to do!

Ana is a beautiful young lady both inside and out! We have been blessed to be part of her life and her educational path! We are so very proud of her! A College Degree!! How awesome is that?!?!

To those of you that might be entertaining the idea of becoming a sponsor, or those who have never considered it, we would encourage everyone to earnestly pray for God to show you which child He wants you sponsor!!

Don't miss out on the blessings you will receive as a sponsor!

Today, SHIP provides education for more than 150 students from kindergarten-4 through university. This school year we had seven scholarship students graduate high school. One student, Fatima, finished third in her class and will be studying engineering in university, and all of those new high school graduates will begin university or trade school soon. At our own school, Colegio La Luz de Jesús, we'll welcome 15 new students in January.

If you'd like to be a part of this work, we invite you to become a sponsor and change a child's life by going to www.SHIPinternational.org/sponsor.



A Light in the Darkness

One thing that always stands out to us when we're visiting El Salvador is how early it gets dark, and, because our property has so many large trees, the darkness there is dense. In another sense, this same area has been dark for many years because of the unrelenting violence of the gangs and the fear they instilled in our neighbors' hearts. The place in which we found ourselves was both physically and spiritually dark.

However, we knew that, even in the darkness, there was light—the light of Jesus. That's why we named our school Colegio La Luz de Jesús, the Light of Jesus School. At the beginning of each school day, we see these bright sparks of light coming together.

In our school they grow academically. They learn reading, arithmetic, English, and much more. They have school programs, and they have time to play in PE class. But, most importantly, they grow in love of God and of their neighbors. They learn how to live in peace, and they learn that they have a God who loves and will protect them.

What started in 2019 as a little school of around 25 students in two grade levels has grown to a school of over 70 students in five grade levels. In January, that little school will grow by 15 more students and expand to include third grade. We love welcoming the new students and welcoming back the returning students, but we mostly love that, with each grade added, we're welcoming in a new generation that loves and follows God.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 5:16





September SHIP Trip

Our September mission trip blessed us beyond belief. We saw sponsors meeting their sponsored children; a huge turnout for our outreach; Salvadoran friends choosing to follow Christ; and so much work getting done on our new classroom building. Most of our team members were senior adults, and we loved seeing our little ones so excited to interact with abuelos and abuelas, our teens getting advice from adults who've walked in faith for decades, and our moms in Bible study connecting with the women on our trip.

We get asked (pretty regularly): How old does someone have to be to go on a SHIP Trip? We get the reverse of that question, too, because a lot of people think that mission trips are just for high school and college students. That's not the case at all; for quick reference, our oldest SHIP Tripper was 90, and our youngest was two months old!

What is so inspiring about mission trips is that we see the whole Body of Christ coming together, bringing experiences and talents and new ideas to our work. We get to see the way that Christ uses us—just as we are—to enrich our lives and the lives of those with whom we work. We see His glory and strength every time we take a group to El Salvador.

If you've been thinking about joining us on a SHIP Trip but felt hesitant for any reason (too young, too old, not enough construction know-how, whatever it is!), we're here to tell you that everyone can be used by God.

Behold: Luncheon 2022 Recap

How excited are we about this year's luncheon? Just about as excited as our little friend in the picture to the right! If you didn't get to come to the 2022 luncheon, never fear. We've got another one coming around in October 2023. Before we get ahead of ourselves, here's what has us so excited about the latest luncheon:

- The 2022 luncheon was the largest turnout we've ever had, with over 500 people in attendance.
- We grossed over \$185,000 in donations. As always, we aim to keep our expenses to 15% or less of the gross profit, and we were able to do that again.
- Almost all of the students in our sponsorSHIP program got a sponsor! That's a huge answer to prayer and a huge blessing for our kids. Having a sponsor doesn't mean that a child's expenses are completely covered, though, and we're welcoming 15 new students to our school in January. If you'd like to sponsor a child, go to SHIPinternational.org/sponsor.

To all of you who attended, prayed for, donated, helped with the luncheon, thank you! You made the work doable and helped SHIP's ministry continue. God bless you all.



See you in El Salvador!

We love nothing more than introducing people to our friends and neighbors in El Salvador. What better way to show the work that God is doing through SHIP in El Salvador?

Each trip is as unique as the individuals on it. What remains the same is that each trip takes us out of our comfort zones and lets us be the hands and feet of Jesus in El Salvador. If that sounds like something you're interested in doing, we want to talk to you about going.

Basic Info: The SHIP Trip cost is \$750 + airfare. That includes all transportation in El Salvador, food, lodging, and an excursion. Learn more at SHIPinternational.org.

2023 SHIP Trip Dates:

March 11-17	July 8-14
June 3-9	July 15-21
June 10-16	September 2023 (Dates TBD)

TAKE A SHIP TRIP

SHIPinternational.org | contact@SHIPinternational.org | 979.260.7447

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