

2014 Honduras Mission Devotions
Bethel United Methodist Church

See His Children



Speak His Truth



Do His Work



Share His Love





We invite you to follow along each morning about 8:00 am as we do our devotions. This is an important time as we prepare for what God has in store for us each day. It is very comforting knowing that we continue to have your love and support. Thank you so much for all your efforts in getting us here. Hopefully we will please the Lord and in doing so, please you.

TEAM PRAYER

Our Holy Father, we come to you in complete humbleness. You have called us to this place in Honduras to help a very specific need. Lord, we have no idea exactly what is in store, what surprises may await us, what challenges may present themselves, or what joys and sorrows may find us.

All we know, Lord, is that we offer ourselves to Your will.

We are at Your mercy and Your grace. We are ready to extend that mercy and grace to those we encounter. For You, this family and their community, equip and prepare us to do a good job.

Lord, protect us spiritually, guard us physically, and keep our hearts and minds open to Your lead. Open our spirits to see our surroundings and to enjoy your creation. You have already been at work where we go – we are grateful for Your preparation. Thank you for the opportunity by allowing us to join You in this work.

We are glad to be on this path. We are pleased to have a loving church family that keeps us excited for Your work. We ask for protection on those families we leave behind.

We ask Your blessings on the family we will serve and on their community.

May Your name be glorified in every aspect of our work and help us remember who is in charge!

Through Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

THIS IS GOD'S PLAN

Acts 16:9-15 *Please read all 7 verses*

⁹During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, Come over to Macedonia and help us. ¹⁰When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

Prior to your arrival in Honduras there was a great deal of planning taking place. People have been praying, raising funds, writing checks, increasing exercise, reviewing Spanish, ordering supplies and many other details were handled in preparation. That is good. I believe I read somewhere that no one needs to build a house without counting the cost. Thank God for the detail people in this group.

Now that you are in Honduras keeping sight of the details is still very important. Listen carefully to the voice of God. God wants to remain in charge of this mission. If we fail to pay attention we can miss out or mess up and neither would be good.

When Paul set sail for Macedonia he was convinced that God was calling him to help a man there. When the mission team arrived, they looked for the place of prayer, which normally was near the river. At the river, instead of finding a man in need of help the mission team found a group of ladies praying. In particular God had placed on the heart of Lydia, a Gentile woman who worshiped Israel's God, to go to the river on the Sabbath day.

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She just happened to be there when Paul arrived and shared a word from the Lord. I wonder if the team would have been so quick to set sail for Macedonia if the dream had revealed a woman crying for help. We may never know the answer to that, but we can be certain that it was God who was orchestrating the meeting of Paul and Lydia.

After hearing Paul's message Lydia and her entire household were baptized. She then urged Paul to stay in her home. Paul accepted the invitation. We read later that Lydia's home became one of the gathering places for believers in that community.

Today you are in Honduras. This is God's plan for this team. There was a call to return to Honduras to help a little boy named José, specifically to build José and his family a new home. God will guide you in this process. Continue to pray, and remain attentive to the voice of God. You may be surprised by the things God has orchestrated for this missionary journey. As you will see everyone and everything will be in place at just the right time. Keep praying and listening.

Pastor Candy

FRIDAY JUNE 6

GREAT JOY

3 John 1:3 *It gave me great joy when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth...*

It truly gives me great joy to go on this trip with each of you. We are staying true to the command “go to all nations”. Even after we leave we are still there working.

Suzanne has told me that when the Rubio’s go witness that they wear the t-shirts we gave. So we are there. When people see David’s house they see us. A somewhat healthier José and with wheelchair, we are there.

So this year remember that we are fulfilling a commandment and are leaving a lasting impression of Christ.

Dear Lord please help others see Jesus in us. Amen.

Catherine Johnson

SATURDAY JUNE 7

OVERWHELMED

Luke 22:42-44 *Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done. And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

An unfinished job, a mower that is too small for grass that is too tall, a daughter about to make the biggest single transition in life that most of us ever make, a house that is too dirty for a mother-in-law that is on her way to visit, students making poor decisions and others trying real hard but somehow I'm just not getting through, and then there is the thought of going to another country to build a house in a week. Oh.... There it is. I am getting to help build a house for another child that, about a year ago, went through a tremendous life transition himself. The unfinished job was to make this trip possible. The dirty house does not have dirt floors. My mother-in-law is visiting. Poor decisions can teach valuable lessons. And, at least some students are trying hard. It is amazing how when the focus is right, the grass is actually greener right under our feet. There is only one man that can say his task is bigger. That one man did his task, and we have life more abundantly because of it. As Christians our focus needs to be on others and how best to love them, even when it is hard, lonely, and scary.

Lord help me to remember the love you have for me. Help me to focus on the sacrifice you made on my behalf. Help me to heed the call to sacrifice for others

Lance Brooking

SUNDAY JUNE 8

TRUST IN THE LORD

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Thought I had this one down pat. God has opened so many doors for me at home and especially in Honduras. Times I thought I would not make it and He would say “Oh, yes you can.” Yes I trust in the Lord.

It was one of those divine wake-up calls you get when you actually listen to the Holy Spirit’s direction.. (That “be still and know I am God” thing is hard for me). Last summer I was in Honduras with the wonderful Rev. Candy Thacker, best roommate ever. I was reading a Max Lucado book and God put “it” right in front of my face in black and white. You have an issue you’re avoiding (retirement/taking care of husband). I agreed and set forth a deadline – February 2014.

May, 2014 (still working) having my quiet time in Honduras and this verse comes to me. You’re not trusting in the Lord with ALL your heart or you would have followed his directions. I’ve set a new deadline of October 1, 2014.

Many of us are control freaks and we want to give part of our trust. But He says ALL and I’ll direct your path. My prayer is that whatever part you and I are holding onto we’ll give it to God. He has amazing plans for you and me.

Carol Myers

TUESDAY JUNE 9

PAIN IS INEVITABLE, BUT MISERY IS OPTIONAL

Jeremiah 29:11 *For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for your harm, to give you a future of hope.*

All of us at some point in our lives have gone through times of trial. Sadness, anger, and frustration are all natural human responses when we face hard times. Taking time to grieve can help us to heal and release the hurt. However, we must be careful not to allow a cycle of negativity to consume our hearts. Romans 8: 6 states, “To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.” Negative thoughts and speech are detrimental to your life. Over time negative thoughts and words influence your actions and are damaging to your mental and emotional stability. Negativity can hurt your relationships, and they keep you from living your life to the fullest. By accepting these lies into your heart, you are rejecting God blessings for your life.

I understand firsthand how easy it is to be consumed by negativity and despair. I have a B.A. in history and a M.A. in anthropology; however I have yet to find full-time employment. In response to this I have complained, cried, and put myself down for years. I felt inadequate and worthless, and I essentially told myself this with every rejection I received. As a result I was unproductive. Yes, I still put in applications here and there, but I didn't really believe anything would come of it. I know my husband and mother have become mentally exhausted from my depressing attitude.

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Exasperated one evening Danny said to me “you have so much potential, but you just give up. One of the reasons I was attracted to you was because I thought you were a go-getter. I don’t care if you are working part-time in retail in five years. Seeing you try is what matters.” Likewise my mother recently told me “I understand where he is coming from. Sometimes when I’m not near you and I hear you talk like that, I just want to shake you. You are blessed. You are blessed with a good husband and you don’t need to be worrying all the time.” I was so preoccupied with my past failures, not being perfect, and the fear of future rejection, I was keeping myself back. *“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for your harm, to give you a future of hope (Jeremiah 29:11).”* I was not trusting in God’s promises and I was ignoring His calling for my life.

Our lives are what we say and think. When you speak out negative words into the universe, they don’t just disappear. The evil one hears your words and uses them as a weapon against you. *“For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm (Ephesians 6: 12-13).”* There is a line from a song by Danny that says, “Pain is inevitable, but misery is optional.” I believe that to be true. God did not promise us a life free of hardships, but he did promise to be there when they come. He is our strength and he will give us peace if we would only trust in Him. So put on the full ARMOR OF GOD. Don’t let fear of rejection, failure, or whatever is holding you back from fulfilling God’s calling in your life.

Fianna Thacker Swain

WEDNESDAY JUNE 10

GOD GIVES US WHAT WE WEED

Deuteronomy 30:11-14 *Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it? Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it? No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.*

I have read this passage over and over for the past couple of weeks. Each time I am brought back to the message GOD was sending to the Children of Israel as they waited to cross the Jordan into the Promised Land. In the previous verses He basically tells them that He knows their hearts and where they have been but He is leading them into His Promised Land where He wants them to put Him first in all things. He tells them to remember all of the things He has done for them and to keep them front and center in all that they do and whoever they are with. And, He says, *“you must return to the LORD your God, obeying His voice, in line with all that I’m commanding you right now-you and your children-with all your mind and with all your being...”* Okay, so why does this verse matter in this context? For me, there is a little boy, José, in a country unlike my own, who I believe God has called us to go to to serve. When I question the project or my part in the project, God puts Jose’s name in my heart. No one need ask why this little boy speaks to my heart. All you have to remember is the name, Papia. Enough said.

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The rest of my questions are also answered in my heart as I know He is faithful to provide all that we need. We are going to serve a family and a little boy who God has prepared us to serve. He has put the word to serve him in our hearts and in our mouths, now we obey. This is about our serving, not our being served. This is about our obedience and our love for our Father that pulls our hearts into obedience. This is about a picture of little boy in a new wheelchair that reached out and stole my heart last year and set up a place in my heart to hear God's word to go to Honduras to serve Him by serving José.

God speaks to my heart saying, "I have asked you to do something, it is within your ability and power to do, just do it." God will help us succeed because we are obeying His voice.

Jogi Mauger

WEDNESDAY JUNE 11

Tell God Your Worries

Philippians 4:6-7 *Don't worry about anything but in everything through prayer and petition with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses every thought will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

Remember how happy you were when you were very little? Remember when you were so full of energy and nothing could stop you? Why do we stress so much now? You will have to answer that question for yourself, but I can tell you to not stress too much because our God knows exactly what He is doing.

Our Father tells us not to worry, but to pray. Tell God your worries and let Him give you His peace. And not only do we have a Father who wants to trade our worries for His peace we also have a Father who has a plan for you.

Macie Mae McWilliams

THURSDAY JUNE 12

LET GOD LEAD YOU

2 John 1 1-6 *The elder, To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth – and not I only, but also all who know the truth – because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, will be with us in truth and love. It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us. And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.*

I am a planner. I have always been a person who plans things out. I have learned through the years if I really want to get things accomplished the best thing for me to do is make a list. Writing this devotion has been on my list for a while. Now I don’t always write the list out, many times it’s just a mental list. I may have a list that I know will take me a month to complete or longer. I break those down into a daily list. I find it is best if they have a deadline attached.

While having this list helps me get things accomplished, I do find times I feel that the task on the list sometimes makes me miss an opportunity God has sent my way. Now if I had been there with you this week, first I would have assessed the construction project and then set out to finish the task. From what I saw last

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year, I know of the great need and I know that the family has no one to help but us. I would have in my mind what we should get done each day. With all that in my head I would have pushed ahead to complete the task. I really like getting things done and I know you wanted to complete this house. I have found, and I am sure you have seen, that God has given you many opportunities to show His love while you have been in Honduras. Was it just blowing bubbles, jumping rope, holding a hand or giving a big old sweaty hug. God also gave you opportunities to share how God touched your heart while you were in Honduras. So I hoped you took time to keep your eyes open, bent that stiff neck and grabbed all the opportunities God sent your way. God will continue to put opportunities in front of you.

Alan Pierce



OUR PRAYER FOR THE TEAM

Oh Lord, thank you for this week.

By now we are breathless, speechless, full of thoughts and prayers of what you have done and will continue doing.

We ask your blessing upon us as we come home to share the good news of Your work in Honduras and in us.

Through Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.