

The Children of Tisma Sponsorship Program

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

January 1, 2009 Release

A small preschool in Central America. Cinnamon rolls and monthly pledges in North America.

This year's story of a growing partnership between the Iglesia Misión Cristiana in Tisma, Nicaragua, and the Huntington Church of the Brethren in Indiana, USA.

*And your role
in making it happen.*



Top: Your donation helps these children of the preschool.

Left: Sponsors help provide food for the daily preschool lunches.

Overview of the Year

THANKS TO YOU, THE Huntington-Tisma partnership experienced another good year. Fifteen preschool sponsorships for Arbol de Vida Pre Escolar were renewed, seven Huntington Church of the Brethren friends visited the church in Tisma for a week in June, a friend from Tisma visited the Huntington church, and the proceeds of two cinnamon roll sales helped support the Tisma preschool.

BUT THE 2008 YEAR was also a poignant one for the Tisma-Huntington partnership with the death of Ken Baker, the quiet pillar of the program. He passed away near Christmas. He was able to be part of almost the entire year of planning and work in meeting the goals of the partnership. His vision lives on in the Children of Tisma program.

A Shared Vision

THE GOAL OF THE TISMA-HUNTINGTON sister church partnership and its Children of Tisma Sponsorship Program is to build an enabling and ongoing relationship between the Iglesia Misi3n Cristiana of Tisma, Nicaragua, and the Huntington Church of the Brethren in Huntington, Indiana, USA. We want to learn to know each other and to mutually and respectfully share resources and friendship as God leads.

Accomplishments This Year

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR was the self-funded trip of seven Huntington friends (ranging in age from 13 to 70) to Tisma in June. During the eight-day trip, they lived with Tisma families, and visited with the mayor to see a future municipal project (plans are for Lake Tisma to be turned into a resort area to boost the economy). They



Top: Ken and Carole Baker, along with other members of the Huntington Church of the Brethren, helped set up the preschool program in Tisma.

Left: The peace dove banner symbolizes the relationship between the Huntington Church of the Brethren and the Tisma Misi3n Cristiana church. Each church created a banner for the other church by tracing the hands of their children. One hangs in the sanctuary of the Huntington church, as well.

observed the women's group of the church bake bread to support the preschool, visited the preschool while in session and the public high school in Tisma. Fifteen preschool sponsorships were renewed, and funds were raised by volunteers selling cinnamon rolls and other food during the 4-H Fair and Pioneer Festival in Huntington. Volunteers also built a serving booth to use at the fairs.

Goals for the 2009 Year

THE GOALS FOR the 2009 year include:

- Recruiting and renewing sponsors for the Children of Tisma Sponsorship Program
- Finding funds for a microenterprise venture in Tisma. We hope to recruit donors in Huntington to lend money to several Tisma families. The families hope to build furniture that they will sell at market. This will provide income for the families and the preschool.
- Setting up an endowment fund to invest for future funding of the preschool
- Reorganizing the Children of Tisma sister-church committee to cover what used to be done by Ken Baker
- Buying a trailer and putting it under the booth to make a permanent portable booth for future cinnamon roll selling
- Planning and operating booths for the 4-H fair and Pioneer Festival during the summer of 2009
- Creating an annual report that can be updated and published yearly.



Top: Children who attend preschool are more likely to become educated leaders in their community.

Left: Women of the Tisma Mision Cristiana church prepare food for the preschool children.

Tisma Preschool Sponsors During 2008

FIFTEEN CHILDREN WERE sponsored this past year. The preschool was thus able to employ 3 teachers, enroll about 50 students, and purchase needed supplies, food, and other items to run the program. (Our long-term goal is to sponsor the full potential capacity of 70 children in the preschool.) Along with the sponsorships, the Tisma church and the Nicaraguan government contribute partial funding.

THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS and organizations have sponsored a child at the Arbol de Vida Pre Escolar (Trees for Life Preschool) during the past three years: Alexis Baker; Ken & Carole Baker; Julie & Les Brin; Sean and Brandi Baker; Cathie Covey; Anthony Beery; Dean & Reba Beery; Beth & Jim Beery-Bennett; Ruth Bowman; Jill Docking; Wanda Dreyer; Wayne & Wilda Eberly; Jean & Charles Hayden; Huntington Church of the Brethren; Huntington Church of the Brethren 2-5 Sunday school class (Tammy K., teacher); Chuck & Lori Grable; Jon & Deb Lahman; Brent Lederle; Jeff & Sharon Lehman; Steve & Jenny Miller; Pleasant View Church of the Brethren; Valerie Riddle; Jenn Schneider; Roberta Schultz; Susan & Ron Sharpe; Laura Summers; June Swing; Leon Stong; United Technologies; Doras & Bob Weinley; Fred and Eloise Young; Brian Zuecher.

Money Matters

Money That Came In

A TOTAL OF **\$5,184.00** in revenues were raised in 2008.

- **\$2,722.00:** Net income from the 4-H and Pioneer festivals this year. (4-H grossed \$3,470.00 and the Pioneer Festival \$1,460.00 minus \$2,208.00 for expenses and fees).



Top: Pastor Leonardo Dominguez participates in a foot washing ceremony with Steve Miller from the Huntington Church of the Brethren. It symbolizes the sister-church relationship.

Bottom: Women of the Tisma church bake bread to raise money for their church and preschool.

- **\$2,462.00:** Donated by sponsors this year (\$1,750 child sponsorship payments, \$40.00 one-time gifts, and \$672.00 from Huntington Church of the Brethren).
- **(\$2,300.00):** Donations given in memory of Ken Baker to the preschool in 2008. This money will be recorded for accounting purposes in the 2009 budget.

Money That Was Given

- **\$2,650.00:** Sent to Tisma for the preschool program.

Money That Is in Savings

- **\$5,180.00:** Money in Huntington savings account for Tisma program as of December 31, 2008.

The Board of Directors in Huntington

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS in Huntington gives oversight to the Huntington side of the Huntington-Tisma partnership. This includes making decisions and finding volunteers for fund raising, publicity, and overseeing the preschool sponsorship program. Directors during the 2008 year were: **Linda Hughes, Susan Sharpe, Beth Beery, Valerie Riddle, Carole Baker, and Ken Baker.**

The Board of Directors in Tisma

IN TISMA, the **Mujeres Milagrosas** (the Miraculous Women of the Tisma Church) serve in the same capacity as the Board of Directors in Huntington. The chair of the board is **Claudio Garay.**



Top: Seven members of the Huntington Church traveled to Tisma in June of 2008. (l to r): Valerie Riddle, Beth Beery, Anthony Beery, Carole Baker, Ken Baker, Steve Miller, and Brian Zuercher.

Left: Your sponsorship of a child provides that child with a year's education in the preschool. This includes a daily lunch, uniforms, school supplies, and religious training.

How It All Began

THE HUNTINGTON CHURCH of the Brethren has nurtured a mutual partnership and friendship with a “sister” church in Tisma, Nicaragua, the Misión Christiana Iglesia, for over 15 years now. Huntington members have traveled to Tisma, and members of the Tisma church have visited Huntington. Tisma is located about an hour from the capital city of Managua when riding in the back of a pickup truck, which is a common mode of transportation in Nicaragua. It's a small town of 11,000 people, many living in poverty.

THE INTER-CHURCH RELATIONSHIP was initiated by co-pastors Kim and Jim Yasse Albricht in 1993. Yasse had traveled to Nicaragua on a college mission project, picking coffee. Later as pastor of the Huntington church, she started the Tisma partnership, teaming up with two Spanish teachers in the congregation (Carole Baker and Beth Beery, and later Valerie Riddle.) Yasse knew of Yvonne Dilling, the Latin American representative from the Church of the Brethren’s national office in Elgin, Ill. Dilling had previously connected some American churches with Nicaraguan churches. The Huntington church began visiting and sending funds to Tisma. Partly supported by some of the funds sent to them, the Tisma church members built a new church facility. But that didn’t take care of the poverty.

THE NEXT PHASE IN THE partnership began when Ken and Carole Baker traveled with Balbir Mathur, founder and president of Trees for Life, to Tisma in 2004. Mathur immediately set up meetings with some groups from the church. He asked the groups what *they* wanted to do to improve their lives economically. The women's group said they needed a preschool for



Top: Children, parents, and other church members gather on an afternoon picnic to celebrate God's gift of nature.



Left: Pastor Leonardo provides leadership in the community to continue the sister church relationship with the Huntington Church.

children who couldn't afford other preschools. They believed that education is the answer to poverty. The women wanted the preschool to provide everything needed so that the poorest of children could attend.

SEEING THAT THE PEOPLE in the Tisma church were willing to work hard to raise money and to do the work of running the school, Mathur had Trees for Life send funds to Tisma to get the preschool started. A women's committee named Las Mujeres Milagrosas (The Miraculous Women) was formed to be the board of directors. Guillermo Eugarrrios, the former pastor of the Mision Christian church in Tisma who has visited Huntington two times, constructed the building.

TREES FOR LIFE BELIEVES that when we empower people to help themselves and each other, all lives can be improved dramatically. This empowerment was exemplified by the new preschool, which was unimaginable to most in Tisma--but became a reality.

A GROUP OF HUNTINGTON church members traveled to Nicaragua to be part of the inauguration ceremony of the preschool in November 2005, just before the first year of preschool operation began. In December 2006, a delegation from the Huntington church and from Trees for Life attended the celebration of the first "promotion" (graduation) from the preschool. The Tisma church hopes to someday add grade levels to the school and eventually have a technical school for older youth.

Becoming a Preschool Child Sponsor

WE WELCOME NEW as well as renewed sponsorships. Each additional sponsor allows the preschool to expand the number of children it serves. A sponsorship is a commitment of \$10 per month per child for a calendar



Top: Worship is very important to Angela and the rest of the Tisma church community. Each evening's services are led by a different group in the church.

Left: The sponsors of cousins Ruth and Sihli receive photos and drawings along with information about their families, pets, and interests.

year. Payment can be made in several ways. You can choose to have \$10 a month deducted from a checking account or from a credit card, or make a one-time annual contribution by check or cash.

What a Sponsorship Will Do

A \$10 tax-deductible donation each month provides the tuition and related educational expenses for one child in the preschool for one year. The school's yearly budget includes all school expenses for the children, including a modest lunch each day. This project is governed by Trees for Life's 501(c)(3). It is also audited by local volunteers who have agreed to travel bi-annually to Tisma. For more information on Trees for Life, see www.treesforlife.org/.

What Sponsors Receive

Each sponsor receives a picture, an information sheet, and a personal drawing from the child she or he is sponsoring. In addition, the child, with the help of an adult, communicates once a year with her or his sponsor in the United States. As a sponsor, you can chose to write letters to the sponsored child. These letters are translated by Beth Beery's advanced Spanish class at Huntington North High School.

How Funds Are Distributed

All money donated by Children of Tisma sponsors goes fully and directly to cover tuition costs for the children of the preschool. None of your donation will be used for administrative costs, which are covered by separate donations. All donated money is distributed equally to all the children in the school. The child you sponsor will be the one who communicates with you.



Above: Members of the Nicaraguan church graciously hosted the members of the Indiana church in their homes. Valerie Riddle is enjoying a conversation with her neighbor Angela and her daughter Ruth.

Left: Teachers in the preschool received three years of training in preschool education.

Contact Information

TO SPONSOR A CHILD for the preschool, go to this site to print off a form: www.cobhuntington.org Or ask for a form by contacting:

Huntington Church of the Brethren
 Betty Dillon, Administrative Assistant
 306 E. Washington, Ave.
 Huntington, IN 46750
 260-359-7983
office@cobhuntington.org



Top: Valerie Riddle of the Huntington church learns about the natural habitat of Nicaragua from Pastor Leonardo and his wife Juanita as they tour a volcano.

Left: Franco, a teenage student in the church, lives in this small house with his mothers and several brothers.

JUST TEN DOLLARS A MONTH provides a preschool education for a child in the village of Tisma, Nicaragua. It greatly increases the opportunity of that child you sponsor for preschool to then thrive in elementary and secondary school and to break out of the cycle of poverty. Brighten the future for one precious child. Your gift is tax deductible, and because of administrative costs being covered by other contributions, 100 percent of your money goes directly to the preschool program.



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Yes! *I would like to make it possible for a child in Tisma, Nicaragua, to attend the preschool there for \$10 a month.*

- Checking Account (attach voided check)
- Credit Card (enter credit card information below)
(You will be sent a direct debit form to authorize the deduction.)
- I wish to pay \$120 for a full year.
- One-time gift to support the school \$ _____
(Checks payable to Trees for Life or enter credit card information below.)
Visa, MasterCard or American Express
card # _____ exp. date ____ / ____
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ ST _____ Zip _____
Email _____ Phone () _____

Send to: Trees for Life · 3006 W. St. Louis, Wichita, KS 67203-5129 (800) 873-3736 · www.treesforlife.org
Trees for Life serves Huntington (Ind.) Church of the Brethren's Children of Tisma Sponsorship Program by providing accounting, processing and 501(c)(3) verification for all contributions.



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