

Honduras Ministry Committee Minutes

Thursday, September 1, 2011, 7:00 pm

Present: Dawn Bratsch-Prince; Angie Nguyen; Brittany Tielbur; Becky Woods; Allyson Brawner; Kristing Riley; Kristin Potts; Annette White; Kathy White; Carl Bern; Shari Reilly; Kathleen Kohlhaas; Kassi Wheeler; Tyler Zoz.

I. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.

II. The minutes of August 25 were not available so review and approval was postponed until next meeting.

III. Good and Welfare

The annual basement sale earned approximately \$5500 in support of STA's Honduras ministry!

Nathan is updating listserv.

Dawn ran into Nora Tobin, former ISU student and Honduras Ministry co-chair, at a Rotary meeting in Ames. Nora is on her way to another international adventure in Africa. She sends her regards to the committee.

IV. Reports

A. In a recent update, John mentioned that Padre Efrain plans to offer a training course via radio for 30 communion ministers. The booklets needed by the course participants cost \$8 each. John suggested that St Thomas help defray the cost of the booklets by \$7/book for a total grant of about \$240. Becky moved and Kristin seconded the motion that we support the purchase of these books. Motion carried. Dawn will let John know that we will contribute funds for the purchase of books.

Carl Bern heard from John that the Bishop has purchased the top of a mountain in the area. He wants to level the mountain

to install wind generators, a radio station and/or a model farm. Carl may explore having his students do a capstone project for this. The Bishop is also looking for a solar fruit dryer and Carl plans to look into this.

B. Parish liaison. Shari reported that Fr. Jon has been thinking about a capital (fundraising) campaign. In response to the generosity of a donor who gave St Thomas \$3.5 million dollars to build additional parking, he believes the parish should give back in return. One idea is to partner with the non-profit EOS International (<http://eosinternational.org>) which is lead by former ISU student parishioner Wes Meier. EOS sponsors projects like ecological ovens and other sustainable technologies in the developing world. By partnering with EOS in the Dulce Nombre parish, we could establish a permanent site that is staffed and funded by St Thomas. This could have significant impact and Fr. Jon is giving it serious thought. There is still interest in establishing internship opportunities for students in Honduras. These, too, would be easier to establish with a site in Dulce Nombre.

C. Immersion Trip update: Annette will be meeting with trip participants for the first orientation session on September 13. She is working to schedule two more sessions.

V. Old Business

A. The group discussed the schedule for John Donaghy's visit in October. He has plans to show a power point during the K of C pancake breakfast. He will meet with our committee. He is speaking at a Wisdom and Wine event. Shari suggested we find ways to get him in front of other STA committees and commissions.

Kristin Riley suggested a pen pal project between middle schoolers in Ames and those in Dulce Nombre. John will meet

with Ann Thompson at ISU to discuss how to organize the technology for this.

There was much discussion about other opportunities for John to share his/Dulce Nombre's story: Rotary, Lions, Spanish classes, TL, other classes on campus, St Cecilia, Ames High. Shari will work on STA related events and Dawn will contact people on campus and in town about possible speaking opportunities.

B. There was no decision made on the suggested reading *When Helping Hurts*.

C. Goals/planning for 2011-2012. Two themes emerged from the discussion of goals: increased communication and people-to-people connection.

Those present agreed that Honduras ministry could be more effective if we increased **communication** with St. Thomas parishioners about our interactions with our sister parish. Some suggestions were that we produce a quarterly communication (newsletter?) for STA. We could create and run a power point on the TV in the student lounge. The focus should be on what we have done, where we are going. The immersion trip team could produce a newsletter following its return to Ames. This fall 25 students and 23 resident parishioners indicated interest in Honduras Ministry so there is broad parish support. We need to identify ways to call upon the talents of our interest group. The Bethesda Shigatini Ministry is a good model to consider.

The goal of our sister parish relationship is solidarity. It was pointed out that a **people-to-people connection** is needed for real solidarity. Are the people of Dulce Nombre real for STA parishioners? And are we real to the people of Honduras? The

group agreed that there is value in sending St Thomas parishioners to Honduras to meet Dulce Nombre leadership and parishioners. There was strong sentiment that we need to find a way to bring parishioners from Dulce Nombre to Ames. Face-to-face interaction will strengthen our connection. While we work toward hosting visitors from Dulce Nombre, we might be able to Skype with them as one was of building solidarity. Dawn will bring this up with John. The committee can discuss with him via Skype at a future meeting, or when John visits us in October.

VI. New Business

A. Student co-chair. Two students were interested in serving as co-chair this year, Annette White and Allyson Brawner. Prior to the committee meeting, Dawn talked with Annette about taking a leadership role in immersion trip preparation/orientation because of her ISU international service learning experience. Annette had agreed. Allyson agreed to serve as committee co-chair for the year.

B. Communications (see “Goals/planning” above).

VII. Shari led the closing prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.