

Methodist Border Friendship Commission *Report*

June 2004-May 2005

GBGM Advance Spec. # 982443

The Border Area Mission Coordinator works with UM/Methodist churches and related ministries to facilitate coordination of resources and communication of needs. The following are some points of activity of the Border Area Mission Coordinator:

- (1) Assist in facilitating 37 Medical Teams *into the Eastern Conference of Mexico*. An estimated 77 Clinic Days were seen with over 480 team members, seeing over 7,400 patients and contributing over \$42,000 in medicines.
- (2) Assist in facilitating 85 Construction/Other Ministry Teams *into the Eastern Conference of Mexico*. An estimated 233 days of work by over 1300 team members, contributing over \$135,300 in construction supplies.
- (3) Assist in the coordination and providing referrals for 22+ UMVIM Teams seeking projects/ministries *on the US side of the Border*. These teams were involved in housing rehabilitation and renovation, Vacation Bible Schools in Rio Grande Conference Churches, working in the Food Bank warehouse and/or gleaning, working with such agencies as the Good Neighbor Settlement House in Brownsville, Habitat for Humanity or Proyecto Azteca of Alamo. In addition, 22 NOMAD Teams were hosted and church/parsonage/housing projects facilitated. The NOMADS average 8 persons per team for 12 workdays per team. A total of 89 RV's (2 persons per RV) were hosted. There was \$10,000 of Supply Fees brought into our Conference from the NOMADS. This summer there are several projects already planned for the border region, including the UM Army bringing about 100 young people and the Memorial Drive UMC of Houston bringing 200+ youth to the Valley. Each team coming to the area brings funds for supplies and offer their gifts of service.
- (4) Coordinate and facilitate tours for groups coming or interested in coming to volunteer with one of the many projects or ministries of the UM/Methodist Church along the border. There have been over 20 such site visits and tours this year.
- (5) Speak to various groups and churches about ministries along the border.
- (6) Assist in coordinating the McAllen District Youth Christmas service activity for the Pharr Community Outreach Project, hosted by La Trinidad UMC in Pharr.
- (7) Work with the Methodist Border Friendship Commission (MBFC) along the US/Mexico Border. We have worked with many ministries and projects that are sponsored by and are priorities of the United Methodist Church of the US or Methodist Church of Mexico. *The MBFC is a General Advance Special of the General Board of Global Ministries, GBGM #982443.*
- (8) Establish a web-site for the Methodist Border Friendship Commission.
- (9) Assist in the planting new ministries/projects in San Miguel Allende (leadership training facility), Monterrey (orphanage) and Nuevo Laredo (health care and community center).
- (10) Visit sites of ministries/projects of the UM/Methodist Church of Mexico, such as churches needing assistance, ministries of UM Community Centers, medical clinics, orphanages, schools, breakfast/lunch programs, new UMVIM dorm facilities, children's computer lab and library, housing rehab/renovation projects, etc.

- (11) Assist in obtaining General Board of Global Ministries Advance Special Credit for the Clinica Betania in Reynosa, Eleazar Guerra Kindergarten and Betania Elementary School in Reynosa, the Volunteer in Mission Program of the Eastern Conference of Mexico, and the Methodist Border Friendship Commission.
- (12) Receive and communicate the following requests for funds made to the MBFC. These were granted through the funds of the MBFC:
- (a) \$4000 for pastoral support in the two Methodist Church of Mexico Districts;
 - (b) \$4900 for Breakfast/Lunch Programs for children in 3 churches of Mexico, each church feeding between 50-70 each day;
 - (c) \$4000 for the Food Bag Program for widows, handicapped individuals and those in need of the Fronterizo District;
 - (d) \$1650 for continuing education and counseling program of the Fronterizo District;
 - (e) \$1600 to assist the Hands Together Ministries in Rio Bravo with a Construction Coordinator;
 - (f) \$300 given to assist a VIM Mexican Team to go to San Luis Potosi, Mexico for a construction project;
 - (g) \$3000 for both Districts of Mexico to take their youth to a spiritual leadership development training in Sonorra, Mexico;
 - (h) \$1000 to be given to Pbro. Jonas Alvarez to assist a pastor's family in an emergency;
 - (i) \$3000+ given to the two Districts of Mexico for School Supplies, this purchased backpacks and supplies for over 120;
 - (j) \$5000 was given for the Pastor's Children's Scholarship fund to assist over 40 children;
 - (k) \$3700 was given through a designated gift to purchase bibles in Mexico for the entire Eastern Conference.
- (13) In-kind gifts are often received and distributed to churches requesting and in need. Such gifts have been designated funds for ministries and programs such as the children's lunch/breakfast programs, school supplies and scholarships, etc. Items such as computers, sewing machines and sewing supplies, school supplies, food, bicycles, clothes, vitamins, sheets and blankets, toys, health care items, religious materials and bibles, children's books and educational computer games, medical equipment, and hand tools. Many of these items are distributed on both sides of the border.