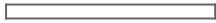


Lewisville volunteers share pure water and Living Water in Guatemala

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Truett
King of
First
Baptist
Church in
Lewisville
reads a
Bible story
during
Vacation
Bible
School,
part of the
church's
recent
mission
trip to
Guatemala.
(See Marv
Knox's
[Down
Home](#)
[column](#) for
a personal
glimpse
into the
Guatemala
trip)

Lewisville volunteers share pure water and Living Water in Guatemala

By **Marv Knox**

Editor

ZACAPA, Guatemala—Members of First Baptist Church in Lewisville delivered both Living Water and pure water during a late-fall mission trip to an orphanage in Guatemala.

They told the children about Jesus, the Living Water, who can quench their spiritual thirst. But they also completed a filtration system that now purifies the orphanage's parasite-laced water supply.



Brittainy Holmes of First Baptist Church in Lewisville shows Christ's love to a girl in an orphanage in Zacapa, Guatemala, during a mission trip coordinated by Buckner International. The church is sending three teams a year to the state-run orphanage.

Working in cooperation with Buckner International, First Baptist in Lewisville has developed a partnership with Hogar Zacapa, a transitional care facility for children up to about age 12. Some of the children are true orphans, whose parents are dead. But others are "social orphans," whose parents cannot care for them and who become wards of the government-run facility.

The church has committed to send at least three ministry teams to Zacapa, a metropolitan area of about 175,000 residents 90 miles east of Guatemala City, each year for at least three years.

Ongoing ministry embraces two key elements, explained Truett King, the church's missions minister.

First, each mission trip features tangible improvements to the orphanage facility, he noted. On two previous trips this year, volunteers worked on the water-filtration system. Earlier this year, workers also picked up shards of broken windows, to make the grounds safer, and cleaned and painted bathrooms. In November, in addition to completing the water system, they built storage cabinets. Next year, volunteers plan to build a greenhouse

within the compound.



Orphans in Guatemala open presents from volunteers on a mission trip coordinated by Buckner International. (Photos by Ron Gibson)

“These things improve the children’s lives, although they probably don’t realize it,” King said. “But they also strengthen our relationship with the orphanage administrator, who realizes we have the best interest of these children at heart and we’re willing to invest in this orphanage—both financially and with our labor—to make it a better place.”

Those efforts have produced unanticipated benefits, King and several other repeat volunteers noted when they arrived in November. Since the church began working on the facility, the government has funded additional improvements. They include a dormitory expansion, new roofs, tile in bathrooms and fresh paint. The government also made the facility safer by replacing a chain-link fence with a cinder-block/stucco wall around the compound.

The second element of each trip is more personal, heartwarming and

eternal, King added. First Baptist missionaries spend hours loving the attention-starved children.

The November trip featured a Vacation Bible School, with stations for Bible stories and crafts, English as a Second Language, sports camp and games. A medical team performed physical exams on all the children, and the church paid to send some of the children to visit a dentist.



The volunteers treated the children to a movie night, featuring a Spanish-language child-oriented version of the “Jesus” film, plus pizza and soda pop. They also provided each child with a new set of clothes, plus many more pants and shirts for the orphanage.

But mostly, they spent time loving the children. Whether they communicated through a crew of Buckner interpreters, used their own fledgling Spanish, or simply smiled and laughed and hugged, the volunteers showed the children they are loved.

“Every minute I was with the kids, I just loved it,” Nancy King said. “I just couldn’t get enough of it.”

“Missions is God using you to show his heart,” Ron Gibson added. “That’s one of the most important things to do in life—show God’s heart to others.”

Reflecting on their days at the orphanage and particularly a tearful farewell with the children, Julio Amaya confirmed the children did see God’s heart and reciprocated the volunteers’ love.

“The kids kept hanging on, saying: ‘I don’t want you to go. I’m going to miss you,’” Amaya, who grew up in Texas’ Rio Grande Valley and speaks Spanish fluently, told the other volunteers. “And they would have said the same thing to all of you if they had been able.”

Many of the First Baptist team hope they’ll get that chance again someday, when they return to Hogar Zacapa.