

Northeast Texas churches provide medical missions in Guatemala

August 10, 2007

Posted: 8/10/07

Northeast Texas churches provide medical missions in Guatemala

By Rebekah Hardage

Communications Intern

MOUNT PLEASANT—A team of volunteer missionaries from First Baptist Church in Mount Pleasant and First Baptist Church in Texarkana traveled to Guatemala this summer to offer general medical assistance, perform surgeries and share the gospel.

Gerald Stagg, a pediatrician in Mount Pleasant, and his family went on a similar trip last year with the Texarkana church.

Gerald Stagg, a pediatrician from Mount Pleasant, helped care for many adults during a volunteer medical mission to Guatemala.

“I made a request for others to volunteer to go in 2007,” he said. “That request was simply in the form of a testimony of what God had done through that medical mission trip and asking for prayer for our church to be involved.”

Doctors and dentists in the area responded to the invitation, including surgeon Clint Twadell, who decided to go and take his crew, wife and son with him.

The Twaddell family, along with Pastor Clint Davis from First Baptist in Mount Pleasant and his wife, prepared for the trip by enrolling in a Spanish language immersion class at the Baptist University of the Americas.

“We all enjoyed our opportunity to see the BUA campus and to interact with the faculty and student body. I was very impressed with the learning experience,” Davis said.



Delores
Head,
nurse from
Texarkana,
showed the
love of
Christ to
children
during
mission
trip to
Guatemala.

After several packing parties and other preparation, the East Texas group was ready to leave for Guatemala. They expected a large number of people to be in need of medical care, but the numbers they encountered were more than they ever imagined.

Each day at 4:30 a.m., people dressed in their best began lining up to receive help from a medical doctor. Some needed dental help, while others required surgery. And the physicians were ready to offer their services with compassion.

Twaddell performed the first laparoscopic surgery in Guatemala, removing gallbladders and appendixes with minimal invasion.

Martha Twaddell also received a blessing when she was able to watch her husband of 25 years perform surgery for the first time.

“After helping him through undergrad, medical school and his residency, I finally got to see him do what he does,” she said.



John
Homer, a
carpenter
from
Mount
Pleasant,
plays with
children in
Guatemala.

Stagg not only treated children, but helped adults, as well.

“Oftentimes medicine here in the U.S. is expected, or there is a feeling of entitlement,” he said. “In Guatemala, they are very grateful for even the littlest thing we do.”

After receiving medical care, each patient received a Bible and one other gift. The tennis balls and beanie babies were a big hit with the children, while the men loved the baseball caps. And people of all ages appreciated the crayons and coloring books while waiting to receive medical care.

In spite of challenges, all of the mission trip participants left Guatemala feeling they had been blessed by the experience, Davis said.

“The Lord showed me his power to do the unexpected and the virtually impossible when we make ourselves available to him,” he said.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Baptist churches, in Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.