

Know the Way
John 14:6

Mountain State Mission Offering 2017

**"Bridge of Hope"
State Goal:
\$270,000**

Promotional materials available

100% Supporting the Mission and Ministries
of the West Virginia Baptist Convention

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**Contact Joan at hall@wvbc.org
if you do not want to receive this mailing.**



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MISSION MATTERS in the MOUNTAIN STATE

SPRING 2017

Mission Matters is a
periodic update from
the offices of
Mission Support
of the WVBC.

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Find it on the Web @

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www.abcusamissions.org
www.onegreathourofsharing.org
www.internationalministries.org
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IT IS NOT ABOUT MONEY – REALLY!

It seems like every time we open the mail there is a request for money. We expect the monthly bills to come requiring our attention – but we also get a lot of mail from organizations that desire our support. Once you give to one of them, it is likely they will sell your information, to get more money, to other groups that will also ask.

In the current model of missionary support, our International Ministries (IM) missionaries have extremely challenging support goals that must be met in order for them to go to and remain on the field. I can only imagine the level of stress they feel each week as they “check the numbers” to see how they are doing. I know some missionaries check their numbers daily. I know others that work in isolated areas without internet for weeks at a time who nervously check their numbers as soon as they return to their base and have internet. Because the pressure to be funded is so great, they have to constantly remind their supporters how important it is to keep supporting them so they can continue their work.

Our IM missionaries are doing great ministry around the world. They are working to equip local peoples with the knowledge and resources needed to evangelize their communities. Thousands and thousands of people are receiving Christ each year though the work of our missionaries and mission partners. Medical missionaries demonstrate the love of Christ by providing healing and health education to people who would otherwise have no access to medical care. IM missionaries are on the front lines in the battle to stop human trafficking.

When I talk with the missionaries or read their newsletters, I am in awe of the sacrifices they are making to do God’s work in the world. It is with passion and calling that they go where we do not. It is with a sense of urgency that they work, knowing the doors of opportunity may close anytime.

As “senders” of missionaries, we have a responsibility to constantly keep our missionaries in our prayers. We also have the privilege of sharing in their work by supporting them with our mission giving.

While mission is not about the money – mission cannot happen without it. I pray we will be so faithful in our support of our Convention related missionaries they will never have to worry that their time in service with IM will be cut short.

Our mission is to empower local churches to be Christ honoring communities of faith, and to help them fulfill their mission by enabling them to do together what they cannot do alone.

MISSIONARY PARTNERS



Juan, Denise, Juancito & Zeba Aragon
Endorsed Missionaries to Mexico

God is on the Move!

Dear WVBC family. It's Ash Wednesday a special day when we remember that we came from dust and one day we'll return to dust. Yet God gives us the incredible privilege to join His mission. We're writing this update from Southern California where we've been for the last six days developing a support network. Even after a few days, we're still struggling with jetlag. The fundraising journey, our passion for the people of Chiapas and God's grace have brought us here where we've been speaking to churches and meeting with pastors from the American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles, the Southwest and Hawaii (ABCOFLASH) to invite them to join us in the journey to Chiapas!

It has been a time with a bit of anxiety since Juancito and Ziba stayed in Ravenswood. When people ask about the kids, Juan has been joking that they're home with several bottles of coke, popcorn and their tablets! They are not. They are staying with Tia Mi (Aunt Noemi).

As we meet churches and pastors to share about our call, the needs in Chiapas and our vision, once again God has shown us He is in control and taking care of every detail. Chuck and Ramona Shawver, who recently retired after 28 years of missionary service in Mexico, have shared a wealth of information and wisdom with us. Chuck joined us over the weekend as we visited two Hispanic churches. He's been an inspiring cheerleader. Our hosts have been the Matic family. They are originally from the Philippines. God knew Juan would need a time to relax, and Mr. Matic has a great sense of humor that has kept him and Juan laughing a lot! Just to give you a little taste ... their children's names are Karis Matic, Matt Matic, Otto Matic and Paris Matic.

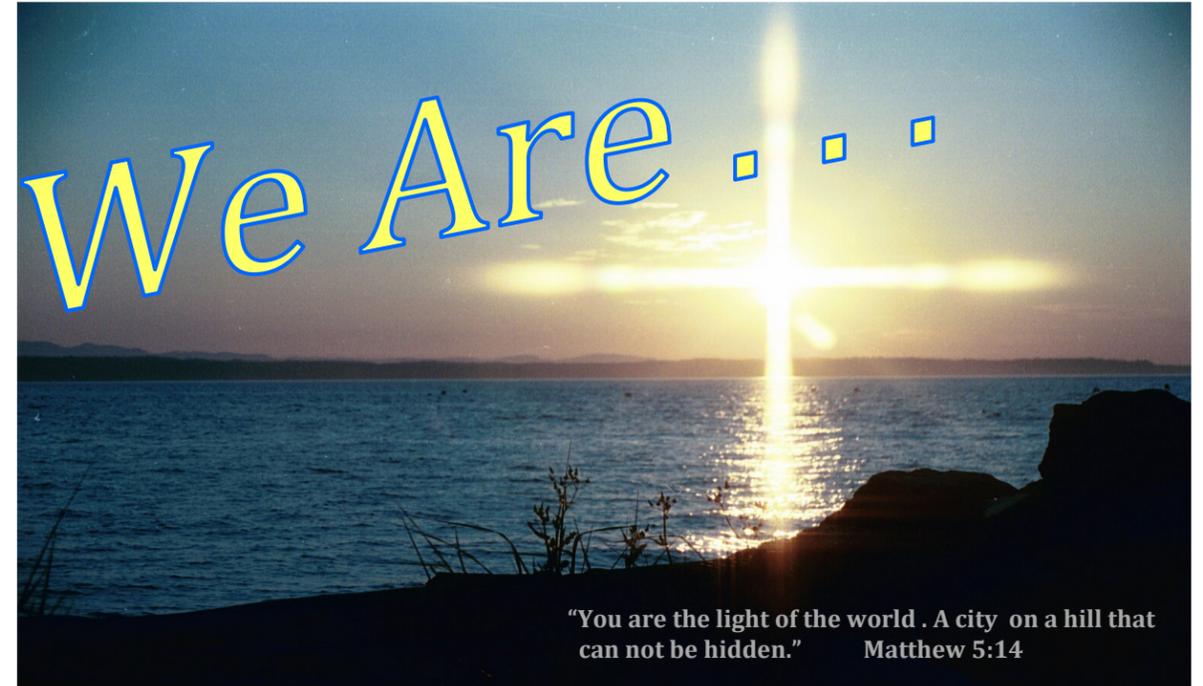
Yesterday (March 1st) was such an important day in building new relationships and praying. We met with Rev. Doug Hubbard, ABCOFLASH's Regional Resource Minister for Youth and Global Missions; Pastor Eddie Ledesma, Senior Pastor at New Hope Community Church and Dr. Samuel Chetti, the Executive Minister for ABCOFLASH. Not only did we have a great conversation with them, but we were invited to come back in June to continue meeting with more churches. Dr. Chetti was very warm and blessed us with a beautiful and powerful prayer.

We thank you for your love, prayer and support!

With love and gratitude, The Aragons

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Camp Global 2017 Family Mission Camp



"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill that can not be hidden." Matthew 5:14

SAVE THE DATE AUGUST 11-13, 2017

Friday 6:00 PM till Sunday 1:00 PM

Programming for Children,
Youth & Adults

- ⇒ Share in Bible study
- ⇒ Mission Education
- ⇒ Vespers
- ⇒ International Crafts, Cooking & Games

A great way to experience Camp Cowen.

Missionary Guests



Debbie Mulneix



Keith & Debbie Myers



Juan & Denise Aragon

Spend time with our missionary partners.



WV Baptist Missionaries
Denise Osejo and Juan Aragon

2017 MISSION OUTREACH PROJECT (M.O.P.) GOAL: \$6,000

"Together, with God on our side, the body of Christ can do great things!"

American Baptist Women's Ministries
of West Virginia are helping the Aragons
hit the road in southern Mexico
with a 4WD VEHICLE!



The vehicle will be part of what is called "start up" cost. It includes money for security training, a vehicle and other things that total \$65,000.00. Then they need to raise money for support on top of that! Once they have raised the funds to get their ministry off the ground, Denise and Juan will move to Chiapas, Mexico, with their two young children, Juancito and Hefziba "Ziba." They will be working with the Myers in ministry with mostly indigenous people in the southern part of the country. They will need a 4-wheel drive vehicle for their work as the communities are all in the mountains.



2017 SPECIAL PROJECT Sunny Day Leadership and Activities Center at Camp Cowen Furnishings for the Meeting Spaces Goal: \$12,000

The West Virginia American Baptist Women are pleased to join in the statewide effort to make the Sunny Day Leadership and Activities Center a reality.



Cost \$90 per person; \$350 max per household

\$40 Saturday only

Watch for a Camp Global registration form mailed to you in June.

Details & registration will be available online at www.wvbc.org

WEST VIRGINIA MISSIONARY PARTNERS



J.D. & Rhonda Reed Family - Bolivia

The House of Hope (HOH) in Cochabamba, Bolivia is going strong with Carmen and Richard and their family running the ministry in Cochabamba. God has truly blessed the HOH family with them in charge. We are pleased to announce that HOH recently became a full partner with International Ministries in September, and beginning in March, the ministry will be seeking to obtain non-profit status both in the US and Bolivia under the new name "Project Hope Foundation."

This will help us serve the needs of the ministry in Cochabamba, as well as begin plans to expand to a second location in Santa Cruz in the next few years. We are very excited about how God is paving the way for this expansion. Carmen is almost finished with her degree in Psychology and Richard is back to classes in English. Liezbeth is busy studying and also doing official translation for the Project Hope Foundation. Both of their young daughters, Camilla and Valetina are happy to be back to school after their vacation (Dec-Feb) and they thoroughly enjoyed their time off.

We are looking forward to hosting teams from West Virginia and Georgia that will visit us from March through July of this year. We will also be welcoming Boyden Myers and Sarah McCloy, who will both, be interning with us at Project Hope in Cochabamba working with teams and a host of other things over the summer. God is truly blessing (what will soon be) the Project Hope Foundation in Bolivia.

Thank you all for your support.



Keith & Debbie Myers Family - Mexico

The Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, is quoted as saying, "Change is the only constant in life." Our journey into and through cross-cultural missions over the past four years has reverberated and solidified this saying as our new way of being.

This past August, as a family, we traveled to BIOLA (Bible Institute of Los Angeles) and said "see you later" to our son, Boyden, as he entered his first year of college. This day was filled with emotions of pride, sadness and joy. He successfully completed his first semester of college. During his semester, he connected with the global community and has begun to develop diverse relationships with an abundance of friendships. We were blessed to have him for six weeks during the Christmas break. Ballie has made her college decision. This fall

she will attend BIOLA along with Boyden. She is the worship leader at her school and her life entails English as a second language, teaching and leading her girls' Bible study as one of the senior leaders.

In January, I (Keith) stepped into the role as principal at Puebla Christian School (PCS). The school is a 1st through 12th grade school with a total student population of 60, mainly for mk's (missionary kids). This was an unforeseen opportunity presented by the school board to fill a need they had for this semester. Our partner (CICEM) Council of Rural Indigenous churches endorsed this temporary shift for five months. In the meantime, we have continued our ministry with CICEM three days a week and PCS four days.

Deb is continuing to develop women's workshops on complete health (physical, mental and spiritual) in each of our zones. This March she will present her final women's workshop in zona Mixteca. Coca-Cola and other sugary drinks attribute to many of the health issues in our communities. Deb's focus has been to educate the women on the importance of water, both physically and spiritually.

Our next major change comes this June when we begin our US/Puerto Rico year on home assignment. Next, in August, Deb and I will become "empty nesters." While change may be constant in our lives, God is our consistency. He has assured us He will never change and His promises are new every day (Lamentations 3:22-23). We are grateful for each of your prayers, financial support and love you have faithfully shown to our family over the years in the name of our risen Savior, Jesus the Christ.

Blessings, The Myers Family



Debbie Mulneix

Dear Friends,

I am so happy to say I am here in West Virginia and even more happy to say that I have already started my deputation!!!

For the last few weeks, I have been trying to re-establish home in Bridgeport. There are still LOTS of boxes needing to be unpacked, but I have started traveling, sharing the experiences of the people I have loved for the last three years or so.

I would love to visit your church and share current information and pictures for Sunday services, Wednesday evenings and any gatherings in between. I will be available between March and August, but the times are filling quickly, so contact me at dmulneix@aol.com or 304-203-4404 as soon as possible for the date that works for you. Lisa Simmons is also taking appointments for me.

The latest news, however, is that **I WILL NOT be retiring in August.** I am not able to share much at this time, but I will continue with IM for the foreseeable future. We hope to bring the information to you sometime in late April or early May. In the meantime, please contact me if I may be of service to you and your church.

Yours in Christ,
Debbie



Rick & Anita Gutierrez Family - South Africa

Returning to Gardening

It is hot and humid here and we look forward to the cooler weather, which is coming soon. We have about 50 people enrolled in five groups that meet for one half day each week. We are equipping our seven trainers to teach people in their neighborhoods about nutrition, gardening and basic health screening skills for common conditions including HIV, diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity.

Health builder trainer, Jabulile, lives with her husband and two 2-year-old twin girls about 20 miles north of Durban in a metal shack surrounded by weeds and tall grass next to a sugar cane field. Neither she nor her husband can find employment. Jabulile's grandmother lived into her 90s and had a large garden on the spot where Jabulile's family built their shack about three years ago. Jabulile's mother grows and sells vegetables. The classes recently inspired Jabulile to plant squash and chaya, and she is planning a large garden where she remembers helping her grandmother when she was a child.

Many South Africans are losing the tradition of gardening. The majority of young men see gardening as women's work. However, studying nutrition and reading Genesis chapters 1 and 2 is proving to be a powerful catalyst for action in all of our groups. As health builder student, Nokwanda, from Umlazi put it, "We cannot afford to buy vegetables. The only way we can have vegetables is if we grow them ourselves."

"Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." Genesis 2:15

We thank you, West Virginia Baptists, for your faithful support. Thank you, Lord, for allowing us to enter into the journey of people who are yearning for their lives to be better. Help us to be effective partners with them.

They are On Their Way!

International Ministries Missionaries in Our State



Keith and Debbie Myers, International Ministries missionaries in Mexico are soon to be on West Virginia soil as they begin their year-long US/PR assignment. They plan to arrive in June. This is not a vacation, but a time for them to connect with their supporters and build relationships with new groups and individuals. They are truly looking forward to their time to share about God's work in Mexico.

Keith and Debbie, along with their children Boyden and Baillie will be residing at the mission house on the grounds of our Parchment Valley Conference Center. The mission house is primarily used for missionary families on US/PR assignment. The residence is fully furnished and ready for families to come with "just themselves and their clothes."



Debbie Mulneix, International Ministries missionary in the Philippines with Samaritana Transformation Ministries is back to West Virginia. Debbie is a veteran missionary and has served in India also. Debbie is looking forward to sharing with churches and individuals about how God is working through Samaritana to change the hearts and lives of women in prostitution in the Philippines.

Are you interested in having **Debbie Mulneix and/or Keith or Debbie Myers** at your church or at your meeting?

Here's how:

- Contact Lisa Simmons, Associate in Mission Support, at lsimmons@wvbc.org or 304-273-9693.
- Provide two to three dates when you would like to have either Debbie Mulneix or Keith and/or Debbie Myers.
- Plan to advertise and **personally** invite people to the event. Think out of the box: host a men's barbeque; a ladies coffee chat; a picnic; invite the Myers for a day of swimming, boating, fishing, hiking and include persons who should hear their story; host a youth event and allow them to share; have a small dinner or lunch at a home; or invite them for a church retreat.



Medical Mission Team
Cochabamba, Bolivia

Medical Teams Needed at House of Hope, Bolivia

Small teams and individual volunteers of medical professionals are invited to join the medical ministry of the House of Hope in Cochabamba, Bolivia. This established local ministry provides medical outreach to indigenous groups living in rural areas and in the city. Along with general medical practitioners, dentists, physical and occupational therapists are also needed.

Spanish is helpful, but translators are available.

Global Servants: Rhonda and JD Reed

Housing: Beautiful accommodations at the House of Hope.

Approx. \$20/day including three meals.

If you are hearing God's call to serve internationally, please call us at 1-800-222-3872, ext 2366.

2016 Flood Relief Efforts

You responded with nearly \$200,000 to One Great Hour of Sharing WV Flood Relief to help us do relief work from the June floods. We have purchased hundreds of mattresses, heaters, dehumidifiers, lime, bleach, rakes, brooms and many other supplies with these funds. We have supported church feeding programs, purchased air conditioners and helped churches put several families back into homes. The work will continue as this summer, groups from across the country will come to Rainelle for work weeks sponsored by One Great Hour of Sharing.



Rebuilding, Restoring, Renewing... **Rainelle, W.Va.**



VOLUNTEER WORK WEEKS

June 10-17, 2017, and/or June 17-24, 2017

Choose one or come both weeks to help rebuild, restore and renew Rainelle, W.Va., which was devastated by a 2016 flood.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- hands-on efforts to rebuild homes, communities and lives;
- encouraging and supporting those in need;
- worshipping with local American Baptist congregations; and
- working side by side with other American Baptists from around the country.

Construction skills are not required; unskilled workers will be supervised and directed on the job. Licensed contractors are urged to volunteer!
Volunteers are responsible for transportation to Rainelle.
The \$250 cost includes housing, food and registration. Scholarships are available.

Info: Victoria Goff at vgoff@abhms.org or 800.222.3872, x2449

