

Flight 3:16

The great mystery of our faith: “Christ appeared in the flesh and was shown to be righteous by the Spirit. He was seen by Angels and was announced to the nations. He was believed on in the world and was taken up to heaven”. 1 Timothy 3:16

Flight 3:16 took the five VBS classes to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus on the first day. The emphasis was how Jesus came to earth, born as a baby to be the promised Savior of the world.

The second day, Flight 3:16 left Bethlehem and landed in Jerusalem. There Jesus, age 12, was utterly engrossed in the discourages of the local teachers. He astounded the great theologians of the Temple on his knowledge of the Old Testament.

Leaving Jerusalem, the destination for Flight 3:16 on the third day was Nazareth. The children were reminded that to love their parents is to honor them. Obeying your parents according to the 4th Commandment was well covered.

On Thursday, the fourth day, Flight 3:16 circled the Sea of Galilee and Jesus’ ministry, teaching, healing, parables and choosing of the 12 disciples was covered.

On the last day, Flight 3:16 landed in Bethany, near the Mount of Olives (most scholars believe this is the place of Ascension, others believe a mountain in Galilee). The Great Commission was well discussed with the children. The last emphasis was for the children to bring their parents to church on Sunday for the Closing Program.

The number of children totaled 85, divided into 5 classes, each class had 3 teachers. There were 6 ladies in the kitchen preparing lunch, which was served early, around 10:30 a.m., because many of the children hadn’t eaten anything yet that day. Each day began with a morning opening in church and then the children were sent to their classrooms. Twenty-three children were new or it was their first time coming to church. **Seven new families** attended the standing-room-only Closing Program which was held on Sunday morning!



Each class performed a song during the Closing Program.

The following week Pastor Romelio invited the teachers and helpers to a luncheon to thank them for all their efforts and hard work. The teachers told Pastor Romelio that next year they would like to plan two weeks of VBS instead of just one! For more pictures of VBS, see page 3.

Crossing Borders

God sometimes calls on us to take risks in order to grow as individuals and as a community of believers. This past year, I took one of those risks by asking my church for six weeks off to travel to Tijuana to live with Pastor Romelio Perez, his wife Marina and his family in order to immerse myself in Spanish language and the community our church travels to each year for mission trips.

Living with Pastor Romelio and his family gave me an opportunity to meet so many incredible people. The two churches he works with, **El Redentor** (Redeemer) and **Principe de Paz** (Prince of Peace) are filled with generous and caring families that are working hard to share Christ's love in their communities. Spending time visiting with families in their homes, playing with kids at church services and breakfast programs, and hearing stories about living in Tijuana and other parts of Mexico has reshaped my view and my church's view of what it means to be in relationship with LBCM and the many families across the border.

I was able to meet many of the pastors that are working in Tijuana, and was able to see the many challenges they face every day in their ministries. Although there are different cultural circumstances, you were able to see many of the same challenges we face in the church in America are the same challenges in Tijuana.

Being able to participate in the feeding programs on Thursday nights at **Principe de Paz**, and on Saturday morning at **El Redentor** helped to demonstrate the continuing need for food, clothing and medical supply distribution in the area. I encourage your congregations to continue to find ways to support these incredibly important programs through LBCM. There are many families willing to help cook, and feed the many kids that need a meal, but they need financial support and food donations to help make it happen.

Being in Tijuana in January and February also demonstrated the painful reality of the rainy season. When it rained (especially for multiple days at a time), the dirt roads became muddy,

by Joel Rothe – Youth Minister, Faith Lutheran Church - Meadow Vista, CA

washed out and you couldn't travel anywhere. Families with houses without concrete foundations, and even some that do, faced mud slides that entered houses, and many families had to endure leaky roofs and strong winds and the loss of power. For many of us that normally only travel in the late spring or summer, the rain demonstrated a new perspective about what it is like to live in Tijuana in the winter time.

The more people and stories you get to know, the more you understand that when we travel to Tijuana on mission trips, it isn't all about just building houses. It is equally about building relationships between congregations on both sides of the border. As those relationships develop, the fear and misunderstanding between cultures that exists, seems to disappear. As concerns over safety in Tijuana continue to worry our churches, I can only say I felt safe living in the El Florido neighborhood and wouldn't hesitate to return. Our whole group that traveled there in late March for the eleventh year in a row would agree.

It was a tremendous opportunity for me to learn about ministry, culture, poverty and language. Thanks to Pastor Romelio and Marina for the opportunity as well as their brothers and sisters in Christ who I met along the way! And thanks to everyone who continues to support LBCM and all the ways they continue to support the many families and congregations in Tijuana!



Pastor Romelio entertaining teens with his guitar.

Legna's Corner

Recently a newspaper in Tijuana reported the following figures. In Tijuana, of those that do finish High School, only 2 out of every 10 continue on to college. In Baja California, 17.7% of all new mothers are under the age of 19, well above the national average for this age range, which is 10.2%. In Tijuana, 40% of all sentenced offenders are under the age of 24. Baja California is second nationally in incidence of AIDS cases with 63.4 per 100,000 inhabitants.

It was not the first time where young people in Tijuana had been the focal point in newspapers and local news. The city of Tijuana lacks the healthy environment that young people need to change and improve their lives.

In many cases, economic problems make the young people easy prey for organized crime, which offers extraordinary profits with little effort. But in the end, it always ends in tragedy.

That is why positive stimuli in the life of a young person is of utmost importance in the development of his personality and character. This is why the Angel Scholarship Program plays an important part in the lives of the youth we work with and their families in Tijuana.

The support provided by you enables them to continue without the concerns on how to obtain money for tuition. In addition the Angel Scholarship Program offers moral and spiritual support. It teaches the importance of serving others and to appreciate the things they have. It stimulates the young people to see the future clearly. They learn to appreciate to value of perseverance, which can be lost when they try to find an easy way out.

A new school year begins and new students are enrolling in the Angel Scholarship Program, with 11 students continuing. The number of young people and the results that they will have are not yet clear, but we know that the word of God is going to touch their lives. They will hear how His love can help them to have a better future. We will continue to help the youth in the needy areas of Tijuana. We will help to connect them with a Lutheran Church, a place they can feel welcomed and appreciated.

Gracias, once again for your prayers and support for this program which helps impact youth for Christ.
-Legna Lanza



More pictures from VBS



Two helpers at VBS telling about Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Each day helpers took turns telling the story to the class they were assigned. Flight 3:16 VBS was a big success!



The church was full of the children attending the VBS. This is only one side of the church. The parents expressed their thanks to Pastor and all the teachers for what they did for their children. Sounds like the kids came home smiling and excited, telling all they had done in VBS each day.



Pastor Josue Del Carmen Cruz officiated at the wedding of Ma de La luz Hdez V. and Abel Morales S/ on May 22nd at **Lirios de Los Valles** (Lily of the Valley).

Please check out our webpage:
lutheranborderconcernsministry.org

The teams from **Faith Lutheran Church**, Meadow Vista, CA, built 2 houses in late March. Below is a picture of one of the finished houses. (Please see Joel Rothe's story on page 2).



NEEDS

Rice – Beans
70-page notebooks
Digital Camera in good working
condition

The LUTHERAN BORDER CONCERNS MINISTRY (formerly the Lutheran Baja California Mission) is independent, inter-Lutheran, non-profit incorporated in California in 1967 to supplement ongoing Lutheran efforts with Latin Americans on both sides of the border. All programs are supported solely through voluntary contributions. Initially the work centered in two of the fastest growing and economically depressed areas in the Americas, in the border cities of Tijuana and Mexicali, today we include San Luis Rio Colorado. LBCM continues to provide religious Spanish literature to all areas we are currently working in. ALL GIFTS TO LBCM ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. With a dollar or more contribution, one becomes an LBCM member.