



# MISSION CONNECTIONS

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Fall 2021



## Let's Visit

**Betsey and Eric Moe**  
*Mission co-workers  
serving in Guatemala*

Dear friends,

As a child, I visited my grandparents' house at least once a week. In fact, my middle school was located right across the street from their house, so on many days I would walk over after school, help myself to a cookie from the Tupperware on top of the fridge, and sit myself down on their couch, or "davenport," as they called it. I remember telling them every detail about my day, from the book I was reading in English to the boy I wanted to ask to the dance. They told me about the mundane but interesting things in their lives, too – faucets fixed, peaches canned, church friends who had stopped by. When I visited them, I felt known and loved – which is just what this awkward 13-year-old needed. My adult self now imagines the delight they experienced in these visits as well.

Eric and I recently made a special visit – to our new friends and colleagues in Guatemala. We decided that after all this time of waiting and wondering, the time had come to make an exploratory visit to the country we would soon call



**Our visit to La Puerta Abierta Santiago Atitlan**

home. I cannot describe the joy we felt when we stepped into the CEDEPCA office and saw twenty fellow staff members we had only previously talked to on Zoom. There at the office, we enjoyed a hybrid Enneagram retreat with the CEDEPCA staff and a group from the Baltimore Presbytery, then we shared a delicious chicken lunch.

After that, our time in Guatemala was filled with many short visits to CEDEPCA's local ministry partners in and around Quetzaltenango and Lake Atitlan: two Mayan Women's Organizations dedicated to caring for and developing their communities; a weaving co-op (Corazón de Mujer); an educational and weaving/sewing center working to prevent migration through community development (Grupo Cajolá); an organization of parents and friends empowering differently-abled adults (ADISA), and a creative, reading-centered school (La Puerta Abierta). Over coffee and cookies – really, at every place we visited – we listened to stories, gazed across green landscapes from open rooftops, and marveled at intricate, colorful hand-made items. There was no need to *do* anything or fix anything, because these organizations' work was already making a difference. But our visit mattered. It mattered as much to us as it did to them.

Visiting together is how we live out the mutuality we were created to experience. Visiting is how we see one another and validate one another's experience. During this time of year, I think of



**Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas**

Mary and Elizabeth at the beginning of the gospel of Luke – two pregnant women unsure about what the future held coming together for mutual encouragement. There was no miraculous healing or feeding in this story; it was just a visit. Yet, in this encounter, the kin-dom of God became real for them and set the stage for the reconciling, bridge-building work that Jesus came to do.

These are the kinds of encounters we cannot wait to facilitate on the Intercultural Encounters team at CEDEPCA. Encounters in which people can look into each other's eyes and really hear each other's stories. In the coming year, we expect to start welcoming in-person groups to Guatemala once again. We expect it will be slow at first, as people gain confidence in traveling under stricter protocols. We do hope that if you are a part of a church, presbytery, community, or university group looking to come to Guatemala, you consider making a trip through CEDEPCA. Our team is skilled at facilitating many types of trips – immersion trips, work trips, trips to strengthen



With CEDEPCA staff at office in Guatemala City

previously-formed partnerships. But our strength is in our visits – our face-to-face, story-to-story encounters that bring life and hope.

Wherever you are, may you set aside time during this busy Advent-Christmas season for good, old-fashioned visits. Visit the people you love. Visit a person who may not have family nearby. Visit a friend on the other side of the country via Zoom. Eric and I are gearing up for an especially busy Advent season filled with packing and getting rid of belongings in anticipation for our January 5 move, but we, too, intend to make time for visits with the people we love.

Thank you for being a circle of support for us. Your encouragement, your prayers, and your financial support have carried us through this long season of remote mission work. We are grateful to God that the next time we publish a letter, it will be written in Guatemala!

In faith, hope, and love,

Betsey and Eric Moe



Visiting ADISA in Santiago Átitlan

## Thank you for reading our letter!

*Please consider supporting Presbyterian Mission through our ministry. We are grateful for your prayers, personal communication and financial support.*

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*Thank you for your faithful support.*

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