

### **Santa Cruz al Salvador sister Parish up date by Lisa Johnson**

As we all are very aware, things have been tough for many during this covid-19 pandemic and holding fund-raisers have been really challenging. I would like to thank all those from Peace United who have given so generously to our efforts to continue the support of education and health/water and sanitation projects in communities in rural El Salvador.

### **Santa Cruz al Salvador Annual Winetasting** (our largest fundraiser of the year)

During the month of September, the board of SCaS ran a virtual fundraiser to help University students continue their education.

Without the ability to meet in person and enjoy our annual wine tasting fund-raiser on the beautiful Bargetto winery patio, we (actually Joan Love from Christ Lutheran and Marian Langdon of St Andrews) came up with a way to virtually enjoy a fundraising effort. Several member churches put together baskets for a raffle and participants were instructed on how to donate. We were able to raise \$13,318.27. All of this money goes to continuing our commitment to the University Scholarship students in El Salvador. How great is this! We are thankful, grateful, and blessed to have the support from all of you. Special thanks to Mary Male, Karen Cozza and Lisa Johnson from Peace United for their financial support in this effort.

Basket winners are: Joanne Clever from Trinity (Quilt basket), David Gomez from Trinity (Picnic basket), and Dee St. Clair from St. Andrew's (Garden box).

### **Water and Latrine projects**

Last year Chad and Jodi Mulder spearheaded the first annual Social Justice film night that we held on the upper meadow. We received over \$160 in pass the hat donations and a \$400 check from a PUCC member who wished to remain anonymous. These funds contributed to the completion of phase 5 (have completed 61 composting latrines) of a commitment to fund 83 latrines. We are very excited to report that during our January 2020 delegation (pre-covid), we negotiated an agreement with the "directiva", the leaders of El Pilar and Las Orquides, these community members researched local materials, cost and labor, and came up with their own proposals and as a community built their own latrines, thus cutting out the NGO (middlemen) that we have relied on in the past. We are continuing the fundraising for this project.

### **Prayer child scholarship program**

This initiative provides an opportunity to establish a "prayer child" relationship and enables Santa Cruz al Salvador to provide 120 scholarships for children k-12 who come from the very poorest families in the communities we accompany. The prayer child initiative has grown from 50 scholarships in 2003 to 120 k-11 scholarships consistently provided since 2009. A very special thank you to Prophets of Hope for sponsoring two second graders in academic year 2019/2020 and a special thank you to Patricia Castagnola and Barbara Broadbent for

sponsoring a high school student each and Reneta Pomeroy for financially sponsoring a first grade prayer child during the 2019/2020 academic year.

If anyone would like to help financially support a prayer child for the academic year 2020/2021 (and beyond!) please let me know. We are in the process of updating prayer child sponsor commitment cards. We can fund an entire school year for one child k-11 for \$100.

### **El Salvador delegation**

The school year in El Salvador, like here, has been very difficult due to the pandemic. In some ways, not too different from the remote learning that our young people are doing here in California, but the difficulty with internet connections and suitable equipment made it more challenging in the communities we accompany. The school year runs from January to early November, so it is just finishing up in El Salvador. The new year will continue in January 2021. We are awaiting the new list of scholarship recipients, please let me know if you would like to sponsor a student. We typically travel to El Salvador during November or January and take with us a one-gallon zip-lock plastic bag with age appropriate items for our students. This year, due to the pandemic, there will be no delegation going to El Salvador. This will be the first time since 2001 that we will have an entire year without a delegation. Due to the lack of and poor internet connections for computers, we are looking into possible ways to help fund internet access to the school and develop a computer lab so that all students can have access. In lieu of a gift bag contributions to school internet connection would be an ideal substitution.

Again I wish to give thanks to those at Peace United who have supported Santa Cruz al Salvador and who have provided prayers for our sisters and brothers in El Salvador.

Lisa Johnson, for Santa Cruz al Salvador, Joan Love (St Andrews, Presbyterian Aptos), Ruth Cruddas, Christ Lutheran, Aptos), and the board of SCaS