



Greater Milwaukee Synod El Salvador Committee
Companion Synod Relationship with the Salvadoran Lutheran Church
and Community Relationship with Comunidad Rutilio Grande



The El Salvador Committee exists to further relationships between synods, congregations, and individuals in the Greater Milwaukee Synod and the Salvadoran Lutheran Church as part of the ELCA Companion Synod Program. We are happy to share this report of our activities over the past year.

Accompaniment. Our goal is to walk together in a spirit of mutual accompaniment with our Salvadoran companions. ELCA Global Mission defines accompaniment as "walking together in solidarity that practices interdependence and mutuality. In this walk, gifts, resources and experiences are shared with mutual advice and admonition to deepen and expand our work within God's mission." The El Salvador Committee works to learn how to make this concept concrete, including our workshop presentation at this year's Synod assembly with Rev. Dr. Raquel Rodriguez and in a new study group.



Floods of 2011. In October 2011, El Salvador suffered from torrential rains causing flooding throughout the country. Food which had come to El Salvador as part of a project by St. Mathews church in Wauwatosa, served to provide some emergency aid. Congregations throughout our synod donated funds to assist with disaster relief. As farmers throughout the country replant their crops this month, the Salvadoran Lutheran Church will continue to accompany them.

Relationships through the Sister Church Program constitute the committee's largest area of involvement. 14 congregations currently have sister church relationships with congregations in El Salvador or with the Salvadoran Lutheran Church as a whole. Several delegations from the Milwaukee area traveled to El Salvador to share time with their companions, while Salvadoran Pastors Rafael Menjivar and Santiago Rodriguez both visited their sister congregations in the past year.

The Mission of Holistic Healing is an annual event. This February's mission, led and delivered by healers and volunteers from both countries, provided care to nearly 1,000 Salvadorans and also included workshops on empowerment and crisis intervention. For the first time this year, the mission traveled out to the eastern zone of the country for a day of clinics with congregations in that area.

Scholarships provide hope for the youth in many of our sister communities. Hundreds of scholarships are provided on a congregation-to-congregation basis and presented to students in Comunidad Rutilio Grande in 2011.

Pastoral Support Endowment Fund. An ongoing project of the El Salvador Committee has been backing the Pastoral Support Endowment Fund of the Salvadoran Lutheran Church. This fund seeks to provide a sustainable source of pastor salaries, and is currently supporting three pastors. It was exciting this year to see the Salvadoran Church initiate a \$1 per Lutheran campaign to support the fund. Think what could be accomplished if we also added \$1 for every Lutheran in the Greater Milwaukee Synod!



Join us. We meet the third Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Synod conference room. Anyone who is interested in participating or learning more is welcome to attend. The Committee shares information about its activities, on the web at www.partnerswithelsalvador.org and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/partnerswithelsalvador.