

At the Saturday night farewell party with villagers and church members, the team awarded team t-shirts and crosses to those who helped the team, and donated 50 VBS booklets with arts and crafts supplies to Padre Canela. The team also donated sports equipment such as volleyballs, basketballs, soccer balls, kickballs, basketball nets and volleyball nets for use during the diocesan summer camp program and the next school year. Everyone enjoyed the abundant food and fellowship — plus cake and ice cream!



For the 2019-2020 school year friends of the mission and parishioners from Christ Church, Trinity (Statesboro) and Nativity (Dothan, AL) are donating 90 scholarships (\$31,500) for the village children to attend the Episcopal school we helped build. This total is the largest we have ever donated, surpassing 89 (\$31,150) in 2018.



Arriving in Santo Domingo on Sunday afternoon, the team explored the Colonial Zone and shared a meal in the beautiful Buche Perico restaurant with Bishop Moisés, Jeannette and Patricia Martin, the diocesan Mission Team Coordinator.

Julius rescued a team t-shirt and phone power cable left accidentally at the camp by arranging to have them sent by bus by Padre Canela



to Santo Domingo on Monday morning. Our taxi driver friend Miguel Perez accompanied Julius to the bus station and negotiated the extraction of the package from the arrivals warehouse.

As always, there was a spiritual element to our mission work. We prayed morning and evening prayer every day. Evening prayer ended with this prayer:

*May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you wherever he may send you;
 May he guide you through the wilderness: Protect you through the storm;
 May he bring you home rejoicing: At the wonders he has shown you;
 May he bring you home rejoicing; Once again into our doors.*

... And we did come home rejoicing. ¡Gracias a Dios! Thanks be to God!

Christ Episcopal Church Dominican Republic Mission Trip June 17 - 24, 2019



The Christ Episcopal Church Valdosta 2019 mission team spent the week of June 17- 24 in El Pedregal, Dominican Republic. Thanks to everyone on the “Home Team” who offered prayers, encouragement, and financial support for the “Go Team” in sharing God’s love with the villagers in our mission field since the first trip in 2001.

This year’s mission team included Julius and Julia Ariail, Bonnie Hanson, Phyllis Hiers, Steph Johnson, Paul Stevenson, and Emily Taylor, from Christ Church; Caroline Hiers and Bella Pozo from St. Thomas, Thomasville; Meg Hiers from Marietta; Fred Richter and William Whatley from Trinity, Statesboro; Casey Wesselman from Myrtle Beach, S.C.; and Mary Jeannette Pringle de Quezada, the wife of the Episcopal Dominican bishop, from Santo Domingo, DR.

The week was a fabulous success! Using their special talents, the 14 missionaries divided the tasks and accomplished an amazing amount of work as well as enjoying several excursions. Several multitasking missionaries helped with different projects as the needs arose.

Veterinarians Meg and Casey worked tirelessly to examine and vaccinate 100 dogs in a rescue shelter. Bonnie, Phyllis and Fred assisted them by recording their findings for the founder and manager of the shelter, Jacqueline Bello Isaías.





Paul, William, and Fred worked with the local contractor Euclides Grullon to pour a cement floor and paint the new bedroom for Pirulu, the special needs young adult our team sponsored through school. They also painted the outside of the front of the house to match his new room attached to his grandmother Elena's house.

Steph, Emily, and Bonnie painted murals in the two newly designated kindergarten rooms in the Episcopal School we helped build in 2005-06. The four-five-year-olds now have a meadow with trees,

dogs, sheep, and cows to brighten their room. The two-three-year-old room features creatures in an under-the-sea theme: dolphins, a sea horse, turtles, an octopus, and Ariel, the mermaid. Several other team members, including Fred, Meg, Casey, Bella, Paul, William, and Julia helped complete Steph's outlines before she enhanced the design personalities with finishing details.

Phyllis, Caroline and Bella worked every day on different projects with eight Dominican teens chosen by Padre Ramón Canela to be our "Teen Team." Every day Caroline taught different patterns of friendship bracelet making with embroidery floss. On Tuesday, the teens learned to sew pool bags to use later in the week.

On Wednesday Phyllis talked to them about the importance of taking care of the environment. As a service project, the teens picked up six large bags of trash on the camp grounds and the street in front of the camp. Bella taught painting in the afternoon. On Thursday the teens chaperoned by Phyllis and



Jeannette along with translator David Duran went by bus to Rancho Baiguatè, an ecological resort 2.5 miles away. After a tour of the grounds and butterfly house, the girls enjoyed swimming in the pool, followed by lunch in the outdoor cabana, and ... even more pool time.

Jeannette taught sewing, accompanied the teens to Rancho Baiguatè and translated for the team. Jesús Rosado, a tailor in Jarabacoa and husband of our translator Leidy, also taught sewing. Julia

was the third sewing instructor for the teens and later to eight women of the village who made decorative pillows with zippers for their sofas.

Julius photographed every activity of the various projects, bought out the water supply at the colmado (local convenience store) and distributed it to all the groups as they worked. He startled the owners of the colmado when he came one day asking for a large block of cheese. The veterinarians needed to hide dewormer pills in the cheese as they tempted the dogs to cooperate. With Leidy's assistance, Julius organized the transportation for all the trips and served as the banker for the team changing dollars into pesos. At 5 o'clock every morning when he had an internet connection, he posted a daily report on his Facebook page so that our "Home Team" could keep up with our progress.

The annual splash party for the 100+ village kids featured six inflatable pools filled with fresh water by the local water truck and two huge slip-n-slides. The entire team and the Episcopal schoolteachers helped the children enjoy hotdogs, soda, ice cream and cake.

The Episcopal Bishop of the Dominican Republic, Moisés Quezada, joined the team on Friday afternoon. After dinner and evening prayer, he talked with the team about his duties as a bishop, answering questions and praising the group for their work and ministry of presence. He also took part in the Saturday excursions to the Baiguatè waterfall and to the Jarabacoa Flower Festival.

Bonnie served as the team doctor on the trip helping to keep the team healthy with medications and first aid supplies. She presented Ana Maria Quiroz, a staff member at the local clinic, with the large box of eyeglasses she had collected at Christ Church before going on the trip. She also collected over 150 toothbrushes and toothpaste tubes to give to Padre Canela for the summer campers coming in July.

