

SAVE THE DATE!



Join the PWNC and our sister Presbyteries in Guatemala for our fall 2021 virtual gathering!

Our October 30th bilingual gathering will allow us to see both familiar and new faces as we hear firsthand how our sister communities are coping with COVID-19. We will fellowship by sharing joys and concerns and engaging in a Q&A with participants.

To ensure that we can engage equally from our brothers and sisters in both the Presbytery of Sur Occidente and the Presbytery of Suchitepéquez, we have scheduled two gathering times on this same day. You are invited to join us for one or both conversations!

What- LIVE Guatemala Partnership Gathering

When- Saturday, October 30th

Access- Visit Zoom's login page <https://zoom.us/signin> and use login details below:

Gathering Participants	Time	Zoom Meeting Details
Suchitepéquez & PWNC	11:00 am- 1:00 pm EST	Meeting ID: 870 4367 2507 Passcode: 150700
Sur Occidente & PWNC	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm EST	Meeting ID: 884 9111 1497 Passcode: 722775

Questions or suggestions?

Please reach out to PWNC Guatemala Partnership Coordinator, Marie Palacios via email: pwnccguatemala@gmail.com

**If you would like an introduction or refresher on the Guatemala Partnership prior to the fall gathering, check out our "Passport to Partnership" handbook. Both a downloadable version of the handbook and an introductory webinar are available on the PWNC's website: <https://www.presbyterywnc.org/mission/guatemala-partnership>

COVID RELIEF EFFORTS FOR GUATEMALA AND MALAWI PARTNERSHIPS

October 2021

Dear Pastors, Mission Committees and Congregations of the Presbytery Western North Carolina

We are writing with a sense of urgency regarding the impact of Covid on the people of our sister churches and partnerships in Guatemala and Malawi. In addition to the physiological impact of this plague, there have been devastating economic impacts as well.

- Guatemala is currently experiencing a new peak in infections, and Malawi is experiencing a slower rate of increase at present; but this could change.
- Due to closures of schools, in both nations, children are missing out on education for months at a time.
- Unemployment has sky-rocketed in both nations and in our sister faith communities. Available income has dropped precipitously, rendering many Presbyterian families, food insecure. As a result, the rate of hunger and malnutrition are on the rise in both nations.
- According to the Reuters News Service "Covid Tracker," as of this writing, only 18% of the population in Guatemala has been vaccinated, and less than 4% in Malawi. As a result, economic recovery in both nations is still a distant hope.
- With so many Guatemalans financially bereft, crimes of theft against Guatemalan's are skyrocketing, and the people of Malawi are experiencing the same thing at a lesser rate.
- Congregational members in both nations are unable to offer financial support to the operations of their local church and most churches are unable to pay their pastors their compensation.
- In both nations, there is no end in sight to the impact of Covid and the level of desperation.

The General Council of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina has given permission to invite PWNC congregations and their members to make a general collection for emergency relief funding in both nations. Some of our churches with sister congregations have recently offered financial support, but the need is far greater than the monies raised to date.

We encourage our churches to do two things. First, to prayerfully lift these concerns in your corporate worship and private devotions, and secondly, to collect relief funds in your congregations. After collecting these funds in your congregation each church should write one check to:

PWNC Emergency Relief c/o Lisa Pressley, Controller PWNC.

**114 Silver Creek Road
Morganton NC 28655**

All monies collected will be divided to address the needs of Presbyterians in both nations.

May God Bless you and our brothers and sisters abroad with good health and well-being and thank you for your prayers and your financial support to our neighbors in Christ.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Dana Seiler, Chair of the Malawi Partnership of PWNC

Rev. Dr. Kevin Frederick, Chair of the Guatemala Partnership Committees of PWNC

**ALTERNATIVE GIVING CHRISTMAS CARDS
TO BENEFIT THE GUATEMALA MICROLOAN PROJECT**



The inside of the card includes a brief description of the microloan project and states:

*"A gift has been made in your honor to the **GUATEMALA MICROLOAN PROJECT.**"*

These cards are a way to remember others at Christmas and at the same time provide opportunities for Guatemalan women to grow in self-esteem, hope, and freedom and to develop sources of economic income for themselves and their families. A \$10 minimum donation per card is suggested. To order, contact Sandra Teubner at steubner@charter.net.



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

August 2021 Guatemala Microloan Update

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13: 34-35



MUJERES
PRESBITERIANAS



From a Microloan Visit to Guatemala in 2018—In attendance Mimi Michael, Ellen, Dozier and Susan Maveety.

(paraphrased) Fraternal greetings and my thoughts are with you today as you are gathered to continue your work and support for this project. I want to share with you the following. The evaluation process has been a very enriching, good and satisfactory experience. The women have received us with much love, they have given us much affection and their sincere expressions of how much they appreciate us and you for being with them. They are very grateful for all the support, and what it has meant to them, especially in this time of crisis. Sometimes it is big things such as food support, psychological support for difficult situations and problems, and also for everyday things, to solve (problems in) their day-to-day lives. To see them strengthened by the knowledge that they have acquired over the years through workshops and empowered by the knowledge and constant practice. But perhaps the most interesting thing is the demand for more knowledge; that for rural women, without more schooling, without access to decent living conditions, is one of the changes that I value the most. Because they did not ask for food, they did not ask for debt forgiveness, they did not ask for help. Their main demand is knowledge, more information, and that we return to work with them.

This reason makes me even more satisfied with the need to make the work team grow in order to make the lives of the women and the community more dynamic. I am really impressed because in no group have they even asked for deferment of payments, they were worried that we would come and ask them to pay immediately, they were willing to pay, to look for a way to do it. On the contrary, these were very gratifying days for us, to see the result of our shared work. It reminds me of what we did during the Assembly in 2018, that of the chain, when we all formed a chain with links of different colors to remind ourselves of how big and strong we were together.

Thank you very much brothers and sisters.

Mildre Castillo, Director of Program in Guatemala

Guatemalans Protest Firing of Anti-Graft Crusader

Euronews.com has reported that on Saturday, July 24, 2021, hundreds of Guatemalans protested the outing of anti-corruption fighter Juan Sandoval, who fled the country after being stripped of his post. This has sparked a global outcry for justice. Sandoval, whose post was head of the FECCI, which was originally created to tackle investigations spearheaded by the U.N.-backed International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) which was ousted from the country in 2019, fled in order to safeguard his life.

Guatemala's Attorney General Maria Porras removed him after he would not comply with her wishes to 'seek her opinion' on any case that involved the government. Sandoval said in a press conference that he would challenge his "illegal dismissal." He went on to say that he is just the latest in a string of prosecutors who have suffered the consequences for seeking truth and justice.

The Guatemalan government said in a statement on Saturday that it "categorically rejects Juan Francisco Sandoval's statements." Sandoval's dismissal underscores the challenges U.S. President Joe Biden's government faces in pursuing its anti-graft push in Central America, where it says corruption and impunity are drivers of migration.



These pictures were taken from a FaceBook page of one of the microloan participants. This is from a march in Mazatenango, a town in the Suchitepequez district of Guatemala.

Covid Relief Funds Were Much Appreciated!

We are grateful for the \$4,340 which was generously given to the Covid Emergency Fund. The situation in Guatemala is dire. Covid cases are on the rise and the economy of the country continues to deteriorate. Your donations have been used to help with medical treatments, educational needs, housing assistance, and other expenses. The pandemic has made it difficult for the groups to meet and for many women to carry on with their businesses. Our administrators at ADEHGUA continue to support us and our participants during this unprecedented time.



Did you know?

"Formations" with the women of the Microloan program are workshops in which they receive specialized brochures, training and support that is intended to minister to the 'whole' person and help them build capacity for their businesses. Some of the topics the women recently asked for include: pinata making, food, baking, embroidery, acrylic nails, costume jewelry, physical exercise, care of breeding animals, party decorations, emotional intelligence, financial management, entrepreneurship, natural disinfectants, natural medicine, first aid, self-esteem, emotional healing and mental health. Here's some comments --Nancy said, "The Covid information helped me to make my contingency plan at school." Aury said, "The information is good, it orients me." "Reading and hobbies relaxes me, it helped me a lot when we were locked up because of the pandemic," said Nurian. And Rosa gave her son's teacher a tip; "At school they only gave my 5-year-old son worksheets which he finds boring. I took one of our pamphlets to the teacher to show her how to add games, puzzles and fun activities that awaken his mind. This is how the teacher now sends kindergarten homework."

Check out the new videos at <https://www.guatemalamicroloanproject.org/stories>

Like us on Facebook <https://m.facebook.com/guatemala.microloans/>

A 2022 Project Hope Scholarship Student from Suchitepéquez

Dalissa Colindres

Dalissa is in her third year studying Clinical Psychology at the University of Mariano Galvez at Quetzeltanango. Dalissa is a member of the Nueva Esperanza u Church. She is pictured below with leaders from Suchi, (Raul Martinez, Arely Tot, and Danillo Villatoro). Dalissa has written a letter to share some of her journey and the impact the scholarship has had on her life.



“I cordially write to you expressing my gratitude for the support you have been providing during these two years. My name is Dalissa Jasmin Asensio Colindres and I am currently studying the third year of the Clinical Psychology career. I want to tell you that I have had good grades in the fifth semester at the University. The courses I received this semester were Psychometry II, Sport and Recreation Psychology, Social Psychology and Neurophysiology. In the month of July, I have signed up for the sixth semester of studies in Psychology with high expectations to continue learning, although it has not been easy for me because the classes are virtual; but I know how to manage them. My courses this semester are Clinical Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Industrial Psychology and Basics of the Computer. I am also learning Guatemalan sign language in order to help and get to know deaf people because I consider it important to learn from them and to be able to learn to communicate with them. With the career that I am following, I want to help people who need it with my knowledge and put what I Learn at the service of God. Thank you very much for your support and accompaniment, blessing”.

2022 Project Hope University Scholarship Students from Sur Occidente



Luis Felipe Perez Miguel (student in the middle) is receiving his letter of congratulations and Project Hope University funds from 2 leaders in Sur Occidente Presbytery (Luis Gomez and Humberto Baten). Luis Felipe is a member of Horeb church in Tecun Uman and in his 3rd year studying Systems Engineering. "I want to support brothers/sisters of the church who want to start a business, giving them orientation or software that helps them with their business."



Wendy Rosemary Sanchez Sanchez is receiving her letter of congratulations and Project Hope Funds from leaders in Sur Occidente Presbytery. She is studying medicine/surgery at the University of San Carlos of Guatemala (year 4). She is a member of the Arca de Noe Presbyterian Church of Noe Morelia. She writes, "My dream is to become a professional in order to serve my community." Presently, she is taking a course of language of locution with the "objective of being inclusive and therefore being able to give timely attention to people with auditory disability."