



Focus on Floradale

Volume XXXI, No. 1

Floradale Mennonite Church

February, 2015

Out of the Cold



Kendra peels apples for home-made apple crisp.

On Friday, Jan. 30, several people from Floradale Mennonite Church helped with the Out of the Cold program at First United Church in Waterloo.

We helped to make and serve the meal. Other volunteers came in to do the dishes. If we felt comfortable we were encouraged to spend time talking to the guests.



Glenn Martin stirs the tomato-meat sauce for sloppy joes.

Numbers were low, so there was lots of food. Local governments are working harder at providing housing and so there are probably fewer homeless people than in previous winters. Some of the guests are not homeless but struggle to have enough money to make it through the month. Because this was the end of the month, some potential guests had just received their cheques and were not feeling the need of a hot meal.

Floradale's volunteers included Kendra Whitfield Ellis, Alina Kehl, Taylor Clemmer, Kayla Buckley, Kaitlyn Taylor, Richard Bauman, Glenn Martin, Dan and Karen Bender and Barb Draper.



Tables for eating and mattresses for sleeping were set up in the fellowship hall.



Taylor Clemmer serves soup.

Family Life Committee Changes

Have you heard the cliché “the only thing constant in life is change”? I think that's what we're experiencing with regards to the Family Life Committee.

In society we've accepted the fact that people aren't just working 8-5 jobs. We realize that children, that younger generation :), have higher expectations than the previous generation.

Consider some of the changes we've experienced:

- Tobogganing at someone's farm hill has been replaced by Chicopee Snow Tubing (lighting, open till midnight and offers a place to warm up and buy drinks, snacks).
- The phone ringing at home use to be an exciting activity. Now with our portable devices we can be reached at anytime, anywhere, find ANYTHING.
- Grocery shopping (and all other shopping) was limited to regular working hours (8 a.m.-6 p.m.). Now we shop for groceries at 24 hr supermarkets and purchase pretty much anything we want (not need), at whatever time of the day and have it delivered right to our front door/mailbox within a couple days using e-commerce on-line websites.

It's amazing how quickly we embrace these new capabilities. The younger generations know nothing other than having these conveniences. We shouldn't be too surprised then that some of the programming our church has offered in the past might not work as effectively as it did in the past. We need to be more flexible in the types of programs we offer and the life expectancy we have for these programs.

This past year, 2014, offered some challenges but also some rewarding community life activities.

- FMC offered a CPR/Defib training course and this will be repeated in 2015.
- We conducted a new Outdoor Worship Service in late May - well received, will be replicated in 2015.
- Out of the Cold service venture has replaced long time running House of Friendship Men's Hostel project.

Gift Discernment committee has been unsuccessful in securing new members for the Family Life committee over the last two years. It was decided to break down what seemed to be too much responsibility for one committee into smaller roles and see if these roles could be filled:

- Family Camping has not yet been filled.
- Inter-generational activities (Eg. Hot dog lunch & games, bowling, etc) has been filled.
- Church Greeters/Host & Hostess/Newborn Flowers has been filled.
- FMC Hidden Acres winter retreat, after decades, will be discontinued.
- The two current Family Life Committee members will organize a pizza and movie night.

Maybe the Family Life Committee is not the correct term for the role FMC is looking for. Maybe it's an Event Planning Committee that organizes ongoing events the church can host—concerts, movie nights, car shows, community breakfast/dinners, Easter egg hunt, football tailgate party—creativity is the key. I don't think we can limit ourselves to only traditional

church activities. As pointed out earlier, our day to day activities have been changing & will continue to change. We have to be willing to change up the activities/programs we offer.

I believe any activities we participate in involve relationships. It's these relationships with neighbours, friends, as well as FMC community that build trust and comfort that all people desire. I think everyone wants relationships—some more and some less. I believe we can all think of new and creative ways to informally build relationships.

We do however need to be willing to extend ourselves out of our comfort zone. We walk outside our comfort zone for work, sport and community activities. We have to be willing to extend this walk and invite neighbours and friends to join us. We have a beautiful new facility & need to use it to the best of our ability to glorify God.

A Welcoming working committee has been formed to evaluate our current outreach. The goal is to identify some opportunities to be a more open/welcoming church & allow us to retain new attendees long term. This committee will provide some potential action items to Church Council along with an action plan of how these opportunities could be realized. If you have any input please contact:

- Lloyd or Brenda Martin
- Tony or Char Martin
- Taylor Holst
- Jeff Martin
- Dave or Marj Metzger
- Dan Bender

Thanks,
Dan Bender
Community Life Chairperson

Kaitlyn in Alberta

Kaitlyn Martin, daughter of Ron and Rosie Martin, lives in Alberta. She spends most of her time working on the 800-acre ranch, about an hour from Calgary. Her chores consist of letting out and cleaning up after 36 horses, four feedings a day and hauling manure by tractor away from the barn. She also feeds an

additional 20 outside horses and fixes fences. Her boss is an accomplished Olympic jumper and Kaitlyn helps with dressage and jumping clinics. She enjoys the opportunity to ride the horses.



Kaitlyn and one of the show horses after a bath—all squeaky clean!



Kaitlyn with Daytona, one of her favourites. Christmas pictures!



Kaitlyn with B—another favourite.



Kaitlyn and her view of the mountains in her backyard!

Recipe: Moe's Mexican caviar

Mix together the following and bring to a boil, stir until sugar dissolves:

- ½ cup olive oil
- ¾ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tbsp. water
- Salt and pepper

Cool mixture 20 minutes, then add to vegetables below:

- 1 cup chopped green onion
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped red pepper

After draining and rinsing, add the following:

- 1 large can black beans
- 1 small can corn niblets
- 1 large can lentils

You can store it in jars and keep in the refrigerator for three weeks. There will be some excess juice that you will want to drain off.

Serve with nacho scoopers or crackers.

Submitted by Karen Bender



U.S. attitudes regarding Charlie Hebdo attacks

A couple weeks after the attacks in Paris on the offices of the satirical magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*, the Pew Research Centre asked Americans whether it was okay for the magazine to publish material that was offensive to Muslims. About 60 percent said it was okay for *Charlie Hebdo* to publish the cartoons, about 30 percent said it was not okay.

Most people who said it was not okay to publish the cartoons said that we need to respect other religions and that the cartoons were offensive and inappropriate. Those who said it was okay to publish the cartoons gave the reason of freedom of speech and of the press.

An interesting finding from this research is that whites, men and Republicans are more apt to support the publishing of the cartoons than non-whites, women and Democrats. Although most groups tended to support publishing, the one group where more than half were opposed were non-whites. There was also variation in terms of level of education where the less educated were less apt to be in favour of publishing.

Of the people contacted, 24 percent had not heard of the attacks.

—From www.journalism.org/2015/01/28/after-charlie-hebdo-balancing-press-freedom-and-respect-for-religion/

Freedom of expression comes with responsibility

By *Mary M. Martin*

I have this love/hate relationship with the media; I want to know what's happening in the world I live in, but I also can get disillusioned and want to ignore everything. The recent events in Paris were no exception. I know the issue is much bigger and more complex than the "freedom of speech" focus that has followed the shootings, yet I have found myself thinking a lot about our right to freedom of speech and what this means to all of us in our daily lives. Furthermore, in my readings this week I kept bumping into new ways to think about our rights and freedoms—for example, the death of the 11-year-

old girl who was given the right to refuse chemo treatment.

Before writing this I googled the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and was left with more questions than answers. The charter states that "Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms" (Here are two of the four freedoms) 1) freedom of conscience and religion and 2) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication."

I wondered, does this freedom of expression really mean one can say or publish whatever one wants too, even if it incites unrest, anger or violence? Does freedom of expression mean one

can degrade or shame another's religion, race, sexual orientation or social status? Or as Fred asked in a recent children's story and this is not an exact quote, "I can do/say anything I want, but is it kind to say things that hurt someone?" The children thought it wasn't kind to hurt someone.

At what point is one responsible for the impact of one's words or attitudes? What good is "the right" to "freedom" of speech, if one might not feel free to exercise the right/freedom with an abusive employer because one needs the job in order to support a family? Are there times when social or financial status is used to silence those who have less? How comfortable or willing are we as Mennonites to let other religions (i.e. Muslim or Native Spirituality) express their religious beliefs?

For my own growth it is important to reflect on the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." How does this "rule" impact or influence how I understand my "rights and freedoms?" Am I willing to give others the right to express their beliefs or opinions if they are different from mine just as I want the right to express my own to them?

If our church were to write our own "Floradale Charter of Rights and Freedoms" I wonder what it would like and I would hope that a Floradale Charter would read, "Floradale Charter of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities" because I believe responsibility is needed to bring balance to our rights and freedoms.

Free speech shouldn't demean

By Fred Redekop

Recently, there were cartoonists and journalists killed at the offices of Charlie Hebdo newspaper in Paris. The cartoonists at the newspaper draw cartoons of the Pope, and the prophet Muhammed, women, and many politicians. These cartoonists were killed by terrorists because of the anti-Muslim cartoons that have been published in the newspaper. The paper has been running these kinds of cartoons for a long time, and have been attacked before this most recent incident.

If we believe in the concept of freedom of speech in Canada (or France), does it give us the right to print or say anything that we want? I think that we all have differences of opinion of where

might draw that line in the sand. I think that the cartoonist in the *Woolwich Observer* has gone too far too often in his/her cartoons of local politicians. I really like cartoons, especially the ones in the *New Yorker* magazine. I am sure some people are offended by some of the cartoons in that magazine.

I do not think you should draw cartoons of the prophet Muhammed because it is offensive to Muslims. I seem to be fine with making fun of the church, because I think that the church has done some awful stuff in its history. I do not like or appreciate lewd or sexual cartoons. But, I know people always draw the lines in different ways.

Sometimes it is said that we do not have to like what everyone

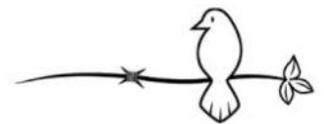
says, but we have to defend the right for everyone to say anything. I do not want to draw my lines in that way. If it does not build up the community we live in, then I do not want to defend everything. If it makes fun of vulnerable people, I will not defend it. If it demeans people, I do not want to be a part of it either.

Jesus defended the less fortunate, but he did not defend the power brokers if they did not care for the regular folk in the community. He had harsh things to say to the religious and political powers of his day. So, freedom of speech does not have easy answers to it. Do I have the right and duty to say anything that I want from the pulpit? I do not think so, what do you think?

Shalom and strength,

Fred

CPT opts not to have tax exempt status



christian peacemaker teams

By Fred Redekop

Our daughter Hannah works for Christian Peacemaker Teams in Colombia. CPT has been an organization that works for peace building in five or six places in the world since 1984. They have received their donations through Mennonite Church Canada. So, if you make a donation to CPT, it is carried by the national church body. In recent years, Canadian Revenue Agency has been monitoring the work of CPT, and have told MC Canada that CPT is more an advocacy agency. If you have more than 10% of your work going towards advocacy, the Canadian Revenue Agency does not approve of that kind of work.

MC Canada had discussions with CPT, and as of Feb. 1, 2015, CPT has opted out of the agreement

with MC Canada, not wanting to jeopardize the work of the church and their own work. So, donations to CPT are no longer given a tax receipt.

This will have a great effect on the work of CPT, although they continue to have tax exempt status in the USA.

One of the reasons that CPT is not considered a charity is that they do not give out money and resources to help the poor. They advocate on behalf of people who do not have a voice; farmers, women and the indigenous people that they work alongside. I believe it is a sad day that this does not qualify to be the work of solving the problem of poverty and injustice around the world, but this is just my opinion.

Focus Flashbacks—Floradale in Service

By Nicole Woeschka

Floradale Mennonite Church has a history of being a caring congregation involved in a lot of different areas of service. When looking through the archives of the *Focus on Floradale*, there are a lot of examples of service—groups traveling abroad to help people in other countries, families living in other areas for mission work and many other local scenarios, as well.

When participating in service projects the goal is to help others but the most prominent note I found while going through the *Focus* archives was people telling of the lessons they learned during their experience:

- November 1986 – “Stormer Lake – Living in the Bush”
“There were many frustrating times, many good times and also many challenging times...I am thankful for the privilege of serving the Lord those years in the bush.”
– *Selina Frey*
- May 1988 – “Moments in the Dominican Republic”
“And what was the most rewarding experience? Realizing that traveling in a country like the Dominican Republic can be a powerful experience reminding us again how our stories are connected to theirs, reminding us that we as God’s children need not divide the world into ‘we’ and ‘they’.”
– *Rick C. Bauman*

- August 1988 – “Our Jane/ Finch Ministry”
“Some personal relationships have developed. There have been visits, phone calls, sharing of garden produce, cards, letters, gifts, etc. This takes time and effort, but I’m sure it is very rewarding.”
– *Laura Bauman*
- April 1989 – “Conference: Why is it important?”
“I believe that Conference provides a way for the church to grow and develop. When people get together and discuss issues, it is a way of solving problems that concern the whole church. All of us should know what the church is doing in education and missions and what resources are available. We can better support the church if we are informed.”
– *Valina Martin*
- October 1990 – “Floradale’s Jane/Finch Connection”
“The exchange of experiences, family happenings, and our stories makes this a rich and rewarding partnership.”
– *Dalton Jantzi*
- June 1996 – “Guatemala”
“These women may never know how their example has changed my inner self; and they may never know just how highly I regard them with respect and admiration. They asked our group to pray for them. I have certainly tried to maintain this promise we made. I am exhausted and can’t wait to get home, but I feel an empty void already. I

will miss Guatemala immensely.”
– *Juanita Gingrich*, —a quote from her journal entries documenting her experience in Guatemala

Over the years Floradale has done a lot of good in our community and abroad. I’m sure this will continue as we strive to serve one another as the Lord taught us. *Galatians 5:13* “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Focus on Floradale is published five times a year.
Editor: Barb Draper
Editorial Committee:
Peter Ellis
Tim Greenwood
Mary M. Martin
Nicole Woeschka

Some silly puns

How does Moses make his tea?
Hebrews it...

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

Jokes about German sausages are the wurst.

Venison for dinner again?
Oh deer!

I’m reading a book about anti-gravity... I just can’t put it down!

Reflections on Guatemala

By Vernelda Weber

Ross and I always said that if another service trip was planned through the church we would like to be part of it. When the opportunity came up last fall we didn't have to think too long about saying "yes."

Although we recognized that you don't always end up doing what you had expected—we were told we would be building a kitchen, hauling rocks, planting trees, etc.—I wasn't sure how this would come together and how we would accomplish it in five days. But it did, and we did even more.

I think our team came with an open mind knowing we had to be flexible and willing to do whatever needed to be done.

The Guatemalan construction crew was starting to make rebar frames on Monday morning when we arrived but there was nothing dug—just a level piece of ground between their current building and shed. Our first task was to dig the foundation for the kitchen. We were to dig the foundation 20" wide and one metre deep with shovels, oversized hoes and picks that they provided us with (not the tools you would use around here). Fortunately the ground was not heavy clay but they had removed two large trees from this piece of ground earlier, so of course we had the tree roots to cut through with machetes. That's when we were glad Eddie was with us. He just used that machete and chopped through those tree roots. We had the foun-

dition dug by the end of the first day.

They had a huge pile of large rocks that they asked us to move around the foundation. We had several wheelbarrows but not the heavy duty ones we have around here. We could only put a few rocks in. Others carried them by hand. Needless to say we had shown some wear and tear on their equipment by the end of the week.

It was interesting to see the Guatemalan construction crew make use of the resources they have. The very large tree trunk they had removed from the site they used as a workbench to bend the rebar for the pillar frames.

When they started cementing the foundation they mixed the mortar by hand, shoveled it into plastic 5-gallon pails, and heaved the pails up on their shoulders to

carry it to where they needed it on the foundation. Instead of using sand in cement they screened the ground we had dug out and used that.

Each of us on the team paid for three trees to plant in their ecological park up the mountain. We had to walk to the next town to pick the trees up at the nursery. Each of us had to carry three trees back to ANADESA. I didn't think I would be able to do that—but I made it! I wasn't sure how I was going to carry these three trees up the mountain the next day. Fortunately we only had to carry one, with the Guatemalan staff carrying the rest on their backs.

I don't think I have worked so hard in my life, been so dirty, or walked so much. Every day after work we'd shower—scrubbing hard and would "dry



A group of ten people from Floradale were in Guatemala from Jan. 23 to Feb. 2. Here they are at lunch at ANADESA.

From left: Roy Draper, Merri-Lee Metzger, Ron Metzger, Liz Weber, Kaleigh Philips, Eddie Bauman, Michaela Pries-Klassen, Donna Freeman, Ross Weber, Veg Weber. Rick Freeman is next to Donna, but he managed not to be in the photo.

clean” our work clothes (shaking them outside really well). I never thought I would get our socks clean again (but I did). After sitting and eating supper we would get up and our muscles would ache. Getting up the next morning the muscles would still ache but off to work we would go. I was amazed at how I could keep working and my aching muscles never bothered me. (Maybe shows how out of shape I was!)

Guatemala has a recent history of war (1980’s) and then the mudslide in 2005. The people have experienced great loss and their lives have not been easy. Despite all that, they have great hope and dreams.

The ANADESA staff has great dreams for their property and ecological park. We would probably say they are dreaming “too big.” The kitchen that we were helping with, the women would like to use it to prepare meals for groups that come to visit.

The women at ANADESA cooked our lunches every day and did a wonderful job despite not having the conveniences we have. We had a variety of foods throughout the week and they were always artistically arranged on our plate. Each meal included tortillas! The meal included a drink as well. We all enjoyed the hibiscus drink. The unusual one for me was the one made with rice and cinnamon.

One evening at our motel a man asked Ross and I what we were doing there (he had seen us working) and who we were working for. We had a chance to tell him what we were doing and his response to us was “I don’t believe in God, but God bless you.”

I thoroughly enjoyed my time on this service trip. It gave me the chance to experience a new culture as well as work alongside the people of Guatemala. It also allowed me to get to know others from our congregation in a setting outside of Sunday morning. Thank you for your support in our fundraising efforts so we could fulfill one of ANADESA’s dreams and most of all for your prayers.



Rick and Eddie take a break from shovelling to measure the depth.

Interview with Donna and Rick Freeman

What did you enjoy most about the trip?

We enjoyed working with the Guatemalan people on their project and experiencing their culture and observing their working skills.

What was most challenging?

The language barrier was probably most challenging and also, bartering in the marketplace. It was hard to tell if the merchants were short-changing themselves just to make a deal. To us, the prices seemed reasonable but if you looked at an item and maybe weren't interested in it, the merchant would immediately come down in price.

What did you learn about Guatemala?

It is a very poor country in the rural areas but they seem to be up-to-date in the use of technology—cell phones were everywhere.

What did you learn about yourself and/or the team from Floradale?

We worked together very well as a group and also shared the same sense of humour. It was a very easy-going group that worked hard to get the job completed.

What impressed you about the Anadesa organization?

Anadesa has great visions for their future and they are willing to work hard to attain their goals.

Did MCC do a good job with orientation and de-briefing?

Yes, they shared insights about Guatemala and what to expect. The translating was great.

Would you encourage others to do a short-term missions trip?

Yes, it is a good experience to work and live in a different culture and to see how people live compared to our lifestyle.

Rick & Donna Freeman

An amazing experience

By Merri-Lee Metzger

The trip to Guatemala was my first Service/Learning Trip. I went with very few expectations, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Our intergenerational group worked well together, and it was a pleasure getting to know the members of our team.

As we worked alongside the people from Guatemalan community, we listened to stories of incredible hardship and heartbreak. The resilience of our Guatemalan sisters and brothers is amazing, and I was surprised and inspired by their hope and desire to move forward. We heard about mudslides, massacres, and the murders of innocent victims; we also heard about dreams, joy, and the hope for a better future for the next generation.

ANADESA provides an outlet for some of the visions of the people of San Atitlan. It was wonderful to watch the children interacting with a talented teacher in a classroom that has been completed on the worksite. The women laugh and work together in another area as they prepare meals and create their detailed, beaded artwork. Outside, we worked with a construction crew to begin work on a kitchen that will enable the local women to earn income by serving meals. On the mountainside, we helped a group of young men to reforest an area with fruit trees that will feed people from the village.

All of our physical work was enhanced by the stories that were told as we laboured to-

gether with the ANADESA community. Listening, working, eating, laughing, empathizing, and taking part in community efforts—these activities filled our week physically, emotionally and spiritually.

An amazing experience!



Liz Weber helps two children climb onto Michaela's back. Michaela Pries-Klassen is an MCC SALT volunteer from St. Catharines.

Guatemala project a worthwhile experience

By Ron Metzger

I went on a group service trip twenty years ago to Brownsville Texas and really enjoyed the experience, except for the fact that Merri-Lee was not along to

share it with me. Over the years we have often talked about how we would like to do a service trip together, so we were glad when the opportunity was presented by Donna and Rick.

My first impression of Guatemala City was that of some of the other Central American cities that I have seen, only a little rougher. I have never slept in a facility that had a tall wall around the perimeter complete with razor wire and armed guard at the gate, and this was a seminary.

The MCC rep (Nancy) did an orientation session the first day that included some of the history of the country. I found her presentation helped me to understand the reasons for some of the struggles that the people have.

Sunday afternoon we traveled to San Atitlan. We were welcomed by the staff of Anadesa. I am very impressed with this organization. They are taking steps to empower the mothers, young women, and children to bring change to their lives through education. They are initiating a place of commerce to market art, crafts and food products. Anadesa has long-term as well as immediate goals set for the organization that will help the local people now as well as in future generations.

I felt privileged to work with our group alongside these people to help advance their dream. I would encourage anyone interested in learning about other cultures to participate in a short-term, learning, working, mission project.

Service trip involved a gorgeous setting

By Roy Draper

The service trip to Guatemala was more or less as I expected it to be, although I was surprised at how much the concrete-walled houses, dusty roadsides, old battered vehicles, and armed guards and razor-wire-topped compound walls brought back memories of a time many years ago when I lived in another Third World country for a few years.

The first few days on-site were the hardest in terms of physical work—some of us were obviously less fit than others. It's also possible that the altitude may have affected some of us at first in terms of stamina. On the bright side of things, the fact that I needed to take breaks meant that I was able to shoot more pictures.

We particularly enjoyed our interaction with the local people,

even if that was limited due to the language barrier (by the way, for many of them English was a third or fourth language). We practiced using the little Spanish that we had—Liz Weber was the closest thing to a Spanish speaker in our group.

Ed probably knew more of the men on the ANADESA team than the rest of us; I think they had a genuine (and well-deserved) respect for his awe-inspiring capacity for sustained hard labour. Watching the chips fly as “Machete Eddie” attacked stubborn roots and stumps was amazing and also hazardous—glasses were a great help.

The setting was just gorgeous, with three towering volcanoes dominating the skyline in our area, and a lake in the low area between the mountains. The weather was also dry and consistent: as cool as 15 degrees at night, with a high around 25 degrees during the afternoon.

Our major challenges varied among the individuals in our group. Some found that eating “pureed” beans with tortillas (for breakfast!) was something they just could not/would not do. Most felt a profound sense of relief when the van stopped speeding along the highways passing everything in sight, and we could get out alive. (Raul was a capable driver, but obviously had aspirations to join NASCAR.)

My self-imposed challenge was trying to keep up to “Grampa Freeman”—I'll admit it; I could-



Santiago Atitlan is on the shore of a lake, near volcanic mountains

n't. (Never under-estimate a semi-retired Scheidel employee.) However, I did win the tortilla-eating contest easily...

As a group we got along well, and I enjoyed being part of this. The first night in Guatemala we got together at the “Couples’ Cottage” and laughed until our sides ached at anything and everything; I guess we were all tired since we had had to be at Pearson airport very early to make our flights.

The local ANADESA team at Panabaj is an impressive group of men and women. They were patient and friendly with us, but what really impressed me was their hope and plans for the future; the government is not involved with the centre, yet the team members keep planning ways to help their people and the local community, and have the energy and commitment to get it done. Considering the trials they've endured in the form of natural disasters—a lethal mudslide in 2005—and the 36 year civil war that ended in the mid-nineties, they are absolutely amazing!

At our de-briefing on the last day of our stay there, we looked
(continued on page 11)



Eddie with his machete

at a list of our first impressions/expectations of Guatemala: most were fairly accurate. One thing I noticed was that although at first the sight of all the armed guards outside businesses which stood behind concrete walls with razor wire was ominous, by the end we mainly saw the friendly people we were dealing with, rather than the guards.

I think we were able to adjust pretty well to conditions

there. One thing that helped was that Rick and Donna—and others of the group—had been on similar trips before, so there were few surprises. We also were helped a lot by the MCC worker, Nancy Sabas, her driver, Raul, and by the always cheerful presence and hard

work of a young Canadian who is a SALT worker there, Michaela Pries-Klassen. We are grateful for safety and for the learning experiences which we had.

- Roy Draper



The team walked several km. to this greenhouse to buy some fruit trees for planting. There was no funding for this, so team members dug into their pockets to buy the trees.

*Back row: Kaleigh, Roy, Rick, Donna, Liz, Veg, Ross.
Front Row: Eddie, Gil, Merri-Lee, Ron, Juan.*



Being thankful for what you have...

By Nicole Woeschka

What are you most thankful for? Do you take it for granted? Do you think about how you would feel if you could no longer have it? Is it your freedom? Your eyesight, mobility or clean running water?

When I get up in the morning, I turn on the shower, let the water warm up and then hop in, have a quick shower, get out, dry off and brush my teeth—probably letting the water run longer than I should. In our society these are normal things that people probably don't think about—at least I

don't. There are places in the world where they barely have enough clean water to drink, and that needs to be boiled so it doesn't make them sick. They need to walk for miles to get this water—I'm sure they wouldn't wait for a few minutes for the water to warm up before hopping in the shower!

I've never been to another country—I've never seen firsthand how these people live. I am, however, very thankful for all the blessings in my life. I have a wonderful house, reliable vehicle, caring and loving husband, family and friends, and a job that I can

enjoy every day. I can't imagine my life without all I have or the people that I hold in such high regard. I cannot fathom going to bed hungry or living in poverty. May God bless those living in poor conditions—may they feel his loving embrace. I don't take enough time to be thankful for what I have. I should spend more time reflecting on what I've been given and think about how I would feel if I didn't have these things anymore.

By His hand we all are fed, thank you Lord for daily bread. Amen.



On Dec. 14, 2014, the children presented their Christmas musical. They wrote it themselves and had a lot of fun with the performance.



The Christmas Eve service involved singing with Mary and Kate Bauman and angels, Alina Kehl and Taylor Clemmer.



Lena Martin celebrated her 80th birthday on Feb. 7, 2015. The women of the church helped her celebrate with a lunch at the Crossroads on Feb. 10.



Special Birthdays

Phares Bauman celebrated his 80th birthday on Jan. 5, 2015.

Mahlon Martin celebrated his 80th birthday on Jan. 31, 2015.

Congratulations!!



Lorne and Elaine Bowman celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 20, 2015 and invited everyone to an Open House at the church on Feb. 15. Congratulations!

Among the displays in the fellowship were clothes worn by the wedding party.



Save the date!

Floradale Mennonite Church plans to have a debt-free party on **Sunday, April 19.**

We'll have lunch at the church and spend some time together remembering and celebrating God's generosity.