



# Loving Hands for Venezuela

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*Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress ...” James 1:27 (NIV)*

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## About Venezuela Mission

*By Luis Aguilar*

As part of the Global Missions Ministry at Calvary Chapel Sawgrass, the Venezuela Missions has made numerous trips to Venezuela over the past six years. Zabdy and Derwin Westerburger started the first mission with a trip to El Tocuyo to conduct a medical rally in a poor neighborhood of the town. Since then, our commitment as a church has increased every year.

Our vision as a ministry is to reach out to the poor and the needy in Venezuela, transforming their lives through the love of God. We want to work with, assist, and encourage the local churches and ministries, favoring the projects, activities, or works that will have the highest Christian impact on the children or the community

Our work is guided under the spiritual umbrella of Calvary Chapel Sawgrass, and the church vision, “Reaching Our World for Jesus Christ.”

Our objectives for the coming years are:

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## God Faithfulness

*By Carlos Barreto*

During the 2007 Venezuela Mission Trip, I was able to see the faithfulness of God with those He has called to serve Him in a special way. Throughout the trip a thought was constantly on my mind, “God is faithful.” There is not a doubt in my mind that the Niños de La Luz and ABANSA ministries are a perfect example of God’s faithfulness.

I saw in Niños de La Luz how God is using those foster parents to bless the children rescued off the streets. It is by God’s providence that they can provide those children with a home, clothing, food, medicines, education, and most important, the love and patience required to raise nine children that have come from different backgrounds and problems. Niños de La Luz’s ranch is a beautiful place where close to thirty kids are being raised by three couples with the help of volunteers (aunts, uncles, and grandparents), providing them with a big family.

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## Venezuela Mission Trip 2007

By Sarah Fackler

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*“... Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”*  
 1 Cor. 15:58 (NIV)

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We left from Fort Lauderdale on Friday, July 13, and arrived in Maiquetia and traveled 3 hours by bus to Caracas. When we arrived at Niños de la Luz Ranch we had a very warm reception. For some of the kids it was their first experience with Missionaries.

Usually the children at Niños de la Luz eat in their respective homes (about 6-8 kids in each home), and for future meals we were to divide up and join them, but that night there was a special welcome dinner.

The next day was all about work. Barbara and company refurbished an old dresser while Armelys and company cleaned the front of the building. Pulling weeds down the hill to the chicks and fruit trees was a task for all of the women and young girls of the team. The bags filled with weeds were carried up a slope to the front of the house by hand or on the head. When the energy was about spent there were still plenty of leaves to rake!

The men's task took all day. They had to pull down a fence at the entrance to the ranch. This was done in preparation so that in the future, nice flowers and bushes could be planted, creating a good first impression to the ranch.

During this time, I was busy cutting the hair of all who wanted or needed. Afterwards, I joined in the weed pulling and raking.

On Sunday, the Mission Team led Worship and Bible Teaching. Armelys led in traditional Venezuelan songs that she had replaced with Christian words. I sang a few songs in Spanish and Carlos opened with a scripture reading. Then Luis had some of the boys read scripture passages and he

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Barbara and Luis Aguilar with Richard, Jose Gregorio, and Luis Enrique at Niños de la Luz Ranch Ministry in Caracas.

### *About Venezuela Mission* from page 1

- To secure funds through donations, offerings, fundraisers, etc. for the Venezuela Missions.
- To establish long term, supporting relationships with local churches and ministries that work with children and the community.
- To financially support local ministries for projects, activities, or works that will have the highest impact on the children and the community.
- To support local ministries through prayer and encouragement.
- Short term mission trips to work hand in hand with locals in projects and activities to benefit the children and the community.



Cleaning a sick person that is confined to his mood house. Siervos de Valor Ministry in El Tocuyo.



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taught a message on Hope.

After the service, Christian Hip-Hop was played and the kids danced. The evening before we had "movie night." The younger kids watched a movie in one of the homes and the older children watched the movie "End of the Spear." Popcorn we brought was popped in a microwave that previously didn't work (Thank you Jesus!).

The two and a half days we spent there were very draining. The majority of the group was in tents within their family units. I was the lucky one and got a BED!

Yet through it all there was time to socialize and enjoy the children one on one. The last night everyone got together and shared their thoughts.

The road trip to Barquisimeto was over eight hours, but we made the best of it. We traveled in "luxury," stopping to eat, change seats in the bus, and sing. The driver said he enjoyed it, but we had our doubts.

Finally, we arrived at the ABANSA foster house and got to know the children. The children loved the flute and were constantly asking for lessons or to borrow it. Grace, a missionary already in the home from the States, was instrumental in our welcome and helped us get to know the children.

One of the highlights of our time in the home, besides the children and the work, was the Festival of the New Moon from the Jewish tradition Rosh Hodesh. Our hosts took the time to explain this Old Testament Feast of Thanksgiving. It was a very meaningful experience.

The next day the youth and I were hard at "work" playing with the kids, helping with homework, singing praise songs, and cleaning up after meals while the women were extremely helpful and hard at work in the kitchen, cooking for a family of 14. The men fixed up things around the house and added some shelving.

We arrived at our next destination on Thursday, July 19. That night we helped the youth of the church organize materials brought from the States into bags to distribute to the poor children we were going to visit Saturday.

In the morning we all met in the hall of the hotel for devotionals. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner were

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*"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

*Matt. 6:33 (NIV)*

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usually at the same place.

Friday was spent visiting people and sites for outreach projects, buying food to distribute to the poor, and talking and praying.

On Saturday we went with Siervos de Valor Ministry from Las Buenas Nuevas Church (youth ministry) to visit the poor and sick in the mountains. The team tended to medical needs and prayed with the poor and sick every Saturday. After a short rest, which felt like eternity to me, we were back to the ministry.

That night we visited the Nueva Vida Church. We saw firsthand how God is building up disciples in the faith spurring them into action by showing Christ's love. As they're growing they're discovering their spiritual gifts so that the church may be built.

We also participated in the Street Evangelistic Activity organized by Las Buenas Nuevas Church. There was music, dancing, special music by the Americans, and music by the Church Worship team.

The Youth in the Churches of El Tocuyo really love the Lord. They are being taught the freedom and joy in self-sacrificial love. In short, I believe they are being taught true Christianity and for that I believe they should be supported. They use their time and resources in a way that brings Glory to God, just as we all should, every minute of every day.

I came back to the States on Monday July 23<sup>rd</sup> after a thirteen hour car trip to the Caracas Airport.



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Now consider the case of ABANSA, where nine children are being raised by a father whose only work is to go out every day to find sponsors and donations to support the kids. Under this condition it would be expected that they would be living in a very humble house with various needs and lacking the most basic necessities. But that is not the case. They have a strong faith and trust in our Lord and they asked our Heavenly Father to provide them with more than the basic needs and they have truly been blessed.

The Lord tells us in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

And in Matthew 6:26, "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

God's faithfulness is clearly evident in ABANSA. God has provided this family with a nice home complete with all the modern facilities, food is never lacking, the children have good clothing, and they all attend school, some even attend private schools! All these things are accomplished without an income or fixed salary. Each day is lived with the certainty that God will supply all that is needed. This dependence and trust in the Lord is something that we should learn and put into practice in all aspects of our life.

We at Calvary Chapel Sawgrass are part of God's work at those ministries; our offerings have become a testimony of God's faithfulness and unlimited provision for his beloved children.



*Having breakfast at the ABANSA Foster House in Barquisimeto.*



*Distributing school supplies in poor neighborhoods in El Tocuyo*

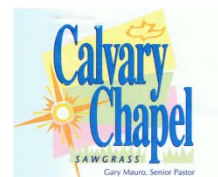
## How to Support or Get Involved

Praying for wisdom for the leaders of this mission, for the missionaries and the activities to be accomplished; making regular or special monetary donations (make your check payable to Calvary Chapel Sawgrass and write in the memo *Venezuela Mission Fund*); traveling with the mission team or attending our meetings; volunteering in the Missions Café at Calvary Chapel Sawgrass or preparing this newsletter; and donating clothes, medicines, school supplies, sports goods, etc.

## A Word About Donations

In Malachi 3:8-10, God distinguishes between **tithes**, giving 10% of our income to support the work of the local church, and **offerings**, contributions above and beyond the tithe designated for special projects, missions and ministries. Calvary Chapel Sawgrass directs over 20% of its congregational contributions to local and global missions and giving to the poor.

As followers of Jesus Christ and members of Calvary Chapel Sawgrass, we fully support the biblical principle of tithing to your local church first, and then designating or giving additional offerings as the Lord directs to support special projects, missions and outreach ministries.



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