



# The Red Door

**January 2014**

## **A Cold Night In Juarez**

Hello to all my friends at Emanuel LC. I'm writing to you today from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. It's a cool 31 degrees Fahrenheit outside and I'm going to estimate it is about a "comfortable" 45° in my bunk bed!

I arrived late at night on Thursday, January 2 to our Proyecto Abrigo compound with a group of friends from Greenland Hills UMC and our own Al Kline from Emanuel LC. We were very warmly and friendly received by Pastor José Luis Portillo and others. In the middle of a cold night we were shown to our dorm where we met another group of volunteers who were just finishing their work at Juarez and getting ready to leave this morning (today, Friday). In fact they just left about an hour ago (5 am) to beat the long line at the border crossing. If you are wondering why I'm awake at this ungodly hour, well that's just one of the joys of sharing a dorm room with a bunch of other people...

Anyway, last night, after meeting each other, Pastor Portillo explained briefly how Proyecto Abrigo started more than two decades ago. With emotion and humbleness in his voice he explained about the thousands of families that have been helped over the years by Proyecto Abrigo. Their ministry is about building houses, but I've realized that it's more than "just" that. Each concrete and cinder block ONE ROOM house (instead of card board walls, dirt floor and a thatch roof) not only gets to provide a safer shelter for a family, it also has prevented the death of who knows how many children out of exposure. The help provided here by countless volunteers over the years has gone a long way in blessings for so many that have so little. In a way, that becomes a blessing for those that come here to volunteer their time and talent. You can do nothing but to realize that you become God's instrument. You remember, right? God's work, our hands.

So, as I lay on my bed complaining how cold it is in my reasonably protected dorm room with a space heater that is barely enough to keep the water lines from freezing, I'm thinking of the thousands of families who are still sleeping on a mattress (the lucky ones) on the dirt floor with no electricity, gas or running water. In the mean time, I am "blessed" with three layers of clothing, a suitcase full of other luxuries brought from home, and even a cell phone that allows me to share with you my experience. That realization--of how much you got--becomes all too evident when you get to see and experience firsthand situations like the one many people in Juarez have.

While I'm trying to make sense of a totally senseless situation, I also happen to remember that we are still in the Christmas season (with Epiphany coming up) and realize that Jesus was born in much the same situation that many people here in Juarez live every day. In the great scheme of things, as it turns out, just by mere common experience, perhaps God is a little closer to these families than to me. In this very cold night, the thought that God has come for those who have less, much less, becomes a comfort since I'm hoping God will bring a little more warmth to their lives. God bless each one of us and may God bless all the people in Juarez. Amen.

Please check out Proyecto Abrigo at [proyectoabrigo.org](http://proyectoabrigo.org).

*The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and good news refreshes the body. Proverbs 15:30*

# Emanuel Community Center Treasurer's Report

December, 2013

## INCOME-EXPENSE STATEMENT

Beginning Balance	\$12,777.16
Income	\$64.00
Expense	\$3,983.26
Ending Balance	\$8,857.90

### Notes

In-kind donations were up this month as expected due to the 250 Angel Tree gifts, and donations of socks and flashlights for the non-kitchen clients. A few unexpected in-kind donations were made as well. There were hair care supplies and practice heads for the Family Hair Care class, a food drive by Greenland Hills resulting in 165 cans of meat, beans, and peanut butter, and a last minute donation from the Stewpot of 60 Christmas boxes for the non-kitchen clients.

There were no unusual expenses incurred for the month of December.

## INCOME/EXPENSE THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2013

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>In-Kind</u>
Food Pantry	\$ 21,566	\$24,563	\$ 18,463
Creations of the Heart	-	500	-
ESL	-	100	-
Unidos Podemos	1,440	1,320	-
Operating Expenses	6,114	10,349	-
Angel Tree Program	-	-	10,000
Summer Reading Program	2,000	2,599	728
Back to School Carnival	3,760	4,064	2,617
Totals	\$ 34,879	\$43,495	\$ 31,808

## Sunday School News

Happy New Year! I hope that you had a wonderful Christmas! In addition to celebrating the birth of Jesus, it is always a special time for families to be together. I hope that you have had time to relax and rest. I am including a list of important Sunday School dates, in order for families to plan ahead. Please note that class dates are subject to change, as special occasions occur. Confirmation and Youth Liturgy dates are to be determined. Sunday School classes will begin again on January 5<sup>th</sup>. The class times are 11:20 a.m.-12:05 p.m.

*In Peace, Barb Brault-Jordan*

## Important Sunday School Dates

January 5, 2014 – Classes resume

January 17-19 - Confirmation “Retreat”

January 26 - NO CLASS (annual Congregational meeting)

March 9 & March 16 – NO CLASS (Spring Break)

April 11-12 – Confirmation “Spring Lock-in” **(not yet confirmed, date is still tentative)**

April 20 – NO CLASS (Easter)

May 11 – FIRST COMMUNION (final day of pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes)

CONFIRMATION – To Be Determined

YOUTH LITURGY – To Be Determined

## **Youth Group Report**

On December 13 and 14 the youth group assisted the Annual Spiritual Youth Retreat. This time the retreat was planned by the youth council of name CJ Double L (Lutheran Latino Youth Council), created by the youth of five Latino churches. The Youth Group Leader, Julia, is in charge of this council and the youth group members Sonia and Alma represent our church as members of the council.

The day of the Posada, the Youth Group and the Confirmation Group participated on the Pastorela. In total more than 20 youth helped out.

The Youth Group wants to give thanks to all those people that supported them this past year. We hope that 2014 would be a year full of blessings to everyone.

Happy New Year!!

## **Food For Thought** by Ted S. Brown

I hope everyone out there had a Merry Christmas and will have a safe and Happy New Year! This is the time of year to spend with family and friends to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and to give thanks. As we gather together and give thanks for all we have, we need to also say a prayer for those who are less fortunate than ourselves. The ECC is dedicated to helping those in our community and surrounding areas fight hunger and provide services vital to living a healthy life. This is no easy task but with your help we can make a difference.

We started out the holiday season with Thanksgiving and, thanks to our partnership with Crossroads Community Services (CCS), we were able to give each family in our kitchen distribution a 14 pound turkey --- 220 turkeys! This was a great feat given the projections for a shortage of turkeys this year. We also received a large donation of canned protein items from our mission partner, Greenland Hills United Methodist Church (GHUMC). These items went to help our homeless clients receive meal-ready proteins. These are the items that are the hardest to acquire because the North Texas Food Back (NTFB) and CCS do not carry large quantities of these products (tuna fish, Vienna sausages, canned chicken, etc.). We also received several hundred pounds of food from Preston Meadows Lutheran Church (PMLC). These items were given to help supplement the holiday meals we distributed to our kitchen clients.

This year December has five Tuesdays and New Year's Eve falls on the last Tuesday of the year. We serve our kitchen clients on the first four Tuesdays of the month and the homeless every Tuesday. When we have a fifth Tuesday we try to serve our homeless clients a special meal, so this month with our wonderful cast of volunteers, we are planning to serve a turkey dinner with donated items and product from our pantry inventory. I am going to deep fry a couple of turkeys so they can have the full experience.

The ECC is proud of the strides we have made to better serve our community in 2013. We started the new food pantry distribution system in August of 2012. This change created a new way to distribute food to our clients. We are now giving out enough food for each family member to have three meals a day for seven days each month. In our first year we doubled the weight of food we distributed. We went from 82,000 pounds distributed before our partnership with CCS to 164,000 pounds with CCS, becoming their largest distribution hub. There have been other benefits as well; there is now a waiting room for the clients that allows them to get out of the extreme weather in Dallas. Each client is checked-in in the order they arrive and served accordingly. These small things have created happier and hopefully healthier clients.

Clients have also benefited, as they wait for food distribution, from the additional services we are now able to provide. Young Women (YM) volunteers are coming and helping screen clients for local and government programs they are eligible to receive. We have also had a church member sign up individuals and families for Medicaid, WIC and CHIP. These are addition benefits we have been able to provide with the help from community outreach programs.

The ECC is privileged that so many people and organizations are pitching in to help provide services to our community. These services are vital to help individuals and families lead happy, healthy lives. We have a website to help spread the word for all that we do as an organization. The address is <http://www.emanuedallas.org/ecc/index.html> and I am pleased to share that it includes a new page set up for easy, online giving via PayPal. The amazing thing is that a donation of \$5 will feed an individual for seven days. This is less than a lot of people will spend on a lunch. Please donate if you can. Even a small amount can make a difference in someone's life.

These great changes in our organization would not be possible without the amazing volunteers we have to help us serve each week. Most of our volunteers are from churches in the Dallas area. We have volunteers from

Emmanuel Lutheran, GHUMC, PMLC and many other churches who share our mission values. On Christmas Eve, we were blessed with 25 youth volunteers and their parents from GHUMC. Another trend that has started involves our kitchen clients coming in early to help us set up for distribution.

Thanks to all who have donated time and money to our continuing effort. We appreciate all that you do to help the ECC serve our clients and put them on the road to healthier and happier lives! We look forward to seeing you in 2014!

Well that is enough to chew on for now. Thanks for your time and God bless you all.



## January 2014 Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	4
5 English service – 10  Spanish service – 12:15	6	7 Food Pantry – 8 a.m.	8	9	10 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	11
12 English service – 10  Spanish service – 12:15	13	14 Food Pantry – 8 a.m.	15	16	17 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.  Confirmation Retreat	18 Confirmation Retreat
19 Confirmation Retreat  English service – 10  Spanish service – 12:15	20  Martin Luther King Jr. Day	21 Food Pantry – 8 a.m.	22	23	24 Creations of the Heart 9 a.m.	25
26 Emanuel Annual Meeting 10 a.m.	27	28 Food Pantry – 8 a.m.	29	30	31	



**Birthdays for the Month of January:**

2 Mark Herbener	14 Linda Moody
6 Melanie Cottier	Berenice Morales
8 Gaynelle Schulze	15 Xavier Trevino
9 Blanca Illades	20 Christopher Bautista
12 Mae Jean Zelle	23 Donna Miller
Jose A. Cruz	24 Julia McLouth
13 Jerome L'Heureux	Julia Hernandez



As I take time to reflect on this very special Christmas season, my heart is filled with love and gratitude - I especially am blessed with a loving family, good health and the promise of fulfilling love with my fiancé Jim. He has provided much needed support with the choir and music program. The choir has made strides to work together cooperatively, to blend and project its voice to listening ears. Buzz Taylor has joined the choir this year and

provides additional strength to the males in the choir. We are very pleased that Linda Soto has shared her lovely solo voice with the choir and as I write this, will be singing this Christmas Eve. Eli Cerda also will share her talent with the flute for Christmas pre-service music. She has increased her competence in the flute, make the next level in her band at school and will be adding her expertise with future choir songs. Once again the Scheibs will share their musicality this Christmas Eve with traditional carols on the horn and cello. I am certainly grateful for all the talent we have at Emanuel! (Now if I could only get Pastor Julio to join our choir!) Blessings and Peace in the New Year.

*Donna*



## Come Hungry to Sunday Morning Worship

Seven-year-old Joel was jumping out of his skin as he followed his dad up the ramp to what was his very first flight in a jumbo jet. He was the local spelling bee champion and was flying to the regional championship. As they boarded the plane, Joel's dad – a veteran of hundreds of thousands of flight miles around the U.S. and internationally – asked Joel “what are you really hoping you'll be able to do while we're flying?” Joel quickly blurted out his most sincere wish, “I want to see the pilot; I want to see the one who runs the show here.” Young Joel has high expectations of his journey; he's eager to go all the way to the top of the command structure, straight to the person in charge. His father, like most veteran travelers, expects nothing more than a predictable – that is uneventful – experience.

When you think about it, the similarities between a typical traveler on an airplane – such as Joel's dad – and a typical worshipper on Sunday morning are striking. Both are on a journey – the traveler to an important appointment; the worshipper to a stronger faith base. Most travelers expect nothing more than a predictable – that is uneventful – experience. They plan to leave the plane the same way they entered, and they'll be happy to return the next time they're needed in a distant city. And most worshippers expect the same; nothing more than a predictable – that is uneventful – experience. They plan to leave the church the same way they entered; and they'll be happy to return next Sunday to participate in another worship service.

It strikes me, though, that at Emanuel we tend to come to worship with Joel's childlike enthusiasm, expecting a faith-enriching experience; hoping to get a glimpse of “the one who runs the show here.” We join our voices in song and prayer; we receive the Word as one, we confess our sins as one, we celebrate the sacraments as one and we willingly connect our lives one to another – all to reconnect our own life with the spirit of God. We stand before God with a heart willing to let Him make our face reflect His glory; to dry the tears of a lonely life, to wipe away the perspiration of anger and frustration to soften the furrowed brow of worry and fear. Paul wrote about this change reflected in our face in his second letter to the Corinthians. “*Our faces then,*” he said, “*are not covered. We all show the Lord's glory, and we are being changed to be like Him. This change in us brings ever greater glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*”

That spirit reaches out to each of us in worship – reaches out and invites us to be more compassionate and less self-interested; reaches out and binds us to one another as brothers and sisters in His love. It reaches out to offer us a fresh vision of God's reality in Christ Jesus and return us to a passionate personal relationship with Him – freed of sin, loved deeply and accepted freely by Him. And it reaches out to bring about moments of transcendence – moments that pull us out of ourselves, deepen our understanding of life and make us feel richer, stronger and truer to what God has created us to be.

Catch the spirit. Come hungry for change in your life next time you step through our red door on a Sunday morning. Come expecting to encounter “the one who runs the show here.”

*Jim Hyland*



# Announcements



**Thanks!** As last week, we give thanks to Pastor Charles Cox and organist Margaret Gumma for leading us these two last Sundays in worship.

**Mission Trip** – Pastor Julio is returning today, Sunday, January 5, 2014, from Juarez, Mexico where he traveled to be part of the Proyecto Abrigo along with Al Kline and other members of the Greenland Hills UMC.

**The 2014 flower chart** is already posted on the bulletin board in Ericson Hall. We invite you to take a look at it and choose your favorite dates (birthdays, anniversaries, memorials, etc.) to bring a floral arrangement for our altar.