

## 2015 Major Accomplishments

- Met our fund raising goal to replace our aging truck with the combination of a GoFundMe campaign (\$4,155.72), personal donations (\$6,194.60), church donations (\$5,354.45) and a generous matching gift challenge (\$5,000).
- Sent our first medical delegation to work in the rural villages to provide basic health care and education to the people of Berlín. (See inside for more details)
- Partnered with a small NGO ([rootedinhope.org](http://rootedinhope.org)), on a pilot project to install and test an inexpensive, low-maintenance, high-quality drip irrigation system in two communities.
- Expanded our educational support with a program to provide college scholarships to former high school scholarship recipients who place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in their graduating class section.
- Celebrated with the Pastoral Team and community members as the very long-awaited beatification of Monsignor Romero finally became reality.

## Words from the Moderators

### Sue Burns

#### *Outgoing Moderator*

I have been a member of Compañeros (the coordinating body for Our Sister Parish (OSP) activities in Iowa) since my first trip to Berlín, Usulután, El Salvador in 2001. In that time, I have seen how the OSP model has had a positive influence on the lives of the people of our sister communities in Berlín.

The image that sticks with me most is how the community of San Francisco transformed in that time. In 2001, they were a community with little hope. They met with us and talked about some of the dreams they had for their children and their future. But they talked about it the way people talk when they have no real hope of achieving them.

They came together as a community and decided on a goal. As a community, they applied for grant money, lobbied the Berlín mayor's office, asked for help from their partner church in Iowa.

A mere four years later, they were a community transformed. I was there when they officially dedicated the project under the cameras of national newspapers, the words of the Bishop and governmental representatives and the shining eyes of the community. They realized a dream for their children and future that, four years previously, they did not believe possible. They did it. And they now have the knowledge and confidence to know that they can continue to effect change for the better in their community.

That is what Our Sister Parish is all about.

### Sharon McCullough

#### *Incoming Moderator*

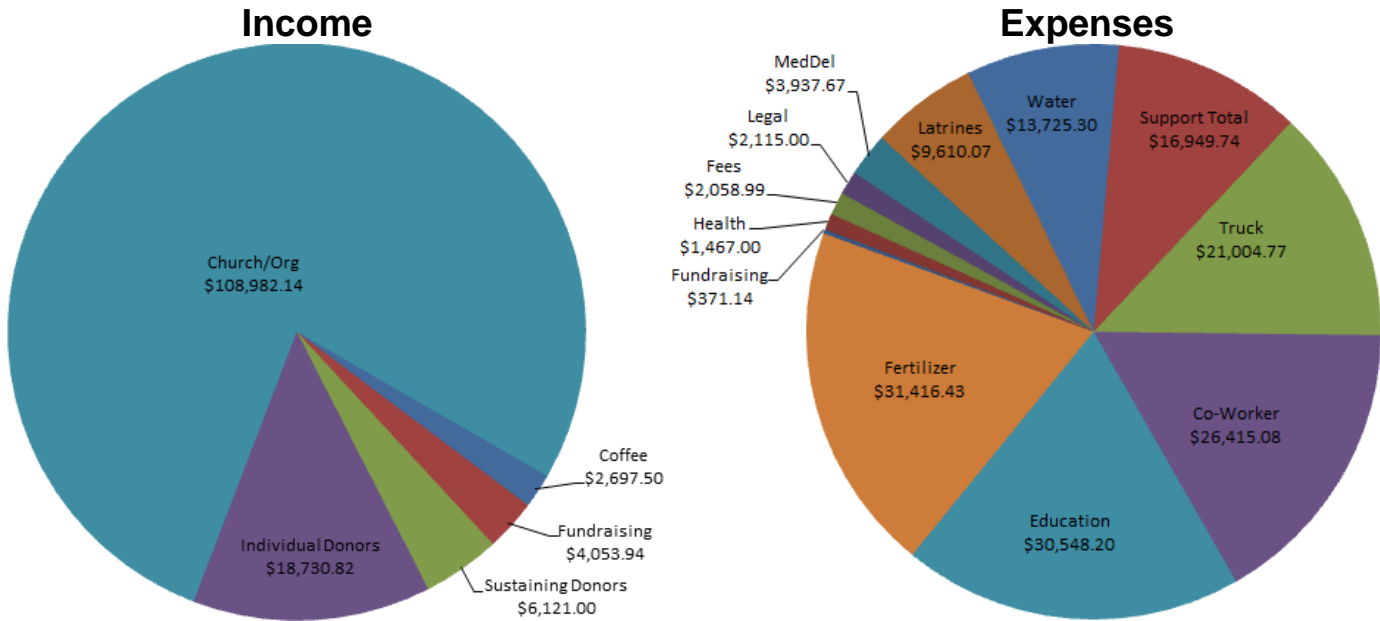
As we go into 2016 Our Sister Parish will be working towards finding congregations within and without the Presbytery of Des Moines who are willing to start and continue a partnership with communities around the Berlín area in need of assistance. We will also be reviewing our fund raising and publicity practices and explore new opportunities to increase support for OSP. Please go to [www.oursisterparish.org](http://www.oursisterparish.org) and view the information on future delegations who will be traveling to El Salvador this year and consider coming along with us. You will never regret it.

## OUR SISTER PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Our Sister Parish mission is a faith based ecumenical effort designed to bring hope and social development to the poor of the pueblo of Berlín, Usulután, El Salvador, particularly those who live in the cantons of Berlín. Our goal is to raise awareness and embrace solidarity by developing committed relationships within churches in the US and with our brothers and sisters in El Salvador. In the relationships that develop between US churches and the poor of the cantons, faith will grow and the love of God will be profoundly experienced for all involved.

# Our Sister Parish – 2015 Finances

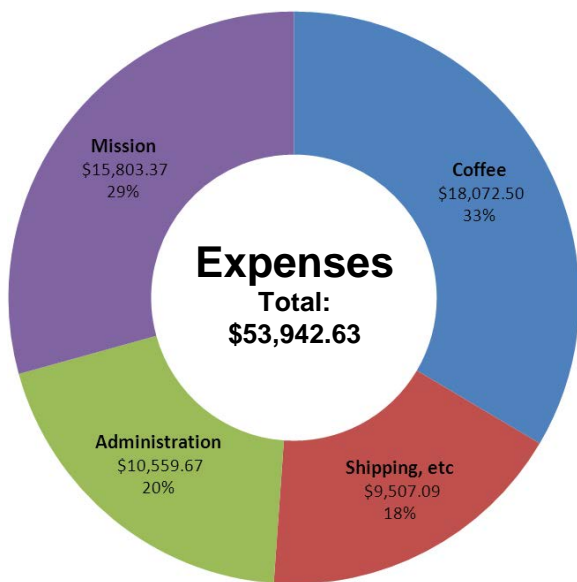
Financial reports are presented monthly to Compañeros and its oversight committee, Compassion, Peace & Justice.



**Notes:**

- Fundraising income comes from craft sales as well as an annual Fiesta FunRaiser event and solicitation mailing.
- In addition to Compañeros-paid co-worker expenses, the Presbytery of Des Moines pays \$15,214.56 for her pension and insurance as an ordained and installed pastor.
- Legal fees were significant this year. Some were from re-registering the Don Justo Coffee with Dignity® logo (every 10 years) and the rest were related to transferring ownership of the Pastoral House from people who are no longer part of the Pastoral Team (a singular event).
- Truck expenses are for purchase of truck.
- Fee expenses include wire fees to move money between the accounts here and in Berlín, banking fees, and PayPal/credit card fees.

## Don Justo – Coffee With Dignity®



**Total Pounds Sold in 2015:** 4848 roasted + 60 green

**Income:**

	5 pound	1 pound	Samples	Total
Regular inventory	\$1,087.50	\$2,013.75		\$3,101.25
Regular sold	\$8,507.00	\$32,830.00		\$41,337.00
Decaf inventory	\$962.50	\$1,457.50		\$2,420.00
Decaf sold	\$3,363.00	\$4,380.00		\$7,743.00
Green inventory	\$200.00			\$200.00
Green sold	\$174.00			\$174.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,206.50</b>	<b>\$38,667.50</b>	<b>\$1,423.00</b>	<b>\$51,874.00</b>

**Notes:**

- Inventory income is valued at cost. Sold value of inventory would add \$6,948.75 to the income total.
- Coffee expenses include growing, picking, roasting, bagging in El Salvador.
- Administration expenses include shipping, boxes, transit, printing, supplies, coordinator, Compañeros.
- Mission expenses are profits returned to Berlín for health, education, water, etc projects.

Coffee and Mission money together (62.7%) support the local people of El Salvador and mission projects of OSP.

# Our Sister Parish 2015 Stories

2015 was a year filled with accomplishments for Our Sister Parish. With the continued generosity of churches from Central Iowa and beyond, as well as the irreplaceable leadership of the Pastoral Team of Berlín, we changed many lives—both Salvadoran and American—this past year. Won't you join us in 2016?

## FIRST COMPANEROS MEDICAL DELEGATION

The medical delegation worked in rural villages to provide basic health care and education to the people of Berlín. Serving were 6 doctors, a nurse, a pharmacist, 2 translators and 3 support staff from the U.S., as well as a local Berlín doctor and nurse who joined us each day. The delegation first visited a dirt floor community to understand the everyday hardships which create severe health concerns, then held 4 clinic days in 4 different villages, ultimately serving over 700 people.

- Health concerns treated: parasites, diarrhea, rashes, skin fungus, bronchitis, flu, stomach issues, headaches, UTIs. One woman woke up deaf in one ear 6 months prior was given a gift of hearing when our doctor pulled a cockroach carcass out of her ear!
- Larger health concerns with follow-up care arranged by the local doctor/nurse: kidney disease, high blood pressure, potential diabetes, a split patella.
- Basic self-care medicines given to each family: acetaminophen, vitamins, antacids, etc.

Local partners and community leaders were instrumental in making each day run smoothly by having organized lists of priority/chronic and general patients, and help creating the physical clinic spaces. They, along with the organization and work of the Berlín Pastoral Team and Co-Worker were critical to the success of the delegation.

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

We continued to organize and empower 25 socioeconomically impoverished communities of Berlín. Without this organization, communities can't self-determine their most important needs, communicate/collaborate with the Pastoral Team and other organizations to implement projects, or to properly maintain and monitor projects the community has received. The Pastoral Team accompanies communities as they learn to legally organize themselves, keep records, speak publically articulately about their needs, and defend their rights.

## WATER

We purchased water tanks for 87 families to help them collect and/or store safer drinking water. In the rural areas of Berlín, it is not uncommon for the water to run once a week, once every two weeks, or even once every month. When families have a water tank, they are able to store safer, cleaner water for longer periods of time. This means that they have to spend less time walking to far away, and often contaminated rivers or springs to provide water for their families. Water tanks make lives much easier—and safer—for families living in poverty.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

We provided scholarships to over 130 middle and high school students last year. Obtaining a high school degree gives most of these students more education than anyone in their family has received before. Having a high school diploma not only improves their chances of escaping poverty, but it also prepares them to serve as leaders in their communities.

## RELATIONSHIPS

We worked with 14 different delegations to educate them about the history of El Salvador, to help them build relationships of mutual solidarity and liberation with the people of Berlín, and to challenge assumptions about class, power, and privilege. Without the support and advocacy of people in the United States, Salvadorans will always be crushed by climate, political, and socioeconomic, and other systematic injustices. Their survival depends on our conversion: to awaken our individual and collective consciousness and allow us to see our Salvadoran brothers and sisters as neighbors and to solidarize and struggle with them in their efforts to build a society that benefits everyone, and not simply the wealthiest and most powerful amongst us. It is how the conversation and understanding begins.

## FERTILIZER

With Don Justo Coffee proceeds, we delivered fertilizer to 11 different Berlín communities without partner relationships, helping 370 families to feed themselves. Berlín soil has been horribly depleted from years of overuse, making it impossible to grow the crops of corn and beans that families need to feed themselves without these essential, and expensive, fertilizers. Often, families are forced to borrow money at high interest rates to pay for them; or worse, risk harvesting little to nothing without fertilizer. Fertilizer helps families to help themselves, providing already hardworking people with the tools they need to successfully feed their families.

# Our Sister Parish 2015: Who We Are

## The Pastoral Team of Berlín

The Pastoral Team has served the people of Berlín for more than 25 years. They organize/educate community leaders, facilitate project requests, financially manage projects, fulfill basic requests for health, education, food, and clothing that come to them every day, and provide pastoral care to the people of Berlín.

## The Mission Co-Worker – liaison between Berlín and Iowa

She helps churches plan and lead delegations; processes, translates, and communicates requests for projects; and generally acts as the central communicator for the mission. She also lives and works alongside the Pastoral Team to help encourage Salvadoran communities and community leaders to work for a better future for themselves and their children.

The current mission co-worker is the Rev. Katherine Pater. She has been fulfilling her call to Our Sister Parish since January 2013. She is a graduate of both the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she earned a Comprehensive Honors degree in Political Science and Religious Studies, and Harvard Divinity School, where she earned her Master of Divinity degree.



## Compañeros – the coordinating body for the Presbytery of Des Moines' El Salvador mission

Compañeros manages the Iowa side of the mission. They educate people in the Presbytery of Des Moines and others about the work of the mission, assist churches in organizing delegations, promote mission projects, fundraise, and help the churches of Iowa to work together to improve the lives of people in Berlín.

### Church Representatives:

- Ankeny Presbyterian: Marcia McAdoo, Mark McAdoo
- Clive Heartland Presbyterian: Kathy Bassett
- Dallas Center First Presbyterian: Nancy Lister-Settle, Jim Howard, Maria Howard, Ann Beavers
- Des Moines Central Presbyterian: Mike Bassett
- Des Moines Intentional Eucharistic Community (DMIEC): Steve Gude, Kevin Armstrong
- Des Moines Westminster: Alisha Lundberg
- Indianola Trinity United: Sharon McCullough, Margaret Blair, Betty Dyer, Maurice Dyer
- Newton First Presbyterian: Linda Andersen
- South Central Partnership: Linda O'Connell
- Southwest Partnership: Gary Badgett
- West Des Moines Covenant: Deb Kellogg

### Officers:

- At Large: Alisha Lundberg
- Mission Co-worker: Katherine Pater
- Moderator: Sharon McCullough
- Secretary: Marcia McAdoo
- Treasurer: Sue Burns
- Vice Moderator: Mike Bassett

### Don Justo Coffee Coordinators:

- Betty Dyer
- Maurice Dyer

## Sister Partnerships – impoverished rural communities around Berlín partner with Iowa congregations

The following is a current listing of these church/community partnerships:

- Ankeny, Ankeny Presbyterian Church with Canton El Corozal
- Clive, Heartland Presbyterian Church with Caseríos Centro and Cerna, Canton El Tablón
- Dallas Center, First Presbyterian Church with Canton Virginia
- Des Moines, Central Presbyterian Church with the Pastoral House
- Des Moines, Westminster Presbyterian Church with canton San Francisco
- Indianola, Trinity United Presbyterian Church with Caseríos Casa de Zinc and Casa de Zacate
- Newton, First Presbyterian Church with Caserío Muñozes, Canton El Tablón
- Presbytery of Des Moines, Southwest Regional Partnership with Caserío Alejandria
- Presbytery of Long Island with Cantón Santa Cruz
- West Des Moines, Covenant Presbyterian Church with Canton San Isidro

## HOW YOU, TOO, CAN BE AN AWESOME OSP SUPPORTER

**Donate:** Send donations to the Presbytery of Des Moines: 2400 86<sup>th</sup> St, Ste 20, Urbandale IA 50322 for "Our Sister Parish." Unless otherwise designated, donations will go to the General fund. To specify a designation, include that information with your donation.

**Get involved:** Compañeros meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm. Contact the Presbytery of Des Moines office (515-276-4991) to confirm location.

**Buy/serve Don Justo Coffee with Dignity<sup>®</sup> coffee:** Call or stop by the Presbytery of Des Moines office.

**Learn More:** Visit and like the OSP page on Facebook, visit Katherine's blog ([womanbetweenworlds.wordpress.com](http://womanbetweenworlds.wordpress.com)), and follow her on Twitter (@katherinepater).

**Visit Berlín:** Come with us on a delegation--or schedule a delegation from your whole church! All are welcome. Visit the Our Sister Parish website ([oursisterparish.org](http://oursisterparish.org)) and click on the "Delegations" tab.

**Become a Sustaining Donor:** Contact the Presbytery of Des Moines office (515-276-4991) to set up automatic, recurring donations