

These are most interesting times. Most of us have never experienced this sort of pandemic with its toll on our health care staff, our institutions, and in shutdown, our livelihood. It has, for many, been a dark time. As Christians, we do know that in all times, but especially dark times, we turn to Him who is the light of the world. The one who is a lamp for our feet, and a light for our path.

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”” John 8:12 ESV

As the month of May progresses, here in Ontario the spring flowers have bloomed (though with the snow most recently one would be excused to think winter had returned). The warmth of the sun and increasing daylight is a welcome sign that summer is approaching. Will you again share the light and warmth as you have done this past year, and assist those in need across the globe?

CLAUS LENK RETIRES

This past year as you are aware, the first Executive Director of ARDFC, Claus Lenk retired. Claus is a founding member of the Anglican Relief and Development Fund of Canada, which has raised funds for more than a dozen projects, affecting about 90,000 individuals, and totalling more than \$600,000 CDN.



Claus' work with the ARDFC has taken him across Canada and the globe, working with the Anglican Church in four continents, helping restore health, hope and dignity in developing countries.

Of note, Claus recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of the company he founded in Toronto. As a special celebration, he offered the opportunity to his employees to travel to a third world country to make a difference and assist in building a house with Habitat for Humanity (Global). They would raise the funds, do the work, and reap the benefits of helping others who would not know them. Early this past February, Claus, his wife Heather, son Jeremy and eight others ventured down to El Salvador. Led by a very capable guide, Johanna, he and the team assisted in building a two-bedroom, concrete walled house doing the heavy grunt work, (carrying soil and concrete blocks, tying rebar for supports, mixing concrete and applying it), all in the heat of Central America. And all for a very appreciative young family of three, Carlos, his wife Brenda and their son Charlie.

This year is also the 50th anniversary of Claus' wedding to Heather. Their plans to celebrate it in March ended abruptly with the arrival of the COVID 19 pandemic. However Claus and Heather have much to be thankful for, and praise the Lord for the opportunity to do the Lord's work in Canada and abroad.

Thank you Claus for your leadership, your work and your love for the Lord. Enjoy this next phase of your life.

RESTORING **HEALTH, HOPE AND DIGNITY** IN **JESUS'** NAME

THE LATEST PROJECT BEGINS FOR ARDFC

A new project to add several new grade levels to a school in Paraguay.

GOAL:

US \$79,099 – C \$111,617

THE PROJECT

To improve the community's educational opportunities, in 2017 Redeemer Anglican Church and the Anglican Church of Paraguay began an expansion of El Redentor School. This new project will complete the second stage of the school's expansion, adding four new classrooms and an office for the administration. These modifications will double the enrollment, and allow the school to eventually serve students from preschool to ninth grade. The school will teach students Christian values and help them gain an understanding of the Christian faith. The facilities also will be used by community members who will host a Saturday Bible club and sports for children.

ABOUT

Paraguay has a young population, with children ages 1 to 14 making up almost a quarter of the 7 million people living there. Asunción, the capital of Paraguay, is the most populated city in the country. It is organized geographically into districts, including Zeballos Cue, where 70 percent of the population is school-age children.

In 2008, Redeemer Anglican Church and the Anglican Church of Paraguay refurbished the Pepe Semillita pre-school building in Zeballos Cue, creating a primary school that has since been officially recognized by Paraguay's Ministry of Education. Now named El Redentor School, it has since grown from 11 preschoolers to 70 students from preschool to the third grade.

THE NEED

In the Zeballos Cue area, access to education is limited, especially for families with low incomes. Children need at least a primary and secondary education to help break the cycle of poverty. Education has both direct and indirect impact on economic growth and poverty because it provides skills that boost employment opportunities.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

"This is the first year for both kids (at El Redentor School). I have been able to see positive changes in them. Both had attention problems, but now I can see they are overcoming that problem. They are focused in what they are learning in school. I also observed that the relationship with other children has changed favourably. I love the education in values they are receiving; I have seen that they have learned to forgive." Thalia Araceli Gonzalez Cuenca, the mother of preschoolers Miqueas Alberto and Misaela Jaqueline.

Thalia Araceli Gonzalez Cuenca, is pleased with the education her children are receiving at El Redentor School in Zeballos Cue, Paraguay.

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GREAT NEWS: THE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL TO EQUIP VULNERABLE YOUTH IN GIZA, EGYPT, HAS NOW BEEN FULLY FUNDED!



As Bishop Charlie exclaimed upon hearing the news, Alleluia!!!

In these most interesting and different of times for most of us, this is quite an accomplishment. This brings this project's total to \$129,997 CDN, now fulfilled.

As you are aware this project was intended to help address the needs of young people in the area for jobs (where unemployment for those with intermediate education is over 42 %, prior to the COVID 19 virus). Through continued support the Vocational School would teach valuable skills that would allow these young people to gain employment, in a few cases give them starter loans. This programme has been operating in the past, but with limited capacity. With the ARDFC project completion, there has been increased enrolment and types of programmes offered (such as training for plumbing, quilting, air conditioner repair, electricians, painting and clothing and artwork).

We are in the process of determining the full impact of this project with the Anglican Church in Giza and will report back as soon as we have received it.

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