

HOPE 2006 Report

The 2006 Hope team has been back a couple of weeks but we are still basking in the warmth of fond memories. We left a day early to spend the night in Newark in order to catch an early AM flight Tuesday to the Dominican Republic. Unlike 2005, we made all our connections and had only minimal delays.

Upon arrival, we immediately went to the job site to determine what was needed and how to approach the work of completing the roof on a room we started in Padre Las Casas in 2005. There was another team of seven from the school where Mike Benson works. They had an unrelated project in the mountains for William Gomez who also lives with his family in the mission home. We got to know and fellowship with them at the beginning and end of our week.

On Wednesday, we had to do a little cement work, build the framing for the roof, and put corrugated tin on the outside. While that was being accomplished, others had the job of mixing vast piles of cement for footers that would be used for a security wall around the church building. We also carried and strategically placed cement block where it was to be laid.

On Thursday, we continued all day on the roof of the Haitian Church, Padre Las Casas. The rest of the team mixed several more batches of cement for the security wall. All the travel, the heat, and the labor began to catch up with everyone. Our attitudes remained uplifted as we continued to tease each other and walk up to the corner store for soft drinks.

On Friday, we went to Cien Fuegos to do more work to a fourth floor classroom and living quarters we started in 2004. Things only progress in the DR as the money and laborers become available. It is frustrating at times, but that is the way of life there. Throughout the week as we traveled, we noticed many, many unfinished projects. Meanwhile, there were some that got to work with the children as Joanne and Jeremiah headed up that team. During the week, we met a woman named Carmen with whom David Savage has contact. She is bilingual and teaches English in a private school for children and adults. Carmen hung with us and was extremely helpful on many occasions.

Saturday was a relatively easy day of finishing up projects and getting some rest. On Sunday we went to Cien Fuegos for worship, and in the afternoon we went to Jaquita for their worship time. Herb Pace, a member of our team from Maryland, had the opportunity to preach as David Savage translated. On Monday, the only cloudy day, we went to the north coast to swim, shop, and relax together before the long trip home.

We thank David and Virginia for hosting us. We also thank the prayer partners who supplied encouragement through their daily notes, emails, and cards. An effort like this requires a tremendous amount of support from everyone in the church. I wish you could all experience actually being in the DR, but that is not always possible. Remember when King David came home from battle with the spoils of war, the ones that stayed behind got equally as much as those who went with David. God notices all the behind-the-scenes work that goes on, whether it be praying, giving, or serving in some capacity. He knows. On behalf of the team, THANKS to all the folks at Abbeyville. Our healthy, happy, and successful trip would not have been possible without your prayerful support.

God Bless, Steve Parmer