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Volunteers' Hands continue to build Deborah's House





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Judith DeRolf and six women from the Great Rivers Region of American Baptist Women traveled to Tijuana, Mexico to volunteer at Deborah's House this past November. In the spring of 2015 the board for the GRR AB Women decided to make Deborah's House their project for the 2015-16 year after hearing about the need for library and classroom furniture. They set \$15,000 as the goal but actually raised \$15,768.81! How God blessed this project! Next came the idea for a mission trip to help set up the new building and the library.

Judith shares below her memories about the trip and how God worked through initial feelings of disappointment to gratitude. "When we first arrived, I was a bit disappointed because the building was still under construction and all of the furniture for the classrooms had not yet arrived. Upon closer inspection, I discovered much of the building had been worked on extensively but there was much we could do to help with the finishing touches. I was deeply moved to realize that all of this building had been built by volunteers and the cost being donated by various churches and individuals. What a momentous sacrifice and dedication to the cause of Christ!

Ray Schellinger, Brian Smith, Paula and Deliris Carrion-Joseph delegated daily activities to our group of seven women; four young active women (three of whom are Spanish speakers) and three senior women with lots of energy. The senior women worked on getting the library up and running by labeling all the books with different colored tags and also by various categories, plus in-putting each book on a spreadsheet on computer. On the final evening, we were able to put all the books onto the new shelves that had been arranged and securely bolted to the walls of the library. We also dedicated it to God for the use of the women and children who will come and go at Deborah's House.

The five younger women used muscles they never knew they had by helping with sawing and drilling various pieces of wood, cleaning and mopping the floors, sealing the brick on scaffolding. The biggest job was moving the old sewing room into the new space. What a big job that was!

It was so moving to get to know the women and their children and to eat meals with them. I will never forget one woman with four children from age 11 months to six years old and how the entire family seemed so sad at first. Little by little the children warmed up to us. On the last evening as each woman told their story, this mother smiled as she told about feeling true love for the first time at Deborah's House! Even though Deborah's House was a group of strangers, she felt like she had developed a family with all of us. What a testimony to Christ's love that Deborah's House is!

Another memory I am left with is of a boy named K., who celebrated his 7th birthday while we were there. He wanted to help us with the library. He would look through the books and tell us he couldn't read but he knew the alphabet. He would go off to school part of the day and come back to look through the books as soon as he was able. One day, he found a little word puzzle book and asked if he could try to find the words in the puzzle. He spent more than an hour looking for the words to match. What a blessing to see this little boy so excited about reading and now having a place where he will be able to learn to read! Since we have returned home, we keep remembering the women and children at Deborah's House. When will our next trip be? That is my question and prayer to God. Perhaps you who are reading this entry might want to join us in sharing Christ's love on the next trip."