

Belize Mission Trip Report 2012

July 21 – July 28, 2012 FBC Whiteville
Mission Trip to Belize

Our trip to Belize was wonderful! Our group from FBC Whiteville took four college students, one high school student, and three adults... 8 total. We arrived in Belize on Saturday, July 21 and stayed at the Aguada Hotel in Santa Elena, which is in the Cayo District. On Sunday, July 22 we attended Sunday School and worship at Santa Elena Baptist, meeting Pastor Manny and the Santa Elena congregation. There were two other American groups at church that morning. Both groups were Lutheran... one from Chicago and one from Wisconsin. After worship the church graciously fed us lunch. Everyone was very welcoming and inviting. They made us feel right at home. Following lunch, pastor Manny went with our group to the Xunantunich ruins in San Ignacio. Our group really enjoyed this excursion. It was a great day!

On Monday, July 23 our group met up with our partnering team from Oakmont Baptist, Greenville, NC, which was led by their Mission's Director, Jimmie Hughes. We worked together each day, painting the school in the mornings and hosting VBS each afternoon (Monday-Friday). We successfully finished painting the school on Friday, except for the ceilings. Our groups worked hard and got a lot done. I think Pastor Manny and the community were very happy with the progress we made on the school.

Each afternoon we hosted VBS for two hours for the children of the community. On the first day of construction we sent a few representatives from Whiteville and Oakmont out into the community to promote VBS. On the first day we had approximately 30 children. Each day the number of children grew substantially, and by Thursday and Friday we had approximately 120 children. We used the school site as our VBS location, holding crafts, music, and Bible study inside the school, and Recreation and Snack outside.

We used Cokesbury's VBS material entitled Overboard with 5 stations: Bible Story, Music, Crafts, Recreation, and Snack. We divided the children into five different age groups (5 years old and under, 6-7 years old, 8-9 years old, 10-12 years old, and 13

years old and up). We ended up with children ranging from one year old babies to 15 year olds. We began each day of VBS with an opening introduction time, and then moved everyone into their stations. The stations rotated every 20-25 minutes. For us, the key to VBS was patience and flexibility. Some of our activities worked really well, and some did not go well at all. Many of the mothers of the younger children stayed throughout the duration of VBS each day.

On Thursday, Santa Elena Baptist provided lunch for our team. They fed us chili and tortillas. On Friday night, one of the families of the church hosted our team and the teams from Wisconsin and Illinois at their home for dinner and a closing celebration. The Wisconsin team leader is very close to this particular family and has worked with them for 6 years. I don't think they host this celebration for every team that comes to Belize. Either way, we were thankful to be a part. It was a lot of fun!

On the last day of VBS we handed out Bibles to all of the children. A member of our Whiteville team felt led to provide the Bibles, so we handed out all 100 of them at the conclusion of VBS on Friday. We also handed out goodie bags full of candy, pencils/pens, notepads, erasers, and a few other little trinkets. The kids were really excited about their Bibles and goodie bags. I think this was a great way to conclude VBS.

As far as activities such as visiting the ruins in Xunantunich, our team also ate lunch at Cheer's, dinner at Hode's, and went cave tubing. Julie Maas scheduled our cave tubing adventure in advance. Our team really enjoyed it!

Our team felt very blessed by our trip and looks forward to going back! We certainly felt God's presence working in us and all around us. The people of Belize were so gracious and welcoming. Not to sound cliché, but they truly ministered to us and were the image of Christ for us just as much as, if not more than, we were to them.

Thank you CBFNC for paving the way for us in Belize, and allowing this opportunity possible!!

Blessings, Travis



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