

Dear Family and Friends,

From June 30 - July 12th, 2018 I will be travelling to Nicaragua as part of the Open Hands United Youth Mission. Open Hands United is a ministry of Burton Avenue United Church in Barrie, Ontario and Living Waters Presbytery, Toronto Conference, of the United Church of Canada. Since 2007, Open Hands United has been bringing Nicaraguans and Canadians together in relationship-based mission that strengthens the lives and faith of those involved.

I will be travelling with 13 other youth and 4 adult leaders from 7 different United Church congregations. All of us are excited to:

- Experience Nicaragua in all its poverty and its beauty
- Be exposed to the social, political and cultural issues of the country
- Develop sports, arts and music programs to be shared with children and youth
- Meet Nicaraguan leaders who are making a difference in the lives of their own people
- Worship in a variety of different settings
- Meet and build relationships with Nicaraguan youth
- Reflect on who and where God is in the midst of the experience

We will spend most of our visit in Puerto Cabezas on the east coast where we will further develop the working relationship between Open Hands and the Moravian Church, a mission partner of the United Church of Canada. As partners with them, Open Hands has funded the building of a community library, filled the library with books and computers, purchased a school bus for the high school, supported water projects, bought musical instruments for the high school marching band, brought medical supplies to remote villages, funded a community center that offers space for a clinic and recreation needs, and begun to build an elementary school.

As a participant with Open Hands, I am committed to raising \$3,300 to cover travel and participant expenses as well as to support projects. The participant expenses contribute to the Nicaraguan economy as we hire translators, drivers, and guides and make purchases such as food and accommodations. The projects are identified as a need in the community by the Moravian Church. Currently the building of the elementary school is the priority.

I hope that you will consider supporting this amazing opportunity for me and the people of Nicaragua. I am asking for your financial support as well as your encouragement for this venture. If you wish to make a donation, please make cheques payable to *Open Hands United Missions*. Donations over \$20 will automatically receive a tax receipt. Any amount that you are able to contribute will be deeply appreciated.

Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to answering any questions you may have and sharing the story of my adventure when I return. For further information, contact Rev. Pat MacDonald, Executive Director of Open Hands United at revpat@rogers.com or 705 795 9438.

Sincerely,

Claire Garraway