

Honduras Stories 2023



CROSSROADS
CHURCH OF GOD



Hello, first..... let me thank you for picking up this Honduras journal and choosing to read the stories inside. Being able to share our experience is a big part of our spiritual growth and helps us to process the experience of the trip. I will pray that as you read our team experiences, you might gain some insight to how God works in so many ways. Maybe, just maybe.....it might help you to address a feeling of being Called

and what that Calling might look like.

Again, hello.....my name is Bob Gould. I am 65 years old and have been attending Crossroads for approximately 18 years. I chose to go on the 2023 Honduras trip because of my love for missions as an act of servanthood, and I have a passion for immersing myself into other cultures and people groups.

There were many opportunities on this trip to learn as we navigated the flight follies, and while we were in country walking alongside the community of Pozas de Agua. So many opportunities to learn about myself and what God felt I needed to learn. Many times while on these trips I tend to hit the ground running and too many times focused on tasks and completion. Due to my recent health experiences my pace was throttled to a much slower pace. It was during this slower pace that I was able to not only experience and share life with the community we were serving, but it also allowed me to witness and support our team members as they experienced what God had designed for them on this trip. In this slower pace I found that I was able to have a wonderful conversation with a young girl even though

I spoke no Spanish and she spoke no English. By using the Google Translate app she shared that her brother was in Washington DC and she was worried for his safety since they had not heard from him in over a year. We spoke for 15-20 minutes as I tried to help calm her fears for her brother. I learned that while my focus was not necessarily bad, it may not always be where God chooses for me to focus my efforts. I intend to be more intentional about listening for where God might be calling me, and not where I want for God to call me.

If you are curious even just a little bit, I would encourage you to be in prayer about it..... but also to attend the next informational meeting about an upcoming trip. There is no harm in hearing about the next trip and how you might fit into the team. Plus, there is so much opportunity for growth from a mission trip both in your spirituality and yourself in general. Did I mention the relationships that you can build with our brothers & sisters in Christ? I hope you sincerely give this some consideration. Again, thank you.



My name is Bri Ridenour and I am currently a Health Sciences Major with a Visual Impairment minor at The Ohio State University on the Pre-Optometry Track. I have been coming to Crossroads for about 5 years now and also attend a church at Ohio State called H2O. I decided to take the big step to come on this trip to push myself outside of my comfort zone as the next step in my spiritual journey and to seek out new Christ-centered friendships.

This trip was nothing but transformational, and taught me that a little CPR can truly save your life. For me, this life-saving procedure became to stand for Community, Patience, and Relaxation which are three elements that the trip to Honduras highlighted the importance of and have been extremely influential in shaping my growth and trust in God.

Community was honestly one of the first elements that drew me to become a Christ follower and I began to see the beauty of Christ-centered friendships throughout the trip. After traversing through many highs and lows of flight troubles, near-death waterfall experiences, and difficult labor I began to find enjoyment in the hard times as it brought me closer to a team that I would now consider family. With 5 years of Spanish and a small amount of courage under my belt, I began to seek out community in our new Honduran friends as well. My fondest memories include playing pato, pato, ganso with the kids and having a deep conversation (IN SPANISH!!) with a Heart to Honduras member. We discussed the ease for Christ followers all over the world to come together, no matter the language barrier, because we are all united for one purpose in serving God and it was this theme that played out throughout the trip. The joy in both the eyes of our team and our partnered community, Posas de Agua, is indescribable and just reiterates the fact that one's sincere presence in another's life is truly transformational.

Patience for His plan was a virtue I began to develop as my meticulous planner self began to let go of my need for details and develop a Jesus take the wheel approach. I slowly grew to trust more in Him and be patient with myself and others as building relationships, speaking a foreign language, and assisting in various projects takes time. It is in these small pockets of waiting that the most impactful events occur and when you see God shine the brightest, such as when a group of sweaty Christ followers in the back of an open truck bed start belting out throwback songs. It's those moments that I have seen the love of God the strongest.

The beauty of the world that God created is also extremely evident throughout Honduras, but I found it to be the most vibrant when I took the time to just relax. I chose to spend my mornings waking up at 5am to watch the sunrise with a cup of coffee instead of scrolling on my phone. I spent unhurried time engaging with others to learn about their stories, journaling, or taking the time to pray about what's on my mind. By taking these small steps to relax, I was able to really experience God's glory in ways I was blinded to previously due to worldly distractions. I am thankful to have experienced the mental cleanse that is being fully devoted and in awe of the work of God in my life and others.

I was originally nervous to go on this trip as I felt insecure regarding my knowledge and strength as a Christ follower as my journey has been much shorter than others. But if anything, I believe that participating in a mission trip, serving in the community, or serving here at Crossroads is the exact commitment that one may need to strengthen one's own confidence in themselves and the Lord. Every individual has a different gift that God intends to use to strengthen His kingdom, it may just take some adversity and stepping outside of one's comfort zone to really discover that. I am now forever committed to seeking out new opportunities to strengthen my faith and encourage others to do the same, because a little CPR can truly save your life.



Hi, My name is Brooke Hill. I am 29 years old and I have been a “member” of Crossroads since I was 4 years old. I started at the Learning Tree Preschool at 4 and started going to church here officially around 11. #CrossroadsLifer . I went on this mission trip because honestly, I have been on the last 2 trips to Honduras and I could not

imagine not going. Two of my favorite things in the world are: traveling & loving on people and this trip embodies that to the max.

But for sake of answering the question, why did I go on this trip the first time- I will say that my mom, Denise Mooney pushed me to go. I was fresh out of graduate school and landed a job at St. Rita’s and my mom said I think this would be a great experience for you to help people. She had previously gone on a mission trip to Haiti that changed her life. (Shout out to Denise- ask her about it!) My first Honduras trip- my boyfriend (husband now) Jered, sister Maddy, her boyfriend (husband now) James and my aunt all went. This trip changed my life. Jered and I decided that we were going to keep our phones completely off the whole week and immerse ourselves into Honduras & God. I will say that week changed my life as a Christian and our relationship. Walking along aside your “person” and watching them be the hands and feet of God is love your eyes and heart never forget. That trip was in 2018 and I still pull out photos from time to time to remember that feeling.

During the trip, Jake did this awesome conversation project with us each night which really helped focus on the day. The questions were- Hardest part of the day? Favorite part of the day? Proudest part of the day? So, I am going to tell you those from my week with the Honduras people and God.

Hardest part of the week? Outside of the flight nonsense, because that was annoying but not the trip. Coming to the

realization that God's people do not all have to live the American way. Going to Honduras, you feel like you are going to help them but once you get there even the third time, you realize they are doing just fine without you. They are clothed, they are housed, they fed us lunch. Is it the American way, no but God's way is not always the American way.

Favorite part of the week? Outside of meeting fifty wonderful smiling children, because that was a given. Watching the community Pozas de Agua come together to further God's natural kingdom was beautiful. The last day with the community, 6 of us, 35ish children and 15ish mothers all went to the spring where they washed their clothes and planted around 100 trees. Unknowingly to anyone, this wonderful nine year old, Elliot, was using an empty chip bag and going into the spring to water trees after being planted. That memory will stay in my heart forever. God is always providing to the trees, to the families in Honduras and to us.

Proudest part of the week? Outside of getting two 16 year olds, two boys and Joy to Honduras and not getting stopped by anyone in the Honduras airport, because that was sure something to be proud of. My goal was to strengthen my prayer life while we were there. It was going to be a springboard to enrich my communication with God. I am proud that I listen to God and spoke out loud to him but also asked everyone on the trip about what they needed to be prayed for. I do not always go out of my comfort zone when it comes to prayer.

In conclusion, why should someone go on a trip like this? Because it is a load of life changing moments packed in one week. Simple as that. Allowing yourself to be present, in every way is so foreign today that sometimes we miss the life changing God moments. Honduras allows me to reconnect with God and truly focus on what is important. I cannot thank Heart to Honduras employees, their presidents -Henry & Randy and the people of Honduras enough for changing my life.



My name is David Mooney and I've attended Crossroads for 18 years.

My wife and 2 of our children, along with their spouses have all been on a mission trip. I didn't make time to do it in the past. When the opportunity to go on this trip came up, I said yes. Partly because my daughter Brooke was going, and I wanted to see the Hearts to Honduras ministry in action. I also didn't

have an excuse not to go.

It is too easy to be distracted. I am as guilty of this as anyone. We have busy lives. Busy at work, busy at home, and if we are not busy, we are busy looking at stuff on our cell phones, watching TV etc... . Something I did, along with some others that went, was to turn off the cell phone, leave it at the cabin, and allow myself to be unplugged for the week. It was refreshing. It also allowed time to connect with the people around me and with God. Instead of looking at my phone first thing and last thing and in between things during a day. I got to practice being present, in mind, body and spirit. That is the thing, Life in general back here in the states is not different. Time marches on, and the tugs and pulls of life have not changed. What is changing in my mind is the cost of time. Everything has a cost. Time and energy spent on one thing means that time and energy cannot be spent on other things. My choices reveal my priorities, and I am working on spending my time on the things that last, and that are eternal.

If you are considering going on the next trip, know this: you will be blessed. Blessed by the connections you will make with your team, with the people in the community you travel to visit, and ultimately in your connection to God as you say yes to him.



My name is Emylie. I am one of the two 16 year olds that went along on this trip. The way I got introduced to Crossroads was by my aunt Tiffany who also accompanied all of us on the trip. I would like to say she is the reason I went to Honduras but truly I feel like something had a pull on my heart and was telling me to go.

One of the many things I have learned not only about myself but about God is I need to take a moment and really soak in all that is around me and enjoy the moment. Really take the negativity away and just look around to enjoy all that God has created. One of the many friends that I made on this trip helped me realize this.

I'll keep it short so I do not drag on but I hope if you were ever feeling like going on a missions trip is calling to you. I highly recommend listening to that call and enjoying all the experiences that come with it. The new country, the language, the food, the landscape, and most important of all the relationships you build with the people around you.



I'm 20 years old, a Junior at ONU, and I've been at Crossroads for two years now. As I grew up, I went on several missions trips in the United States with my middle and high school youth groups, and it was always a great experience. Every trip I felt the presence of God and saw Him move in ways that I didn't always pay attention to in my busy everyday life. When I got back from Christmas Break in January this past school year, I learned about the Honduras trip and I knew immediately I wanted to go, and I'm so glad I did. Traveling outside of the country gave me a new perspective and I got to see a glimpse of how truly great our God is.

One major lesson God has taught me through this trip is about His love. The love of God is a force more powerful than any dividing line, whether that be geographic distance, material wealth or poverty, race, ethnicity, language or otherwise. I experienced God's love through the care and generosity of people I barely knew at the beginning of the trip, and who have quickly become my family. The people of Honduras, and specifically Pozas de Agua were kind, gentle, but so strong and ready to love our team the moment we met them. Even though most of us were unable to verbally communicate with them, building relationships with them was not hindered at all. I personally got to see God's love in action through playing with the kids in Pozas de Agua; almost the entire time I was there, I was surrounded by anywhere from 4 to 36 kids at once, all wanting to play catch with the tennis ball I had packed in my backpack. It was crazy, they were so fun to play with, and that was the most unique answer to a very simple

prayer I had prayed only the night before asking God to let me experience His love while I was in Pozas de Agua.

Why should YOU go on a trip like this? I think I could make a case for anyone to go on this trip, no matter your age or abilities, because I believe God can use each of us in mighty ways when we're willing to simply say yes to Him. Should you choose to say yes to a trip like this one, you will learn so much about God, yourself, and the people around you that no other experience allows for you to learn. There is something uniquely eye-opening about traveling to a foreign country where you don't speak the language and don't know the people you're interacting with, because you realize how very little God requires of us in order for us to make an impact for His Kingdom on earth. If you don't think you have what it takes, a verse the Holy Spirit laid on my heart the whole time we were in Honduras was Mark 6:8-9, which says "He instructed them to take nothing for the road except a staff - no bread, no traveling bag, no money in their belts, but to wear sandals and not put on an extra shirt." Basically, God doesn't ask us to take anything with us when we're being obedient to Him; no specific skill, no crazy testimony, no huge amount of faith or anything else. He just wants our trust that He is with us when we go. I can tell you from experience, He absolutely is, and He will be with you when you go too.



My name is Hailey Hinkle, I am 16 years old, and I have been coming to Crossroads my whole life. I have been wanting to go on a mission trip since I was little, and have just been waiting to be old enough to go. I first signed up for this trip, to be honest, because it sounded fun and I like helping people through volunteering or other ways. My dad and other close friends had gone on mission trips and always came back saying

how amazing it was seeing the culture and meeting all these new people. I think at the time I didn't really understand when they would talk about the changes in their spirituality or relationship with God. However, in the few meetups the Honduras team had before the trip, I heard other people's reasons for going on the trip and realized that I needed a change in my life as well. I'm a pastor's kid, so I sometimes found it hard to think of my religion as my own. I grew up knowing God, and I don't really remember a time in my life when I realized how amazing and real he is. To me, Christianity was just the way my family lived, and that included going to church and praying to God every night.

By the time the trip came around, I was hoping that I would be able to see God through my own eyes, instead of just through my parents. Although I didn't have a groundbreaking moment or discovery with God on the trip, there were many moments when I could feel God showing himself to me through others, or even through Honduras itself. As many of you know, Ohio is not known for its scenery. Honduras is way different. Everywhere you turn, there are plants that seem fake, animals (mostly insects) that can't possibly be real, and mountains that seem to reach to the sky. I remember landing in Honduras and being awestruck by how different it is from Ohio. There was one drive in particular where I decided to try to take all the scenery in. Sometime during that drive I fully realized that God was the one that made all of it. He made the colorful, creatively imagined plants on the side of the road, and the giant

mountains farther in the distance (which, by the way, were very hard to climb). Seeing that God can make something as colossal and strong as those mountains really helped my knowledge and understanding of him. He isn't just someone in the sky that helps us through life, he is a strong and all-powerful God that I can put my full trust in. I know that this story doesn't have much to do with the "mission" side of the trip, and you don't have to go on a mission trip to see a few mountains. But I don't think I would have had this realization so soon if I hadn't had the chance to go on this trip. Through the Honduran people and the amazing team I went with, I was inspired to look for God in every aspect of my life. This is why I decided to look for him in the scenery of Honduras. Although there are no mountains in Ohio to remind me of how awesome God is, I now look to and for him in my everyday life, and my faith continues to grow.

I think that everyone should go on a trip like this. You might not think you'll get much out of it, or that your spiritual life is good how it is. But as I learned, God shows up in unexpected ways to teach you unexpected things. Take me for example. I first wanted to go on this trip because it sounded fun and I wanted to help people. I walked away with a new picture of Christ and a growing faith. You might not think you'll be much help on a mission trip. Although people expect mission trips to be all about building something for the community or teaching them something new, most of the time we are playing with kids and building relationships in the community. Yes, we helped with a few building projects (and I don't think I was much help with those either), but the most impactful moments of the trip, for the Honduran people and for us, were just becoming friends and learning about each other. No matter where you are in your walk with God, you will get something out of this trip. You might not know what it is yet, but God will reveal it to you eventually. To be honest, I couldn't tell what God was doing in me during the trip. It took a while for me to process and realize just how much I had learned. That is why so many people say to go into mission trips without expectations. You will never be able to guess how the trip will impact you.



My name is Joy, I am 44 years old. I am not a regular/member of Crossroads though I have visited several times with my sister and her family, who are regulars/members.

My sister, Tiffany, asked if my 16 year old daughter would go on this mission trip to Honduras with her. I never in a million years thought my

daughter would be interested in a missions trip, but she shocked us both and said yes. That was one of the first of many ways I saw God move on this trip. I immediately said "I WANT TO COME TOO!" I've always had a heart for serving others and missions. Plus, I didn't want to send my teenage daughter to another country without me. Also, I wanted to experience the Honduras culture and beauty.

As an outsider, this could've been very uncomfortable and awkward. Thankfully this wonderful Crossroads group welcomed my daughter and I with open arms without any hesitation or weird sideways glances. (At least to my knowledge lol). It was amazing to get to know each of these individuals, some on a very deep level. We are all in different stages of life, of different ages, of different spiritual levels and we came together as one unit to create beautiful and meaningful connections. Every night we met together and ministered to each other with prayer, encouragement, hugs, laughter, and tears. You could feel and see the Lord moving in hearts and His love poured out through others.

There's so much I've learned from this trip. Most significantly is the importance of community and relationships. I loved watching how the Hondurans care for each other, work alongside each other, watch out for each other and welcomed strangers into their homes and lives. Our time was short there, but the people made an eternal impact on me. If you have a chance to go on a mission trip, I encourage you to go. And if you're not able to go, be a supporter with your prayers and donations. You'll challenge yourself physically, mentally, and spiritually. You'll get pushed out of your comfort zone and grow from it. You will make friends. You'll get to be a part of something so much bigger than yourself. You'll get a small glimmer of how heaven will be with people from different nations and tongues. It really will change your life.



¡Hola! My name is Kristi Spencer. My family and I have been attending Crossroads since 1995. During these years, there have been mission trips to Uganda, Haiti, and Honduras. I am sure I am forgetting others. When the opportunity arose to go, I just did not think it was for me. I thought I did not have what it took, or I thought “I CAN’T” do that.

When the 2023 Honduras trip was announced, I thought it would be neat to go, but still was not sure it was for me. Plus, I wanted to make sure I went for the right reason. Not sure about going, I had a conversation with Jake about it. He said I should go and the reason would become apparent. It did! The reason why I wanted to go does not matter, but the reason God wanted me to go does! God was wanting to show/teach me things that could only be accomplished through the experiences had on the trip. I have heard many times that participants believe they are going on a mission trip to change the lives of those in country but after find that their lives were changed. I did not understand until I experienced it myself. God used the time to open my eyes to so many things and has begun to mold me even more to what He is wanting me to be for Him—relationship building, overcoming fears, be stretched are a few of the areas He is working.

Here is one example of what God is doing in my life. God revealed to me that I have the “I can’t” attitude when I should have an attitude of trust in Him to be able to accomplish what is put before me. Throughout the trip many were pushed to do things that they were scared of doing. For me it was heights. I had been thinking about ziplining (at the suggestion of my sister) but still

was not sure of participating because of the height. But we were not ziplining when I made the decision to try to overcome my fear. The team was putting an obstacle course up for a weekend youth retreat being sponsored by Heart to Honduras. When a rope bridge was strung across a small valley, I said there was no way I would be doing that. I watched others from the team cross the bridge and took pictures of them as they did so. As I watched I thought about how God had been helping so many with their fears. I thought it was time for me to do the same. So right before the team began to move to the next obstacle, I decided to cross the bridge. I was scared but I prayed, asking for help and took the first step. With each step I prayed “God help me” and with each step the team was encouraging me to keep going. I completed the obstacle, but more importantly I knew what I was being taught—God’s help is always there, we only need to ask for it each step of the way and that if we are willing to share our need/fear with others, they will be there to encourage us through it.

Why should you go? Go to find out what God has in store for you! Do not let age (I am 62) be a deterrent. God uses all ages to meet the needs of others. We each have a purpose in God’s story and we need to be willing to do what He asks to help Him write it.



Hola! My name is Matthew Howard. I have been coming to Crossroads for 2 years now. I am going into my Junior year at Ohio Northern University where I am a finance major and on the Football team. I decided to go on the trip, because I felt intrigued and felt a draw from the first-time hearing that there was an opportunity to go on a mission trip. Having

never been out of the country or on a mission's trip, I felt nervous of the idea of putting myself out there like that. That was uncomfortable for me. But at the same time, I felt the pull towards the mission's trip and thought it would be extremely beneficial and was excited at the idea of trying to help others. I was hoping I would be able to grow a lot in myself and in my relationship with God.

Going on the trip, God taught me a lot about myself and a lot about Him. The main thing I feel like he taught me and is still teaching me, is to not let my level of comfortability get in the way of doing something. And to continuously get out of my comfort zone. An example of this for me is working with kids. I am an only child, with few younger cousins, so I am not around kids much. At the Church, I have been blessed enough to be able to help with the 2-6th graders a few times and was able to check in kids at the kiosk for a few months. But other than that, most of my life I haven't spent much time with children. I realized once we got to the community that we traveled to for 3 days of the trip, I wanted to be intentional with the kids. To get to know them, love them, laugh with them, relate to them. I wanted to do all of this without knowing much Spanish at all and that was mostly what they knew. This was a bit uncomfortable for me, but I wasn't sure why. I discovered after the trip

when processing it, that kids can be intimidating to me, because they are dead honest and will tell you exactly how it is, and I was scared to be vulnerable to a kid. To try to connect and then just to have them pull away, run away, cry or make fun of me. But as I found throughout the trip, a common theme God was pouring into me was, is this out of my comfort zone? Yes, for sure. Through God's strength can I do it anyway? Yes, most definitely. Choosing to connect, play with, communicate with, laugh with, smile with, do handshakes with, hug and even continuously attempt to learn and speak some Spanish with the children in the community was a blessing to say the least. It was uncomfortable for me to put myself out there and become vulnerable when trying to connect with the kids. But for every bit of discomfort I felt, there was a smiling young face waiting to do all the above with me. God showed me how getting out of my comfort zone and loving others through His strength and love for me can be such a blessing and a joy.

You may be saying to yourself, I wonder what it would look like for me to go on a trip like that? You may feel a bit of discomfort at the thought of throwing yourself out there, going on a mission's trip. But I believe that there is something beautiful about getting out of our comfort zone, trusting in God knowing we don't have it all figured out, but we have figured out the one who does. Taking that leap of faith for an experience and memories that you will remember for a long time. Doing it alongside believers growing in community and in relationship with God in the process. My high school football coach always used to tell us: Become comfortable with being uncomfortable. If you feel called to a mission's trip, I encourage you to not let comfortability, be the reason you don't go. Because when we step outside our comfort zone, we learn to rely more and more on God and less and less on ourselves, and that is a beautiful thing.



My name is Nathaniel Robertson. I have been attending Crossroads for eight years and have been serving on the Childrens Ministry team for five of those years. I am a full-time student and have now been on three international mission trips. This was my second time going to Honduras, but as just as every mission trip, God had new adventures planned for me.

The trip started off a little rocky with unexpected travel difficulties and an unbelievable amount of waiting. I could write a full page about the travel extravaganza but with respect to the length of this page and the other amazing things on the trip; I shall move on. I plan to cover the surface of what God taught me throughout the trip and hopefully plant a seed to start a conversation in person. Here are three of the many things, God taught me over this short trip.

First, God is a master artist. It is one of the first things that catch my eyes every time I walk outside in Honduras. The breathtaking mountains contrasted by the peaceful valleys are something out of a movie. On the first day, we hiked with the community to an area where they were planting crops. This is where I realized that God's beauty was not just in the nature around us, but it was abundant in the people. Each one of the community members was walking alongside us and even though there was a language barrier, I could feel the relationship between the team and the community forming. This relationship just became stronger as the week progressed, and it made it very hard to leave the community and the kids.

Second, nothing is more fulfilling than serving

Jesus. I am consistently reminded how good serving God is especially since I started working with Crossroads Kids. This truth was just reiterated on the trip. Through watching the Heart to Honduras Staff and our own team members truly care for those around us, I came to find Jesus at center. This feeling of Jesus's presence followed us everywhere we went. I even got to have a theological discussion with a stranger, who happened to be from Cincinnati, prior to jumping into the river after the waterfall near-death experience (long story). This very quick discussion was just a fraction of the time I felt the power of Jesus pushing me to talk about faith. Since the trip, I have been able to have many conversations about my life with God to people that have no relationship with Him all because of God's glory.

Third, God has a very clear plan for us. We are told about God's plan since we were little kids but it never feels real until you lean in on Him. This trip was full of uncertainty and situations that pushed me outside of my comfort zone. I also watched as each team member overcame adversity and grew to trust in God more. The community we served consistently talked about their trust in God's plan and that mindset was something I took home with me.

Lastly, I want to end with a word of encouragement. As I said prior, I have been on three international mission trips and on each one I have been exposed to new experiences. My relationship with God has been dramatically affected by each trip. While my head knowledge of God may not change on these trips; my heart has never felt closer to God than while serving his people. I encourage everyone to explore opportunities to serve whether that be in a different country or even at Crossroads.

I would love to dive further into what God is still showing me so feel free to stop me and ask about it.



My name is Nathan Motter. I am 43 years old and have attended Crossroads Church since 1999. Admittedly, I initially felt like this trip was somewhat business-like for me, and I identified two specific goals to accomplish

while I was there. First, I felt like God was sending me on this trip to learn more about the corporate side of community development, as I have been actively using information I gathered from a previous Honduras trip. Secondly, I felt like God wanted me to focus less on my own personal experiences this trip and instead pay attention to the experiences of those who had never been to Honduras. Little did I realize, God had different and much bigger plans.

God used this trip to really teach me about relationships. Ones that were established, and are continuing to be built even after this Honduras trip, are exciting, love-filled, and God-led. Not only were the previously-established relationships in Honduras strengthened, but new ones were formed with both Hondurans and our Crossroads Church team. And despite some early challenges, God kept reminding me over and over of Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” This verse kept re-appearing in my heart as we struggled with travel, as I spoke individually with several team members and Hondurans, and as I prayed daily. God used Jeremiah 29:11 to further His teachings about relationships and bring about peace within me.

While there are so many additional reasons a person should consider taking a missions trip, the idea

of growing your relationship with God and others has to be at the top. Experiencing another culture, practicing another language, partnering with others to accomplish a common goal, being disconnected from our “normal” world, seeing beauty in a different way - the list can go on and on - but, strengthening your relationship with God and growing meaningful, Jesus-centered relationships has to be my biggest reason to encourage everyone to consider taking a trip like we experienced.



My name is Paul Briggs. I am (in case you've never seen me during the Question of the Day portion of church service) an introvert, and when there are big personalities with me, I tend to fade into the background and let them take the lead. Because of that, most of my experiences were internal but I wanted to share just a couple of times

when God showed up on this trip.

When I filled out the application to go, I wrote the truth - that the last couple of years had been extremely hard on my faith and that there were days I wasn't sure if I would even consider myself a "Christian" anymore. I wrote about how I wanted to experience the "real God" and not one that was twisted into some label, and I wanted to lose some of the chip that has been on my shoulder for quite some time now. It was tough to write, and I figured it would be disqualifying - both from the trip and probably from the church (ha-ha).

I am an old, out-of-shape guy, and a lot of the physical aspect of this trip was very tough for me. There was a mountain hike that I promise you was 600 miles straight up in the Honduran sun and humidity. There was the foundation digging at the church and then manually mixing concrete for the latrine. I didn't feel like I pulled my weight in any of this most of the time. On the last full day, we were in the country, we went through an obstacle course, and I was determined to try at least one of the challenges - and while I failed and ended up with a shoe full of mud- I was proud of myself that I tried. After this, we went to a lake and jumped off a pier into the water. We were told that the hike to the lake itself was tough, so I hopped into the back of the truck, old-person style, but I knew I was going to jump into that lake...there was no question in my mind. I was the last one to jump in, and this ridiculously amazing group of people on the trip were chanting my name before I did. I felt like some WWE superstar, and included which for someone like myself was pretty awesome. I did the jump and drank way too much Honduran lake water, but I did it.

Our next stop was ziplining and, like most of things on the trip, it didn't go super smoothly. 4 or 5 of us had been suited up and ready to go, with these heavy-ish harnesses and gear strapped on, when we were told that there would be a 45-minute or so wait due to a group in front of us. Now, the smart thing to do would have been to sit down and wait it out, but no one ever accused me of being smart, so I kind of wandered around between our people, and by the time it was time to climb the steps and begin the ziplining, I was already a hot sweaty mess. Ziplining was one of the best experiences of my entire life, but with each passing minute, the harness got heavier and heavier. When we were done, after looking at some of the most incredible nature I have ever seen, I was so ready to step out of that harness and I felt this immediate lifting of this weight off me, both physically but also spiritually and emotionally. I was able to somehow let all the baggage I had carried with me through this trip go at that moment and again, felt this sense of spiritual freedom I hadn't felt in years.

We got back to the compound, and had kind of an impromptu worship service, and, because God really wanted to drive the point home and God knows I am not smart, we sang Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) and for the second time on this trip, I felt it get a little bit dusty and my eyes watered. I couldn't have been crying, big tough guys like me don't do that. Okay, that's not true - I cried like a baby, but it was so freeing.

In truth, I am still processing some of the things that happened on this trip. I probably will be for quite some time, but I came back much closer to God than when I left, and I feel much less cynical. When I told Dave Mooney that I had fallen asleep and was pretty much dead to the world on Tuesday night, he said "Well, God knew what you needed, and that's ok". On this trip, I was reminded again and again and again that God knew what I needed to get out of this trip and God provided it in big and small ways.

Why should someone go on a trip like this? Whether you want to or not, you will experience God on a journey like this. It may not be an immediately life-changing process, what I am working through will take time, but it will happen if you open yourself up to God.



My name is Samantha Robertson and I have been attending Crossroads for about eight years. I decided to join the 2023 team to Honduras because I not only love the people of Honduras and the Heart to Honduras staff, but so many of my friends who I love decided to come on this trip and I wanted to experience this trip alongside them.

Something that I learned about God from this trip, is that God dwells in the unity of His people. With all the traveling difficulties before even stepping foot in Honduras, it created opportunity to bond and to be vulnerable with our team in a way that typically doesn't happen on mission trips until you're in the country you're serving in. It was so cool to watch God work through all of what we went through as a team, and when threats of discouragement and disconnection arose, God restored those relationships through bringing us all together again in unity.

I also saw God working in unity as we worked alongside, engaged in conversation, laughed, and genuinely just did life among the people of Honduras. We are all God's children, and we are all brothers and sisters in Christ and that was exemplified on this trip. We all may speak different languages, but love knows no language. God is a big God and He dwells in the unity of his people.



My name is Tiffany Steinmetz and I am 35 years old. My family and I have been attending Crossroads for almost 5 years now.

Going to Honduras was not on my radar... until one Sunday morning when Pastor Brian was talking about it. I felt very strongly that God wanted me to go and to ask my 16 year old niece to go with me. I looked over at my husband, Eric, and he immediately said, “If you want to go to Honduras you can.” The quick confirmation from him, without me even bringing it up, was just further validation

that it was not just fleeting thoughts in my head. Also—surprising, considering that meant he would be solo parenting a 7, 4 and 1 year old by himself for a week haha. Additionally, my niece was an unexpected quick yes and brought a bonus of my older sister (her mom) joining the team.

I am a big believer in the idea that you cannot “grow” if you’re comfortable. There’s always something to learn in the challenges of discomfort. However, I also very much like situations that I can control, or in the very least, know what to expect. Well, with the traveling challenges my group had— plane malfunction, multiple delays, multiple airports, and a total of 3 missed flights (one that involved challenging my mile run PR)— I was definitely thrown into some scenarios that I could not control. Moreover, without my luggage for majority of the trip, I was able to literally experience being physically uncomfortable.

I was reminded through this “uncontrolled” and “uncomfortable” growing period, that God is SO good, even in uncertainty. He is in the details, even in the moments that you are waiting and wondering, or moments that seem like everything else is against you. He used the troubles we went through and changed it for good— creating a team that grew close in our vulnerability and challenges and drew closer to Him. It was awe-inspiring, but in a way that makes you feel the presence of God. It was an experience that I am so thankful for and will never forget. So if you’re wondering, “why should someone go on a trip like this?” I only have one answer— because if God tells you to go, you go. Also, the food is really good.



My name is Ashley Glick. I am 24 years old. I have been attending Crossroads for 2 years. When I heard that the church was going to Honduras, I prayed about it and felt called to go, so I started talking to people who I knew have gone and they all encouraged me that I should go and I knew that this was something I wanted to do.

One thing I learned on this trip was how faithful God is. This trip caused me to have a lot of fear and anxiety considering I have never been out of the country or been on an airplane. I turned to God and asked him for help and with him I overcame so much fear; flying on an airplane, zip lining, and doing things throughout the trip that were out of my comfort zone. God helped me overcome all of the anxiety and showed me how he is faithful. If you are thinking of going on a mission trip, I would tell you to go. The fear and anxiety I was facing doesn't even compare to the joy and peace I felt on and after the trip.

This was the best experience of my life and I gained so much strength and confidence from it. I saw God move in my life and everyone's on the trip. My heart felt so close to God and has encouraged me to live my life with faith over fear.



Heyo! my name is Riley Daniels, I am 20 years old and I have attended Crossroads for 7 years. I decided to go on this trip because I love building relationships with others.

One thing I learned on the trip is that no matter what you have or who you have, family is everything. I was adopted when I was 9 months old and

I have always been surrounded by love. But I struggle with family sometimes. Blood doesn't make a family, but love does. All of the people in Pozas de Agua all take care and love each other as 1 big family. They taught me that everything that they have is everything they need. The kids valued all they had and even the plants around them. This trip really opened my eyes to appreciate all that I have and who I have.

I think everyone should go on this trip because it definitely pulls you away from our daily lives. We get so caught up with work, errands and home life that we forget to slow down in life. Honduras is beautiful and the people are amazing!



Hello! My name is Carter Brian. I am twenty years old and attended Crossroads for about 4 months. When I first heard about the trip to Honduras, it seemed like a good idea at the time. I had been on different mission trips during my life, and I assumed that this trip would be the same. We would go to a community, help them, build something, and leave. What I didn't know is that there was so much more to these

trips.

The last time I traveled out of the country for something like this was when I was around 14 years old. Now, as someone who is about to enter adulthood, I saw things through a different perspective. Instead of going to Honduras to help them do things “the American way”, I saw that we were just partners. For a while before the trip, I had been struggling with issues that I thought no one else in the world could understand. During one day on the trip, I had the opportunity to speak with our translator. He was a boy, the same age as me, and we ended up talking for about an hour. As it turns out, he was struggling with almost the exact same issues. It baffled me to think that someone in a completely different country, with different resources, and a different life, could understand what I was struggling with. This helped show me that believers around the world struggle with similar issues. And that I am not alone in my trouble. This was something that I really needed to hear at the time. It was an opportunity that God gave me to see that He knows my problems. Instead of going down to Honduras so that we could give something to them, we went to Honduras and built relationships with the people

there.

Going on trips like these gives you an opportunity to see how God is working in places other than America, and that He has a following all over the world.



My name is Rachel Kroner, I am a 38 year old mother of two beautiful girls, Violet and Iris. And I have been happily married to my husband Tommy for almost 10 years. We moved to the Lima area 6 years ago from Tipp City to be closer to my husband's parents who live in Ada. We decided to try out Crossroads, the place with the blue roof, and we never went anywhere else. Being a part of Crossroads has been such a joy and a blessing. I sing on the worship team and for the past year I have had the pleasure of being on staff. As some of you know my mother was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in December of 2022. Without hesitation, I brought her to my home from Mansfield to care for her and take her to all of her appointments in Troy. My faith wavered a lot but the support of my family, the staff, and my friends here kept me going and strong for her. I was asked to consider going on the trip and I said there was no way with my mother at my house and the unknown. My mother ended up passing three months later, that's when I started really re-evaluating my life. I went on the Honduras trip because, well, why not? Maybe God could speak into me more in a different country? Maybe helping someone else or seeing how someone else lives would make me happy again? Maybe, just maybe, I could find Peace again?

God did all these things and more for me. People kept saying "It will change your life" "You will get more out of it than you will give" and I just kept silently thinking "yea sure" or an invisible eye roll. I went to Honduras broken and thinking I could never heal. Not only because of my mother dying but because of all the lies I let invade my very being. The lies that told me I

wasn't good enough, the lies that said they don't mean those nice things they said to you, the lies that said you're absolutely alone. Because of the words spoken into me through this amazing, faithful, loving group of individuals that all decided like me, to go to Honduras, God transformed my soul. I heard the words "your not just a mother" and "you are a child of God" and for the first time in my life I believed those words.

I learned from the Hondurans Peace. I went to a community where no one knew me and I didn't speak much of their language but I felt genuine love from them. I saw joy all over their faces, the kind of joy most Americans don't feel daily. They made me believe in community. How they all come together and help each other and love each other. The last day we had with the Community of Pozas de Aqua the matriarch reached out and grabbed me and held me and prayed over me. I have no idea what she was saying but I felt it. She kissed me on the head and smiled with such love. I felt a sadness as we pulled away. Being there, although the work was hard, brought me a sense of Peace that brought on such happiness.

I went on this trip to Honduras, just because someone said I should consider it. And I came back changed, for the better. I feel that anyone who is at all interested should go on a mission trip. Not only for the life changing experience but to see God's beautiful creation and to eat the food!! I felt like being there as me, not a mom, or a wife or an employee, helped me to see me for the first time in my life.

And to all my Honduras team, you changed my life. The words that God spoke to me through you were just what my soul needed. So, yea, Honduras changed my life.



My name is Jake Kline, and I am 35 years old, and I have been at Crossroads for 10 years. I had the great honor and privilege of “leading” this group to Honduras. I’ve been on many mission trips, and this was my 3rd time in Honduras, and it is an honor to get a front row

seat to see how God works in people’s lives. I tell people often that if I never experience God again, He has already done enough for me in seeing others experiences with God. Thankfully, God still chooses to interact with me on a personal level.

There are two experiences I want to share that had a significant impact on me. The first is being able to ride in the back of a pick up truck. I know this doesn’t seem like anything special but there is something about being able to see the scenery all around while traveling around Honduras. The second experience is jumping into a lake surrounded by the same scenery. The thing about the scenery, mountains in particular, remind me of God’s majesty and beauty. It’s in the moments of riding in the back of the truck or jumping/floating in a lake that really puts things in perspective for me. I can be tempted to think that I know what is best and being surrounded by God’s majesty and beauty quickly puts me in my place and makes me feel as though I am the size of a paperclip. Then I’m overwhelmed that a God of that level of majesty and beauty wants to be in relationship with me. The majesty and beauty of God is overwhelming to me, but I’m grateful that God doesn’t use it to intimidate me, but instead uses it to draw me into a deeper understanding of himself, that he desires to bring his majesty and beauty in my own life. The Honduran scenery is one that

constantly reminds me that the same God who earth is still creating us new and my prayer is that my life would be one that is marked by the majesty and beauty of God.

Mission trips aren't for everyone, but experiencing God is. While you may not be interested in going on a mission trip, you might be interested in experiencing God in a new way. If that is you I would encourage you to go on a mission trip. One of my favorite quotes is from Thomas Jefferson and it goes like this:

“If you want something you’ve never had, you must be willing to do something you’ve never done.”

Mission trips vary and different trips experience different things but the common denominator of every mission trip I've been on is that people experience God in a way they never thought possible. I hope you see that in the stories you have read in this booklet. Your story could be next.

