



Serving. Training.
Energizing Partnerships.

EL SALVADOR

Our Partner

Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel, Spanish for Emmanuel Baptist Church, is a member of the Baptist Federation of El Salvador. With only approximately 100 members, Emmanuel is not a large church, but it is a remarkable one! Emmanuel is best described as a missional church that ministers far beyond its own walls. As a mission congregation it is deeply involved with development programs and is part of a dynamic relationship with the larger Christian constituency of El Salvador.

Emmanuel strives wholeheartedly to live up to its mission statement: *To proclaim the good news of God's redemption in order to convert women and men, making them disciples, and educating them in the values of God's Kingdom, in order to contribute to the construction of a more just and humane society in El Salvador.*

Our partner reminds us that when the church hears God's calling, she also must understand the social context in which she is situated and the moment in history in which she is called to be salt and light.



Emmanuel has been deeply influenced by Oscar Romero's approach to ministry who has maintained that for people the gospel reaches *"in their transcendent dimension, and their historical dimension, in their spiritual dimension and their bodily dimension. Whole persons must be saved, persons in their social relationships, who won't consider some people more human than others, but will view all as brothers and sisters and give preference to the weakest and neediest."*

Partnership

Emmanuel has entered into partnership with CBM out of the conviction that both Canadians and Salvadorans share the task of witnessing to the Kingdom of God.

STEP churches are central to our partnership with Emmanuel. They will provide financial support, so that Emmanuel Baptist can increase its commitment to community development ministries. STEP churches will also support Emmanuel's vision for theological formation of new leaders and community projects which address the housing needs of the poor.

Canadian Baptists benefit from exposure to Emmanuel's approach to holistic ministry, that is relevant in any community. Through this process, Canadian Baptist will be invited to share in Emmanuel's ministries at various times during the year.

Recent Challenges

The Salvadoran government's two principal economic policies have been the adoption of the U.S. dollar as legal tender and the pursuit of free trade agreements (FTAs).

Nearly two million Salvadorans live outside the country and send approximately two billion US a year to family members still living in El Salvador.

This constitutes the largest source of foreign income, followed by exports from so-called “maquila” assembly plants, which are known for their low wages, lack of environmental or labour regulations and low taxes.

For many Salvadorans, land tenure best reflects the inequality of their society. From 1981 to 1992, a brutal civil war left deep wounds in the country, when thousands of civilians were kidnapped and murdered by government death squads. An estimated 75,000 people died in the conflict.

In 1994, a land-transfer program outlined in the peace accords was implemented. However, unemployment, lack of housing and the high number of gun-related homicides have kept most Salvadorans in conditions no better than before the civil war.



Pastor Miguel Castro says: *We could have this sort of partnership only with Canadian Baptists. We understand our relationship in terms of mutuality, by which both parties assume responsibilities and are willing to offer each other anything that would help the other*

to fulfill the mission that our Lord Jesus Christ has given us. At the heart of our relationship is the call for our churches to understand and live out the proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom and help one another accept and live by this commitment.

Your contribution at work

True partnership requires mutuality. CBM honours the ministry priorities of our partners, and they in turn value ours. Therefore, the financial contribution of STEP partners will be allocated according to these priorities.

Community Development

The Sharing Way and Emmanuel have worked together since 1990. Initially, TSW’s involvement in El Salvador focused on relief work for refugees. Today, sustainable development ministries directly impact 34 communities. The priorities are sustainable agricultural production, micro-enterprise loans, water, reforestation, primary healthcare, basic education and housing.

Pastoral teams

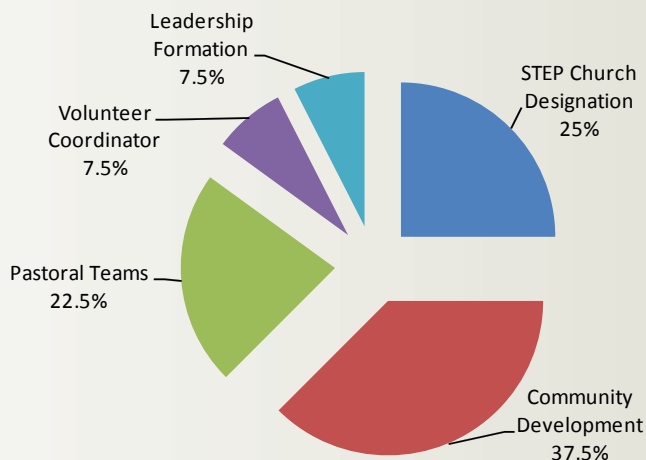
Emmanuel aspires to employ pastor-missionaries to establish churches, nurture new believers and provide spiritual guidance in the communities where there are development programs.

Leadership Formation

STEP churches will support Emmanuel’s effort to provide solid and contextualized training for emerging Christian leaders.

Volunteer Coordinator

To facilitate meaningful experiences and relationships between Canadians and Salvadorans, it is crucial to have staff in charge of planning and coordinating the activities of visiting teams and individuals.



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