



Ellyn Benson Dubberly – Children’s Ministries
Global Ministries Missionary Serving in El Salvador
End of Year Update (November 21, 2023)
Advance #3021818 edubberly@umcmmission.org

Each of the images above tells a story of gratitude – something for which I give thanks to God. The first image of two girls named Valentina and Sofia is a story of a sweet Sunday School friendship. If you ever get the opportunity to meet either Valentina or Sofia, you will surely not forget them. Each is full of life and excitement for experiencing it to the fullest. This photo was captured one Sunday morning as the two friends played out the story of Philip and the Ethiopian Royal Official found in the eighth chapter of Acts. Philip followed the nudging of the Holy Spirit and found himself in the company of a man seeking to understand God’s word in Isaiah. The Ethiopian man listened as Philip explained that the passage he was reading was about Jesus. As his heart had already been prepared by the Holy Spirit, the man asked Philip to baptize him.

I will be completely honest with you and let you know that I struggle almost every Sunday morning to rally after a week of English classes Monday through Friday, 7am until 5pm at School and then Bible Study Fellowship on from 5:45 to 11:00 Saturday mornings. But the eager spiritual hunger of children like these two precious girls gives me the strength to step beyond my comfort and wants to serve Jesus, who multiplies my feeble attempts and makes it into something eternally beautiful – like a living sacrifice...that has nothing to do with who I am or the effort of which I put in....but EVERYTHING to do with who HE is and the ministries that He invites us in which to take part.

The second photo is also from Sunday School at La Providencia Methodist Church in Ahuachapan, El Salvador. Each Sunday morning, children gather and sing praise to God as they give thanks for the many blessings provided by a faithful heavenly father in the completed week. The young girl in the forefront of the photo is eight years old. She began attending Sunday School in this past year and has very recently started attending Sunday afternoon worship services sitting with the Pastor and his wife. Something in her is hungry to know more and the Holy Spirit is nudging her to come and see.

Also in the second photo is a girl in a yellow shirt proudly wearing a crown on her head that she made during the week as a United Methodist Volunteers in Mission team with members from Virginia and Costa Rica led Bible School classes for the children in the community of La Providencia. The little girl, Emily is the youngest of three sisters. She faithfully attends Sunday School each Sunday morning, but rarely allows herself a chance to get too far removed from her sisters. On this Sunday, there was an obvious difference in Emily's confidence as she participated fully in the activities of her age-group. This is a beautiful example of how the missions teams support the ongoing ministries of the local Methodist Churches. I believe her confidence was a direct result of the outpouring of God's love that she received from the members of the missions team.

The third photo represents faithful prayers of children at La Gloria Methodist Church as they celebrate Children's Day in the month of October. Very few children in El Salvador have a care-free childhood and that is one reason that Children's Ministries are so very important to give children a space of respite to forget about some of the problems and home and to learn about a God who is always with them even in the darkest moments.

As we approach the final month of the year 2023, I give thanks for you and your support of these ministries. Because of your faithful support to my GBGM Missionary Support Advance, I can walk daily in my faith, sharing the good news of a radical man who turned religion upside down and proclaimed eternal life as a gift (*not something that must be earned through perfect living*) to all those who come to Him and receive Him as the Son of God and Messiah. I look forward to continued partnership in ministry with you in 2024 and many more testimonies of God's goodness in the lives of young people in El Salvador, Central America.

Your faithful servant,

Ellyn Dubberly

