



From David Feikes, The Shepherd's Work

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This year is a milestone for me. On Sept. 27, 2025, I turn 70. Thing is, I'm not interested in gifts, praise or congratulations. The Lord has been working on my heart, and nothing would make me happier than to see buildings constructed in Bullet Tree Falls in Belize. Would you consider contributing to this worthy cause? **The mission of The Shepherd's Work is to provide a residential facility for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Belize. Many of these people are kept at home, rather than be integrated into the community.** The Shepherd's Work will provide a home where they can thrive and develop relationships with their peers. Several residents of Sharing Meadows in Rolling Prairie, the model for The Shepherd's Work, will tell you, "This is the first time I ever had friends." Will you please consider making a donation, so this dream becomes reality. Thank you!

Here are highlights from the third trip to Belize this summer. One of the greatest blessings this time was the help the First Church of God Youth Mission trip group. Several youth and adult chaperones worked tirelessly on the construction project. They cut trees, including some very big ones and piled them up. They also carried cement block which are very heavy and aided in the laying of the cement block for the walls.



Mission Team Working on Project



Adam cutting a tree!

The best part was the relationships that I formed with the youth and adults on the trip. I have always had a heart for working with high school students and it was a joy to work with them and to hear their stories in our nightly group meetings. First Church has been taking a youth mission trip to Belize for nine years. One of the best compliments about his group came from a staff member at the hotel where we stay. He said that every year the youth from First Church are polite and courteous and some other groups are not!

I would name several of the young men and women who worked on The Shepherd's Work but they rotated over the five days and I am afraid I might miss someone. Ryan Shockey, the youth pastor, always emphasizes that the mission trip is about relationships not about the construction project or the vacation bible school that they run. I was able to bond with Adam Binkley who worked tirelessly on the project, and I got to know Danny Evans, who I think has been on every mission trip to Belize. My sons got to know him on previous mission trips and always talked highly of Danny. I now know why they hold him in such great esteem, and it was my pleasure to know him better as well!

I was in Belize 18 days after the mission group left and with their help and in total, we got a lot accomplished. We laid the block for the foundation for the main building, and it was filled by a local contractor. We spent over two days leveling the floor level and getting it ready to pour the concrete floor. I have to say that I am not very fond of Belize dirt, when it rains it gets very muddy and when dry it is hard and mixed with rocks. I love the soil in Indiana! We did not pour the floor because they were predicting rain each day and I did not want the floor to end up like the first residential building.

The temporary electrical service was installed and we now have electrical service. The mission group cleared the space for the parking lot. After they left, the excavator showed up at 3:30 just as we were about to leave. Abel, my Belize foreman, and I stayed late that night to see the culvert placed and the gravel spread! We now have parking for guests!

After the mission team left Abel and I worked alone for a couple of days. Eventually I was able to hire three local workers from the village of Bullet Tree where The Shepherd's work is located. They were a big help. The four of them speak Spanish to each other all day long. I am trying to do Duo-lingo each night but am nowhere close to understanding them.



Finally, I hope to accompany the First Church of God mission trip again which will be adults in mid-July and then I will stay for a total of four weeks holding another one-day camp for adults with intellectual disabilities and conducting my fifth math workshop for primary teachers in Belize the first week of August.

Thank you:

I want to thank all of those who have provided financial support for The Shepherd's Work. I promise you that I have been working diligently and with personal sacrifice to make the mission a reality. But most of all I want to thank those that have been praying for me and The Shepherd's Work. I can tell people have been praying, when something goes wrong, **and something always goes wrong in Belize**, it always works out! I often think about Faith, Hope, and Love. This mission requires Faith. Faith that one day a residential facility for intellectually disabled adults will be thriving in Bullet Tree, Belize. Please keep praying for the mission.

Todos son bienvenidos a La Obra del Pastor!
All are welcome at The Shepherd's Work!

Thank you for reading!
David Feikes

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