



San Lucas, Guatemala

Volume 5, Issue 1

May 2024

**A'KALA Family Foundation**

P.O. Box 52

Cologne, MN 55322

Hello friends of A'kala. Just an update from the construction side of things in San Lucas. We have the privilege of having some of the finest tradesman on our crew in San Lucas. I would like you to meet them. Israel is our foreman; he is pictured to the right. Israel has been doing construction for 30 years and has been building homes for A'kala for about 1.5 years now. Federico pictured middle has also been doing construction for 30 years and has also been building homes for A'kala for 1.5 years now. Ismael pictured left has been doing construction for 10 years and 1.5 of those years have been for A'kala as well. Of course, none of this would be possible if I didn't have our facilitator Marcos on the ground for us in San Lucas. Marcos is an amazing young man and has been with us for a long time but has only recently taken over managing the projects down there. Marcos is my eyes and ears on the ground giving me updates on all projects and has been doing that for us for about a year and half now. All of them are very skilled tradesman and have been doing wonderful work for us.



Of course, building homes in San Lucas comes with its challenges as well. Some of these challenges can include anything from simply acquiring a plot of level land and working with very rocky and volcanic soil, to getting the basic utilities ran to these homes such as water and electricity. Even faced with these challenges, the strength of the good lord seems to always pull us through.



In San Lucas we generally build two types of homes. Below are examples of what we consider a hybrid home which is built with a block foundation finished with wood walls, doors and windows topped with a steel roof. The other type of home which we have built is made completely of block with steel frame windows and doors with a steel roof as well. Both types have finished and smoothed walls inside and out and smooth red concrete floors as well which has kind of been an A'kala signature. Both have made for a very dignified living for the families of San Lucas. Of course, none of this would be possible without all the generous donations from all the kind friends of A'kala of which we are very thankful for.



## JOIN US ON A MISSION TRIP

Have you ever been on a mission trip? Maybe you're scared or anxious about going. If you have never been on a mission trip, this is your chance! We have had all ages on these trips, from babies to 80s. It can be life-changing!

There are two trips coming up this year on August 5-11, 2024 and December 5-12, 2024. If you are curious about what we do on these trips, keep reading!

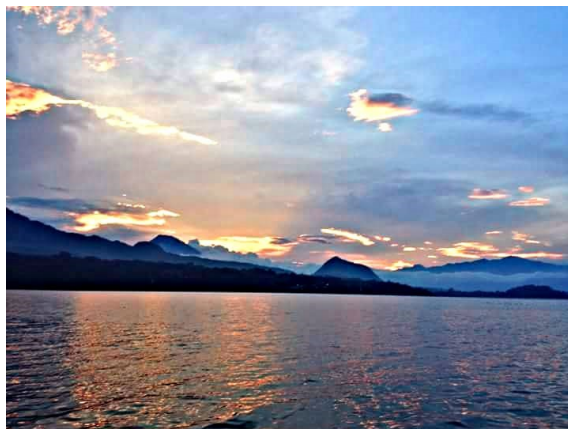
We take an early morning flight out of Minneapolis (5 am!) and we are in Guatemala City by noon or 1pm. Vans are used to transport us to San Lucas Tolimon, which sits on the edge of beautiful Lake Atitlan. We stay at a hotel that caters to mission groups. We eat all our meals here and each room has an attached bathroom. It is very clean and the food is fantastic.

Each day we try to show you the beauty of San Lucas Tolimon, either in the places we see or the people we meet along the way. In the evenings after dinner, we spend some time talking about what we did that day. Each day is different and here are a few things you may experience on the trip:

- Tour the town. You get to see the lake, the church, the cemetery (very different from our typical cemeteries) and some projects completed on past trips. You get to meet the staff that work with A'Kala families and construction in San Lucas.
- Service Projects. We do concentrate on service while we are there, but these mission trips are so much more. You have an opportunity to work on building houses, bunk beds or stoves for families in need.
- Deliver food and clothing to the children and families associated with A'Kala. You may help to package the food for deliveries and the donations that we bring along with us.
- Work alongside the people in the community. It may be working with the bomberos (fire fighters) or the health care community. If there is a need, we try to find a way to help.
- Visit Santiago, a nearby city, and see the church and site that Blessed Stanley Roether was martyred. There is also an opportunity to do some souvenir shopping here.

Things don't happen at the same speed we are used to in the States. We often call this "Guatemala time". Sometimes our pickups that we travel in daily don't show up on time or the tools we need aren't readily accessible. It can cause some frustration because we are so used to things happening immediately. However, this creates opportunities for us to talk to others in the group, get to know our Guatemalan partners or brush up on our Spanish!

If you are interested in going with us on a trip, please contact Fr. Brian Oestreich or Julie Cink for more information.





## A'KALA Sponsorships

A'KALA offers a sponsorship program through which your generous donation can fund food for a child in need each month. If you sign up, you will receive information about your sponsor child & be able to write letters and send pictures back and forth to each other. (If you come on a trip with us, you'll also be able to meet them in person!)

**COST:** \$40/month or \$480/year

**CONTACT:** Mallory Raymond ([m.raymond@akalaff.org](mailto:m.raymond@akalaff.org))

### **Here are some details regarding a sponsorship:**

- \* A donation of \$480 will sponsor a child for a year. You can choose to either pay this amount month to month or one time a year. We accept PayPal (via the website) and check payments. Yearly payments are due on January 31. If you want a A'KALA sponsorship, please let us know!
- \* Monthly payments of \$40 are payable via PayPal or check and are due on the first of each month.
- \* We encourage continued communication between sponsors and the children/families. All correspondence from either party (letters, pictures, etc.) will be translated and shared via email. Our staff in Guatemala will ensure that these items are printed and given to the family.
- \* If you have specific requests for gifts or donations (for birthdays, special events, etc.) please reach out to a board member and we will help make it happen.

Thank you again for partnering with us, and please contact us if you have any questions!



The people of A'KALA want to pray for you!

If you have a special prayer request please email us and let us know what to pray for. We will send your request to San Lucas and ask all the families of A'KALA to pray for you. Together we are blessed in prayer! You can send your prayer request to [m.stordahl@akalaff.org](mailto:m.stordahl@akalaff.org)

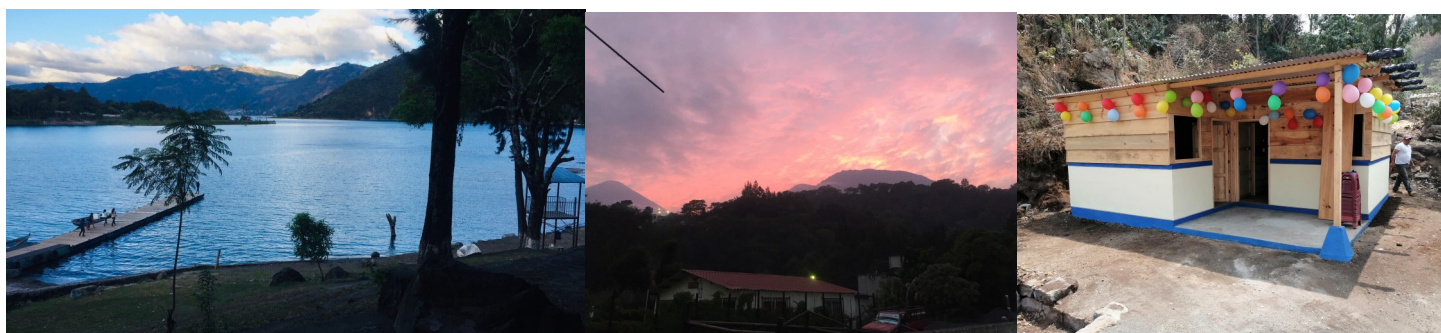
**Foundation Board of Directors  
and Contact Information:**

Father Brian Oestreich ~ b.oestreich@akalaff.org  
ph: 507-829-6667  
Julie Cink ~ j.cink@akalaff.org  
Mallory Raymond ~ m.raymond@akalaff.org  
Meghan Stordahl ~ m.stordahl@akalaff.org  
Sydney Wittnebel ~ s.wittnebel@akalaff.org  
Ryan Kaczmarek ~ Construction Resource Manager  
r.kaczmarek@akalaff.org  
Sandra Ajcot ~ Directory of Ministry  
San Lucas, Guatemala  
Marcos Galindo ~ Program Manager

**A'KALA Team Members**

Katlyn Fischer ~ Social Media Support  
Shari Stordahl ~ Volunteer Resource and Medical  
Support  
Dawn Mork ~ Education and Translator  
Jill Lora ~ Sponsorship Resource and Translator  
Kris Radermacher ~ Publications and Communications

*Please don't forget, send your email to  
[m.stordahl@akalaff.org](mailto:m.stordahl@akalaff.org) so you can receive news  
and ministry information from San Lucas!*



«First Name» «Last Name»  
«Address»  
«City, State» «ZIP»

A'KALA Family Foundation  
P.O. Box 52  
Cologne, MN 55322