

Answered Prayers in Belize

This year's trip, outreaches and Expo in Belize were extra special as we were able to go into neighboring villages distributing mobility items, medical supplies, and food as well as build ramps for folks in need.

The first person we met on these outings was Ms. Mary. She had come home from the hospital the day before, after having her second leg amputated below the knee. When we drove up to her house, her sister greeted us and we explained that we had come to build a ramp for Ms. Mary's house and visit with her, if she was feeling up to it.

After a few minutes, we were shown inside to visit with Ms. Mary in her room. She was sitting up on her bed and greeted us with a smile and was so excited to hear about the new ramp. Her pastor and friends had made the arrangements through our local ministry partner, Hearts of Christ, so it was a surprise to Ms. Mary.

One of our team members, who is experienced in fitting people with wheelchairs, talked with Ms. Mary and then he and a couple of team members went back to the Hearts of Christ mission to see what we had that would be a good fit for her. The rest of us stayed and prayed with Ms. Mary and heard a little of her story before the ramp-building began.



With it being our first ramp of the week, there was a little trial and error, and one minor injury, but soon the workers were in their groove and the platform and ramp began to take shape. As it was getting completed, the others came back with a motorized wheelchair for Ms. Mary. When the ramp was finished, we all went back to see Ms. Mary and brought her the chair. She was so surprised that she was going to be able to leave her bed and her house with the help of the chair! A couple of us helped Ms. Mary get into the chair. Then we asked her if she would like to go outside. She said "yes" as she wanted to check out her new ramp!

As she wheeled through the door and out onto the porch, she was so excited to get out in the sunshine and said that she wanted to sit outside the rest of the afternoon and wave at everyone passing by! Being able to have a wheelchair and leave her house gave her freedom to even go to the store in her neighborhood by herself.

The next day, we headed out to the village of Ontario to meet Eli and to distribute packets of rice and beans to the people in the village. When we drove up, Eli was on the porch working on someone's bicycle tire (he repairs bikes for a living). After they finished, Korie made the introductions and the builders got to work removing the old ramp (the porch remained, but was reinforced). We saw some frogs that lived under the ramp and uncovered the hiding place of a tarantula, which caused some excitement, especially when the tarantula appeared again later in the process!

While the ramp was being built, Eli and Doug, who has also been living with a disability for many years, were able to spend time talking and getting to know each other, sharing their stories. Eli told Doug, "I've lived for 13 years since my accident and have never met another person in a wheelchair." Eli was able to see how God has worked in Doug's life despite his disability, and that he can be used by God to encourage others as well.

Our team was also able to bring Eli a new manual wheelchair to use while he works and repaired a motorized wheelchair that Eli already owned. Eli was appreciative of the new "wheels" as well as the ramp and porch and the other practical items that the team brought him. There were also some holes in the flooring of his house that needed to be repaired and the team was able to fix them to make it easier for Eli to maneuver inside.

The culmination of the trip was our 2nd annual Expo at the Hearts of Christ facility and God blessed us with over 200 attendees! We were able to distribute many walker, crutches and canes along with appropriate medical supplies, as well as fitted over 50 folks with power or manual wheelchairs. Many told us including Mary and Eli that they had prayed for God to send help and that we were an answer to their prayer. Thankfully, we have a Good Father who sees our need, and hears and answers our cries for help!

