

MY LIFE BARTLETT & CORDOVA

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FOCUS | FAITH

Sharing Jesus in Honduras

Bellevue members have vacation Bible school

By ALISA NAVE
Special to My Life

Bob Furniss of Bartlett sat in the middle of his light brown couch with his hands resting under his chin. His face was red as he smiled and tried to hold back tears while watching a video of a group of children playing basketball.

"This is the school where we held vacation Bible school," Furniss said as he pointed to the video.

Furniss, a consultant and public speaker, is also an active member of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova. He just recently returned from the annual Bellevue missionary trip to Honduras.

The trip was led by church members William McKay and Dave Hamilton, who are also leaders of Point of Impact Ministries (POI). POI is a movement to reach the youths of Honduras, develop them to become fully devoted followers of Jesus and equip them to have an impact on their entire nation for Christ.

With help from Impacto, a local Honduran church supported by Bellevue, Furniss, his son Kevin and other members spoke freely about Jesus and His gospel to Hondurans at their local school. According to Furniss, this is a luxury we no longer have in the United States.

For eight days the teams shared Jesus through music, drama and crafts at vacation Bible school.

"It was great," he said. "We sang songs and played with puppets."

The teams also provided medical aid.

"In three days, we treated more 1,000 children with parasite medicine which only costs 25 cents," Furniss said. "They need it twice a year but their government can't afford it. Unfortunately those children with parasites basically have problems digesting their food."

Furniss said they also gave the children dental hygiene treatments and taught them how to brush their teeth.

"You know fluoride is the nastiest tasting stuff," he said. "But the kids would just look up at you and open their mouths. Actually, the hardest part about brushing their teeth was they would not quit smiling. The highlight of their day was getting their picture taken with a digital camera."

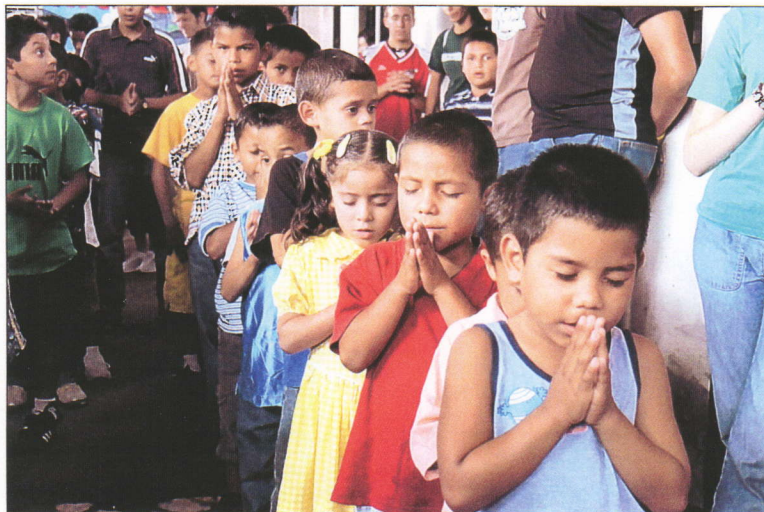
Furniss described Honduras as being like any other country. You have the rich and you have the poor. He said there are nice middle-class neighborhoods, like in America.

He also said there are multiple families and generations living in one house where the average household income for a year is around \$660 a person and children tend to roam the streets without their parents, looking through garbage for food.

"We have poverty in America," he said. "But we don't have poverty that exists in some of those neighborhoods."



Bartlett residents Bob and Kevin Furniss recently returned from the annual Bellevue Baptist missionary trip to Honduras.



Bob Furniss, son Kevin and many other Bellevue members spoke freely about Jesus and His gospel to Hondurans. During a vacation Bible school held at Impacto, a local Honduran church supported by Bellevue Baptist, children learned about God and how to pray.

But in spite of their circumstances, they are amazingly happy children. And they watch out for each other."

Furniss said he thinks their greatest obstacle is the opportunity to better themselves. But the local youth group works diligently to make every day a better one.

Kevin, 19, has been on this mission trip three times. He said he believes the trips have made him view America

differently.

"I don't think that we (Americans) think about how much we do have," Kevin said. "I think God has blessed us with a lot of things for a reason — to help others, but we tend to take it for granted."

Bob Furniss said he is proud of the positive changes Kevin has made because of these trips.

"My son prays for nations," he said.

"He prays for starving children in Africa. And he also changed his major from business to Christian studies."

Furniss is also grateful for the opportunity to have gone on this trip and for the bonding time with Kevin.

"The first day I was there I couldn't stop crying," he said. "There is so much need there."

For more information on Point of Impact, visit poi.hn.org.

New black belts

