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A new phenomenon has begun in India. The amazing work of God’s Spirit over the last 14 years has resulted in a huge growth of believers who long to send their children to a Christian school.

In many cases children have no options for school, and rarely do the poorest citizens get a quality education. Maranatha has built numerous school campuses, but the need is far greater than they can accommodate. The boarding campuses are important, but smaller day schools are needed also. After finding The One-Day School to be an answer to prayer in other parts of the world, Maranatha debuted the first One-Day School campus in India in November of 2011.

The volunteers who constructed the One-Day School campus in Guntur, India were touched by the people around them. “I think it’s
very important to build schools for kids in India and other parts of the world," says Danilo Poljak, a first time Maranatha volunteer. "First of all, they don’t have the opportunity to go to school. There are not enough schools. Especially if we can build Christian schools. I am convinced that we are saving lives for eternity. They are not just going to learn to read and count. They are going to learn about God. That is very, very important for people in India."

"Almost half of the kids are not going to school because they don’t have the chance," says Danilo, "They either don’t have a school or their parents don’t have money to pay for them. The school that we built will be a blessing for so many."

Ten years ago the government closed the school, because they weren’t able to bring the old buildings up to code. After a decade, the community is grateful to see the campus opening up to students again. The school campus is right in the middle of the city of Guntur. It will be a day school for those who live close enough to attend classes and live at home.

Each new building on the campus took approximately one day to build, yet provides a sturdy, permanent solution. After many years with no Adventist school, the quick construction was a surprise to locals. But the quality was even better than expected. "The level of construction is way different from schools that we saw around the area. Right across the street was a school without windows or doors in most of the classrooms," says Danilo. "Compared to everything else that we saw, they will be first-class classrooms."

Longtime Maranatha volunteer Wayne Juhl was the primary sponsor for the project, officially called the Juhl Adventist School. He remembers his first trip to India, many years ago. "At that time I was just amazed at the people – masses of people. Instead of the town streets having vehicles, they were just packed with people," he remembers. "I got to know some very nice people who very much needed what we could give."

Wayne’s son Ivan, daughter-in-law Jolene and grandson Jte attended the project and saw for themselves the impact the school is sure to have. "You would see kids sitting on the ground cross-legged in the dirt studying," remembers Jolene. "You could see the importance of education for them." Some village people even told her they had attended the school in Guntur years before.

The dedication ceremony at the Juhl Adventist School was a special day for many. In the middle of suburban Guntur, the quiet campus is a refuge. Mature palm trees tower above the 12 completed classroom buildings. On November 12, local teachers, conference officials and families joined the international team of volunteers to pray and celebrate God’s care in Guntur. They asked for a blessing on the immaculate rows of desks that will soon hold as many as 300 boys and girls – children who might have stayed sitting in the dust without the opportunity this school will provide. Classes will begin on schedule in June, 2012.

"It was a big blessing overall in lots of ways. I see things differently now. I put things in a different perspective," reflects Danilo.

The Juhl Adventist School campus in Guntur is the first of many One-Day School campuses to begin making a huge impact in India, and on volunteers, for years to come.

Photo by Debbie Thompson Kippel

“Almost half of the kids are not going to school because they don’t have a chance," says Maranatha volunteer Danilo Poljak. The new One-Day School campus will change that for many children.

Photo by Laura Noble
MOVING INTO NICARAGUA

BY CARRIE PURKEYPILE

It’s official! The newest “top” destination for Maranatha volunteers is the Central American nation of Nicaragua. Hundreds of volunteers will travel to Nicaragua during 2012 to serve, learn and grow.

Maranatha has returned to Nicaragua! Volunteers started by revamping the Education and Evangelism Center built by Maranatha in 2001.

Maranatha has been in Nicaragua before – with amazing results. In 1975 Maranatha volunteers built ten churches there. Those ten congregations grew so large that each of them created several “daughter” churches. Maranatha returned to the country in 2000 to build 20 more churches, and seven schools.

Pastor Juan Angel Guevara is the Director of the Central Mission of the Adventist Church in Nicaragua. He watched the astounding effect of new churches on the neighborhoods. “In the time since then, those churches also grew, multiplied, and divided. From one church, four churches were born. From another church came forth three new churches, from another five new churches. The advance in the church growth has been greatly aided by Maranatha.

“In 2005, leadership divided many full churches and planted members in other places,” Pastor Guevara recounts. “Our church has grown a lot in the short time since then. Five years later the new churches and the ‘old’ original churches were completely full.”

Nicaragua is ready for the next challenge! They have officially requested 80 churches, but Pastor Guevara knows they could easily utilize many more. “The real need is for about 200 temples throughout our country. But we don’t have land. Here under this tree (in the Mission parking lot) a church meets. Another meets at our radio station office. Churches are meeting in pastors’ homes, in members’ homes, because they don’t have land. So for now we will work on the ones for which we DO have land!”
The land that they have for churches is spread around Nicaragua. The majority of church sites are on the dry western coast, because most of Nicaragua’s population is concentrated in the western Pacific lowlands, near major ports. A quarter of the entire population lives in or near the capital city of Managua. This region was settled by the Spanish centuries ago, and their ancient architecture is on display here – most colorfully in the beautiful cities of Granada and León. The other two regions of Nicaragua, the cooler central highlands, and the Caribbean lowlands provide a very distinct experience. Some isolated segments of the population speak only creole-style English, others have conserved ancient cultural languages and traditions. A large segment of the population are afro-caribbeans who settled in eastern Nicaragua generations ago.

Nicaraguans of all colors, speaking a variety of languages and each keeping their own traditions are waiting to welcome volunteers to their communities.

“Our dream is to have a church in every neighborhood. A church in each community, in each city, in each housing development. We dream of filling Nicaragua with churches and with schools – and to always have a school connected with a church. We cannot do it because sometimes, the resources we have are limited. But we are sure that with the help of the volunteers of Maranatha that we can do it together,” says Pastor Guevara.

Consider Nicaragua as a destination for a mission project in 2012. Whether you join our summer family project, send a teen on the Ultimate Workout, or volunteer on one of our friendly open team projects, Nicaragua will be the place to make memories this year.

There are volunteer opportunities for all ages in towns and cities all over Nicaragua.

Children gratefully receive gifts from volunteers. Those who serve almost always say they receive more blessings than they give.

One-Day Schools and Churches will make a dramatic change for people all over Nicaragua during the next year, and for many years to come.
The original “emergency” buildings provided after Haiti’s earthquake in 2010 helped thousands of young people get back on track with their education, and their lives in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. A more permanent solution has now arrived – the One-Day School classroom – complete with permanent walls, ventilated windows, desks, and hurricane reinforced roofs.

Maranatha recently erected the first One-Day School on the Adventist University Campus in Haiti. Adventist World Church President, Ted Wilson attended the dedication and rejoiced alongside hundreds of Haitians. The anxiously awaited One-Day Schools are a partnership between Maranatha Volunteers International, ASI and ADRA.

The Haitian Adventist University Campus has 2,500 students from Kindergarten through college. The quake damaged or destroyed most of their classrooms. After the January earthquake the government announced that classes would resume in April – and gave them six tents to replace the 40 classrooms that had been destroyed. “I can tell you that it would be a very, very, big, big challenge for us. Really it would (have been) impossible to start classes without those One-Day Schools,” says University President, JJ Pierre.

The University Campus will have 28 One-Day School classroom buildings, and more classrooms will be built in other areas around Port-au-Prince for a total of 100 new buildings. The original One-Day frames will be repurposed for other needs in the country.
Since the very first One-Day Church built in Malawi in April, 2011, crews have erected 605 church structures in villages, towns and seemingly empty bush locations around the country. Tens of thousands of overjoyed local people are meeting in the new churches, and making them their own.

Bruce LaPorte recently spent two years in Mozambique and Malawi providing mechanical support for the Maranatha team, and helping build churches. “We did 254 churches in 12 weeks,” he explains. “It’s pretty amazing what the Lord can do with the right people in the right situation.”

“The congregations are really putting the walls up,” he reports. “I see the excitement that they have for their new churches. They are so happy!”

Bruce saw for himself many of the previous places of worship. “Some of them didn’t even have churches. They were just meeting under a big tree. Others were these broken down block buildings, with mud bricks and a thatch roof. Sometimes they were caved in when we got there.”

Most of the structures in Malawi have been built by Maranatha crews. Two groups of volunteers also went in to assist. Over the last few months political turmoil has increased in Malawi and one of the consequences is that there is almost no fuel available for purchase anywhere in the country. Without fuel to power the trucks, it is difficult for Maranatha crews to continue. To keep progressing forward, we are moving the One-Day Church team into Zimbabwe to start work there. We’ll return to Malawi to finish the requested buildings when fuel is flowing once again.