



Open Arms Hispanic Ministry

Sharing God's love by meeting needs of Hispanic immigrants in Wayne Co., Ohio, and surrounding areas

Brazos Abiertos

June 2020

Open Arms Ministries' Statement on Racial Injustice

Due to recent events that have transpired and continue to occur in our nation, we, the board and staff of Open Arms Hispanic Ministries, feel compelled to respond with a call for us all to examine ourselves, lament and pray together. In addition, we support the call of the Mennonite Church Executive Board and staff to "... encourage our supporters to stand in solidarity with communities of color, walk alongside them, (learn from them, and work together for needed change.) This is especially needed as COVID-19 is unveiling the racial disparities in our systems."

We lament the tragic death of George Floyd and the numerous other inexcusable deaths of African Americans at the hands of police who appear to be ill-trained to handle conflicts with people of color. In addition to African Americans, Open Arms also stands in support of Hispanics in northeast Ohio and throughout our nation who are also experiencing racism and discrimination. Our Executive Director has seen discrimination against his Hispanic brothers and sisters in

Wayne County on numerous occasions and has experienced such discrimination himself.

Unhappily, the racial pain, injustices and division in the United States are happening daily. We stand with all those who recognize that every human being is created in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity, equity and justice. We reject all forms of racism, exclusion, oppression, and violence.

As people of hope, we need to be willing to step out in new, radical ways to understand, serve, and know people who think and live differently than we do. As people of hope we cannot leave this situation unchanged. We may be small in number, but we can have a significant impact if we allow God to work through us.



George Floyd

"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."

~ Hebrews 13:2

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Summer Remote Tutoring Program for Hispanic Children

"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me." (Matthew 18:5)

Open Arms is blessed to be pursuing a program of remote tutoring for elementary-school Hispanic students over the summer, and possibly into the fall as we work to strengthen their access to technology at home and their confidence in online learning as they work remotely with a tutor. Many local Hispanic students found remote learning to be a challenge during the spring school closures. Our hope is to work with elementary school students, who need to master basic academic and English-language skills.

We are beginning with a small pilot remote tutoring program with several students and tutors I will recruit, and we will provide them with suitable laptops and access to internet service. The pilot program will let us determine interest and need from Hispanic families and students. We also

want to see how the materials we select and the remote learning with tutors are working before we expand.

Hopefully, this program will not only assist students and their families in the summer months, but also possibly into the fall, when we may continue with the remote tutoring program or possibly move to an in-person tutoring program in partnership with the Orrville Elementary Schools.

I am excited about this possibility of helping our Hispanic elementary school students with a remote reading/language program this summer. It is a blessing to see God's love in the children we will meet, tutor, and nurture.

Blessings!
Haroldo Nunes



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From the Desk of the Director

“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me

something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” -Matthew 25: 34-36 (NIV)

As I'm writing this report, I feel an immense gratitude for you, our stakeholders. As you already know, due to the cancellation of our annual fundraiser banquet in March, our business donors have pledged around \$8,400 to be matched to help Open Arms during these difficult times. Because of the current Covid-19 pandemic, the Board has decided to greatly expand our Compassion Fund to help meet the physical needs (food, rent, medical bills, etc.) of many immigrants who will not qualify for government assistance. Our goal was to continue reaching out to those in need with God's love in action during this difficult time.

In this time we experienced the blessings of our Lord and Savior pouring out. You were awesome, responding to our call to help: "Sharing God's love by meeting needs of Hispanic immigrants in Wayne County, Ohio, and surrounding areas". Our mission is inspired by Biblical mandates from many OT passages on the treatment of "aliens" to the words of Jesus seen above.

As a result, our Matching Campaign had received double the amount of money to be matched. We want to extend a HUGE THANK YOU to our community, empowering us to help the less fortunate. Recently, the Board of Directors and I decided to also help our Hispanic

sisters and brothers in Tuscarawas county. Due to a huge increase of positive cases of Covid-19 in the meat-processing plants there, we extended our focus to the Dover area, where most of the plant workers live. Dan and Jeanette King were coordinating with the leadership of "Iglesia Latina" in Dover. I was in contact, working with Jeff Stewart, the Director of the Immigrant Worker Project in Canton, to assist sick people and those in need with grocery cards. We also gave money for rent, and sent funds to the Food Bank of the Dover-New Philadelphia area. Here in Wayne County, we contributed to the Covid-19 fund of Salem Mennonite Church (Wooster) as well. We disbursed more than \$12,000 in the last three months to help Hispanic families around us and in surrounding areas. (This money provided for food, housing expenses, and more).

We have been blessed again, to see God at work in many ways and in many lives through a small but dedicated group of staff and volunteers.

Thank you so much for your love and compassion for our Hispanic brothers and sisters!

In Christ's Love!
Pastor Haroldo Nunes
Executive Director



Open Arms was able to disperse more than \$12,000 in aid to help local Hispanic families during this crisis.

Helping Hispanics in Dover & New Philadelphia



Since our retirement from the pastorate, and return to Dover in December 2016, God has opened up unexpected doors for Jeanette and I, in ministry to Hispanics in our area. I took a part-time job in April 2017 as an interpreter at Dover High School and continue in that role. It has been fulfilling to be able to help Hispanic students, struggling to pass their classes in a new language,

while working (most of them) in factories during evening/night hours.

Early on, through a mutual friend, I met a Guatemalan man in his early 40's (we'll call him Carlos) who lost one eye in a work-related accident in a local factory. He was without work for almost three years; I helped him get a job last fall in a local restaurant. As much as possible, Carlos sends money back home to his wife and two teenage daughters in Guatemala. I have learned much from his friendship as a Christian brother.

Jeanette befriended a young woman (we'll call her Teresa) who was expecting a child, and sat with her during labor and delivery. Several weeks later, Teresa was admitted to the hospital with abdominal pain and ended up

needing gallbladder surgery. Jeanette ministered to her both as nurse, and an absentee mother during this difficult process. She keeps in touch with Teresa often as her beautiful baby girl continues to grow.

We recently became involved with a newly-formed group called ONE; an informal association of 10-12 persons, mostly bi-lingual, from about 6 local churches who are seeking to improve the lives of Hispanics in the Dover/ New Philadelphia area. A few of our activities include: advocacy with local police departments, medical advisory, Covid19 education, and assistance with rent and food. We do not accept funds, but, as occasions arise, refer interested donors to several other faith-based nonprofits in Tuscarawas County. In coordination with the ONE group, Jeanette and I also deliver food each week from the Greater Dover/New Philadelphia Food Pantry to six Hispanic families.

We thank God for opening doors for us in retirement to share God's love with Hispanics in our area. We are learning and receiving much from them as well.

Dan King
Chair of Board