

## OUR GUATEMALA PARTNERSHIP

*“that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith”. Romans 1:12*



Friends,

Here is an amazing letter that was passed at the recent Suchitepequez Presbytery Convention. Osmundo Ponce, one of our partnership pastors authored it. What a bright light for our world. Shared by Brian-Thompson Royer, our Mission Co-Worker in Guatemala.

### PASTORAL LETTER

"Do not conform to your current situation but transform it,  
for that is the will of God "(Rom 12: 2)

The members of the Suchitepéquez Presbytery gathered in the Plenary Session of the month of October 2017, within the framework of the Celebration of the 500 years of the Protestant Reformation, have decided to follow the example of the reformers and express our thoughts freely about what happens in the church and in today's society.

We believe that the faithful and true Christian has as a fundamental principle the true change of situations that are in poor condition. That is why we preach conversion and personal change, family change and complete social transformation so that there is peace, truth and justice among the entire population. The Bible encourages us as Christians committed to the Kingdom of God to seek and work for justice and the dignified life of all the people, the Bible tells us: "Blessed are you who seek justice" (Matthew 5: 6)

As a church that fulfills its prophetic function we denounce that in the current Guatemalan society there is social sin from the very foundations of the economic, social and political structure. The government of Guatemala, for many years, has ingratiated itself with the transnational corporations, and nowadays the privatization of public services continues, the excessive exploitation of natural resources is facilitated and the environment is contaminated, which it only favors the ruling classes to the detriment of the population that suffers more poverty every day and much more malnutrition, especially in childhood that will suffer great intellectual, physical and emotional consequences. "He who oppresses the poor offends God" (Proverbs 14:31)

We have noted with great concern that the dark forces of corruption and impunity have captured the Guatemalan state and have led it increasingly to deterioration, with the aggravating circumstance that when government authorities are discovered and denounced in cases of corruption they do everything the possible for not responding before the instances of justice and they are protected in the antejucio that facilitates them to remain in the impunity. "When the wicked rule, the people groan" (Proverbs 29: 2)

We see with pain how the working population can not subsist on the minimal minimum wage imposed by the powerful businessmen that have representation in the National Congress; but these will have their reward, because the Holy Bible says in Isaiah 10: 1 "Woe to those who dictate unjust laws against the poor"

Therefore, we urge the Government of Guatemala and its officials to listen carefully to the demands of the people and to manage with agility the solution of the problems that have led to the current social conflict. We support the courts that have correctly carried out their work, those who have investigated and presented the evidence of acts of corruption to the courts. And so, we hope that justice will be

enforced and that the damage caused to the country will be repaired. "The just one is attentive to the cause of the poor, the wicked one does not understand" (Proverbs 29: 7)

We encourage the people of Guatemala, the different social organizations, especially the Christian churches, to coordinate actions to solve the crisis that our country suffers. Let us carry a message of hope and peace, providing solutions to these economic, social and political problems. Let us share the confidence that it is possible to change this grave situation by assuming a transforming commitment so that the signs of the Kingdom of God in our midst become reality. "How beautiful are the feet of him who preaches good and peace!" (Isaiah 52: 7)

We call on all Christians to be faithful followers of the Master, since Jesus and his disciples changed history. Remember that the Master, Jesus of Nazareth, chose to serve the poorest of his time, he taught us that the Way of Justice is the way to the Kingdom of God. "I have come to give good news to the poor ... to free the oppressed and preach the acceptable time of the Lord." (Luke 4:18)

Just as Jesus changed history, the Reformers Luther, Calvin and Knox also changed history. Today it is up to us to be the standard-bearers to change the history of our society. We must not be afraid because we trust that "God is with us and if God is with us, who is against us" (Romans 8:31).

May the God of Life, God of History, our Master Jesus the Christ, the Holy Spirit provide us with the Strength, Courage and Wisdom to exercise our ministry. "God has declared what is good and what he asks of you: only do justice, love mercy and humble yourself only before God." (Micah 6: 8)

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Please keep our PWNC Guatemala Leadership Team in prayer as they travel to Guatemala January 28- February 6<sup>th</sup>. They will be meeting with the Joint Partnership Committee and sub committees for: Education, Presbyterian Women and Micro Loans.