

From the Director, Roy Berkenbosch

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:4-5 (see next page)

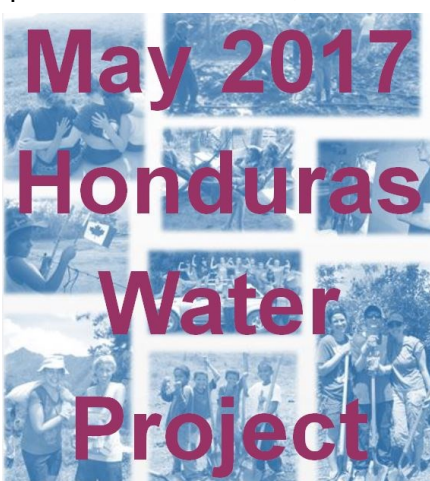
Reflections on the Honduras Water Project

Alyssa deRegt, 2016 HWP team member

Prior to our departure to Varsovia, Honduras, our team of 11 students learned about some of the political, environmental and educational issues in Honduras. We talked about transformational development and the negative effects our own cultural biases can have, and have had, on this kind of work. Once in Honduras, we were led through further orientation about the country, including information about the work of **Diaconia Nacional**, **World Renew's** local partner, and where we fit into that picture. We also visited and learned about **The Association For a More Just Society (AJS)** and what they were doing to address corruption in the Honduran justice system. In Varsovia, the community where we stayed, we made a trip to the local health center. We asked a doctor questions about healthcare and learned that the lack of support and funding, even for basic essentials, made proper patient care difficult. Clinics were in need of supplies, and medicines were too expensive for many families to afford. We also learned about community dynamics and the roles individuals play within it.

Attending a leaders' meeting, we learned about the mechanics of the community, how leaders are chosen, and the responsibilities that come with those roles. Even the smallest of children had responsibilities that I might not have had until I was a teen, such as caring for siblings, and taking care of the house. This, combined with the high cost of education, resulted in many children not making it past grade six. In some cases, children were left to take care of their younger siblings while both parents were working, either on crops such as plantain and cashews, or traveling to work in the closest major city.

Before leaving Varsovia, we had the opportunity to tour a banana plantation as well as shrimp and cashew farms, to see how these were run and the work behind some of the food that we see in our grocery stores. This experience made me much more appreciative of where our food comes from and the work that goes into making it readily available. Having the opportunity to be involved in the Honduras Water Project has been an incredible learning experience and a true blessing.



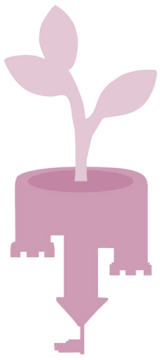
The 2017 Honduras Water Project team will be returning to Varsovia to continue with, and hopefully complete, the project started in 2016. Applications are due December 1st and can be obtained by contacting the Micah Centre.

Action on Campus

This year, **MASS** (Micah Action and Awareness Student Society) has been diving right into important social justice issues. On October 14, we hosted a Harvest of Letters on behalf of World Renew's **Good Soil Campaign** (see article on next page). Students and professors joined together to write letters to the Canadian federal government and urged them to increase funding for small-scale farmers in order to address global hunger, gender equity, and climate change. MASS was also involved this year with the "**Chew on This**" campaign, which seeks to spread awareness about food insecurity in Canada and the need for a federal anti-poverty plan. We handed out more than 80 "Chew on This" lunch bags filled with postcards addressed to the government, and of course, apples! MASS was very excited to cohost special guest **Cynthia Hunt** at the beginning of November. Cynthia shared about her work in the Ladakh, India, with **Health Inc.**, addressing community development, the environment, agriculture, health, and education with the Ladakhi people in the high altitudes of the western Himalayas. For more information upcoming events or to get involved with MASS, find our group on Facebook!

(From the Director cont'd)

One of the more dismaying disclosures following Donald Trump's victory in the US election was the widely reported fact that a vast majority of white evangelicals voted for him, having apparently found his bigoted and racist policy promises, his bellicose belligerence and his misogynist behaviors to be of insufficient concern to vote otherwise. I've been trying (unsuccessfully) to understand that but did receive insight from a column by Michael Coren in the Toronto Star. He points to the tendency of Christians everywhere to make Jesus over in their own image. He writes "The reality is that myriad Christians — Americans in particular but many Canadians follow the trend — want Jesus to become more like them rather than they more like Him. Whether it be abortion, equal marriage, euthanasia, climate change, unbridled capitalism, immigration or government intervention, they have transformed Jesus the Loser into Jesus the conservative, Jesus the businessman, Jesus the bumptious reality television personality." I'm reminded of a ditty an old school friend used to sing in an attempt to tease my faith: "I don't care if it rains or freezes, as long as I've got my plastic Jesus sitting on the dashboard of my car..." A plastic Jesus, one that we can mold and fashion after our own sensibilities and aspirations, one who can be made to baptize and sanction our own best and worst ideas. I know that what is true of others is also likely to be true of me. One of Jesus most pertinent questions was, "who do you say that I am?" How we answer makes all the difference. And so, this advent season, as we draw near the light of the world, I pray that this life-light may penetrate the self-deceptive darkness in my own soul so that I may see Him clearly, in all his cruciform glory, so that I may be shaped by him and not vice versa. And I pray that for every friend of the Micah Centre too.



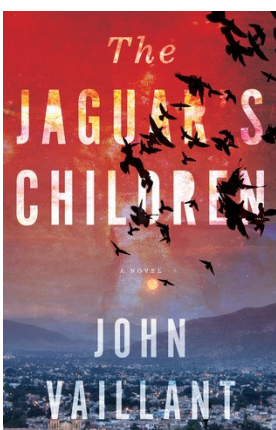
Alumni Update - Sarah and Jonathan Nicolai-deKoning

Both Sarah and Jonathan had the opportunity to participate in Micah Centre internships right after graduation. Sarah spent 6 months in Uganda volunteering with **World Renew** in partnership with the **Anglican Development Department**. Jonathan's half year in Haiti took him around the country, experiencing the work of **World Renew**, **Mennonite Central Committee**, and their local partners. In the years since graduation, the Nicolai-deKonings have been involved with a number of organizations and groups that work with marginalized communities and different social issues. From community kitchens at **Jacob's Well** in Downtown Eastside Vancouver, to the **Greater Edmonton Alliance's** efforts around preserving agricultural land in Edmonton, they've had the chance to see firsthand what Micah's call to "do justice and love kindness" looks like on the Ground. The Micah Centre and their time at King's have been an important catalyst in their own understandings of justice, and the role they might play in seeing God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Sarah and Jonathan currently have two young kids, and are both employed at **The Mustard Seed** in inner-city Edmonton. Sarah's work as a community engagement coordinator involves her with a huge variety of people around Edmonton who are interested in learning more about poverty, homelessness, and social justice. The **Open Door Project** is Jonathan's area of work, journeying with men in the Edmonton area as they leave the federal prison system and rejoin society, and empowering volunteers to do the same.



The Good Soil Campaign

Last May four King's students, including Micah students Abbi Hofstede and Claire Brandenburg, took part in the **Justice Leadership Tour** sponsored by **World Renew**. They travelled to Ottawa and spent time with World Renew representatives and other students from across Canada, learning about the **Good Soil Campaign**. This campaign promotes increased aid investment in small scale farming as one important way governments can address food insecurity and hunger. The students then met with MPs on Parliament Hill and talked to them about the importance of investing in agriculture. Many MPs took action by writing a letter to the Minister of International Development. Through this trip students were introduced to advocacy work and gained valuable experience in the workings of our government. Reflecting on the Tour Abbi Hofstede said, "I really appreciated learning about how our political system takes into account the concerns of citizens, and I enjoyed the opportunity to experience this firsthand".



Director's book recommendation
The Jaguar's Children by John Vaillant
The Tiger's Children is a riveting novel about the travails of migrants crossing from Mexico in to the US, at the mercy of ruthless coyotes. But it is more than that, drawing attention to the dark underside of globalization, the effects of agri-com on subsistence farming, the perils of truth-telling and the possibilities, and limits, of courage. All of this is interwoven with a sense of mystery that derives from indigenous understandings of the world. This novel is suspenseful, instructive, moving and irresistible. Run, do not walk, RUN to your nearest bookstore and get this book!

For More Information

about what you read in this newsletter, please see the following links:

- www.dignityforall.ca/en/chew
- www.worldrenew.net/goodsoil
- www.micahcentre.ca/opportunities/Honduras-water-project