

## GROUP MEETINGS/ TRIP PREPARATION

In the months leading up to our trip, we will have six meetings, at which we will learn about this country called Nicaragua - its people, culture, history, politics, struggles, and successes. Talented and expert speakers will be invited; and, yes, there will be homework! The best mission trips are the ones where we go with knowledge of and respect for the people we seek to serve. If we do that, the blessings flow!



## A FINAL WORD...

If you are feeling a nudge from God...a stirring or excitement in your heart regarding El Paraiso...I encourage you to give this trip prayerful consideration. Questions? Comments? Contact Jeff ([jhassel@davidsonumc.org](mailto:jhassel@davidsonumc.org) or 704-892-8277).

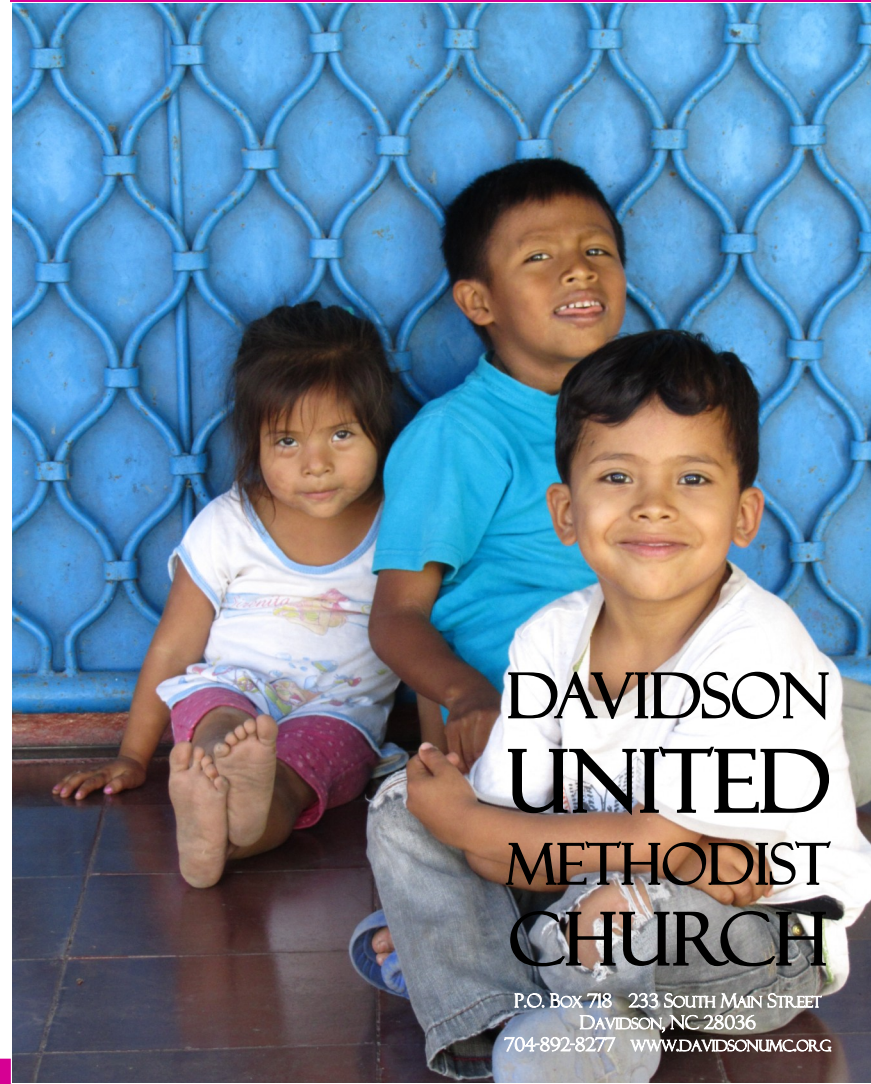
## OUR TEAM LEADER

Rev. Jeff Hassel has been leading mission teams for 22 years. He got his start working full-time for the Appalachia Service Project, a home repair ministry that operates in the coal mining regions of Appalachia. After seminary at Duke and serving as an Associate Pastor at First UMC in High Point and the pastor of two churches in Sylva, N.C., Jeff trained to become a missionary pastor with the United Methodist Church. After studying Spanish intensively for two years, he was asked to go to Lithuania (northern Europe - no Spanish!), where he spent six years starting congregations and constructing church buildings. As he likes to say, "It was a good gig!" Returning to N.C. in 2005, he was appointed as pastor of Maylo UMC in Gastonia, where he served until 2008 when DUMC asked him to put his skills and passion for mission to work for this congregation. This is Jeff's fourth mission to Nicaragua.



# NICARAGUA

*come along on our next trip to el paraiso*



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Join Rev. Jeff Hassel on DUMC's third mission to the village of El Paraiso in the mountains of Nicaragua January 2-9, 2012!

## COST

Airfare plus \$650.00, which covers double occupancy hotel rooms, food, translation, transportation - all expenses except your miscellaneous purchases and tips for our translators. You may use frequent flier miles, provided you arrive before or at the same time as the rest of the team.

## WHAT WILL WE DO?

El Paraiso is a mountain village of 250 people who live and work on a coffee plantation. There are many things we will do with our friends in the village. (The thing Jeff is most excited about is picking coffee beans!) The village of El Paraiso exists on the property of a coffee farm and the coffee harvesting season will be in full swing when we are there. On our mission last April, Jeff had the great pleasure of sitting down with the mayor of the village (an honorary title, really!); and she brewed some coffee that came from their farm – what a treat! Let's find out what life is like for our friends in the village. Their work picking and shelling coffee beans is likely more grueling than we imagine it to be. Our friends are paid \$1.30 for every 5-gallon bucket they pick. Think about how many coffee beans it takes to fill a 5-gallon bucket....

Five years ago, the Rainbow Network (our mission partner in Nicaragua) began working with the village on a comprehensive plan to educate its children; provide healthcare, food, and clean water for all; create a micro-loan program to develop their economy; and a housing program to move people out of hovels and into affordable, strong, and watertight cinderblock homes. We can work alongside the village teachers to teach and play with (and love on!) the children. If medical professionals join our team, we could work along with Rainbow Network doctors in El Paraiso (or in another village, depending on where doctors are needed most). We will have the chance to experience what life is like for our friends in El Paraiso and walk away richer because of the experience. We will see and be invited into the new homes that DUMC's mission team April 2011 helped construct.

## WORSHIP

There are two churches in this little village. The larger and more active church is an evangelical church that has wonderful and lively worship. If you want to sing, preach, or give a witness to what God has done in your life...you could do any of these! If you play guitar, bring it! Music is vital in the life of our friends and makes for a GREAT connector between cultures.

## THE EMPHASIS OF THIS MISSION IS ON RELATIONSHIPS

Rainbow Network has a great program that builds the dignity of all those who are part of it. We go to invest who we are with people who live a life that is very different than ours and come away amazed by the similarities we have in faith and in life. This is a great chance for your family to put faith into action in a way that God will use to strengthen the community of El Paraiso as well as relationships within your family. Charlotte Lawrence, who will start her college career at Duke in August 2012, loved our first trip to El Paraiso last August. She returned on the April trip and will go again in January 2012! She created a great video that you can watch: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), search "Nicaragua, el Paraiso."

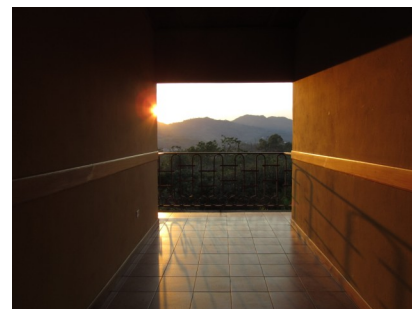


## SEEING THE SIGHTS

At the end of our trip, we will say "adios" to our new friends and spend our last days exploring a volcanic island in the huge and beautiful Lake Nicaragua...or some other equally fascinating destination, depending on the wishes of our group.

## HOTELS

Our hotels are nicely furnished and safe. The hotel in Matagalpa is the Hotel Lomas St. Tomas; the hotel across from the airport in Managua is the Best Western Las Mercedes. Both of these hotels can be found online. You can also take a look at reviews on the Trip Advisor website.



## TRANSLATORS

Rainbow Network has fantastic translators and drivers - two of whom will be with us and be part of our group the whole time we are in the country.