

University Congregation Alternative Spring Break Trip: Antigua, Guatemala
Semana Santa – Holy Week
March 25-April 4, 2010



How wonderful that you are interested in joining the University Congregation Alternative Spring Break Trip to Antigua, Guatemala to learn about Holy Week observances and practices, meet our sponsored child, Marvin, and learn about fair trade practices in the region. Beautiful Antigua is a world heritage site in the mountains of Guatemala. The original capital of Guatemala, Antigua was destroyed by several earthquakes and rebuilt after each. Known for a climate of “eternal spring,” the area has a rich heritage of Mayan and Hispanic culture and faith. However, nearly 15 years of civil war left many people financially poor. Groups like Common Hope are helping to rebuild the economy and provide an opportunity for people from the US to learn from the people of Guatemala. We will be able to observe and participate in the Guatemalan celebration of Easter as will work side by side with the community brought together through Common Hope.

Price: \$1300, including airfare, transportation to Antigua, housing, and most meals. Guatemala is very affordable so extra expenses will be very reasonable. You will be required to pay a non-refundable deposit of \$300 by Wednesday, December 2. The remaining balance is due on Monday, January 11.

Tentative Schedule

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| March | 25 | Depart PLU. Arrive in Guatemala City late evening. |
| | 26 | Visit Museo Ixchel and the Popul Vol Museo in Guatemala City.
Travel to Antigua |
| | 27 | Settle at Common Hope and get oriented in Antigua |
| | 28 | Palm Sunday |
| | 29 | Fair Trade learning experiences/Visit Marvin & his family |
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| | 31 | Travel to Chichicastenango |
| April | 1 | Maundy Thursday—observe vigils and processions |
| | 2 | Good Friday—observe processional and ceremony of the crucifixion at Cathedral Park |
| | 3 | Visit Antigua museums, markets, and shops |
| | 4 | Easter Sunday—Depart Guatemala, arrive late night in Seattle |



Common Hope: Their web page states that: *Common Hope promotes hope and opportunity in Guatemala, partnering with children, families, and communities who want to participate in a process of development to improve their lives through education, healthcare, and housing.* They call their volunteers who travel to Guatemala “vision teams.”

Based on Common Hope’s list of needs, we will collect donations of needed supplies to take with us as our carry-on luggage. Their emphasis is not just on physical work, but work and learning tied together. Through these teams, Common Hope seeks to:

- Build relationships that support our work
- Foster encounters that educate, provoke compassion, and challenge complacency
- Connect needs and resources

Accommodations and meals: Common Hope has comfortable and safe housing at their site on the edge of Antigua. We will eat breakfast and lunch there, and will go out to dinner at some of the wonderful restaurants in Antigua.

Pre-trip activities: We will have four meetings before the trip to learn about Guatemalan Easter traditions, about Common Hope, and a bit of Guatemalan Spanish. We will also plan to hold a meeting after the trip.

Clothing : Guatemala is the land of eternal spring. Plan to pack light but bring a wind breaker. We will do a lot of walking.

Security: As with many other places in the world, Guatemala has had some highly publicized robberies of tourists. The chances of these can be minimized by avoiding high risk areas and activities. We will do everything possible to make this trip safe and provide safety guidance for all trip participants. Probably the biggest risk is pickpockets, particularly in crowds.