



December 2007

Dear Friend,

It has been a month since our last PathLight letter and a lot has happened. As you can see, we have a logo! We hope you like it as much as we do. The first PathLight brochure is not too far behind. With any luck it should be printed by the end of the month.

Our first letter, mailed last month, was well received. Many of the response cards had a word of encouragement. That is very meaningful to us as we launch this new organization. Having the support of friends and family is a source of strength as we tackle this big challenge.

This past weekend we had a dessert party for a few local friends and family who have supported PathLight from the beginning. What a fun time it was to talk about the ministry, to dream about the future, and to realize all that God has done for us in such a short period of time.

But of all the things that have happened since the last letter, the most important by far is that our scholarship students finished their first trimester of high school. Without our help, most would not be in school. For example, last year, before the scholarship program was put in place, only three students from the village of Armenia in Belize went on to high school. This year PathLight alone sponsored 14! That's solid progress, although we have a long way to go.

Armenia is a poor rural village of about 2000 people. About half the residents are refugees from civil war in Guatemala or El Salvador. Others in the village are Mayan Mopan or Ketchi, who moved to Armenia from southern Belize. Only a few have an education beyond elementary school, and many cannot read or write English. Most estimates are that about 40% of the children in the village drop out of school before finishing primary school. Only about 25% go on to high school, far fewer graduate.

The scholarship program was established to assist those who cannot afford high school, which is not fully funded by the Government of Belize and therefore relatively expensive. The average family income for our scholarship students is just \$1900 a year. A full year of high school, including tuition, uniforms, transportation, etc., comes to \$1500 a year. So you can see why few people go on to high school or graduate. Our scholarship program helps fill that gap for some.

An education provides hope and creates options. Our scholarship program develops these boys and girls into young men and women of character. It is much more than just financial aid; we get involved in their spiritual, social, academic and emotional development as well. There are monthly meetings, devotionals, study programs, and social events. We often partner with the parents and find ways to better serve the entire family. So the scholarship program is more than just financial assistance – it takes a holistic approach that models our mission of “integrating faith and learning”.

The spiritual development of these boys and girls is paramount. Eventually all people are challenged by adversities, but this is especially true in a region of the world where many live without a safety net. It is times like these, during the vagaries of life that inevitably come, that faith is tested. The scholarship program aims to build character, integrity and academic scholarship into the lives of the scholarship students so they can weather these storms. Of primary concern is building their faith in Christ, for without a relationship with the risen Lord, then all the knowledge and good intentions can seem meaningless when the challenges of life arise.

As we approach the end of this year and reflect on the scholarship students, we want to ask for your help. For a small amount of money you can help these boys and girls, which in the long run will dramatically impact the entire community.

There are several ways you can help:

- For just \$50 you can help us purchase school supplies for the students. With this we can provide books, uniforms, and other essentials for school.
- Another option is to fund a month of a scholarship with a \$125 gift. For about \$4 a day you can provide a faith-based education for a boy or girl, which is an amazing bargain.
- A full year scholarship is \$1500. Your year-end gift will cover a full academic year of education, including books, uniforms, registration, tuition, transportation and lunch. Some folks make a \$125 a month pledge to do this.
- And of course a gift of any amount would be welcome.

As before, a response card and an envelope are enclosed. We hope you can help make the integration of faith and learning a reality for these boys and girls. It would be a great Christmas present that celebrates hope!

Thank you, and have a very Merry Christmas!

Roy & D'Aun Goble
Founders

Mark & Adrienne Parcher
Executive Directors