

# H2O

## CHURCH

## Guatemala: A Community that is Sent

By Abby Lewis

Over spring break, H2O Ohio State teamed up with New Life at Wayne State University to serve our sister church in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Our days were split between working at a K-6th grade school and engaging with the Guatemalan community. In the school, we had the privilege of sharing the gospel with the children, discussing the meanings of various bible verses, teaching English, playing games at recess, and showering the kids with hugs and attention. It was incredible to see Jesus use our small efforts in amazing ways as the students would memorize scripture, take notes when we shared the gospel, remember our names, ask questions about God, and simply pour out their love on us with no hesitation.

However, the most devastating, challenging, and encouraging aspect of the trip occurred when we were able to visit the homes of five different children from the school where we worked. The homes were essentially dirt floor, one-to two-room shacks, and each family shared a different story of intense heart break (many of which included murder, extreme poverty, abandonment, and lack of work). The families invited us to enter into their pain and suffering, and our entire team wept with them as we were hit with the reality of the world's brokenness. Before leaving,

we were able to provide the families with some food and clothing, in addition to sharing the gospel and praying over them. We believe the Holy Spirit was moving, as many of the families clearly responded to the gospel with their questions and emotions. The pastor of the church in Guatemala will continue to follow up with these families and is committed to serving them as he is able so that he may continue to share the love of Christ with them. In summary, we witnessed firsthand the ways in which the Lord gives hope and provides healing, as well as the beauty of three churches uniting as one family to do the work of God's kingdom.

### IN THIS EDITION:



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**Mountain T.O.P. (PG.2)**



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**Cocoa Beach (PG.3)**

**SLICE OF LIFE (PG.4)**



## Smoky Mountains: A Community of Life Transformation

By Lisa Scott

Thirty-eight of us headed down to Gatlinburg, Tennessee with the goal of connecting with God through His Word. Our desire was to see men and women be refreshed and experience life transformation through reading the Bible. During the week, we traced God's plan for redemption through Jesus Christ, beginning in Genesis and until it's completion in Revelation. A few of the students on our trip were fairly familiar with the story of the Bible, but many had never read large sections before, or had never read any of the Bible at all.

Throughout our time in the Smoky Mountains, we saw God do many things: He challenged students, but also allowed them to really engage with His living and active Word; He gave students a greater understanding of His story, and of His goodness and power throughout history; He gave students a greater desire to prioritize time in the Word in their everyday lives; and He convicted students, and led them to repentance and obedience. Ultimately, we saw a unique picture of a community united around Christ and His Word!



painting homes, building fences, constructing a shed, and helping to landscape different properties. Throughout the week, we not only learned about serving the poor, but we also learned about Christ's call to serve each other and share the gospel. Service and Christ-centered community is what this trip was all about! Personally, my week serving with Mountain T.O.P. really challenged me to look at my attitude and heart behind service, and I hope to bring this heart of service back to campus as I reach out to my classmates at OSU.

## Mountain T.O.P: A Community of Servants

By Taylor Truesdell

During spring break, 44 people from H2O partnered with the Mountain Tennessee Outreach Project (Mountain T.O.P) to do various construction projects. Mountain T.O.P is an incredible ministry that has been serving the mountain community for the past 40 years. We got to spend two days at the actual camp at Mountain T.O.P. preparing the site for future volunteers. We then spent the following days serving and connecting with the people in the Altamont, TN community. A few of our projects included

## Wright State University: A Community that is Sent

By Kyle Metz

Over spring break, nine of us headed to Dayton, Ohio to partner with a new church plant at Wright State University. The vision for the trip was for our students to connect with Jesus's heart to seek and save the lost by having spiritual conversations with Wright State students. We spent several hours each day talking with students on campus about their spiritual beliefs, which led to many opportunities to share the gospel! As a result, we saw three Wright State students begin a relationship with Jesus Christ, and many more students became connected to the H2O Church at Wright State!



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Another core aspect of our trip was to share the vision of church planting with the students. As a church, we are excited to see the word of God spread through planting collegiate churches, and this trip was designed for our students to get a glimpse of what being on a church plant could look like and what impact church plants have in the lives of others. We had opportunities to hear church planting stories from other pastors within the H2O network, as well as the plant team at Wright State. Furthermore, we spent time dreaming about the places God might be putting on our hearts to go to in the future and, we engaged in the different ways we might serve on a church plan team in the future! It was such a joy to see our students have a fresh vision and excitement for evangelism and church planting. We pray that their passion will persist and spread to other students at OSU, and we also pray that God would continue to use H2O at Wright State to seek and save the lost in Dayton!

## South Carolina: A Community of Life Transformation

By Julie Cody

On the sunny beaches of Pawley's Island, South Carolina, 45 H2O'ers spent spring break studying Ephesians 1:3-14 and learning what it means to live a life transformed by Jesus. Students learned how to connect with Jesus through reading the Bible, prayer, and community. Most days consisted of a morning teaching followed by an extended period of time alone with Jesus (ranging from one to four hours!). The first few extended times with the Lord were challenging and stretching, but by the end of the week, students requested to have more than the four hours we gave them! It was incredibly beautiful to watch people fall more in love with Jesus by experiencing His love and grace in their times with Him and in the context of a Christ-centered community. At the end of the week, one woman decided to place her faith in Jesus Christ! We also got to celebrate four people getting baptized in the ocean! Our prayer is that students would put into practice what they learned in South Carolina to continue to pursue Jesus and life transformation through Him for the rest of their lives!



## Cocoa Beach: A Community of Grace

By Vivake Baranwal

God showed up in amazing ways during the Cocoa Beach Spring Break trip! The focus of the trip was on God's amazing grace. We live in such a performance driven culture where we're tempted to find our worth in work, school, relationships, etc. It can be so easy to take that performance driven mind-set into how we view God. We will spend our entire life plunging the depths of God's grace, so we figured it would be worth taking a week to investigate it during spring break. Our prayer

for this trip was that students would leave knowing that God has lavished His undeserved grace on us through a relationship with Jesus.

God answered these prayers in amazing ways! 40 students came to Cocoa Beach, and there was a vast spectrum of where students were at spiritually. Through the trip, 7 students accepted Christ as Lord and Savior! Along with that, 5 students chose to get baptized in the ocean to profess their love for Jesus and desire to follow Him their entire life. We got to see God's grace in fresh and tangible ways all week through teachings, worship, authentic community, and intimate time spent along with God and in the Word. It was such a privilege getting to see how Jesus changes lives when we're willing to set-aside time to engage with Him and His abundant grace for us.





# SLICE OF LIFE

I grew up in a Christian home with a mother who always encouraged me to be involved at church from an early age. Thankfully, I was also blessed to be a part of a loving church family and was surrounded by people who encouraged me to pursue and develop my faith. As a result of their support and encouragement, I truly learned a lot early on about God's love for me and his character. I loved to be at church, and I was faithful to attend whatever events I could. However, despite all of my knowledge and involvement, I had never really engaged with the gospel or thought about what it meant for me. I knew who Jesus was and what he did for me, but I lacked a genuine understanding of what Jesus's life meant and, in turn, placed my faith instead in my own abilities and relationships. That is, until I came to college.

Honestly, I came to Ohio State not really having any idea what I was doing in the midwest. I knew that I wanted to study Islam and to work with Muslims, but Columbus didn't seem like a place where I could do any of that. I often wondered if I had made a mistake as I looked around and found myself far from home in a strange city where I knew absolutely no one. I simply felt a little bit lost.

Thankfully, I came to college determined to grow in my faith, and I happened to meet another freshman during Ohio State's "Welcome Week" who was determined to do the same. She invited me to come with her to an H2O service, and as I sang along to worship music I had never heard before and listened to another H2O member share her own Slice of Life, I recognized that there was something different about the people of this community and church. It was then that I decided that I wanted to be apart of it.

So, I joined an H2O team and was quickly connected to a small group of incredible women who showed me what it meant to for me to pursue God with my whole heart, and they gave me a greater picture of what community looks like. They shared deeply week after week, and I was amazed by the obvious love they had for each other and for God. Over of the course of my first year, I learned more and grew more in my faith than I could have ever expected, and after years of learning about God and his grace, I finally took the chance to pursue a personal relationship with Jesus. I gave my life to Jesus in my dorm room on a Wednesday during the spring semester of my freshman year, and I have continued to be amazed by how he is working in my life.

After my first year, I decided to transfer to H2O's International Team, where I have since spent the last two years learning from and growing with people who are passionate about missions, reaching the unreached, and loving international students. Additionally, I have been blessed to be able to work with Muslims in both the United States and around the world. God has taken me to Jordan, Morocco, and Senegal, and I have had the privilege of working with Iraqi and Somali refugees right here in Columbus. I have learned so much about God's love for all his children from working with these communities, but my time in Senegal stands out the most. I had never been so challenged to fully rely on God and to learn what it looks like to share vulnerably about my faith and God's love than my time with the Senegalese people. I came to the country extremely nervous about sharing about my Christian faith with Muslims, but God opened doors and gave me so many opportunities to share about him and his love for people.

Since my return from Senegal, I have been able to apply the things I learned to my everyday life and to my volunteer work here in Columbus. Most recently, I was even able to attend a conference called Catalyze with some of my fellow H2O members to learn more about how to reach out to Muslims. I think it's amazing that I not only have the opportunity to reach out to Muslims, but that I get to do it with fellow H2O members and Christians! I may have come to Ohio State not really knowing what God had in store for me, but it's been incredible to see his plan play out and how he has surrounded me with a community that's better than anything I could have imagined.

I'm so excited to see what God has in store for my last year of college and for my time after graduation. I am eager to continue reaching out and serving Muslim communities and hope to venture to the Muslim world after I become an Ohio State alum! Surely God is so unbelievably good, and I am continually blown away by all he has taught within my time at Ohio State. I look forward to continuing to walk with the Lord for the rest of my life.

## ABOUT ME

Name: Rachel Burch

Age: 20

H2O Team: H2O International Team

Home State: Virginia

Major: Islamic Studies

Favorite Color: Daffodil Yellow

Favorite Book: The Phantom Tollbooth