

# ships

SPRING 2023



## Our favorite view

This view is one of our favorite things about SHIP's property in El Salvador.

We're not talking about the view of the volcano, though you know we absolutely love that view because we share it as often as possible. We're actually talking about the foreground of this photo—our Salvadoran neighbors gathered together to worship and learn about God.

When we began hosting evangelistic outreach nights, it was with the idea that we wanted to share our love of Jesus with our neighbors in El Salvador. We had been working in this area for several years already; our neighbors knew us as people who cared and wanted to help. We wanted them to know *what* made us care, *what* made us want to help. So, we decided to have a time of singing, testimonies, and preaching with them.

In true SHIP fashion, we had no idea what we were getting ourselves into, but we believed it was what God wanted us to do. So, with all the confidence of a group of people with pretty much no training in evangelism or experience

working in a church, we invited our neighbors to our place for dinner and a time of worship. To our surprise, they came!

And, since then, they've kept coming. Each time we take a group of SHIP Trippers to El Salvador, we have an outreach on Monday night. In the early days of our outreaches, we might have had 50-75 people come, and that was great. Now we might have 200 or 300 or more.

It feels good to see those big numbers (even if it means a LOT of cooking to feed them all). But, what's even more special than the big numbers is seeing people wanting to be a part of something bigger than themselves. So many people are searching for hope and for meaning in life. We're blessed to introduce them to the God of the universe and tell them that He wants them to know Him, to have a relationship with them.

One of our dreams is to be able to have regular weekly outreach services. Before the world shut down for COVID-19, we had fairly regular services. We'd like to bring those back.

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# GATHER TOGETHER



*Have you ever thought about cooking for several hundred of your closest friends? It's not something we recommend doing everyday, but we've learned that the right team can make it happen!*

*continued from cover*

Having services at our facility is important because it offers a large place to meet, is a safe place for people to come together, and helps bring our other ministries together. All of our Bible studies already meet at SHIP's facility, and we'd love to offer a place for all of those groups to gather together for worship.

Most importantly, gathering together in worship means that we're doing what we're called to in Hebrews 10:24-25:

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Weekly services are a huge undertaking, but they're necessary for building a community of people who know and serve God. Would you join us in praying that we will have leaders willing to commit to this ministry?

We love showing people what God is doing in El Salvador. One of the best ways to do that is by actually taking them there.

On each trip we spend a week getting out of our comfort zones and being the hands and feet of Jesus in El Salvador. Sometimes that means working hard, and sometimes it just means hanging out and playing a game of Uno or soccer. If that sounds like something you're interested in doing, we want to talk to you about going.

**Basic Info:** The SHIP Trip cost is \$800 + airfare. That includes all transportation in El Salvador, food, lodging, and an excursion. Find out more information at [shipinternational.org](http://shipinternational.org).

**2023 SHIP Trip Dates:**

June 3-9

June 10-16

July 8-14



# TAKE A SHIP TRIP

# SPRING BREAK



## What's it like to go on a SHIP Trip?

Though this was her first trip to El Salvador, *Ede Loera* is no stranger to SHIP. Ede has been interning with SHIP for the past few months, and we have been so blessed by her. We were even more blessed to have her help on our second spring break trip this year, and we can't wait for her to join us again!

As a first-time SHIP Tripper, I arrived in El Salvador amazed at the beautiful landscape that I saw the moment I stepped out of the airport. There were volcanoes, abundant trees, and fruit! As I took in the beauty of the land, I began conversing with God about the upcoming week in El Salvador.

Having an expectation that I would be pouring out throughout the week, and being concerned that I didn't speak Spanish, I prayed to God that He would help me share who He is with my neighbors in El Salvador despite the language barrier.

*¡Guau! Dios se movía de maneras milagrosas.*

Did you get that? God moved in miraculous ways! I feel that I don't have the proper words to describe how I was equipped to love my neighbors in El Salvador, but I will try my best to give you an insight as to how God moved during my trip.

I believe that every task we get to do is an opportunity to serve the Lord with gladness. As I performed both small and big tasks to serve the Lord—such as cutting cabbage, carrying bags of clothes into the SHIP shop, and leading the children's service—God allowed me to connect with people by using my gifts, personality, and a nifty translator app.

Relationships were formed with people of all ages in El Salvador. I got to see elderly members of the community being touched by God, teenagers trying to understand God and the world, and the littles who have the sweetest joy, delighting in daily pleasures. It was such a merited treasure getting to worship Jesus in El Salvador with my new friends.

As the week came to a close, I reflected on my prayer at the beginning about pouring out while having a language barrier. Not once did I feel unequipped. Not once did I feel that I couldn't connect with someone. I actually left El Salvador feeling more poured into than what I could have ever offered in pouring out. I recognized that the Lord went before me in every interaction, every teaching, and every relationship formed:

"It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." - Deuteronomy 31:8.

If you are considering going on a trip to El Salvador, I would first pray. Then if God is calling you to go, recognize that there is no fear of possible limitations because we know that God does the impossible and works in wondrous ways to accomplish the goal of His glory. Come to El Salvador and see for yourself how God is moving among the nations!



## Retreats

In early December 2022, we continued a tradition that we've started looking forward to each year: Retreat. Our young men's and women's Bible studies headed to a retreat center to spend time together and time with God.

This retreat was our biggest yet, with 72 people going. The majority of those 72 were our young men and women, but they were joined by volunteers from the US and El Salvador who helped facilitate the retreat.

The retreat isn't a vacation (though it is LOTS of fun). Instead, it allows our young people a chance to spend time getting to know God more, learning to encourage one another, and deepening their understanding of God's love for them. They learn how to "stir up one another to love and good works."

Our young people in El Salvador struggle with many of the problems faced by young people in the US. They're trying to find their place in the world and what it means to follow God. Though they're coming from an impoverished area, they're still susceptible to social media pushing an ever-changing message of how to be accepted.

On this trip, this group listened to the Gospel message, a message that never changes, and they made decisions that will have lasting effects on their lives. Seven of our retreat goers were baptized, and all were prayed for and shown how loved they are by God.

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

Hebrews 10:24-25



# SHIP Trips

One of the greatest blessings of this ministry is getting to introduce SHIP Trippers to the people we love in the country that's become like a second home to us. Our spring break trips gave us the opportunity to welcome back some familiar faces and to meet some new friends.

You can see those faces throughout this newsletter and even get a glimpse of some of the work they did: leading Bible studies, lighting up our new building, feeding the 5,000. It was more like 400, but it always feels like God has performed a miracle when we have more than enough to feed everyone at our outreach service.

When we host groups at SHIP's Salvadoran facility, we get to see the Body of Christ come together to do amazing work. We have SHIP Trippers coming in from all over. On this trip, we had trippers from Texas, Missouri, and Tennessee, and, in the past we've had SHIP Trippers from as far away as Australia.

These people have one thing in common: a love for Jesus. And that love spurs them on to reach out to the world and share that love. They want to share the Gospel *and* their lives in a place where people need to know that they are loved by Someone so much bigger than themselves.

Our SHIP Trippers amaze us on every trip. We're just blessed to be able to give them a comfortable place to sleep while they do God's work.



"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us."

1 THESSALONIANS 2:8



P.O. Box 3003

Bryan, TX 77805-3003

## *Let our light shine*

It seems only right that the back cover of our Spring Newsletter should leave you with the same view our front cover greeted you with. The special thing about this view, this building, this place is that it's the work of so many different people.

Some of those people live in El Salvador; some have traveled and worked in El Salvador once (or many times); some may never stand in this spot on the third floor of our classroom building and look out at this view in person. But all of those people have blessed this ministry, through their work and donations and prayers, in ways that we may never see this side of heaven.

During our first spring break trip, the third floor you see here got a little brighter. The group visiting from The Hanna Project put up ceiling lights. Those lights will help so much with our evening outreaches. Light might not seem like a big thing. We all have lights in our houses, but, if those lights make our neighbors feel safer coming to an outreach service or a Bible study, who knows the good that a little light may do?

As we're told in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Thank you so much for being a part of SHIP and for helping God's light to shine through the darkness and show His love in our little community.

