

## Setting up the Good Samaritan Store Tena Blakey

The team left July 14-21 for Ahuachupan El Salvador. We flew into Guatemala City and took a 4-hour bus ride through the mountains to get to El Salvador. The thrift is located in the lower level of the "Good Samaritan House". In El Salvador, you are only allowed to visit with your loved ones during the noon meal. If the people have come from far away (mountains), they just stay outside in the elements. The church members will first interview/screen them, then offer them respite in the Good Samaritan House to have a place where they can rest, get food, and just get out of the elements. While there, Mr. Ralph had to plan, purchase materials and construct the clothing racks. The rest of the team moved existing furniture out, cleaned the first floor, painted and repainted. We negotiated with a furniture company to purchase shelving units for the children's department. We purchased 700 clothes hangers at the local market (sort of like a flea market). We hung all 700 on the bigger children's, women's, and men's racks. We needed 1 more day, 100.00 more dollars and 300 more clothes hangers then the project would have been ready for business. Apex United Methodist Church in Apex NC took 43 suitcases of clothes for the store in August 2010. I am in the process of contacting future groups heading to Ahuachupan. The goal is to keep a continuous flow of clothes heading their way with additional groups, as the shipping problem is one that we have not found a solution to. Another goal is to not only to have a thriving business in Ahuachupan but also to employ 1-2 part time employees, then move them to full time as warranted. The average monthly wage is 200.00 a month for a full time employee.

The proceeds from the clothing sales will help them sustain their ministry of building. They are in the process of building churches, additions to existing churches as well as homes for the poor.

The first day the store was open, they made \$60.00! This was selling items for .50 – 1.00 each. "American" clothing is sought after. While there, people stopped everyday wanting to buy the clothes we were putting out.

Helping others to fish is God's Marketplace's mission. We are doing so locally and now in El Salvador. God is so good! If you would like to donate time, treasures or talents to God's Marketplace please call Tena 706-339-0088. God Bless!