

## **BRAZO EN BRAZO ANNUAL REPORT - 2017**

*Brazo en Brazo* (Arm in Arm) is a Spanish-language ministry in partnership with the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA. It aims to provide support services to Hispanic individuals and families in the Lima, Ohio, area. Alongside of this is a vision of friendship evangelism and spiritual formation in the Hispanic community. The supporting local congregations include First Mennonite (Bluffton) Grace Mennonite (Pandora), Lima Mennonite (Lima), Pike Mennonite (Elida), and Salem Mennonite (Elida). The Board of Directors is made up of a representative from each of the five supporting congregations.

The *Brazo en Brazo* board met five times during 2017 (January, March, May, August, and November) with Ivan Friesen serving as chairperson, George Hostetler as treasurer, and Marti Mesa as recording secretary. The board's focus is on the social ministry of *Brazo en Brazo*, including oversight of and reporting from our staff person, Marti Meza. It also coordinates planning for and giving leadership to the *Fiesta Familiar* in September.

The worship ministry of *Brazo en Brazo*, organizationally separate from the social ministry, is led by a *Pro-bienestar* (equivalent of a "ministry team") group. This ministry includes Bible classes followed by worship each Sunday afternoon at Lima Mennonite Church.

During 2017 Marti provided support services to Hispanic people in the following areas: financial needs (including tax counseling), translation, transportation, education concerns, medical issues, and employment. The *Fiesta Familiar* in September 2017 brought together some 90 people, Hispanic and Anglo, to visit and eat together. Among those who attended was a group of 11 farm workers in northwest Ohio from the states of Chiapas and Oaxaca in Mexico.

The *Brazo en Brazo* ministry began in the fall of 2004 and in the fall of 2017 completed its 13<sup>th</sup> year.

Ivan Friesen, board chair  
December 2017