

## **Annual Report from Open Arms Hispanic Ministry to Ohio Conference - 2017**

### **Activities –**

We are very grateful to God for the works He has done through our ministry over the past year! The mission of Open Arms is to meet the spiritual and physical needs of immigrants in our community. Our Executive Director, Haroldo, and Coordinator, Raul, have been very busy attending to the needs of the growing Hispanic population in Wayne, Holmes and Stark counties. Much of their work involves helping immigrants (refugees) find lawyers/legal assistance and transportation to immigration court and INS offices. We are glad that Esmirna, Haroldo's wife, is volunteering and helping the ministry with these tasks. They also help with more routine tasks such as helping children and parents understand the school system, and providing translation services during doctor and dentist visits. Raul's wife, Vanita, is of great support in this area!

### **Affirmations –**

Hispanic members of Salem Mennonite Church (SMC) continue to grow spiritually and in numbers. Many are taking leadership roles in worship and Sunday school, and the music ministry has been particularly blessed. Attending SMC is definitely a cross-cultural experience, and the long-standing members have graciously allowed God's will to transform His church. Last September, five Hispanics were baptized, and three new members were accepted in their faith community.

### **Concerns –**

Please remember the immigration debate that is occurring across our nation as many in the Hispanic community live with constant anxiety. Pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit as the board continues to provide vision, accountability, and oversight of the ministry.

The Tio-Tia Program is in its second year. The program assists Hispanic children by finding tutors to make home visits and help with homework. The need in the Hispanic community is very great according to school officials, but building trust with parents is still a challenge. Please pray that Open Arms can continue to build trust with Hispanic families and the program can grow.

### **Action Items –**

We continue to work hard at fundraising, and we appreciate the area churches that have supported us in this endeavor. As the year draws to a close, the Open Arms board pays particular attention to the budget. Thanks to the gracious support of our donors, and the success of our Amigo program, we are close to meeting our fundraising goals for 2017.

*Haroldo Nunes*  
*Executive Director*

*Douglas L. Zehr*  
*Chair, Open Arms Board*