

**Casas Por Cristo** (<https://casasporcristo.org/>, +1 (800) 819-8014) is a charitable organization that uses the building of small homes for the homeless to help local pastors and churches to share the love of Jesus Christ with their communities. Volunteer teams build secure houses with concrete foundations, a metal roof, windows, a lockable door, and 3 or 4 rooms depending on needs. The houses are usually built in 3 days but a fourth is scheduled in case of various issues. Worthy recipients of the new houses may or may not be members of a local church.

The Casas organization began in 1993 in Mexican cities along the border with the USA. It has expanded its ministry into Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Honduras, building more than 6500 homes by 2025. Our involvement was through the congregation of Peace Lutheran Church, Arvada, Colorado. The initial proposal was to work through Casas to build one home in July 2025. But the eagerness of congregational volunteers and financial supporters lead to four teams, about 25 participants each, totaling 101 people, with an initial waiting list, who built 4 homes near San Raymundo, Guatemala. The trip was 20 to 26 July, including two travel days, one tourist day, and four days reserved for construction. With the four homes built in the usual three days, the fourth day was for visiting local schools.

Casas Por Cristo has built a brand new large regional building on the east side of San Raymundo, Guatemala, with many rooms filled tightly with bunk beds, maybe totaling about 180 beds. With our group of 101 we gave the building its first large test. There are two dining rooms adjacent to the kitchen. There are two rooftop patios with tall thatched roofs for open-air group meetings. WiFi is available. Groups are transported from and to the Guatemala City national airport by the typical recycled American school buses.



San Raymundo: Casas headquarters



Our group at airport waiting for the bus    Unloading luggage from the bus roof



Rooftop meeting room



Crowded bunk bedroom example



Typical sink, toilet, shower stall



Front balcony



Name on van





Overlapping views from the roof

East

Southeast



Main dining room

Also main dining room

Smaller dining room

These new facilities were sufficient for our large group of volunteers. The food for breakfast and dinner was excellent and abundant. We prepared our own sack lunches: PB/J or ham/cheese sandwiches, bananas or apples.

A regional holiday was happening on Friday, our normal tourist day, so we did our trip to the city of Antigua on Monday instead. It had a variety of historical sites, craft shops, and restaurants. The nearby historically active volcano was named Volcan de Agua (volcano of water) because it erupted as a geyser of water its last time.



Volcan de Agua. Public transport buses are typically recycled American school buses, often specially painted.

Coffee bush with beans on its branches. The beans ripen almost randomly and must be individually picked.

For the next three days our group was split into four teams (red, green, blue, purple) and sent to different locations to build the four small homes for homeless families nominated by a local pastor.

Next is a Google Earth satellite view of the home building sites of the blue and purple teams.





The bus carrying the teams could not easily make the hairpin turn (upper left) and had to back up twice. Then it could not pass by the blue team site down the steep narrow road to the purple team site. We often walked there. Next are photos with the family members for whom the purple team built their home.

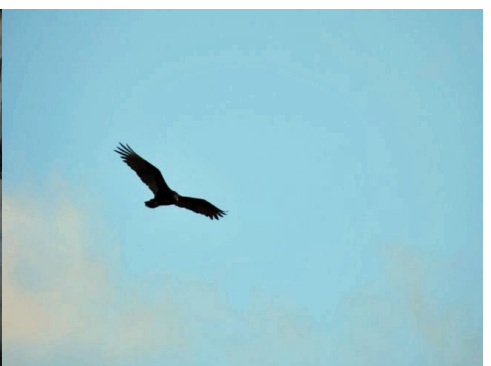


Local boys were eager to help on this first day of work, during which the concrete foundation was made.





In the middle of our first day of work a large truck got stuck on the narrow road. We tried to help pull it but failed. Black Vultures by coincidence appeared. Eventually the truck was freed by others. But the road blockage gave us many hours of safety for those gathering sand and gravel from the roadside.



Third day, at new window

Starting second work day.

Neighbor watching us

It was a great pleasure working with this family and the neighbors.