

Guatemala Church Service
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This past June I was able to return to Guatemala after the 7 years that it had been since I last went with UUS. The first time I had just completed my sophomore year at West High and this time I was visiting as a 23 year old with my then fiance, now husband. It was amazing getting to see some familiar places and faces and see the changes that had occurred since my last visit. On this trip, not only did I see familiar places but I was also able to see new places and meet new people. The best memories I have from my 2018 trip was our first home stay in Pachi. When first arriving I was pretty nervous. I had never been to this part of Guatemala and I didn't know what to expect at the house we would be staying in, but just after one night in Brenda's house I was already more comfortable than I could have imagined. Brenda and her husband Guillermo live together with their three children and Brenda's mother. The moment we arrived at their house that first night their children wanted to play with us and their son, Neymar, threw a fit when his dad made him go to bed. He was enjoying playing games on my husband, Bailey's, phone and probably could've all night. We spent five days with their family and the day we had to leave was so much harder than I could have anticipated. Fast forward to only ten days after leaving their family. Bailey and I got a facebook message from Guillermo, the father, that their son Neymar had been hit by a car. He sent us pictures and they were unbearable to look at. This was the little boy we had just been playing with, the boy who was just about one of the happiest, go-lucky boys I had ever met and now he was laying in a hospital bed and in critical condition. I had to do something. Thanks to Deb, Sally, and many others from our trip, we brainstormed ideas and decided to have a bake sale to raise money for Neymar. And thanks to many of you we raised over \$1000 to send to him and his family. Neymar is currently "getting better everyday" according to his family. Brenda and her family took such great care of us those five days. They let us stay in their home, they fed us, and were just genuinely nice to us, these strangers they had never met. When we heard about Neymar we wanted to show that love and kindness back to them. Hopefully one day Bailey and I can visit their family again and pick up right where we left off with Brenda and her family. I know my life has changed by meeting them and I know we've been able to help change their lives, especially the life of Neymar based on our visit to Guatemala.

