



Paul Engstrom

*SBSC Founder Paul Engstrom left us recently, but he continues to inspire our involvement with the harassed and struggling villagers in El Salvador as well as those desperately seeking sanctuary at our borders.*

*See 'Paul Engstrom', page 5*

How can we care about our friends in El Salvador when our lives are in turmoil – with deaths and fears from an insidious virus, everyday living disrupted, many out of a job, schools and businesses restrained from re-opening, demands for overdue social change,



and intense political conflict? It's already too much! Still, we are literally friends with some in El Salvador. We've cared about these struggling people for a long time. Many of us because of our faith or compassion feel we have to respond as we are able. How bad is it in El Salvador? José Acosta, our partner who directs Voices on the Border,

believes that Covid 19 will set the country back 20 years. Employment is plummeting. Remesas (funds that family members in the U. S. send to their families to survive in country) are already down 30%. Government troops enforce Stay-in-Place. Most folks are living on the edge. In larger towns hungry people come out of their home with a white flag—signaling that they don't have anything to eat. They go out into the streets to find something they can bring home for food.

*(Above: Folks from Octavio Ortiz patiently and with social distancing line up for SBSC's emergency food distribution.)*

Sick people are dying at home, because there are no hospital resources for them. Then two torrential rainstorms washed away their crops. What was needed immediately? Food, of course, reducing their extreme anxiety. This is when our partnership is tested. Will we still be in solidarity with them through the struggle ahead? Dale Bracey



## Improving Food Security and Nutrition Through Family Gardens

Several of us on the SBSC Steering Committee participated in a recent webinar by Voices on the Border about a new project to improve food security and nutrition in El Salvador. SBSC recently donated \$2310 to Voices to get this critically-important project started.



The webinar was broadcast from El Salvador with several Salvadoran presenters: José Acosta, the Voices' Executive Director, Miguel Ventura, a socio-cultural activist and organizer, Yaneth Marquez, a youth advocate and nutritionist, and Evelyn Romero, a pioneer in the women's movement in El Salvador. Together, they gave us a better understanding of the challenges El Salvador faces with food security - defined as the state of having reliable access to sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food--and how this project will address these challenges.

The country is highly dependent on other countries for its food, with 70 percent of the food to feed the population needing to be imported. 90 percent of the fruits and vegetables come from neighboring Guatemala. In a poor country made even poorer recently since the introduction of Covid-19 and the loss of employment, the challenge of access to sufficient nutritious food isn't easily overcome. Food prices have tripled.

Voices is introducing the project to 20 families in the rural department of Morazán, the region with the highest level of poverty and malnutrition in the country. The plan is to extend the project to other parts of the country in the future, including the Bajo Lempa, where SBSC has a history of accompaniment and solidarity with the people in their struggles going back to 1992.

Under the guidance of agricultural experts, the project will focus on the planting of small family gardens that will yield nutritious vegetables. The goals are greater family autonomy about food sources, improved nutrition, and reduced family food expenses. There will be a model farm to demonstrate to the families how to implement successful technologies. The farms will employ agro-ecological methods, rather than using synthetic fertilizers or toxic agrochemicals. Some families will grow the gardens on their own land and some will grow them collectively in small groups. Children are encouraged to participate and will be critical for the long-term sustainability of the project and strengthening family bonding.

For a detailed description of this project, along with photos and a video, go to <http://votb.org/activities/the-issues/sustainable-living-in-morazan/>. Your support of SBSC will help expand the project to our partner communities in the Bajo Lempa region.

*Mark Reedy*



*Paul Engstrom, Continued from page 1*

Paul Engstrom was an avid supporter of SBSC from its inception in the 1980s. He went to El Salvador with Arlene Schaupp, Trudy Reagan and others on the very first delegation, during its civil war, and remained a loyal friend to SBSC until his passing earlier this year at the age of 103. He was a long time member of the SBSC Steering Committee and an active Quaker involved in the Palo Alto Meeting House support group for Salvadorans.

Paul was mild-mannered in a way that quite betrayed his courageous and fearless past, but he always had a twinkle in his eye. In the 1950s he had taken off with his family to tour the world, camping in the Soviet Union, staying in a Kibbutz in Israel and visiting the United Kingdom. Later he took off to visit China well before it was a common tourist destination. At the time of his first visit to El Salvador with SBSC he extended his travel to make a courageous visit to a refugee camp in Honduras where 10,000 Salvadorans had fled.

As a licensed social worker he had the essence of a great practitioner; he was an attentive listener and a kind and compassionate man. He brought these qualities to his work with South Bay Sanctuary where he showed a persistent concern for the people of El Salvador and creative ways to help. He drove Pastors for Peace trucks with supplies to El Salvador through dangerous conditions. He acquired refurbished computers that were donated to Schools in El Salvador and he attended all of our Fund Raising Events making generous contributions in any way he could.

Paul's spirit of openness to the diversities of our world and his willingness to give of himself wherever he saw a need will continue to inspire our work in South Bay Sanctuary Covenant.

*Janet Constantinou*

## Jesuit Murder Trial in Spain Concluding



*Dr. Terry Karl, speaking in October, 2019*

SBSC recently received important news from Dr. Terry Karl, Professor Emeritus at Stanford and expert witness at the trial of a former Salvadoran military officer accused of ordering the killing of 6 Jesuit Priests, their housekeeper and her daughter in 1989. Dr. Karl spoke at the SBSC event last October, describing the importance of investigating civil war atrocities to healing the social and psychological trauma of the war. A few days ago she said that the trial had concluded, and verdicts are now awaited.

Video and summaries of trial testimony can be found at the website of the Guernica Centre for International Justice in San Francisco:

<https://www.guernicacentre.org/jesuit-massacre-trial>

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VOICES on the Border

<https://voiceselsalvador.wordpress.com/>

## Art For Auction

Proceeds to benefit SBSC Partners in the Bajo Lempa

SBSC is very fortunate to have received a generous donation of three art works from Trudy Reagan. Trudy, who signs her work "Myrrh" joined SBSC in 1984 and went on the first delegation to El Salvador in 1988. At that time her fellow travelers included Arlene Schaupp, who has devoted her life to SBSC, and our avid supporter Paul Engstrom, who recently died at age 103. The goal of their trip was to identify areas of humanitarian need, to visit churches, human rights groups and a camp for victims of the 1986 earthquake. They also visited a Salvadoran refugee camp of 11,000 people situated across the border in Honduras. These experiences inspired Trudy's paintings.

These works may all be viewed in color on our web site at:

[www.southbaysanctuarycovenant.weebly.com](http://www.southbaysanctuarycovenant.weebly.com)

under Upcoming Events. They will be sold by silent auction to support our work with Salvadorans.

Bids starting at \$200 may be sent by email to: [contactsouthbaysanctuary@gmail.com](mailto:contactsouthbaysanctuary@gmail.com) or by USPO mail to:

South Bay Sanctuary Covenant,  
3290 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto 94306.

Please give your name, and phone number where you can be reached, the name of your chosen picture, and the amount of your bid. Bids will be posted anonymously on our web site along side the picture. The highest bidder will be informed of their purchase on September 1, 2020.

*The following descriptions are Trudy's own words.*

## Blanca/Targets'

Usulután Province, El Salvador

Size 24" x 30"

The saddest community we visited was out in the country. Farmers here had fled the war in their own area, only to find the new area in the Bajo Lempa was in a "conflict zone." They gathered at an old building to tell us their plight. This woman told us that soldiers raided their food every two weeks and American-made bombers strafed them. This painting was based on a photograph I took. This is in the same area where our partner community now is, and a few of the people said they remembered us.



**'Aguas Negras/Sewage'**

Earthquake Victims' Camp, San Salvador

Size 24" x 40"

El Salvador had had an earthquake 18 months before. This depicts a temporary camp set up by the Baptists for people made homeless. You see the ditch of sewage dumping into the river. Children played around it. Also, a woman is cooking in a 55-gallon can that probably once held oil or pesticide. Nevertheless, the late afternoon sun over the hills and city was beautiful.

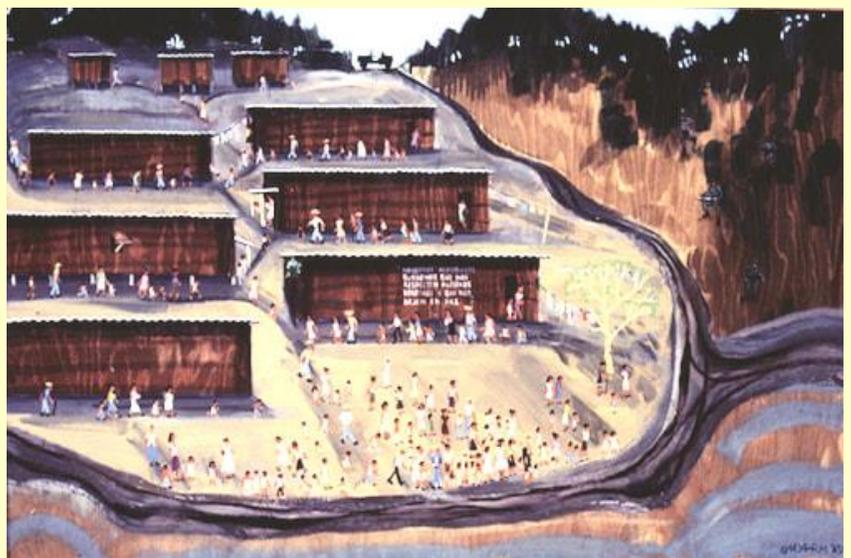


**'Get Ready for the Patrol'**

Colomoncagua Refugee Camp, Honduras

Size 28" x 44"

We visited a refugee camp of 11,000 about three miles from the Salvadoran Border. The UN Refugee Agency and Catholic Charities had it well organized. You can see people coming down the hill to gather. This was the sight that greeted our delegation. On the hill we could see soldiers coming down to inspect and harass them. They all knew from experience that an isolated person could be hauled off and killed. We saw this lettering on the barracks building. It told the soldiers to respect their human rights and leave them alone. It was very doubtful that the soldiers were literate.



## Some Ongoing Work That You Make Possible

### 1. IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Having enough food has been a long-term need in Central American countries. Voices on the Border introduced the plan of Family Gardens in Morazán, a project described on page 2 to plant small family gardens to yield vegetables. The goals are to train families how to improve their nutrition as well as to lower family food expenses. Experienced agronomists from the National University will initially train 20 families in model farm plots and how to construct their own family plot using new methods instead of synthetic fertilizers or toxic agrochemicals. Youth and children will learn with their parents.

This fall we hope that what is learned in Morazán state can move south to the Bajo Lempa among villages where SBSC has been a strong presence for years. We want to fund this continuing phase also.

### 2. WOMEN'S NETWORK TO PROTECT FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

We want to continue funding for a few more months for a promoter/organizer who is guiding the Women's Network to provide education to counter domestic abuse and arrange shelter in sixteen villages.

### 3. CHANGING NEEDS OF THE FAMILY WE ARE ASSISTING TO GAIN ASYLUM.

The young family we are sponsoring for asylum have all contracted Covid-19. While their young child had a light case of it, the mother has a serious case, and father is ahead of them in recovery. They are all in quarantine at home until mid-August and cannot work. Additionally, the family has "grown" when the 14 year old sister of the mother came to live with them because the two sisters' mother was captured by ICE and is being deported to El Salvador.. Thankfully, the 14 year old girl has just been granted asylum! Meanwhile we are providing emergency food support for the family for three weeks.

**We report these things so that you have more up-to-date news of how we are engaged with a changing scenario of needs. Until we can get together in person again we will keep you informed by more frequent newsletters.**

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO MAKE THESE THINGS POSSIBLE! GIVE AS YOU ARE ABLE!**

**Write checks to:  
and MAIL TO:**

**University Lutheran/SBSC  
SBSC c/o St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Office  
3290 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA 94306**

**Or, contribute by credit card or Paypal on the 'Donations' page at our website [www.southbaysanctuarycovenant.weebly.com](http://www.southbaysanctuarycovenant.weebly.com)**