

Crossing the Lines as an Act of Faith - Peggy Hahn

I sat on the floor in the sanctuary at Principe de la Paz, much like you would for a children's sermon, surrounded by a circle of tired faces – mostly youth who were one day away from the end of a three-week journey of faith. These amazing young leaders had crossed the lines and they knew it!



Crossing the lines of how we do Camp Hope - Pastor Mark England called in February to let me know that Kinsmen had grown too many leaders! They had so many gifted youth for their summer day camp staff that they didn't know what to do with them all. "Could we help another congregation start Camp Hope by sharing our staff?" It was this visionary question that started the whole journey.

Crossing the lines of stereotypes - Pastor Adriana Johnson-Rivas was excited about Principe de Paz doing Camp Hope in partnership with Kinsmen, but youth from both congregations had to be prepared. Several meetings took place with the leadership team before arriving for training together at the Disciple Project. That week was perfect for acknowledging fears, concerns, and preconceived ideas about different cultures, working out financial commitments, thinking about how to make decisions together, and just getting to know each other's names!

Crossing the lines of fears - While debriefing, one student admitted, "No one really thought we could do it. The youth at Principe de Paz had never done anything like this before; I even had my own doubts." A student from Kinsmen admitted that she had no idea she could be as flexible as she had been as they did Camp Hope together in a different way than she was used to. Generally people were proud of the risks they had taken.

Crossing the lines of culture - My favorite reflection came when one Latina youth said, "I was so nervous on the first day. On the second day it was Splash Day and that's when I learned from you (pointing at a guy from Kinsmen) that we could relax, joke around and have some fun! Then we all really opened up!"

It was a Holy conversation listening to stories and seeing the spark in the eyes of young people who admitted they learned Bible Stories for the first time this summer and were amazed at how great they were. I am so grateful for the opportunity I had to accompany these leaders as they grew through this cross-cultural immersion. It was a real peek at the kingdom of God breaking in among us. Now, if we can keep doing stuff like this, we can really change the world!