

## **Fagerlins leave piece of heart in heart of Belize**

Written by Darci Tomky

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The goal was to go to Belize to bless the children and staff at an orphanage, but it was the Fagerlins who were blessed in the end.

Dixie Fagerlin of Holyoke spent Nov. 23-Dec. 4 in the Central American country of Belize on a family mission trip with her son Richard Fagerlin and his family.

“It tore my heart out,” she said of her time in the heart of Belize at an orphanage in the village of Jacintoville, located about 15 minutes from the city of Punta Gorda on the southern point of Belize close to Guatemala.

Dixie and her family had the opportunity to serve the 26 children and 20-some staff members at the orphanage provided by LOL Ministry.



**Dixie Fagerlin, at right, spends time with a small girl at a village school during a recent mission trip to Belize.**

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“My first-ever mission trip was going to become a reality,” said Dixie after her son presented her with the idea of a family mission trip.

“The greatest thrill for me is the thought of sharing this amazing missions adventure with my four grandsons,” said Dixie in preparation for her trip.

Richard, a 1992 Holyoke High School grad, and his wife Christy live in Fort Collins with their four sons—Christian, age 13; Preston, 11; Jackson, 7; and Lincoln, 3.

The four boys were joined by seven other kids from four other Colorado families that partnered together for the family mission trip. They all knew each other from Mill City Church in Fort Collins.

They got involved with LOL Ministry through ties to Resurrection Fellowship church in Loveland, and Christian and Preston attend school at Resurrection Christian.

Jervis Fisher, who grew up in Belize, and his wife Melissa were youth pastors at Resurrection Fellowship church. God gave them a vision for an orphanage in Belize, said Dixie, so about five years ago they bought the land and launched the project.

According to their website, [lolministry.com](http://lolministry.com), LOL Ministry is an international organization that exists to love and nurture orphans, neglected and disadvantaged children and young adults. Its focus is to bring restoration through God’s love, allowing children and youth to discover their potential, while equipping and releasing them into their divine destiny and future.

Dixie explained the Laugh Out Loud Ministry’s name came from a vision from one of the Fishers’ friends. This person was physically abused and would lie under her bed to journal. She had a dream of a place where children could laugh.

“I loved the humility of Melissa and Jervis,” said Dixie. “They’re following their calling.”

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Dixie's grandsons and the other children were able to interact with the Belizean kids at the orphanage, some of whom are orphans while others were taken from their homes due to bad family situations.

"We got a little taste of how it tears at your heart, and the staff deal with that every day," said Dixie, noting the country of Belize is not very open to outside adoption. The government was also not supportive of this orphanage at first, but Dixie was happy to note it now has the government's support.



**While visiting a village school one day on their Belize mission trip, the Fagerlins interacted with the kids during a game of soccer. Pictured from left in the top right corner are Richard Fagerlin and sons Jackson, age 7, and Lincoln, age 3.**

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