



2023 Advent Calendar

# Blessings Flow

To receive daily prompts for this Advent calendar via text, text (920)495-8995 and include "Advent calendar" in the text.

To receive daily updates for this Advent calendar via email, email [sylvie@moravianmission.org](mailto:sylvie@moravianmission.org) and include "Advent calendar" in the subject line.

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## How can counting our blessings help others?

We are blessed more than we realize, because we rarely pause to count the blessings. Day by day, as you follow this Advent calendar, you will be given an opportunity to count many of your blessings... and some days we also recognize the ways that the Board of World Mission's ministry has been blessed this year! But rather than leave it there, this Advent, we seek to allow our blessings to bless others. Either by yourself or with others, decide how much you would like to donate for each of your blessings to help the Board of World Mission provide clean water through our Blessings Flow project. You may not have some of the blessings listed for one day but be aware that you may count many blessings for other days. Find a jar to collect a penny or a nickel for each of these blessings? Perhaps you can afford to give more. If coins are in short supply around your home, you can use the tally card sheet found at the end of this file to help you with this process. Cut the tally cards off the sheet each day, make note of your blessing, and place it in the jar. At the end of Advent, December 24, we will invite you to total up your blessing count and make that a donation to the Board of World Mission's work. We would count it a blessing to turn your blessings into clean drinking water for families in need.

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### Sunday, December 3rd – First Sunday of Advent

2.2 billion people around the world lack safely-managed drinking water. In Matthew 25:35, Jesus said, "I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink." In Ahuas and the surrounding area, drinking water typically comes from rivers, lagoons, or shallow wells where the liquid often has the color of coffee. Intestinal parasites associated with contaminated drinking water contribute to malnutrition and disease for the whole population, especially children. Count your blessings for every place in your home from which you can get clean water (i.e. faucets, showerheads, perhaps even your refrigerator door).

### Monday, December 4th

The filters being distributed through the Board of World Mission's Blessings Flow project will provide families in La Moskitia with clean water for at least ten years. At a cost of \$50 per filter, this means that the project will provide clean water to each family at a rate of under 50 cents per month. Count your blessings for every year of your life that you have had consistent access to clean water.

## **Tuesday, December 5th**

Leaders of the Moravian Church in Honduras are working together to provide clean water for every family, despite the fact that the church has been divided in this area for over 25 years. Psalm 133:1 says, “How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” Count OUR blessings for the two Honduran provinces who are working in collaboration on this project.

## **Wednesday, December 6th**

Tumtum Tara, the first village to receive filters through this project, is situated in Laka, an area that is often referred to as the poorest of the Miskito homeland and characterized by lack of employment, absence of government services, limited access to potable water, and poor conditions for agriculture. Laka residents often travel several hours to work their plots of beans, rice, yucca, etc. and local families obtain their water from shallow wells and/or the nearby rivers where they also bathe and wash clothes. Count your blessings if you have less than a 30-minute commute to your school or workplace each day.

## **Thursday, December 7th**

Water quality in La Moskitia has become more unreliable in recent years due to an increase in rainfall, hurricanes, and erosion caused by colonists felling trees in the area. Count your blessings if current weather patterns and changes to landscape around you do not immediately impact your access to drinking water.

## **Friday, December 8th**

Campers and staff at Mt. Morris, Tar Hollow, and Camp Hope assembled water filters during their senior high camps this summer. Count your blessings for each week of Moravian camp you have attended as a camper or staff member.

## **Saturday, December 9th**

Families in La Moskitia do not have access to running water in their homes and often need to go long distances to collect water from rivers and lagoons. This can take hours each day and takes time away from school, work, chores, family obligations, and social time. Count your blessings for each time that you accessed water today without having to interrupt your other activities (i.e. showering, washing dishes, cooking, etc.).

## **Sunday, December 10th – Second Sunday of Advent**

Pakwi, Honduras will be one of the next villages to receive filters through the Blessings Flow project. Pakwi consists of about 200 families who live by cultivating rice, beans, and other crops traditional to this region. Some people also have cattle. Many families continue to obtain their drinking water from the nearby Kruta River, though during the dry season, they may be forced to travel to the large Apalka Lagoon to find a cleaner source. Count your blessings if your water source does not change throughout the year.

## **Monday, December 11th**

In North America, much of our interaction with local water sources is for our own entertainment - swimming, kayaking, snorkeling, paddle boarding, and more. In La Moskitia, families most often visit nearby lagoons and rivers for basic survival, including bathing, collecting drinking water, and washing clothes. Count your blessings for each type of water-related pleasure activity you have enjoyed in the last year.

## **Tuesday, December 12th**

Congregations throughout North America have supported the Blessings Flow project by hosting “filter experiences” where members have assembled water filters that will eventually reach families in La Moskitia. Count OUR blessings for each of the nine congregations that have hosted a filter experience.

## **Wednesday, December 13th**

3.5 billion people around the world lack access to safely managed sanitation. Honduran Moravians rarely have indoor plumbing. Families that can afford the cost of construction will have outhouses or latrines. However, many people still rely on clumps of bushes that communities generally recognize and avoid except for those purposes. Bushes (and even some well-constructed latrines) contribute to problems with drinking water and intestinal parasites. Count your blessings for every bathroom in your home.

## **Thursday, December 14th**

Kuhrpa, Honduras is a village located on the upper Patuca River. The long distance from the mouth of the Patuca makes this village somewhat inaccessible, though there is a highway that is increasingly used by colonists who are taking over traditional Miskito lands. The area is known for cacao cultivation, but most people live by planting traditional Miskito crops of rice and beans. There are about 200 families in Kuhrpa who will soon receive water filters, which are needed more than ever due to the increasingly muddy waters in the Patuca since colonists have begun felling forests in the area. Count your blessings for each roadway you can easily take into / out of your town or city.

## Friday, December 9th

100% of Miskito families surveyed during our pre-intervention assessment in Tumtum Tara reported that someone in their household had experienced symptoms of a waterborne illness in the previous two weeks. Count your blessings for each day in the past two weeks that you were unaffected by diarrhea, nausea, fever, and stomach cramps.

## Saturday, December 16th

For those who are poor and living on the margins, natural disasters can have a devastating effect. Hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, fires, and droughts can rob people of what little they have, leaving them vulnerable to sickness or death. The people of La Moskitia depend on their agricultural plots for food and their hand-dug wells for potable water. Frequent tropical storms and periodic hurricanes bring heavy winds and floods that destroy crops, damage homes, and contaminate wells, leaving families without reliable access to safe drinking water. Count your blessings if you have not been adversely impacted by a natural disaster this year.

## Sunday, December 17th – Third Sunday of Advent

The filters distributed through the Blessings Flow project filter water from a five-gallon bucket. In John chapter 4, Jesus tells a Samaritan woman that “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.” Count your blessings if you have access to an unlimited amount of water each day.

## Monday, December 18th

Residents of Warunta, Honduras received 200 filters this past October. There are very few wells in the community, as people for generations have been obtaining their drinking water from the same lagoon where they wash clothes and bathe. 200 water filters were distributed in Warunta in October. Locals are engaged in traditional Miskito agriculture, but other employment is limited. Count your blessings for each type of food you have eaten today without knowing where it was grown.

## Tuesday, December 19th

40% of families surveyed during our pre-intervention assessment reported that someone in their household had missed school or work due to symptoms of waterborne illness in the past two weeks. Count your blessings if you are typically confident that your school / work will be unaffected by health issues in any given week.

## **Wednesday, December 20th**

Communities need clean water to thrive mentally and spiritually. Chronic illnesses, including waterborne illnesses, cause a host of symptoms that impact mood, energy levels, anxiety and cognition. Having access to clean water provides communities with improved health, economic opportunity, and hope in a living God that sees and loves us. Count your blessings if chronic illness does not impact your family's daily life.

## **Thursday, December 21st**

The lives of women and girls in many areas are more severely disrupted by the lack of access to clean drinking water than their male counterparts. They often spend hours each day collecting water for meals, drinking, and washing. Count your blessings if the women and girls in your community have an equal opportunity to participate in school and employment.

## **Friday, December 22nd**

Río Plátano is located at the mouth of the Plátano River and on the shore of the ocean, so many people fish both for profit and for their personal diet. Agricultural fields are situated further upriver. Due to recent storms and hurricanes, the beach has been greatly eroded and the community is now much smaller than it once was. Between Río Plátano and the neighboring communities of Uta Almuk and Tasba Pauni, there are approximately 200 families who will soon benefit from the Blessings Flow project. Most of these families continue to collect their water from the Plátano River. Count your blessings if you feel that your community is not immediately threatened by flooding and rising water levels.

## **Saturday, December 23rd**

During this year's Moravian Day of Service, many Moravians assembled water filters, wrote love notes to Miskito families, and raised funds for the Blessings Flow project. We are so grateful for the overwhelming support this project has already received and for each person who has been involved thus far. Count OUR blessings if you have already assembled a filter, prayed for this project, made a contribution, written a love note, or helped organize a filter experience.

## **Sunday, December 24th -- Christmas Eve**

Our partners at One Atta Time are graciously extending the price of \$50 per filter to our Moravian donors through the end of the year, despite having increased their general rate to \$100 this summer (to match increases in the cost of supplies, travel, water testing, and other services they provide). Add up all of the blessings you have counted throughout Advent and make a contribution to the Blessings Flow project before December 31st to double your impact.

# What Next?

As you have journeyed through this Advent season counting your blessings, you should now have a jar full of change or tally cards. Take a moment to count that up. Can you make this donation to the Board of World Mission so that we can turn your blessings into clean water for families in La Moskitia?

Please don't send us your change...

U.S. donors can go to [MoravianMission.org/Give](http://MoravianMission.org/Give) to donate online or mail a donation to:

Board of World Mission  
1021 Center St.  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

Canadian donors may send Interac e-Transfer donations to [treasurer@moravian.ca](mailto:treasurer@moravian.ca) or mail a donation to:

Moravian Church in Canada  
600 Acadia Drive SE  
Calgary, AB T2J 0B8.

Please note: Whether you make your donation online or by mail, please indicate that this donation is part of the Advent Blessing Calendar for the Blessings Flow project. Thank you!

# Advent Blessing Calendar Tally Cards



<b>Sunday, Dec. 3</b> Number of faucets in your home: _____	<b>Monday, Dec. 4</b> Years with access to clean water: _____	<b>Tuesday, Dec. 5</b> Two Honduran provinces: <u>  2  </u>	<b>Wednesday, Dec. 6</b> Less than 30-minute commute: _____	<b>Thursday, Dec. 7</b> Water access not impacted by weather patterns: _____
<b>Friday, Dec. 8</b> Weeks of Moravian camp: _____	<b>Saturday, Dec. 9</b> Number of times accessing water: _____	<b>Sunday, Dec. 10</b> Unchanging water source: _____	<b>Monday, Dec. 11</b> Water-related pleasure activities: _____	<b>Tuesday, Dec. 12</b> Nine congregations' participation: <u>  9  </u>
<b>Wednesday, Dec. 13</b> Number of bathrooms in your home: _____	<b>Thursday, Dec. 14</b> Roadways into / out of your town: _____	<b>Friday, Dec. 15</b> Days unaffected by symptoms of waterborne illness: _____	<b>Saturday, Dec. 16</b> Not impacted by natural disasters: _____	<b>Sunday, Dec. 17</b> Unlimited amount of water: _____
<b>Monday, Dec. 18</b> Food eaten without knowing source: _____	<b>Tuesday, Dec. 19</b> School / work uninterrupted by symptoms: _____	<b>Wednesday, Dec. 20</b> Unaffected by chronic illness: _____	<b>Thursday, Dec. 21</b> Women and girls access to school and employment: _____	<b>Friday, Dec. 22</b> Not threatened by flooding: _____
<b>Saturday, Dec. 23</b> Already supported this project in some way: _____	<b>Sunday, Dec. 24</b> Count up all your blessings for the month: _____			