



Mission UpReach Newsletter

Here at Mission UpReach we believe and practice a core value that states, “Our job is to teach and train people to become members of self-led, self-sustaining and self-reproducing communities of faith that serve as the Lord’s church in their respective communities.”

One night, several years ago, my wife Donna and I visited an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) group in downtown Santa Rosa de Copán where we live. Donna was finishing her masters at the time and was required to attend a support group event as one of her projects. While we were there we heard the group repeat in unison the twelve traditions of AA. At the time, Mission UpReach was just beginning to develop its methodology for planting new churches. As I listened to the group say each of the AA traditions I couldn’t help but draw some comparisons between some of the traditions and the principles that we were discovering for

Self-led, Self-sustaining & Self-reproducing *by Phil Waldron*

successful church planting.

Since its inception in 1935, when Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith began the first AA peer-support group in Akron, Ohio, the movement has established 115,000 groups worldwide. Those who have gone through the program (or are close to someone who has) would have to say that the program is very, very successful. My thought back at the AA meeting in Santa Rosa de Copán was, “wow...this group learned something very early on that we are only just now discovering about how human beings successfully work in a weekly group.” Specifically, I was thinking about the AA Traditions #5, #7 and #8 which are:

5. Each group has but one primary

purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

What we have discovered at MUR in our efforts to plant new churches is that “each group of Christians that form a part of a local church have but one primary purpose – to carry the message to the unsaved people in their local community.” And “every local church in a community ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” We have found that it is almost never successful in the long term if the local members don’t take ownership and responsibility for the local mission of seeking and saving the lost in their own community.

And finally, applying Tradition #8 to the third world setting in which we live and work here at MUR, “the local church should remain forever non-professional, but our churches may employ special workers.” The NT teaches a priesthood of believers. MUR has dream of training 5,000 men and women in the next twenty years to be church leaders, teachers and evangelists. Our prayer is that this mass of humanity trained and equipped as ministers of the Gospel and passionate about reaching their neighbors with the message of Christ will spark an uncontrollable wildfire of revival. May it be so!





ESPERO faces challenges

Our deaf school, ESPERO is a challenging environment on a good day. Imagine yourself attempting to teach first and second grade curriculum to a deaf population that has no common language, no concept of reading and writing, and very little experience socially. Our teachers and facilitators face that challenge daily. Many times, before a new concept can be taught, the facilitators have to research the language and then teach the vocabulary.

An additional challenge here is that



the sign language of Honduras (LESHO) is not completely developed. If that were not enough, this month we have faced even more challenges. Last year our school consisted of 9 first graders, one certified teacher, and two facilitators. We added a grade this year and are up to 19 students, 2 certified teachers, and four facilitators. 60 days into the school year we realized that one of our teachers was not apt for the job and began our search for her replacement.

On the day we finally got a replacement teacher, our other teacher, Cindy de los Santos, was hospitalized for complications of her pregnancy. Cindy will be on bed rest for the duration of her pregnancy and fortunately our new teacher, Sonia, is taking on the challenge with a great attitude. Our four facilitators have really stepped up to the challenge as well and are proving to be an incredible asset to the school. The students have handled all the changes very well.

We would like to ask you to pray for



Cindy and her husband Juan Carlos. They are nervous about a pre-mature delivery like anyone would be, but with the added stress of having lost their first child after a pre-mature birth, their anxiety and stress is elevated. Pray for Sonia as she assumes the role of lead teacher and for our facilitators, Abbie, Mirian, Elizabeth, and Mario as they work hard to keep our students on track.

60 People Receive Needed Surgeries

Ben Carson is quoted as saying, "God has given us more than fourteen billion cells and connections in our brain. Why would God give us such a complex organ system unless he expects us to use it?" Ben Carson is known for many things. A few of which are his leadership role in separating conjoined twins, Benjamin and Patrick Binder, and being named Johns Hopkins University's director of pediatric neurosurgery. Carson's perspective on our God-given abilities is sound, and one we also hold. Each day is a gift and a chance to impact the life of others. Our challenge as Christians is finding how we can use our life to impact those around us. Carson's gift is neurosurgery, which he used to bless the lives of countless people.

Mission UpReach is blessed with the opportunity each year to host groups of people who are ready and willing to use their gifts to do incredible work. This was the case with our second-ever surgical brigade. A group of 14 trained medical

professionals, a majority of whom work at Williamson Medical Center in Franklin, TN, spent a week of their time in a local hospital in Gracias, Lempira, doing general and ENT surgeries. In all, the group performed 60 surgeries and blessed the lives of their patients immensely.

Jesus believed in the importance of healing. To this day, he is known as the great physician and the stories of the miracles he performed are still studied and analyzed. Just as Jesus saw value in the physical touch and the healing of earthly ailments, we too see that value. Likewise, just as Jesus used his miracles as a tool to spread his teachings, we strive to use everything we do as a means of spreading the gospel. During the week of surgeries, a team of our evangelists visited and prayed with the patients before and

after their operations. They also collected their information and were able to visit them two weeks post-op to check up on their condition. We are excited to report that every single patient is recovering wonderfully. We look forward to many more surgical brigades and the chances to help people encounter healing, both physically and spiritually.





Q&A: Aristides Sanchez, *Church Planting Team Leader*



We sat down with the leader of our Church Planting team to get an inside look at what it takes to plant self-led, self-sustaining, and self-replicating churches.

Q: How has our method of planting churches changed in recent years?

A: In the beginning we would enter a village or community where there was no church of Christ and put on an evangelistic campaign. Later, we realized that it was not the best tactic to start a new work. Our new approach is to go to a community where a member of the church has family and start working with this family and friends. Before it was the work of the team, but through brothers who come from different congregations inside and outside the country, we have little by little disseminated the seed of planting new works.

Q: What do we do to promote self-sustainable churches?

A: We are making use of our training programs such as CREO and CRESCO. At CREO we give a week of intensive training and talk extensively about how brothers can start a new project in their surrounding communities. In CRESCO we

teach a 2 month segment on this topic. Additionally, CRESCO has branched out and we now offer it outside the country (El Salvador and Guatemala), which will make it possible for more people to be reached with our vision.

Q: Have CREO and CRESCO had a visible impact on the churches in and around Western Honduras?

A: From the testimonies of brothers and sisters we have realized how both programs have impacted their lives and have benefited local congregations. We know that there are those who work full



time, secular jobs and without receiving money from the church have become the leaders in the local work in their communities. Cases such as: Octavio Pérez, Eusebio Martínez and Santos Mejía, graduates of CREO and CRESCO who now run the church in Las Crucitas, S.R.C.; Waldemar Madrid, graduate of CREO and CRESCO, now preaches in Amates, Guatemala; and, Dionisio Sánchez, graduate of CREO and CRESCO, now preaches in Suchitoto, El Salvador and runs a branch of CRESCO in his local congregation.

Q: Besides CREO and CRESCO, what other things are we doing to train and equip leaders?

A: A 3-day mini boot camp is being held in Chinacla, La Paz. We also maintain contact with graduates who have shown greater interest in continuing to learn, through telephone calls, visits to their communities of origin to give them feedback and inviting them to events such as the Baxter seminar. We also conduct seminars on evangelism, preaching, and special events like retreats, evangelistic campaigns, etc.

Q: Where do you see the Church Planting team in 5 years?

A: I see us all over the place! Scattered in different places inside and outside the country (in Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua) with branches of CREO and CRESCO where men and

women are being trained to go out to work in the Lord's harvest, reaching the white fields for Christ. Offering Bible boot camps of intensive weeks in CREO to train women as well.





A note from Donna



Many of you have read in past newsletters about a little girl named Iris that has been receiving assistance from a couple of our young donors.

We first

encountered Iris when she came to a medical brigade.

She was suffering from a degenerative neurological disorder and at that time had pneumonia and was severely malnourished. When the two young girls heard her story, they started sending donations to Mission UpReach so that we could purchase Ensure for her.

Iris soon began to thrive and gain weight. Just a few weeks back I was able to take the girls to meet Iris in person and spend some time with her family. We noticed that she was weaker than before but did not expect that she would pass in her sleep just a couple of weeks later.

We feel so sad for her family and we know she will be missed. We are so thankful for the promise of an eternal life with God; one where Iris has a new body and is free from suffering. Join us as we pray for her family in their grief.

2018 Brigades/Visiting Teams

TBD	Tusculum C of C	Medical
March 10-17.....	Southside C of C	Medical
March 10-17.....	Pine Tree C of C youth.....	VBS/Construction
April 7-14	Surgical Team	Surgery
June 9-16.....	Lexington C of C.....	Medical
June 16-23	North Atlanta C of C	Pastoral Counseling/ Marriage Mentoring
June 23-30	Pine Tree C of C	Medical/VBS/Construction
June 30 - July 7.....	Snellville C of C.....	VBS
July 7-14.....	Burnt Hickory C of C.....	Medical//Construction
July 14-21	University C of C	Medical

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Other Giving

Mission UpReach is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We can assist you to designate MUR in a corporations' matching gifts program, or giving through a United Way campaign, or as you prepare wills for your estate.



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