

Mission UpReach Newsletter

Erick Abimael Perez: Another life cut short

By Jon Stacy

Have you ever had a day where things were just clicking? You were checking things off your to-do list and things seem to be humming along and then *BAM* you receive a knock on your door, and your whole day comes to a screeching halt? I know that many of you have. I have before, and I know that it won't be the last time it happens.

Erick Abimael Perez had his life taken from him at 9 am on Thursday, June 9th. He was just 16 years old. Someone took it upon themselves to riddle the house in which he was sitting with bullets, many of which struck his body. Done. Over. Another life cut short in Honduras by senseless violence.

Erick was recruited to become a member of the Moses Project family because he showed potential. He was a brilliant young man with the world at his fingertips, but the systemic poverty of Honduras kept him from realizing his full potential.

You see, that is exactly why the Moses Project exists. It exists to take young men like Erick and give them the opportunity to realize their full potential. To realize that there is something more out there. To realize that you can be what you dream of being. To realize that you can learn a skill and you can find gainful employment and you can provide for a family.

Erick began his time in the Moses Project in 2016. In January of

2020 Erick entered what would have been his junior year in high school. He attended our first Bible training seminar of the year and showed real interest, not just in learning the material to pass the course, but real interest in Jesus and what he offers. Shortly after the seminar, COVID-19 hit. The schools were suspended, and the boys were sent back to their villages. I last saw Erick on Thursday, March 5th before I went to spend time with my parents for a week. I will never see him again.

I have asked myself many times if we are making a difference at all here. At times it seems like we are trying to empty the ocean with an eye dropper. There is so much mission to do here—so much good that has been done, is being done and has yet to be done. I am in no way writing this to profit from this tragedy, but it highlights just how real the need is here for the light of Jesus to shine into this darkness. We need money to operate. We need money to get to the villages with the Good News. We need money to change lives.

Just recently I saw that someone started a non-profit for planting trees and they have already raised \$19 million dollars. How does a non-profit to plant trees raise \$19 million while missions struggle to get funding to save souls? We are currently in a financial crunch to plant the seed of eternal life. We need your help. The simple fact of the matter is that without money

we have no mission. I can guarantee you that Heaven will be a brighter place with these souls saved through hearing the Good News from our ministries and, therefore, by the help of your donations. I pray that Jesus' light shines into this darkness here. God placed the Waldron family here as well as the Stacy family. We are here to shine that light, and we can only do it with your help. Please help us.



Thank you for your generosity

DESEO Project, Matching Challenge bless our ministry

We are humbled that so many of you responded to two of our more recent fundraising efforts. Our DESEO Project (child sponsorship program) was able to successfully take food baskets to 242 families! These baskets consisted of basic provisions for a family of 4. Times are really tough right now for most families with the country still shut down. Most of the families we serve are made up of day-laborers who have been without employment since mid-March. Our efforts seem like a drop in a bucket, but the love and concern our little drop provides gives hope and communicates love.

DESEO Team Leader, Yulema Reyes, saw this firsthand. "I had the opportunity to deliver food to four communities in Santa Rosa de Copán," she said. "It was a great blessing to be able to see the joy of each mother and father when receiving food in these times of crisis. Among their words of thanks, some of them commented that they felt powerless not having food for everyone, but they thank God that He always provides at all times."

The Honduran government has mostly washed their hands of the situation, providing no help or support for their people. As they continue to insist that companies pay their employees, in spite of businesses being shut down, they are draining businesses which will eventually lead to an even greater crisis. We are among the few able to continue complying with the law, and we thank God for his provision, which has flowed through your generosity.

Our recent Matching Challenge campaign was a great success and your participation provided the \$25,000 needed to match the \$25,000 offered! Your ongoing support enables Mission Upreach to provide opportunities to local Hondurans who wish to be a part of the radical



change in their communities, like recent hire, Anny Tabora. "I started working for the DESEO Program in January of this year," noted Anny. "I was very excited and grateful to God and Mission Upreach for giving me the opportunity to work in a place where I can help those in

my country. As a child, I asked God to make me a channel of blessing for others and it fills me with great joy that He has answered this prayer. I would like to tell each donor that what they sow means more than money. It is hope. It is love. It is joy. You are changing lives and creating stories."

Thank you! And as always, we ask for your gift of prayer and guidance as we navigate these new challenges.



Dewey Church of Christ joins Barrio Belén in food relief

By Jon Stacy

"In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity."

2 Corinthians 8:2

This verse came alive for the Iglesia de Cristo en Barrio Belén when COVID-19 brought the Honduran economy to a screeching halt and stressed and already overstretched economy. No working. No public transportation. No going to the store except for once every 15 days. The brothers and sisters at the Barrio Belén congregation were able to provide food bags to all the families that attend church as well as for all the students who attend the ESPERO school, which is a school for the hearing impaired. All told, this congregation, in the middle of the greatest economic crisis in the last decade, was able to pull together a little over \$1,600 dollars to purchase and distribute these bags of blessings to over 100 families. Those 1,600 dollars represent more than a year's salary to many Hondurans.

The sacrifice of these brothers and sisters has not gone unnoticed. Much like the generosity of the Macedonian

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Corquin church growing in midst of crisis

By Kris Bridges

This pandemic may have brought strict lockdowns and exacerbated already dire, impoverished conditions, but it has also awakened the Church to new ways to share God's love. Although our church has not been able to gather since March, God has provided many ways to be active and to use every means possible to share the Good News and meet needs innovatively.

In order to connect within our congregation, our church services now use WhatsApp group texts. Every day the church is reading through different books of the Bible chapter-by-chapter and sharing how that day's reading touched our hearts. On Sunday, we meet in family groups in our homes to take the Lord's supper, sing and record our songs, and listen to a message that has been sent via WhatsApp. Afterwards, we share our recording and pictures that we took while meeting. In this way we haven't felt so separated, though everyone is ready to meet as a whole group again!

Success in using innovative ways to

connect with our congregation during this pandemic has also encouraged us to expand our outreach as God has provided more and more opportunities to serve. The police have given the Corquin Church of Christ special permission to move around whenever



we ask in order to deliver food to the community. With the financial assistance of many individuals and churches in the US, we have been able to provide over five hundred bags of food to those in need. Members of

the church help assemble and deliver these bags every other week. One week the women of the church also prepared hot lunch plates and delivered them to the local "urgent care" for the nurses, patients, and their family members waiting outside. On another day, the church offered coffee and pastries to the police force in Corquin as a way to say thank you for all of their hard work.

These are trying times, but we are witnessing how God is using the difficult times in this life to achieve good in His kingdom. The faith of our Honduran brothers and sisters is strengthening through our dedicated time of study and service. Their eyes are being opened to the needs of those around them, and they are enjoying finding practical ways to serve them. Unbelievers are being drawn close to God as they search for something beyond what

this physical world has to offer, and they are asking for the opportunity to study God's Word with us. Please join us by praying for our congregation, our community and the people of Honduras.

Thank you for your generosity...continued

church reached the ears of the brothers and sisters in Corinth, this news reached the ears of the brothers and sisters of the Dewey church of Christ in Dewey, OK.

The Dewey congregation recently just donated \$3,000 for food relief. The elders and deacons of the Belén congregation raised another \$800, and the staff of Mission UpReach donated another \$1,100 towards the effort. Overall,

God has used the brothers and sisters of Dewey and Barrio Belén to give \$4,900 to be used to bless the Honduran citizens in a real way! Praise and glory be to God who works all things for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose! This is a time for the church to be salt and light in a time of darkness and despair.

Would you be willing to ask your church to do something similar? The needs are growing daily with no end in sight.



A note from Donna



Yes, Phil and I are still stuck in the USA! However, we have seen God's direction as we look for what He would have us do with our time here. This month we were able to move into an apartment we found for our

youngest daughter, Laura in Chattanooga, TN where she will be going to grad school in the fall. It provides some relief to our family, who so graciously hosted us these past 3 months.

Phil and I are able to work from the apartment and have both gotten involved in the promotion and sales of Subida Coffee. As you probably know Caleb Gossett moved to middle TN in February to begin the process of getting our coffee in grocery stores in the region. Caleb has had great success, in spite of the massive shutdowns! As of this writing we are in 20 stores and counting. Phil and

I have been able to help with stocking shelves as well as doing demos and promotions so that Caleb can continue his focus on selling to more stores. We are finding that people are very excited about knowing they can purchase good coffee and support a good cause at the same time.

With such an amazing team on the ground in Honduras, we feel no urgency to return, other than missing our people and our home. Please pray for the success of Subida Coffee in the US. It has the potential to move us towards sustainability, if that is the Lord's will.

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Mission UpReach, Inc.
3221 Dundee Road
Longview, TX 75604

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You can correspond directly with Phil and Donna at:

Phil and Donna Waldron
 Apartado Postal #255
 Santa Rosa de Copán, Copán
 Honduras, Central America
 donna.w@missionupreach.org
 Phone: 706-534-7060