

Mission UpReach Newsletter

'Redeeming the Time' – MUR's 2021 Year End Annual Campaign

By Phil Waldron

How Much Is a Human Life Worth?
Back in May of 2020 Adam Rogers wrote an article with that title. In the article Rogers explains how our government calculated the VSL (Value of Statistical Life) of US Citizens during the early days of the COVID Pandemic as they formulated their plans for social distancing and mask wearing mandates. It is a fascinating article if you like that kind of thing—which I do, but it started me thinking about the value of the lives that are being changed by our sharing Jesus with the people of Western Honduras.

This month we launched our year end annual giving campaign backed by a \$500,000 challenge fund. These funds are essential for maintaining these life changing ministries that have impacted hundreds and even thousands of lives over the past twelve years.

This year's campaign is themed as "Redeeming the Time" coming from Ephesians 5:15-16. The NKJV translation says, " ¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

I don't think we could write a better description of what Mission UpReach is all about.

The reality of our world is that none of these good works we do, that are changing so many lives for the better, can be done without money. We depend



on donations to sustain our ministries. That's why you and others like you are such an important part of our team. We are here in Honduras on the front line. We have an incredible team of Latin brothers and sisters in Christ that God has assembled to achieve something outstanding in our generation. But none of us could be here doing the work that needs to be done if it weren't for you.

As I was writing these last words, the words from Proverbs 14:14 came to mind where Solomon says, "Where no oxen are, the trough is clean: but increase comes from the strength of an ox." Now please don't misunderstand me. I am not calling you an ox, ha-ha! What I am

saying is that your prayers, donations, and volunteering, combined with our day to day on the ground efforts produces a great increase in the number of lives that are changed.

As you consider your year-end charitable giving, please consider making Mission UpReach a large part of your giving. You will not be disappointed with our stewardship of your donation dollars. We take our responsibility seriously to assure that every \$1 delivers a \$2 return on productivity. And best of all, if you give before December 31st, your gift will be matched by our Challenge Fund up to \$500,000.



MUR Employee Spotlight

Meet **Gerson Geoviny Hernández García.**

Geoviny is from Coyolar, a small village just outside of Santa Rosa de Copán. He has lived in Santa Rosa for 7 years. Geoviny and his wife Esperanza were one of the five couples that got married in October. They have been together for 9 years and they have three children. Their youngest child, Etan Moises was born with a heart condition that is improving, but that challenge is the thing that caused he and

Esperanza to seek God with all their hearts. They were both recently baptized in our local church.

Geoviny has been working in security all his adult years and came to work for the mission two years ago as one of our security guards. Geoviny says, “I have never been treated as well or as fairly by any former employer. Working at Mission UpReach has sincerely blessed my life. Being a part of the Barrio Belén church with my family is wonderful.”



Weddings, weddings, weddings

We are thrilled to announce that this past month five couples made the decision to legalize their marriage and ask God to become the central focus of their marriage. As we have mentioned



before, free union relationships are the norm in Honduras and culturally acceptable. As people come into a transformational relationship with the Lord, they come to the knowledge of their need to formalize their relationship before God. The mission, in partnership with the local church, offers to help couples with the hurdles

and expenses of legalizing their marriage. We had a wedding with five couples, complete with legal and religious ceremonies as well as cake and food. It's beautiful to witness the women live out their dreams of being a bride. Over the past several years, Mission UpReach has assisted more than 85 couples legalize their marriage.



Appreciated stock donations

By Jason Shelnutt

As we approach the end of the year, many of us are beginning to evaluate our income, taxes, and gifts to charitable organizations. Our donations are the lifeblood of organizations such as Mission UpReach. I have been a supporter for years because I love Mission UpReach's focus on building a

have held that stock for longer than a year.

As an example, if you purchased a stock for \$1,000 over twelve months ago and the value of the stock has risen to \$5,000, you have an unrealized long-term taxable gain of \$4,000. Your tax on that gain, if you sold the stock before donating, may vary depending on your income level, but we

letter from you identifying the specific shares to be donated along with the information on the Mission UpReach account. Often this letter can be uploaded to their website securely. Mission UpReach can provide their account information to you. If you have purchased the stock on multiple dates, be sure to describe the specific date(s) of purchase for the shares to be donated in the letter to your broker and use the shares with the largest long-term capital gain. The process may take a few days, so begin the process with some time to spare.

Donating appreciated stock rather than selling the stock and donating cash allows you to deduct the full market value of the stock...

Christ focused organization that helps the people of Honduras obtain self-supporting skills. In addition, the businesses Mission UpReach is developing will also help the organization itself to become more self-supporting as well.

One method of giving that you may not have considered is donating appreciated stock. Our stock market has done well in the last few years despite the pandemic shock of 2020. Some of you may be holding individual stocks that have substantially risen in value. Donating appreciated stock rather than selling the stock and donating cash allows you to deduct the full market value of the stock, and under current law you will not pay any tax on the inherent capital gain if you

will assume the tax rate would be twenty percent or \$800, and the cost of the donation becomes \$5,800. If instead, you transferred the appreciated stock to Mission UpReach they may then sell the stock for \$5,000 and you avoid the \$800 capital gains tax. You could then consider increasing the donation by the amount of the tax avoided. This strategy can also work with mutual funds if they have a longer-term investment strategy and the difference between your basis in the shares of the fund and current value is substantial.

If you have an interest in pursuing a stock donation, consult your representative at your brokerage to determine the exact process. Usually, they request a



Jason Shelnutt is a CPA that has been an accountant, consultant, and healthcare executive for the last 45 years. Aside from being a long-time supporter of Mission UpReach, he also serves on the Board of Directors for Independent Communities (a housing project specifically for individuals with significant disabilities) and Raintree Village Children's Home. Jason and his wife Yvonne live in Roswell, Ga and have two adult daughters, Victoria and Melissa, and a grandson Castiel.



A note from Donna

As we kick off our year end giving, your support means even more than usual because what you give doubles this time of year. We truly feel honored when you commit to giving to Mission UpReach because it communicates a level of confidence in our ability to steward your gift towards something lasting and meaningful.

This month, as we were able to spend some days with our son, Harrison, along with his wife Hayley, we found ourselves talking a lot about eternity. This seems to be a common topic for our family since Harrison's accident. When a family loses something of great value it can lead to a loss of faith or an increase in faith. We are grateful we feel closer to God and eternity because of the loss of the many things that we were robbed of due to the accident. And yet, we have gained more than we can express. We have learned that to stay connected to hope, one must intentionally focus on the fact that this life is temporary, at best. What awaits us is better than our feeble minds can grasp or imagine.

When we do that, we are better at redeeming the times and not living as foolish, but as wise. We are choosing to live each day prudently towards eternity and the things that matter most. Taking as many with us to that promised hope of an eternal life without pain and suffering is a product of prudent and focused living. That is the goal of each of our ministries at Mission UpReach. While the primary focus may be on giving an education to deaf individuals or teaching Bible and values to school aged children, the ultimate goal is to lead everyone into a transformational relationship with Jesus Christ. Please consider making a generous donation this year so that you can be a part of what God is doing here in western Honduras to bring many into His Kingdom. And thank you for entrusting us with your donation.



2022 Brigade Season

January 1-8 VCOM Medical Team
 Feb. 26-March 5 Tusculum Church Medical Team
 March 12-19 Belton Church VBS Team
 April 2-9 VCOM Medical Team
 June 11-18 Pine Tree Church Medical Team
 June 25-July 2 Southside Church/Woodland Park Church Medical Team
 July 9-16 Burnt Hickory Church Medical Team
 July 16-23 Disciple Trips VBS Team
 July 23-30 Tusculum Church VBS Team
 September 3-10 Surgical Team

Mission UpReach Board

Larry Baker, Lexington, SC
 Scott Bedichek, Ft. Worth, TX
 Phil Berry, Coral Springs, FL
 Mike Bridges, Corquin, Copán
 Kory Cummings, Ft. Worth, TX
 Tim Heath, Kennesaw, GA
 Wayne Kellis, Gilbert, SC

Dorris Gulley Shelton, Dunwoody, GA
 Jeff Simpson, White Oak, TX
 Adam Spencer, Longview, TX
 Jon Stacy, Santa Rosa de Copán
 Ted van den Meiracker, Snellville, GA
 Donna Waldron, Santa Rosa de Copán
 Phil Waldron, Santa Rosa de Copán

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.

Please contact us:

Our mailing address is as follows:

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

Please send all checks, donations and correspondence to this address.

You can correspond directly with Phil and Donna at:

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 Phone: 706-534-7060



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Make A Lasting Gift

By Bob Stephens

In recent years I've become more responsive to pleas for help, financial or otherwise. Perhaps, one reason for my more receptive heart is having passed the "three score and ten" threshold, or maybe it's having the passage in Matthew 25 replaying in my mind countless times. I'm blessed to live in a comfortable house (howbeit a villa), with ample food, reasonably good health, and basking in the grace and mercy of a loving heavenly Father.

You no doubt recall the parable Jesus shared in Matthew 25 concerning helping the less fortunate with the basic necessities of life. "...Then the King will say, 'I'm telling you the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me – you did it to me.'" MSG. I must say that parable haunts me. I would never turn my back on Jesus, my Savior. I would provide whatever was needed. But now, it's like I see him whenever a genuine need for the necessities of life arises.

One of the greatest opportunities for us to provide for the very survival of the "overlooked or ignored", or "one of the least of the these" KJV, is through Mission UpReach. My wife and I have supported MUR since its inception through regular giving and more recently, a planned gift.

Each of you give regularly to

Mission UpReach and look forward to reading the impact that your donations are having on this life-saving and life-shaping ministry. However, I want to share with you, from personal experience, some suggestions on other ways to make an even greater difference. Planned giving opportunities provide numerous ways to compound and grow our support to this most rewarding mission. I've seen first-hand the impact of planned gifts.

During my 29-year tenure at a Christian affiliated university, which concluded in serving as president (basically a fancy title for a fund raiser), we were recipients of countless planned gifts. These gifts came in many forms, which I'll describe later in this article. But each had one thing in common: they made a significant difference in the lives of our students. I left the university in 2005 and accepted the presidency of one of the largest private philanthropic foundations in my home state. This foundation was established by an estate gift from a family who wanted their legacy of giving and impacting the lives of others to extend beyond their lifetime. I'm



Dr. Robert Stephens, Retired President of the Bernard McDonough Foundation and Ohio Valley University

sold on planned giving because I have seen first-hand what it can accomplish.

Planned giving comes in many different forms and can provide tax write offs, the avoidance of capital gain taxes on appreciated assets, and potential income to the donor. In our situation, we avoided capital gains on appreciated stock and received a nice charitable deduction toward our income tax while at the same time benefitting Mission UpReach. It was a true "win - win". Following are some of the more popular planned giving instruments in which you might consider partnering with Mission UpReach.

BEQUEST – A bequest is a gift made by naming Mission UpReach



in your will. You can provide a child's portion or name a specific amount that would be distributed after your death.

LIFE INSURANCE – Simply purchase a life insurance policy naming Mission UpReach as the beneficiary.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY – This instrument can provide you income for life with the possibility of eliminating capital gains tax when you donate appreciated assets, such as stock. With a charitable gift annuity, you have the potential to take a partial income tax deduction when you fund the annuity. Part of your gift will be used by Mission UpReach immediately and part of the gift is set aside in a reserve account to be invested to support your future income payments.

CHARITABLE REMAINDER

TRUST – The CRT is similar to the CGA in benefits to the donor with the difference being you receive income for life or a certain period but, at the conclusion, the remainder of the trust would be distributed to Mission UpReach.

DONOR ADVISED FUND – A donor-advised fund is a charitable giving vehicle administered by a public charity (such as a community foundation) created to manage charitable donations on your behalf. To participate in a donor-advised fund, you open an account in the fund and deposit cash, securities, or other financial assets. This is another way to avoid capital gains on appreciated assets and potentially receive a charitable tax deduction. You surrender ownership of anything you put in the fund, but make decisions concerning gifts to your preferred charities, in our situation, Mission UpReach. At your death the remaining funds go to your prior specified charity.

These are just some of the more popular planned giving options that can be used to benefit you and Mission UpReach. For your specific situation, seek advice from a qualified attorney or your financial advisor.

There are so many ways that you can, and have, supported Mission UpReach in its life-altering work among the most vulnerable in Honduras. We know that God will bless all our efforts as we partner together to make a difference one life at a time. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Mt. 6:21 NIV