

# Mission UpReach Newsletter

## The truth about missionaries

Shared by: Phil Waldron, CEO Mission UpReach, Inc.

This past month I ran across an article that a friend had shared with me back in 2014. I had forgotten all about it and when I read it again this month, I was genuinely surprised “again” by the findings of Robert Woodberry, the author of an intensive study on the global spread of democracy. The article I read was written by John Stonestreet at [breakpoint.org](http://breakpoint.org).

I did my own Google search for “who is Robert Woodberry” and found an interesting collection of speeches and articles surrounding his findings. You should look him up yourself if you have any interest at all in the topic of “long term missionaries,” i.e., *Christians from one country or culture living long term among the people of another country and culture for the express purpose of converting them to Christ (Conversionary Protestants (CP) as labeled by Woodberry)*. The results were drawn from Woodberry’s analysis of “a massive amount of data entered by an army of college students.”

Here are just two of the fascinating results of Woodberry’s investigations that are almost exactly opposite of what current, popular cultural paradigms are telling us today:

1. Popular current thought is that Western missionaries were agents of colonialism or tools of imperialist oppression. However, Woodberry’s results show that over the last several centuries, the presence of “Protestant missionaries is the greatest predictor of whether a nation develops into a stable, representative democracy with robust

levels of literacy and political freedom, especially for women.”

2. *“This contrast is replicated across the world, from Botswana to India.” “Areas where Protestant missionaries had a significant presence in the past are on average more economically developed today, with comparatively better health, lower infant mortality, lower corruption, greater literacy, higher educational attainment, and more robust membership in nongovernmental associations.”*

This is fascinating reading for me. I am the son of missionary parents and spent my childhood in both Pakistan and Australia. So, much of what Woodberry shares as conclusions based on reams of research resonates with me personally.

Well, you might ask, what does all of that have to do with Mission UpReach’s current efforts in Western Honduras? The simple answer is this; for centuries Christian missionaries have shared the Gospel wherever they have gone. And being disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, they couldn’t help but respond to the needs of the people with whom they lived and worked. That means where there was illiteracy, they taught people to read so

that they could read the Word of God for themselves and read books that would educate them on various topics. They also established hospitals and clinics to meet the health needs of the people that they grew to love. And much more. The evidence is in, and the results speak for themselves for those who take the time to review them.

Mission UpReach is a ministry that is about bringing as many people to Jesus as possible in this generation. We believe that a disciple of Jesus makes the best citizen, the best community leader, the best businessman or woman, the best politician, etc. As our “missionary forebears” have proven with several centuries worth of results, preaching the Gospel is about more than preaching the Word. As essential as that is, we must realize that we humans are body, mind, and soul. We approach missions here with a mind that we should be ministering and serving on all these same fronts including helping people gain access to economic opportunity so that they can support their families and loved ones. We are grateful to those of you have committed to partnering with us to continue this effort. We need your support more now than ever before.



**See more photos and info on page 3 from our first-ever Church Family Retreat held recently.**

# Día del Niño (Day of the Child)

The 10th of September is the Day of the Child (Día del Niño) in Honduras. The Day of the Child is an international event celebrated by most countries in the world, but on distinct dates. For Honduran children, it's one of the happiest days of the year. Children are generally celebrated at school, churches, community centers, and even at home if the economic situation allows.

The celebrations generally include piñatas, lots of candy, cake, coke, toys, and usually clowns. The idea is to make the children feel celebrated and bring them special joy. Our DESEO team plans months ahead for this day, including a special plea for donations. We normally serve around 850 children per week with our values and Bible teaching, but for the Day of the Child this year, we served 1200 children after receiving an invitation from the mayor of a nearby village requesting our help celebrating the children of their community.

When it was all complete, we had enough toys and treats to visit the local hospital to celebrate with the 30 children who were hospitalized on that day. Thank you to all who responded to this opportunity with financial support!



## A good reason to sponsor a child

In a recent meeting with team leaders, questions were asked of Irma Santos, our DESEO administrator, regarding the disparity in attendance for tutoring between certain schools. Irma explained that in the school that has nearly 100% participation weekly, the difference is that the children in that school are mostly all sponsored by someone via our DESEO Project. It is a requirement of the program that the children attend.



The progress being made by these children in areas such as math and Spanish has been astounding, and it is due to the children's participation in our program offerings. In such environments where the parents have low regard for education and often allow the children themselves to decide whether to attend tutoring or not, we can see the direct and positive impact of sponsorships. While it is the receiving of benefits that motivates attendance, the outcome is very positive. This reinforces the great need to recruit more and more families to sponsor children. The positive results in the education of these children may be the very thing that keeps them in school. Without an education, these children are bound for continuing lives of poverty, and many will end up migrating illegally to the U.S. in search of jobs.

Please consider participating with us to keep children in school, provide education, teach lasting values, show Jesus' love, and help them see their value and worth in the eyes of God. Would you consider sponsoring a child? Visit [www.deseoproject.org](http://www.deseoproject.org) and select a child to sponsor today.

## Independence Day parade

ESPERO, our school for deaf adults, was once again invited to participate in the annual Independence Day parade. The school was honored by being the first school to present in the parade. The town dignitaries received the schools at the town square. A description of the school was presented and the deaf were applauded (using sign language).

It has been very rewarding to see the change in perspective regarding the deaf population since our school began more than 6 years ago. High regard is given in the community for the privilege of marching in the parade. It entails hours of waiting in the heat and sun for a few minutes of recognition, but the tradition is strong and meaningful, making it worthwhile.





# First ever Church Family retreat

For the first time in the history of our local congregation, La Iglesia de Cristo de Barrio Belén, we had a family retreat. 119 individuals participated as the leaders shared their vision for the church. The retreat was held at the same location as our annual Bible camp, and the children were so excited to share a bit of their camp experience with their families. The church worked in harmony to prepare and serve meals, clean the kitchen and bathrooms, as well as provide a meaningful experience for the children while the parents enjoyed a spiritual feast. We also had a time of games, skits, and a bonfire. A group of young people provided a meaningful devotional reenacting the crucifixion of Christ. This is a tradition for each week of Bible camp for the children, and for many of the adults it was the highlight of the retreat. We plan to continue this new tradition and hope the number of participants grows each year.



## Surgical team arrives after 3 year hiatus

During the first week of September, we were able to host our first surgical team since the Fall of 2019. There were 10 participants who were able to perform 22 much needed surgeries. There were numerous challenges we haven't faced before such as resistance from Customs to release their equipment and medications. We also experienced our first ever need for our emergency evacuation insurance, which worked wonderfully for the individual who fell and fractured their hip and hand. Additionally, the public hospital where we serve is in the worst condition in the history of our relationship with them with supply shortages and no funding. Despite the challenges, this team endured the hardships and accomplished so much. Knowing that the patients they served had been waiting for as long as four years for surgery made the challenges worthwhile. The tearful thank-you's reflected the depth of gratitude of the patients and their families. Can you imagine

waiting four years for a much-needed hysterectomy or gall bladder removal? We are excited to be hosting surgical teams again and invite you (if you have OR experience) to contact Donna Waldron at [donna.w@missionupreach.org](mailto:donna.w@missionupreach.org) to inquire about getting involved.





## A note from Donna



My recent experience with the surgical brigade provoked a lot of emotions. I recognize that my emotional state isn't optimal in this moment, but it brought discouragement

unlike anything I've felt in the 13 years we have been in Honduras. It is so hard to see the conditions that many Hondurans must endure to receive medical attention.

While assisting the OB/GYN surgeon in reviewing the potential surgical patients, I saw just how desperate the situation at the hospital is. The doctor was using the ultrasound machine and post procedure needed something to clean the patient and instruments with. A simple paper towel would do, but there were none in sight. When I went to ask for some, the response I got was, "we don't have any." We were eventually given some pieces cut from a disposable table covering. When I asked about the number of surgeries being performing weekly, the response was,

"only emergency surgeries due to a lack of supplies like sterile gloves." No paper towels? No sterile gloves? That's desperate.

However, the team's 22 surgeries were a great achievement and was greatly appreciated. As we faced the power struggle with the newly politically appointed Customs staff noted in the "Surgical Team" article on page 2, my anger peaked. How could someone be so heartless as to keep much needed instruments, medications, and supplies that were donated for the purpose of helping the neediest in the country? And even after involving our attorney and the director of the hospital, we were denied access to the donations. Never in 13 years have we faced such a challenge.

This passage comes to my mind, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9) This story is unfortunately only one of many challenges we are facing right now. We will not give up until the Lord returns or we are called home (or get too old to keep going). But we do need your prayers personally, for the mission, for our finances, and for open hearts and doors as we strive to continue to fight for the poor and oppressed.

## 2022 Brigade Season

Feb. 26-March 5 .....Tusculum Church Medical Team  
 June 11-18 .....Pine Tree Church Medical Team  
 July 2-9 .....Southside Church Medical Team  
 July 23-30 .....Tusculum Church VBS Team  
 September 3-10 .....Surgical Team

## Mission UpReach Board

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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.*

## 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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