

# MOST Ministries

Mission Opportunities Short Term | 2020 Annual Report

Impacting the World for Jesus Christ Through Short-Term Missions



## 2020 Year in Review

### Moving the Ministry Forward During a Pandemic

Dear Ministry Partners,

2020 started out to be a great year for MOST Ministries! Our staff was excited about the prospect of sending 33 volunteer mission teams to 16 countries to “impact the world for Jesus Christ through short-term missions” – more teams than MOST had sent overseas in several years!

Our first two mission teams (a water team in Uganda and an eyeglass team in Belize) left the U.S. on schedule. But, by the second week of March, this “thing” called, “COVID-19,” had been declared a global “pandemic,” and all international travel came to an abrupt halt. Our plan to deploy a third team on our 2020 mission trip schedule (a medical mission team that was packed and ready to leave for Guatemala), had to be cancelled less than 24 hours before their scheduled departure.

Soon after, uncertainty and great concern about our ability to send the other teams on our 2020 schedule began to take over. After much prayer decisions were immediately made to cut back on expenses in order to keep the Ministry running through the end of the year and poised to resume sending teams overseas, once

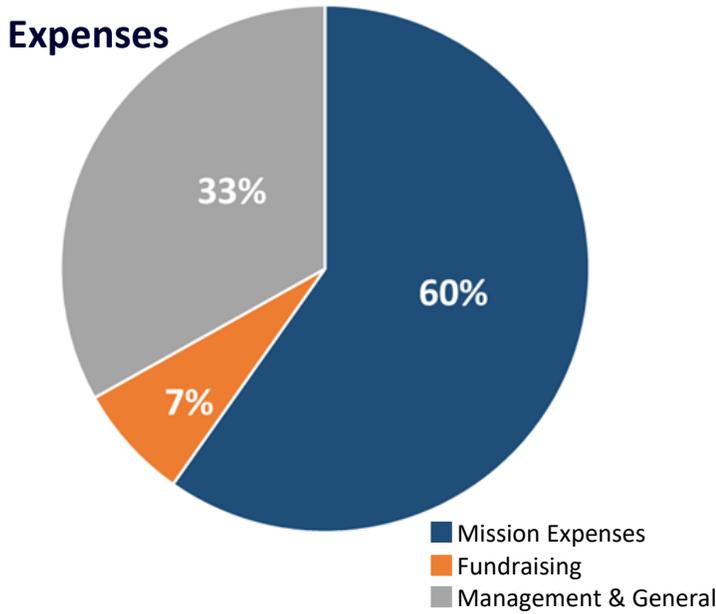
borders reopened and volunteers could safely resume international travel. It was emotionally draining for our staff to realize that our “best laid plans” for the Ministry in 2020 had to be changed so early in the year. But, we decided to step out in faith, confident that God would see MOST Ministries – His Ministry – through the end of the year, as long as we committed our decisions and “changes in plans” to Him.

In April our Board of Directors revised the original 2020 budget projections to reflect substantial reductions in mission team income and Ministry expenses. Due to cutting unnecessary expenses and reducing other expenses; receiving a Payroll Protection Program (“PPP”) loan under the Federal CARES Act; an increase in unrestricted donations through the end of the year from our faithful donors; and careful stewardship of the funds entrusted to the Ministry – God did bless MOST Ministries! We ended the year in better financial shape than we could have ever imagined when we had to cancel our first team last March. Praise God!

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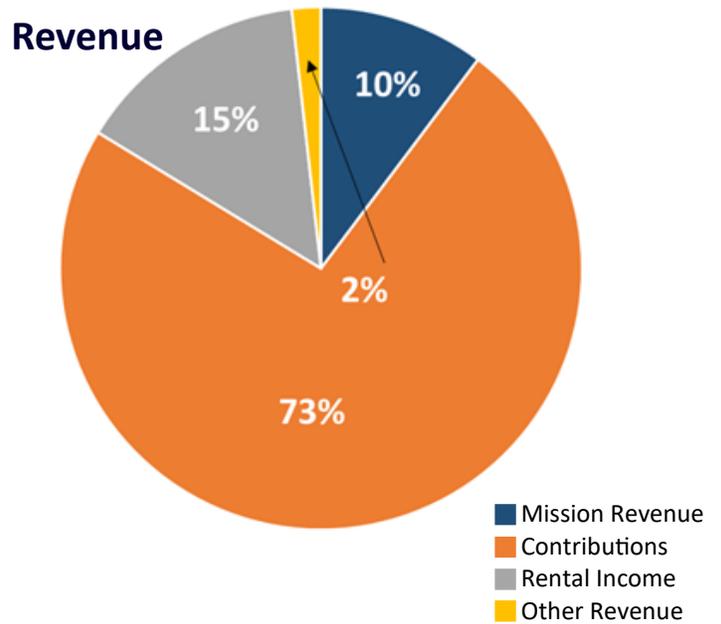
# MOST Ministries Financial Statistics for 2020

Information is taken from the audited financial statements of Mission Opportunities Short Term.



**Expenses:**

Mission Expenses	273,928
Fundraising	32,538
Management & General	<u>120,195</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$573,285</b>



**Revenue by Source:**

Mission Revenue	58,876
Contributions	421,002
Rental Income	83,089
Other Revenue	<u>10,318</u>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$573,285</b>

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The impact of COVID-19 on MOST Ministries’ ability to carry out its mission last year was undeniably disappointing. Dozens of volunteers who had planned to be part of a mission team were saddened about not being able to help people in need and share the Gospel in unreached parts of the world. Our plans to bring hope to thousands of spiritually lost and hurting people, as MOST had been doing for the previous 30 years, were unquestionably thwarted. And our international hosts on the ground (national pastors, Lutheran missionaries, and local mission partners) who had requested a MOST team more than a year in advance, were disappointed that our team members wouldn’t be able to help them carry out their plans to expand the church in the communities they serve.

But the good news is that through your generosity

YOU helped MOST Ministries get through 2020 and, hopefully, the worst of the pandemic! Your prayers and financial support made it possible for the Ministry to step out in faith, believing that God would see MOST Ministries through a very difficult, unprecedented year, as long as its “changes in plans” were committed to the Lord. Thank you for your faithful support!

Serving Him Together,  
Ruth Richert Martin  
Executive Director

*Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established. Proverbs 16:3 ESV*

## Team 2001 - Uganda Water Mission Team

by Kevin Gambill (MOST Ministries Team Leader)

2020 was the most unusual year in mission work I have ever experienced since 2003, but I was fortunate enough to lead one of the two teams that served this past year. It was the first team of 2020 to leave on Jan 23-Feb 4 to do a clean water project/health and hygiene project in Uganda, Africa with a team from Calvary Lutheran Church in Wray, CO. After traveling for 2 days, we arrived at our base city in Uganda to start the project, 7 days in 5 different cities in the SE district of the Lutheran Church of Uganda.

This was my 4th water team and the worst quality water I have ever seen. Filthy river water, cattle ponds, well water, all dark brown, gritty and smelly water. Boiling the water was the only way to make it safe to drink until we provided the Sawyer water system that produces 99.9% pure water, crystal clear and with no odor, it was a night and day difference in the quality of the water available to drink.

The team was very excited to help provide such a precious necessity. As with all water teams we also taught the importance of health and hygiene to improve quality of life and health. We taught the importance of washing hands, oral hygiene, cross contamination of foods in cooking, importance of diet, and farming techniques to improve yields. We left behind toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, towels to help get them started.

It was a great week and God used the team to improve the lives of many. Each day had a spiritual lesson that centered on how much God loves you and cares for you. Overall, it was a great and uplifting week.

On the trip home we had a layover in Amsterdam, and we started to be questioned by the airline staff about where we had travelled from. China? NO we answered and as we watched the TV in the terminal we first heard about the Covid crisis.

We all made it back home safely, and started to watch our own TVs as the Covid virus, within a month of our return, closed down the world, started to wear masks and washing our hands continuously. I started to receive messages on Facebook from those we served in Uganda thanking us for teaching them the importance of washing their hands and providing the soap and towels that allowed them to do so. I began to learn that Covid had become a big issue in Uganda and lives were in danger. What I thought was mostly a water project, I soon realized that a bar of soap and training in the importance of hand washing became the most important lesson that we left behind. God's hand leading us and his timing was, as always, perfect.



## Team 2012 - Belize Eyeglass Mission Team

by Bill Hahn (MOST Ministries Chairman of the Board & Team Member)

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.”  
I Corinthians 12:12

Our spectacular mission team of ten (ages 20-65+) from four different states, flew to Belize during the first week of March 2020. Some of us knew a couple of people ahead of the trip; two of us didn't know anyone; and only three of us had previously served on an eyeglass mission team!

Our base with Pastor Roldan was the remote, non-tourist “city” of Orange Walk Town. From there we traveled to three locations where we held four and a half days of eyeglass clinics. Each day team members had to choose an area of the clinic in which to work. We all tried two or three different work stations that week. It was amazing to watch how God brought all of us together to discover which part of the body of Christ was ours.

Together, we provided vision testing to over 800 individuals and distributed over 1,000 pairs of eyeglasses. That

was a blessing for the people of Belize and also for us. It is a joy to reflect on the many people that we helped that week. From as painful as helping a man in his 30s and a boy of 12 understand that they were blind and teaching them how to use a walking stick, to as normal as helping school children and adults finally see well enough to read.

Ten virtual strangers in a strange land, eating strange food and doing strange things. During the clinics we all had our role, and the Holy Spirit worked through and among us in different ways, but for one purpose: to help others see Jesus and to help them see across the street!

We were blessed to be one of the few MOST Ministries teams to go out in 2020. We were blessed to be God's hands and feet and mouth to so many people in Belize. We look forward to what God has in store for us in 2021 whether at home or abroad!



## 2020 Legacy Members

MOST Ministries Legacy Members provide a five-year financial pledge of at least \$1,000 per year. In 2020, MOST had a total of 33 current Legacy pledge members. They are a tremendous blessing to the Ministry.

## 2020 Staff

Ruth Martin, Executive Director  
Kelly Bone, Business Manager & Volunteer Coordinator  
Tyler Seehafer, Team Administrator  
Kaleigh Bone, Team Administrator & Communications  
Anna Valaskova, Storeroom Manager  
Linda Thompson, Ministry Support

## 2020 Board of Directors

Bill Hahn, Chair  
Jan Gerzevske, Vice Chair  
Chad Woltemath, Treasurer  
Charlotte Campbell, Secretary  
Greg Gessert  
Sandy Hardies  
Chuck Hempel  
Bethel Larsen  
George Locke  
Rev. Joel Sarrault  
Penny Selle  
Janet Stechholz  
Carol Stuhr  
Don Sommerfeld, Emeritus  
Gayle Sommerfeld, Emeritus

## 2020 Team Leaders

Tim Bernthal  
Kaleigh Bone - Trainee  
Kelly Bone  
Kathryn Chrzanowski  
Katie Cowan - Trainee  
Cheri Dennis  
Sarah DePriest  
Kevin Gambill  
Sandy Hardies  
Barbara Hoffmeier  
Dennis Leidel  
Roxann Leidel  
Deanna Leimbach - Trainee  
Alysia Masters  
Debra Selinger - Trainee  
Annette Trelfa  
Craig Watkins - Trainee  
Darcy Zent

## Team Impact Since 1989

LIVES IMPACTED	COUNTRIES SERVED	TEAMS	TEAM MEMBERS
241,969	52	535	6,290
EYEGASSES DISTRIBUTED	WATER FILTERS DISTRIBUTED		
160,000+	1,700		

### Team 2005 - Guatemala Medical Mission Team

by Tim Bernthal (MOST Ministries Team Leader)

Can the cancellation of a mission trip be a blessing? Is the promise of Romans 8:28 true? St. Paul wrote: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

In early March 2020, MOST team members had been ready and excited to see how God would use them for their short-term medical mission trip to Guatemala. This diverse team of medical professionals, dental professionals, and lay people were scattered across three states and three time zones, from Oregon, to Wisconsin to Michigan. But, within a little more than 24 hours before the scheduled departures were to take place, things began to dramatically change. Concerns arose for the safety of team members if they contracted the coronavirus and the possibility of exposing people in Guatemala to COVID-19. After contacting one of the

hosts in Guatemala, the executive staff decided to cancel the trip. Of course, the team members who had been planning the medical mission trip to Guatemala for months were disappointed, but only later did they understand what God already knew and how He protected them.

On March 14<sup>th</sup> about 12 hours *after* the team would have arrived in Guatemala, I received an email from the US State Department's Embassy in Guatemala indicating, for the first time, that their borders would soon close to US citizens. Later that same day, when our team's oral surgeon sent me an email to say he was glad the team did not leave for Guatemala, I then realized this is what God had planned for the "good" of his people. God had protected MOST's team members *and* the people of Guatemala.

# 2020 TEAMS



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