

Mission Partner of the Month

October 2018

*Building
brighter
futures*

**The
Peace
& Hope
Trust**

The Peace and Hope Trust

St Michael's Church Stoke Gifford

Link person at St Michael's: Janice Wade

The Peace and Hope Trust operates in Nicaragua, which is second-poorest in the Americas (after Haiti). We focus on the poorest communities along the Caribbean coast, near Bluefields, but also bring donated goods to cities such as Matagalpa and Granada, and to Ometepe island.

Our mission is centred on health and education.

St Michael's funded the building in 2018 of a smart new school (see picture) in Las Brenas, around 30km west of Bluefields, as requested and supported by the Ministry of Education there. This was completed in little over 2 weeks, using 5 UK volunteers and a much higher number of parents and other helpers. The project included the purchase of a cement mixer, to accelerate the build, and it will remain there for future work. We have also regularly purchased uniforms for hundreds of school children, to allow them to attend school.



Our UK support is based mainly around Newent and Ross-on-Wye; we have a tiny office, and our charity shop finances the shipping of donated goods out to Nicaragua, mainly hospital beds and mattresses, and mobility aids such as wheelchairs and crutches – here is a photo of our warehouse stocks. We normally ship 4 or 5 containers per year and distribute the goods quite widely.



Our operations came to a sudden stop in April, as the school was being finished: the team had to leave a country suddenly torn by demonstrations against the government, which were then heavily suppressed by police and para-militaries. At present we cannot send teams into Nicaragua – but of course, our local staff are managing the situation and doing what they can, and we continue to

pay them. We are waiting for our chance to return, and reacting as opportunities arise - such as diverting some donated goods to Romania and other countries.

Our future programme depends on political stability. We are keen to resume work as before, as soon as consular advice allows us to return. That might take a year or two, and we are sending funds into the country in the meantime as we identify specific needs.

Prayer points:

- Continue to pray for a return to peace and stability.
- Pray for president Daniel Ortega, that he will reform or step aside so that peace and stability can be established once again.
- It is reported that more than 40 medical staff have been sacked for treating wounded anti-government protesters in the city of Leon at a public hospital. Pray for all the people of Nicaragua but especially those who work with us for the good of their communities.
- Pray also for guidance to the container team, in finding a destination for some of the donated goods.
- An estimated 500,000 Nicaraguans currently live and work in Costa Rica and the numbers are rising fast! Pray that the refugees will find homes and work and that aid will be available where needed.
- Remember also our Nicaraguan friends experiencing violence, fear, death as well as major food shortages, with much infrastructure such as schools, closed down. Pray for a cooling of emotions and a peaceful run-up to new elections.



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