



PARTNERING FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND RENEWAL – TRANSFORMING LIVES

YOUR IMPACT

Our Favorite Stories from 2020

For many, 2020 is a year they hope to soon forget. We know this has been a very challenging year for many, and our thoughts and prayers are with you if that has been your experience. We, too, will not soon forget this year, but it's because of the amazing things God has done in the midst of challenges. Here are just some of our favorite stories from this most unforgettable year.

Record-breaking Events

As the world slowed to a crawl in March, we questioned what PEER's financial future may look like. A significant portion of our donations come from our key events – our Annual Walk (June) and Banquet (October). It soon became apparent that we would not be able to hold either as we knew them. Bit by bit, God showed us how to transition virtual events, and the outcomes were record-breaking. We raised \$30,000 more in the Walk than we had ever raised before. Not to be outdone, we raised more than twice as much in the Banquet than ever before! And both events allowed the talents of many of our volunteers to break through in ways that will benefit PEER Servants and the kingdom for years to come!

Young Kingdom Superstars

Back in 2014, six young people in northern Uganda gathered to discuss what it would look like if there were more of the kingdom of heaven in their community. Those six pioneers launched PEER Teens – today a movement with hundreds of young people in eight countries. This year PEER Teens blossomed! Over 30 of the Teens gathered in teams and qualified for \$100 Social Entrepreneur Grants to extend more of heaven into their communities. The number of PEER Teens Scholars, university students in Africa, surged past 25 as they pursued careers in health,

law, technology, community development, and more. PEER Servants Boston was blessed with two interns from PEER Teens Burundi – Osian and Bella. And four young men from northern Uganda (pictured above) produced a "Perfect Peace" video that was central in our Banquet program and is rising the music charts in Africa. The future of the kingdom is in very good hands!

Guatemalan Growth

You might think in a year like this that most organizations would just hold on and try to survive. Not Potter's House, our Guatemalan partner. Their expansion this year has been remarkable – a new community center and microfinance branch in Chiquimula, new programs addressing food security, a new medical lab in Guatemala City that will make healthcare accessible and affordable to the extremely poor, and much more! Their vision led us to something we have never done before – provide \$100,000+ to one partner in a calendar year. Gracias, Potter's House!

Justice Wins

Like every year, this was a hard year to choose one Lydia Award winner from among many inspiring finalists. Unlike other years, this year there was Dionnie. Dionnie spent ten years in prison wrongfully accused of murder. While there, he learned to farm and provide for his family. After his acquittal, he found one organization (CCT, our Filipino partner) that believed in him, helped him grow his business, and helped his amazingly faithful wife and him send their four children to university. In a year when justice seemed to rarely win, it brought us great joy to see justice win with Dionnie!

Celebrating 25+ Years of Partnership!

How we thank God for 25+ amazing years of extending more of the kingdom of heaven to earth! Through your prayers and financial support, God is at work enabling tens of thousands of the materially poor and non-poor to experience economic, social, and spiritual transformation. Thank you!

If you would like to send a tax-deductible donation to PEER Servants, you can direct 100% of your gift to any of our Microfinance Partner Funds. See the back side of the newsletter for contact info. Thank you for your generosity. **God bless you!**

Todd G. Engelsen

Todd G. Engelsen
President



GivingTuesday

One of the best days for generosity in 2020 is coming up – Tuesday, December 1, which is GivingTuesday! PEER Servants will offer you three ways to express your generosity on this day – a \$100 micro-loan in India, a \$25 Homeschool Kit in Guatemala, and a \$100 PEER Teens Social Entrepreneur Grant. Thanks to the generosity of one of our donors, your GivingTuesday donation will be matched, dollar for dollar, up to \$5,000 for each of these three initiatives (\$15,000 total). Let's make it a great day for these micro-entrepreneurs, students, and kingdom-minded young people!

WHAT TRANSFORMATION LOOKS LIKE

**Here Comes Justice!**

Meet Mukuma! Mukuma is one of the most recent PEER Teens Scholars graduates, having just completed his Bachelors in Law in Zambia. Mukuma's passion is to become a Human Rights Lawyer and join the front lines of extending the kingdom of heaven to those who lack justice, especially the materially poor and the marginalized. A double orphan himself, Mukuma knows how critical it is to have an advocate for justice and he is committed to making a difference in the lives of many.

**Mmmm! Mmmm! Moldova!**

Looking for some of the most delicious breads, buns, and pizzas in Moldova? Then you're looking for the bakery of Parascovia! Parascovia and her family did what so many Moldovan families have done since the early 1990s – they moved OUT of the country. But then she decided to move back with the children and she needed a means to help her husband still support the family. Her passion was baking, and with a series of loans from Invest Credit, she is growing a very dedicated customer base!

THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS



One of our core values is "The Power of Prayer" and our volunteer family meets frequently to be with God and bring our requests to Him. Here's some of the crew who gathered for our Fall Foliage Prayer Walk – a crisp day topped off with a warm cup of soup back at the office.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

We'd love to hear from you!

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The McGonagle Family is redefining a "hybrid" House/Virtual Banquet! Paul and Janet hosted one of 20+ House or Virtual Banquets that gathered up to 10 people in person or dozens of people on line to celebrate what God is doing in our midst. The outcome – both in the wonderful times together and the resulting Banquet Offering – was what only God deserves credit for!

God Threw a Banquet!

I am relatively certain God is a foodie! His Son, Jesus, was found often attending banquets in the Scriptures, and we're led to believe even God is preparing a heavenly banquet for us. We think God loves banquets!

We gained more evidence for our theological hypothesis this year when it came to our own Fall Banquet! The only way we had ever hosted our Fall Fundraising Banquet was to pack 200+ people into a church or school hall. COVID wasn't going to allow that in 2020. What would we do? We turned to the master event planner – God!

Key Word: Flexible!

Some of you may question whether God still speaks in our day. I can assure you He uttered at least one word – "flexible". As we prayed to Him for what we should do with our Fall Fundraising Banquet, that was the word He gave us. Then, day by day, sometimes hour by hour, He revealed how we should proceed, who we should ask to get involved, and what we should say. Never before in the almost 30-year history of PEER Servants have we had an event where we were so attentive to God's leading. Bit by bit, the pieces of the event came together, and what ultimately resulted became beautiful in our eyes.

A Dynamic Duo Video Team

Our entire Banquet program was going to have to be delivered on video. In stepped Jervie Magat – one of our most inspiring PEER volunteers from the Philippines. Jervie and his family used to live on the streets of Manila – their lives were transformed when our Filipino partners, CCT, came alongside of them and saw them as Jesus did. Today, Jervie is a university graduate and global leader – in fact, he is our Co-Director for Global Youth Empowerment. He is also FANTASTIC with video! We identified a bunch of scenes from

our volunteers, partners, Teens, and more that would make up the video. Once we had those video clips, Jervie would weave them together to the final program. Then Andrew stepped in – a veteran volunteer from Arlington, MA, and with all enthusiasm, joy, and talent, captured dozens of videos from around the world and fed them to Jervie. By the time they were done, they had woven together God's story, and that's just the story He wanted to tell at His Banquet!

Down Under for the Keynote

You can't have a Banquet without a keynote speaker, right? Since we had already gone virtual, we didn't need to limit potential speakers to Bostonians. Rather, we went about as far as we could go – Australia – and pleaded with a dear friend who had worked in peacemaking for decades to address this theme from God for the year to come: "Perfect Peace". David Cohen replied with an immediate "yes!" Before he was done, his professional videographer godson helped produce a "Perfect Peace" homily complete with koalas and kangaroos. God couldn't help but throw in some humor in His Banquet.

God's Global Voice

As you might suspect, a Banquet with God as the event planner was going to allow a much wider range of voices to be heard than usually get to utter a word at a fundraising banquet. "Amazing Grace" would be sung by Ugandan young people who knew something about their chains being gone, "Perfect Peace" would be a rap from some talented, articulate voices from Africa, Lydia Award voting would be a difficult decision between four inspiring finalists, and a fun bunch of Latin American woman would exude one word: joy! God threw a Banquet, and through His event, raised up an Offering response that will bless the poor to the ends of the earth.