

**PRAY** POSTED ON JULY 10, 2019

**Pray for Elberto and Molly Juarez endorsed to serve in El Salvador in ministries of peace building and social transformation.**



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Elberto Juarez and Molly Jamison Juarez are endorsed to serve as global servants in El Salvador with IM partner Mision Vida y Paz (MVP), or Mission Life and Peace. They share a strong commitment to peace building and social transformation through the power of the

gospel. MVP is an educational program based on biblical values to be used in public schools in El Salvador. The couple will build the MVP program by educating and training Christian volunteers who will work with Molly, a sociologist, and Eliberto, a student of economics, to deploy the MVP curriculum. They seek to see churches living out their calling to bring God's peace to children, families and communities.

They write – **The Beginnings** – We began this journey in November of 2015, in the small town of Chalchuapa, El Salvador. We had been invited by about 15 pastors to meet and explore **new opportunities for the church that would have a greater impact on their communities**. Our first meeting was held in a school where soldiers arrived daily to enforce a safe environment for students. In this school, we began our journey of ministry.

El Salvador, Central America's smallest country, boasts of *beautiful landscapes* and *hardworking people*. It also suffers from *gang violence* and *lack of opportunity*, forcing many people to migrate to other countries.

As we began working with this group of pastors in Chalchuapa, we quickly discovered the need for a **new vision of sharing the Gospel** with young people. Our churches were active and strong, yet violence and migration continued to mark many families. As we dialogued, the demand became clear: we, as Christians, needed to create a new program that showed **how our faith can provide practical solutions to the daily challenges of students**. As this program took shape, with help and input from a diverse group of leaders, we decided to name it "**Misión Vida y Paz**" (**MVP**), which in English means "Mission Life and Peace."

**Partners in Mission** – We, Eliberto and Molly, began this journey of ministry with MVP without knowing the path God was preparing for us. What started as a part-time "on the side" project quickly **gained momentum, demanding more time, energy, and resources**. After just three months in our first school, MVP was asked to share with students in a second and third school, finishing our first school year with about 40 volunteers impacting over 1500 students. By the end of the second year we had expanded into a second town, working with more churches, volunteers, and students. **God's work was multiplying**. We felt a strong calling to serve as leaders of MVP and facilitate its growth, but **conflicted by our limited time and resources**. As we prayed for guidance and sought support from friends and family internationally, we were connected with Adalia Gutierrez Lee, the regional director for Iberoamerica of International Ministries (IM). In conversations we quickly found that MVP and IM shared **common dreams of working together to build God's kingdom of peace and justice as partners in mission**.

**Growing the Family** – In 2018 we responded in faith and moved to the United States to complete our application process with International Ministries and to define our role as partners with IM in mission in El Salvador. We left behind our friends, family, and ministry in El Salvador, trusting that we would return ready to dedicate ourselves full time to the work of MVP. **Our decision to join with IM was driven by our desire to expand our mission to reach more students throughout the entire country**. Last month we had the privilege of visiting the IM offices to complete our new Global Servants orientation. We met many partners for the journey and were encouraged by their support and faith in God's work for transformation in El Salvador.

Now, as part of the IM team, we are given the task of raising the financial and spiritual support needed to sustain our service as missionaries and grow the ministry of MVP.

In El Salvador, we encourage our group of MVP volunteers to refer to themselves as "The MVP Family." Together, we form a bond of love, support, and trust that guides us on our journey.