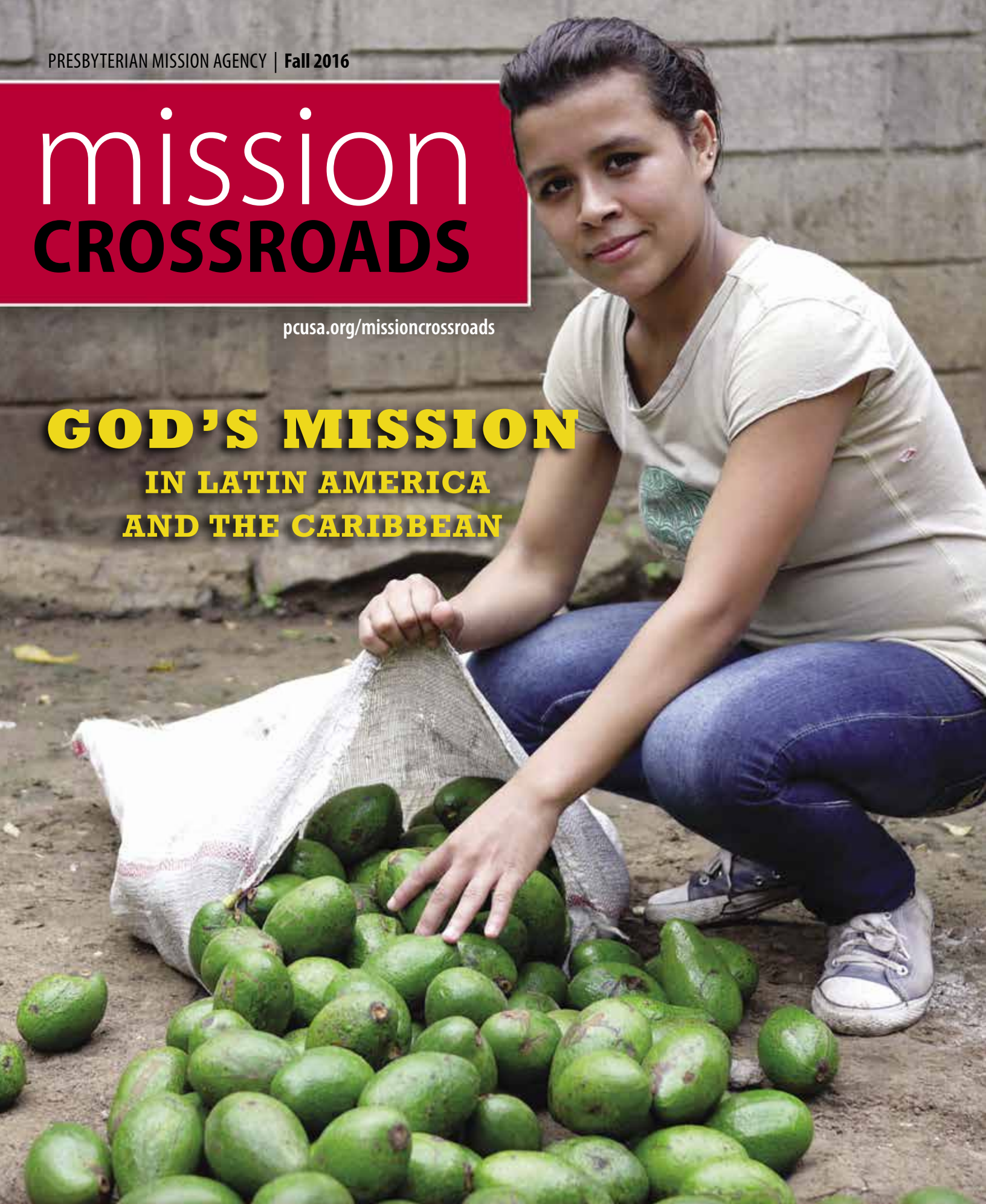


PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY | Fall 2016

# mission CROSSROADS

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## **GOD'S MISSION** IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



Will Colombians vote for peace? | Protecting sacred resources in Bolivia | Political unrest in Haiti



## Building bridges, embracing diversity to make disciples of all peoples

Cindy Corell



Valdir França, area coordinator of Latin America and the Caribbean (right), sits with Herns Celestin at a primary school operated by members of the Movement of Landless Farmers to Reclaim Land in Dofine, Haiti. Herns is the second born in a family of eight children. He and his wife, Jennifer, and their young son, Barns, live in Port-au-Prince. Herns is trained as an electrician. He also teaches at a technical school.

brothers and sisters have a Latin American pope for the first time in history. Yet identification with Catholicism has declined throughout the region, and religious diversity is on the increase. As Presbyterians, we've been part of that diversity since the mid-1800s, when Protestants first sent missionaries to Latin America and the Caribbean. Presbyterian missionaries faithfully established churches, schools and hospitals from Cuba to Chile, from Mexico to Brazil. These missionaries spread the Gospel and trained pastors and evangelists, teachers and community leaders to bear witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ in their own land and in their own language.

Today the region is re-thinking what it means to be "Protestant" or "evangelical." New charismatic expressions of Protestantism, including Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals, are reshaping Protestant identity. In recent decades we have witnessed the extraordinary growth of Protestantism in Latin America and the Caribbean. In many countries now, on any particular Sunday, more people attend Protestant worship—in all its diversity—than attend Catholic Mass.

As our ecumenical partners in the region learn to navigate the complexities of their own context, Presbyterian World Mission has the great privilege of working with them in evangelism and theological education, in addressing the root causes of poverty, and in lifting up the hope of reconciliation where violence and polarization hold sway. Presbyterian mission workers help to build bridges between U.S. presbyteries and churches and our partners as they work together in ministries of compassion and discipleship, advocacy and peacemaking, evangelism and community development.

In this issue of Mission Crossroads you will read about some of this exciting work. We invite you to become part of what God is doing in Latin America and the Caribbean through your prayers, your active participation and your financial support for Presbyterian World Mission.

**M**ission always happens at the crossroads, where God continues to work in the world. God is present—between hope and despair, justice and injustice, violence and peace—offering alternatives where none seem apparent. That is who God is.

The Gospel of Matthew, written to a troubled community at its own crossroads of crisis, reminds us that the way forward in our faith is found in the Great Commission. The way forward is not to circle the wagons and withdraw into ourselves, but to follow Christ by making disciples of **all** peoples, embracing diversity the same way that Christ embraced and blessed outsiders, teaching them to practice God's justice for the poor.

For five centuries, Latin America and the Caribbean have been Roman Catholic strongholds. Even today, this region is home to 40 percent of the world's Catholics. Furthermore, our Catholic

*Mission Crossroads is a Presbyterian Mission Agency publication about God's mission around the world through the PC(USA) and our church partners.*

*Presbyterian World Mission is committed to sending mission personnel, empowering the global church, and equipping the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for mission as together we address the root causes of poverty, work for reconciliation amid cultures of violence, and share the good news of God's saving love through Jesus Christ.*

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#### On the cover:

*Oneida helps on her family's farm in Nicaragua and takes special pride in the avocado crop (page 12).*

*Photo by Audrey White*





## Presbyterianism in Cuba

**Sound mission strategy and a persevering church shaped a vital witness**

The stresses of a political revolution, Cold War tensions, a trade embargo, and travel restrictions could not break the ties that bind U.S. and Cuban Presbyterians. These bonds may grow even closer thanks to joint ministry opportunities emerging in the wake of renewed diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba.

This development helped open the door for last year's appointment of mission co-workers David Cortes-Fuentes and Josey Saez-Acevedo. The couple are the first mission co-workers sent to live and work in Cuba since the 1959 revolution led by Fidel Castro.

Cuban Presbyterians endured a severe crackdown on religious expression after the revolution, and when religious liberties started to expand in the 1990s, the Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Cuba began a trajectory of steady growth. Yet the church lacks enough trained leaders to serve its increased membership. At the request of our partner church, we sent David, a seminary professor, and Josey, a Christian educator, to help address this need.

The energetic witness of Cuban Presbyterians is a testament to their faithfulness and to the mission commitment of U.S. Presbyterians. Our church's work in Cuba began in 1890 when Cuban layman Evaristo Collazo asked the Presbyterian Church in the United States (the Southern church) to offer counsel and oversight for worship services he and his wife were holding in

their home. The church responded by sending Antonio Graybill, a Presbyterian pastor from Mexico, to Cuba. He held worship services, baptized 40 adults, ordained two elders for the session, and ordained Collazo and installed him as pastor.

About a decade later, the Southern church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (the Northern church) began sending missionaries to Cuba. The Northern church formed a presbytery in Cuba in 1904 and placed it under the Synod of New Jersey's jurisdiction. This ecclesiastical tie to the United States continued until Cuban Presbyterians formed the Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Cuba in January 1967.

By the early 1960s, nearly all missionaries had left Cuba. The one exception was Lois Kroehler, who went to Cuba in 1949 to serve in education and music ministries, and remained there until her retirement in 1992.

About the time her service ended, partnerships between U.S. congregations and presbyteries and Cuban counterparts began to develop. Nearly 90 such relationships exist today, and they have greatly strengthened the spiritual kinship of Cuban and U.S. Presbyterians.

Neither the diminished missionary presence nor the difficult circumstances after the revolution could end Presbyterianism in Cuba. Its success is one more example of our church's wise approach to mission. Our emphasis on local leadership, self-determination, and



David Cortes-Fuentes and Josey Saez-Acevedo are the first Presbyterian mission co-workers appointed to live and work in Cuba since 1959.

mission in partnership results in churches that persevere and flourish.

In Cuba and around the world, a commitment to sustainable ministries remains a hallmark of our church's mission involvement. When you give to Presbyterian World Mission, you can rest assured that you are supporting ministries that will transform lives now and for years to come. I give thanks for this long-term mission focus and for generous Presbyterians like you who make it possible.

*Rosemary Mitchell is senior director of Mission Engagement and Support at the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Contact her at [rosemary.mitchell@pcusa.org](mailto:rosemary.mitchell@pcusa.org).*

### MAKE A GIFT

Support David and Josey's work in Cuba.  
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# Seeds of hope must be watered

## Water Law Bill needed to protect life-sustaining resources in Bolivia

Chenoa Stock

The gravel road is mostly abandoned now. With only small spots of fallen snow and flurries along the way, one would not believe this was the same road that led masses of people to the world's highest lift-served ski area at 17,785 feet. After navigating hairpin turns and watching the houses and farmland of the Bolivian altiplano (high plateau) become smaller and smaller (if one dared look over the narrow road's edge), the Chacaltaya glacier, in all of its nakedness, soon would be revealed. Today's view of the glacier, however, is much different from that of years past. Now only a few small remnants of ice and snow remain.

What used to be one of the highest glaciers in South America, a majestic mountain of the Cordillera Real range, and thus part of the Bolivian Andes range, Chacaltaya was about 18,000 years old when it disappeared in 2009. Though predicted to survive until 2015, the glacier melted at an accelerated rate after 1980, due to lack of precipitation and El Niño effects. For the cities of La Paz and El Alto and those villages of the altiplano who rely on the partial melting of the Andean glaciers for parts of their water supply, this disappearance is cause for alarm and action.

While many in this west central region of the Bolivian altiplano worry about the disappearance of their glaciers and their freshwater resource due to global climate change, those in the southwestern altiplano are concerned about the disappearance of one of their principal water resources due to human intervention. Many communities and

fishermen used to spend their days on Lake Poopó, located outside the major mining city of Oruro, hunting for the next meal for their family and maintaining their livelihood. But now, due to the slow and eventual disappearance of the lake last December, these men and their families are left with nothing but empty boats on nonexistent shores.

Lake Poopó, once the second largest lake in Bolivia, was a crucial water and life source for many in the surrounding areas. Though the Bolivian government claims this change was due to natural causes—such as climate change and El Niño—community members and local technical universities know that another significant factor for this loss is the diversion of water for mining and other industrial purposes.

Bolivia is one of South America's poorest countries, but its location in the Andes Mountains provides it with a wealth of natural resources. This is both a blessing and a curse. After hydrocarbon exploitation, mining is its second biggest industry, extracting a variety of minerals such as tin, gold, silver and zinc. As Bolivia's economy grows steadily from these extractive industries, many communities suffer the consequences.

The health and well-being of communities such as Toma Toma and Machacamarca, located outside of Oruro, have been greatly affected by mining contamination of their water and land. Located downstream from a mining operation, community members, such as Doña Primavera, find themselves

with little access to clean water, stunted crops, sick livestock, rare illnesses and migration of their children to the cities because there is no longer work for the younger generation on the barren and contaminated land.

The PC(USA) accompanies Bolivian communities through Joining Hands for Life (Uniendo Manos por la Vida in Spanish, or UMAVIDA), the Presbyterian Hunger Program's Joining Hands Network in Bolivia. Joining Hands is composed of nine partners, including two church denominations, nongovernmental organizations and community and grassroots groups. Though the focus of each partner differs—be it child labor, youth education, women's empowerment, rural agricultural development or urban farming—they joined hands to form UMAVIDA in 2001 to address the root causes of hunger, poverty and injustice in their country.

Upon studying and learning together with their U.S. partners in San Francisco and Cascades presbyteries, UMAVIDA chose to focus its campaign for sustainable and just change on the issue of water. They could not deny the spiritual call that all of God's people deserve to live an abundant and dignified life; one that includes equal access to this sacred and precious resource.

According to a 2008 report of the United Nations Development Program, Bolivia is among the countries with the greatest reserves of water resources in the world. These resources are for domestic, industrial and agricultural



This is a view of what's left of the Chacaltaya glacier. Due to lack of precipitation and El Niño effects, Bolivia's only lift-accessed ski resort area closed several years before the glacier's predicted demise.



Looking down from the old Chacaltaya glacier onto the cities of La Paz and El Alto, farmlands and winding roads.



A mining operation in Oruro, Bolivia, dumps waste into the Huanuni River.



There is no accurate estimate of the numbers of Bolivians and wildlife displaced by the disappearance of Lake Poopó, high in the Bolivian Andes.

use. Unfortunately, since the writing of the new Constitution in 2009, there has not been a water law passed to protect these resources and regulate their use by citizens and industries so as to avoid more natural disasters, such as the Chacaltaya glacier and Lake Poopó.

Our mission is to get to the root of the problem of contamination and injustice, advocating for the long-forgotten Water Law Bill to be an important part of the political agenda.

As Presbyterians, we have faith that where seeds of hope are planted—even on barren land and in despair—life can

grow. Where the strength of partnership and God's love is felt, the Sustainer of Life is present. UMAVIDA is the seed of life and light of the PC(USA), planted in Bolivia to grow and provide support for people like Doña Primavera and others in similarly-affected communities.

We serve in the hope that justice will flow down like [clean] waters and that this sacred resource will be sustainably protected and controlled—not only for the extractive industries, but for God's Kingdom and people. Water is life. Let us walk in partnership, as the PC(USA) and UMAVIDA, and accompany our

Bolivian brothers and sisters to plant seeds of hope for environmental justice and care for God's creation, nourishing it with the living water that sustains us all.

*Chenoa Stock is companionhip facilitator with the Presbyterian Hunger Program's Joining Hands Network (UMAVIDA) in Bolivia. See page 21 to learn more about Chenoa's work.*

### PROTECT GOD'S CREATION

Support Chenoa's work in Bolivia.  
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# Haiti's political turmoil makes hard lives even harder

**The struggling poor suffer most when frustrations erupt in demonstrations, violence**

Cindy Corell



With life already difficult in ordinary circumstances, life under political unrest in Haiti is nearly unbearable for the working poor.

Life starts early in Haiti. Market women, called *madam seras* in their native language, rise before dawn to sell produce along the streets or in village markets. Arriving at their spot to sell, they spread a cover on the ground and artistically arrange their wares, be they vegetables, sundries or household items.

It's a small market economy, and these street-level merchants endure the hot tropical sun, incessant traffic that sometimes rolls within inches of the women's wares, and thick competition. Often dozens of *madam seras* line up in one area, all of them fighting for a sale.

Add political unrest, and things are even more difficult. If ordinary life is tiring in Haiti, life during political uncertainty can be exhausting.

Since January 2016, the people of Haiti have lived under extreme political duress. The bitter departure of President Michel Martelly on February 7 left the country with a transitional president, but it has never been clear what will happen next. And like any political situation, it's complicated.

From the time Martelly took office in May 2011 until August 2015, no elections took place to fill political offices left vacant when earlier terms ended.

Martelly had called for parliamentary and presidential elections in 2015, but a majority of the Haitian people protested the results.

The top vote-getter, according to the electoral council results, was Jovenal Moise, a Haitian businessman who was



A woman sells produce in the market in Jacmel.

running as a member of Martelly's party, PTKH. Second place was awarded to Jude Celestin, a prominent Port-au-Prince businessman who had run in past presidential elections.

Celestin called fraud in the election result process. He joined seven other runners-up to protest the results. Celestin refused to participate in the runoff election, and thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in protest, effectively stopping the electoral process.

Under such protests, Martelly left office without a successor. The Senate elected Jocelerme Privert to be the provisional president, with a primary task of verifying the presidential election results and continuing the electoral process.



In early February, people flocked to the streets of Port-au-Prince to demand that President Michel Martelly step down.

So without an elected president, the country—its people already coping with rising inflation, increasing security issues and the aftermath of a three-year drought—endures regular political protests.

When you read the headlines of a country facing political turmoil, you often see only the clashes in the streets. Unless you live there or know someone who does, you don't see what goes on behind the scenes.

In Port-au-Prince, and in cities in most countries under great stress, residents and visitors are warned of the hot spots. U.S. citizens get emailed warnings about protests, sometimes before they happen and often when a random demonstration flares up.

Just about everyone listens to the news, most of the people by paying close attention to radio broadcasts that are the first to air information about demonstrations and protests. Because demonstrations are legal with proper notice, often the population knows when and where protests will take over the streets. On those days, people know to avoid the areas.

If demonstrations are expected to be particularly widespread or violent, residents hole up in their homes, having already gathered nonperishable food and water.

But for the madam seras and those who live in the deepest of poverty, these options are not available. Market women lose sales if the streets are taken over, but

there still are children to feed.

And in places where governments are not serving the people, these demonstrations often are the only voice the citizens have.

The next time the media show violent protests taking over the streets of a poor country, understand that these are commonly the actions of desperate people. But also, please understand that beyond the street scenes are exhausted families trying to make do.

And please, please, keep all of them in your prayers.

#### **SUPPORT MISSION CO-WORKERS**

Give to support mission co-workers.

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# A Waldensian congregation in Argentina promotes and defends human rights

Dennis Smith

As Christian denominations around the world grapple with questions of sexual orientation and gender identity, the response is far from uniform. The Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil and the Evangelical Presbyterian and Reformed Church of Peru voted in 2015 to break ties with the PC(USA) over its decision to allow same-gender marriage by Presbyterian ministers, as a matter of conscience. Others have embraced marriage equality as a necessary step to defend human rights.

The Waldensians are a Reformed group that originated in Lyon, France, in the 12th century. Violently repressed because of their teaching and pastoral practice, the “Poor of Lyon” were forced to flee to the remote and rugged valleys of the Italian Alps. Today, they are the oldest of the members of the Reformed family in Italy. Wherever they have migrated, including South and North America, Waldensians have always defended religious freedom and respect for diversity.

The Evangelical Waldensian Church of Río de la Plata (IEVRP), based in Colonia Valdense, Uruguay, traces its roots to the massive emigration out of Italy that began in the mid-19th century. Today, the IEVRP has congregations throughout Uruguay and Argentina.

Like many ecumenical Protestant

churches in the region, the life and mission of the Waldensians were deeply marked by the military dictatorships in Uruguay (1973-85) and Argentina (1976-83). During these periods, for some Waldensians, the promotion and defense of human rights came to be a core expression of their pastoral presence in society.

The IEVRP congregation in Flores, a neighborhood in Buenos Aires, illustrates this commitment. Their previous pastor, Oscar Nuñez, who died in 2013, was a well-known human rights activist and a respected professor at ISEDET, the local ecumenical seminary. Beginning in 2006, the leaders of the Flores congregation, together with Nuñez, began to actively support the civil rights struggle of Argentina’s LGBT community. Marriage equality became a high-profile political issue in Argentina when the government decided to back legislation that would legalize same-sex marriage. The Flores Waldensian community came to understand that part of their pastoral task—and a concrete expression of solidarity with LGBT members in their own congregation—was expressed by their participation in the struggle for marriage equality.

As is the case in many countries, ministers in Uruguay and Argentina are not agents of the state and thus have no authority to perform legally binding weddings. Yet, as a community, they could formally bless a same-sex marriage. To do so, they would need to bring the issue before the IEVRP Synod. In 2008 and 2009, members of the Flores community were appointed

to lead the Synod’s Commission on Liturgy. From this platform, members reflected deeply—together with their whole congregation—on the theological and pastoral implications for their denomination of blessing same-sex unions.

.....  
“We should be encouraged as communities to become sensitive to and to respond with concrete actions of study, attention, and intervention to the issue that demands of us a response of solidarity rooted in the Gospel...”  
.....

In a document sent to all IEVRP pastors in 2009, the Commission on Liturgy stated:

“... (We) understand that we are a Church that is born of the boundless love and grace of Christ (Romans 5:1-11). This challenges us to walk in accordance with the vocation to which we have been called (Ephesians 4:1) and that is made clear in Christ’s call to love the neighbor. Therefore, we feel called to be an open door to all. To welcome and reflect with, not on, (the LGBT community) is what permits us to be faithful to the Gospel call: ‘Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God (Romans 15:7).’”

In 2009, the Synod of the IEVRP commissioned a resolution on same-

## WORK FOR RECONCILIATION

Support the work of Dennis and Maribel Smith in Argentina.

[pcusa.org/donate/E200481](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200481)





Aymar Pais and Edgardo Maln prepare the elements for Laura, Adriana and members of the Flores session faith community to share the Lord’s Supper together.

sex unions to be presented to the 2010 Synod. This resolution, approved unanimously, included the following:

“We should be encouraged as communities to become sensitive to and to respond with concrete actions of study, attention, and intervention to the issue that demands of us a response of solidarity rooted in the Gospel. Consequently, if a local congregation receives a concrete request and, upon reflection, has come to a mature and respectful consensus, we understand that they should feel at liberty to take the pertinent decisions. . .”

In July 2010, Argentina became the first nation in Latin America to approve same-sex marriage. Edgardo Maln, a member of the Flores community, describes the decision to participate in the public campaign in support of this legislation as being the result of a “fraternal, committed dialog, certain that the approval of the marriage equality law

constituted a milestone in the struggle for civil rights, especially for minorities.”

Maln shares that in 2014, Adriana and Laura approached the Flores session, asking that their faith community bless

.....  
**Wherever they have migrated, including South and North America, Waldensians have always defended religious freedom and respect for diversity.**  
 .....

their legal marriage. The session gladly approved the request. The ceremony took place in January 2015. For reasons of space, the liturgy was held in the nearby, much larger, Methodist church. Because the community was without an ordained

minister at the time, lay members of the community coordinated the whole celebration—the decorations, music and the sermon. They also pronounced the blessing. After reading 1 Corinthians 13, Adriana and Laura approached the Table to receive the blessing. Then, as is their custom every time they gather, the community shared the Lord’s Supper—this time with Laura and Adriana sharing the elements. At the time of intercession, all in attendance were invited to share their hopes for the couple. Maln describes this event as being a mobilizing experience for this faith community.

Maln notes that the struggle to defend this new legal conquest will continue. Under Argentina’s new conservative government, some sectors of society are calling for the marriage equality law to be repealed.

*For more information on the ministry of the IEVRP, see [iglesiavaldense.com](http://iglesiavaldense.com).*



## An invitation

### Sessions and congregations

For your convenience, we are providing a few simple options for you to use in submitting your gifts. Congregations can send contributions through regular receiving channels, usually presbyteries, or send Directed Mission Support (DMS) gifts directly to the address below. Those gifts designated to DMS accounts will be reported to the presbytery. We urge you to report DMS contributions directly to your presbytery in order to keep them informed of your denominational support.

### Individuals

Individuals should use the numbers beginning with E to provide financial support to specific mission workers. If you desire, you can also give online at **presbyterianmission.org/supportwm**. You may also write the name of the mission co-worker on the memo line of the check; mail it to the address below, and we will confirm your designation and intent.

### Give to the sending and support of your mission co-workers:

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### For additional information, please contact:

Nicole Gerkins  
Mission Engagement Associate  
Mission Engagement and Support  
nicole.gerkins@pcusa.org



# World Mission stirs couple's generosity and Presbyterian pride

Pat Cole

While lifelong Presbyterian Stan Lush has always cherished his church, he did not learn about its expansive worldwide reach until his retirement years. He was both surprised and heartened by his discovery.

"I can't remember how I first became aware of World Mission, but I was stunned at the scope of the program and the number of countries where we work and the number of people involved," he says. "I was very impressed."

Stan quickly moved from simply being an admirer of World Mission to being an enthusiastic supporter. He and his wife, Karen, made their first gift to World Mission in 2012 in response to a direct-mail appeal. They have made gifts every year since then.

Born into a Presbyterian family in Pennsylvania, Stan maintained his membership in Presbyterian congregations as his career with two large furniture manufacturers took him to New York and Colorado. In retirement, he and Karen continue to live in the Denver area and are members of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Arvada.

Stan has a particular interest in Africa in part because his granddaughter has worked in an orphan care ministry in Rwanda and his congregation has been directly involved in mission in Malawi. He has met Presbyterians from Malawi who have spoken at his church, and he has visited with Presbyterian mission co-workers who serve there. However, most of his World Mission giving has been to the general support of all mission co-workers.

"I understand that all or part of my



Presbyterian World Mission supporters Karen and Stan Lush admire their church's widespread international mission efforts.

contribution could go to a particular location, and I have exercised that option," Stan says. "But my feeling has been that World Mission would know where the need is the greatest, and I have been satisfied to make general contributions."

As he has learned more about World Mission, his affection for the ministry has grown. "So many areas of the world are being serviced by dedicated people," he shares. "I am very proud my national church is doing this important work."

Stan respects the effectiveness and dedication of mission co-workers. "If you are interested in helping people in need throughout the whole world, there is nothing more worthy of support than the work these dedicated people are doing to help people spiritually and in their lives in general. I can't think of anything much more worthwhile for somebody who is trying to be a dedicated Christian to support."

Stan and Karen have been among the World Mission supporters who have pledged to match gifts given to World Mission. Last spring they and other supporters made a combined pledge of \$76,000, and the challenge they put forth was easily exceeded. The Lushes have pledged funds for successful World Mission matching gift challenges on two other occasions.

While Stan has made generous gifts to World Mission, he says he has received an important gift through his participation. "I feel so good about being a small part of this important mission that the Presbyterian Church has throughout the world."

## MEET CRITICAL NEEDS

Support all mission co-workers.  
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# Finding the sweet spot

## A new funding model for mission co-workers

Tracey King-Ortega

**S**a-wing! Bam! Whoosh! When you hit it just right, you know. Through years, decades, nearly two centuries of trial and error in the mission field, I think we Presbyterians may have found the sweet spot on this one. The way we are moving forward in mission involvement in Honduras is feeling like a step in the right direction, bringing a concrete, engaged way to be partners in mission.

For nearly 180 years, Presbyterians seeking to follow God's call to faithful and effective mission have learned from and transformed our model from a direct mode to an equipping mode that first and foremost focuses on doing mission in partnership. In our most recent efforts to reform how we identify and engage in God's mission, Presbyterian World Mission—in its role as resource, capacity builder and servant leader—has been talking about how our mission work is about becoming a “Community of Mission Practice.” As a denomination, our pioneering work of striving to live into a model of authentic partnership as a way to “do mission” has led us to develop this concept of the Community of Mission Practice, which was adopted by the 219th General Assembly Mission Council (2010) to encourage more integral connections in the many ways Presbyterians engage in God's mission.

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- Support Tracey's work in Central America.  
[pcusa.org/donate/E200518](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200518)
- Support a new mission co-worker in Honduras.  
[pcusa.org/donate/E200535](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200535)



Tracey King-Ortega

Hondurans and North Americans pray with a terminally ill pastor.

Think of a Venn diagram. We have our global partners represented by one circle, U.S. Presbyterians by another circle and Presbyterian World Mission by a third. That space where all three entities are collaborating is where we strive to be. As an intentional community, guided by the disciplines of prayer, Bible study, reflection and worship, we can best discern where God is calling us and then share our resources to accomplish that mission together. A community of mission practice seeks to include all committed voices rather than work in isolation or bilaterally.

As Rev. Mark J. Englund-Krieger writes in his book, *“The Presbyterian Mission Enterprise: From Heathen to Partner”*: *“The insight which the concept of Community of Mission Practice offers is that this massive, new energy for mission, wherever its source, is not to be denigrated*

*or rejected but rather harnessed and coordinated. The individual congregations and presbyteries across the PC(USA) are not going to stop their direct involvement in mission now that the transformative power of this work has been experienced. On the other hand, the powerful heritage of professional mission work organized and sponsored by national, denominational mission agencies, like Presbyterian World Mission, will also continue and is highly sought by church partners around the world who need support and expertise. . . . In this new day, the concept of Community of Mission Practice is a space where all involved bring their energy, commitment, passion and vision together.”*

Over the past decade, with more intentional engagement by Presbyterian World Mission with the Presbyterian Church of Honduras (IPH), we have been trying in fits and starts to form a

viable mission network, a community of mission practice of sorts. However, the Honduras Mission Network really didn't come together until we found ourselves in a time of possible crisis. The commitment of Presbyterian World Mission and partner presbyteries to the IPH was high, but our ability to be present with them changed drastically when our mission co-workers assigned to the IPH for the last six years ended service, coinciding with the retirement of Tim and Gloria Wheeler after more than 30 years of mission service in Honduras.

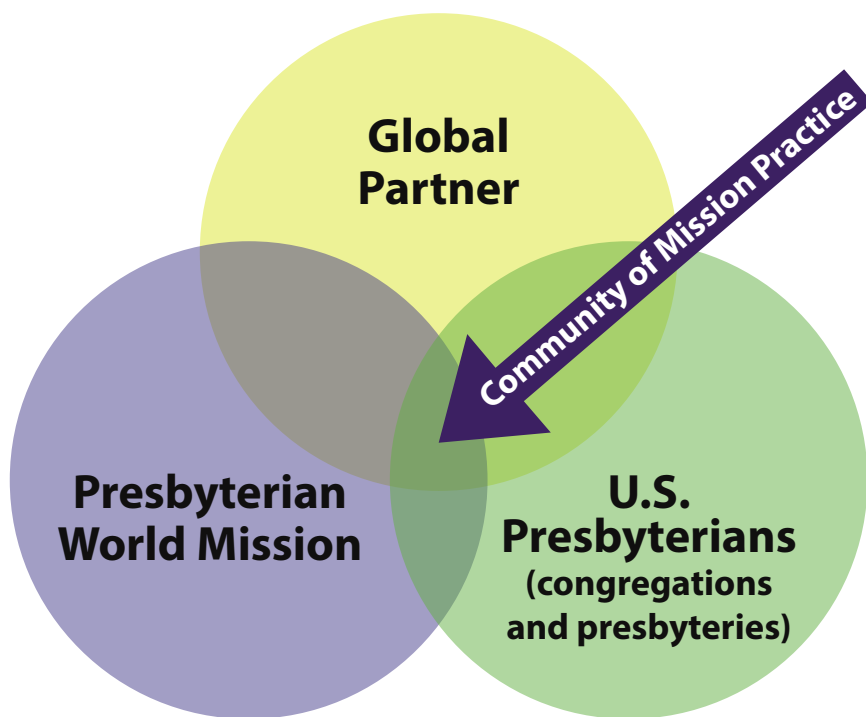
That crisis ended up being a real opportunity for consolidation and growth of our network that was suddenly forced to come together around a shared need. We took care with how to discern and define that need, wanting to be sure to include our partner, the Presbyterian Church of Honduras, in that discernment process.

Out of our discernment, we identified four common areas of mission involvement with the Presbyterian Church of Honduras: theological education, new church development, social outreach and deepening partnership. We also affirmed the desire and importance of having an ongoing presence in the country through the appointment of a full-time mission co-worker. Given the current funding reality, we knew that the only way for us to be able to send someone new would be if we raised the full amount needed for sending and support. The network eagerly agreed to take on this fundraising challenge together, but more importantly, we wanted to find a way to continue active participation in our shared mission. In some ways we were developing a new funding model for mission co-workers, but I believe it goes well beyond a funding model. It takes us into giving more life to the whole concept of Community of Mission Practice by allowing for active participation by "key constituents" (in this case the mission network) throughout Presbyterian World Mission's process of searching for, hiring, supporting and

assessing mission co-workers. Thanks to the Honduras Mission Network, Presbyterian World Mission now has a policy in place, approved by Presbyterian Mission Agency board in February 2016, that establishes concrete ways to be a Community of Mission Practice that calls, supports, and surrounds our mission co-workers, not just as we seek to place a new mission co-worker in Honduras, but also in other places around the world where Presbyterian World Mission and PC(USA) congregations, presbyteries and/or mission networks share a common passion in engagement with a global partner.

It is exciting to report that, to date, the Honduras Mission Network, with collaboration from Presbyterian World Mission, has reached 65 percent of the fundraising goal in pledges for the sending and support of a new mission co-worker position. With that level of commitment, the candidate search has begun. Together, striving to be a Community of Mission Practice, we are energized by our deepening involvement with the church in Honduras, our broadening of partnerships and new ways to engage and grow in God's mission. Whether we are talking sports, acoustics or God's mission, there is an incredible feeling of satisfaction

when you find the sweet spot. As we aim our sights on that place where God is calling us, may God be glorified and the kingdom expanded.



The Rev. Kim Wadlington, Presbytery of Carlisle; Tracey King-Ortega, Presbyterian World Mission regional liaison for Central America; and the Rev. Mark Englund-Kreiger, executive presbyter, Presbytery of Carlisle, with packages of basic foods (rice, beans, corn, oil, coffee, sugar) to distribute alongside Presbyterian Women of the Church of Honduras to six rural communities affected by drought.

# Harvesting new crops and hope in Nicaragua

## CEPAD empowers farmers to help themselves and generations to come

Justin Sundberg

One of our planet's worst earthquakes leveled Managua, Nicaragua, in December 1972.

A medical doctor and missionary, Gustavo Parajón, raced to action. Within hours he had mobilized others to feed those left homeless. This ecumenical, Jesus-loving, outward-looking group called itself the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD). Today and for most of its more than 40-year history, CEPAD has helped people feed themselves and avoid the need to emigrate.

Nicaraguans depend on the land. They call themselves “Pinoleros,” people of the corn, because corn is the base of many of their drinks and dishes. Hazel Mariel y López, a leader in her community of Jiquelite, says, however, that while she and her neighbors are rich in natural resources, they are poor in self-esteem.

The problem, she says, is that some of her neighbors have counterproductive habits. For instance, while a variety of crops can be grown in Nicaragua, people typically raise only corn and beans. Even if some grow orange trees, they may sell the oranges to buy Tang, the artificial orange drink. Healthy produce is sometimes sold, out of necessity, to purchase staple items of less nutritional value.

At CEPAD, where my wife, Renée, and I work, we believe that successful farming must overcome both internal (theological or psychological) challenges, as well as external challenges like occasional drought and destructive torrential downpours that regularly devastate growing seasons. CEPAD



Audrey White

After working with the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD) to irrigate and fertilize his crops, Eduardo grew enough beans to feed his family.

approaches its ministry from this holistic grounding.

CEPAD is a rock star to many of the 6 million people in Nicaragua, but not in the way of flash and fame. Christian churches in Nicaragua work year-round to advance agriculture and train leaders to transform their communities.

CEPAD's answer to the problem that Hazel identified involves considerable training and education—new water and soil conservation techniques, crop rotation and, when possible, drought-tolerant crop varieties. Organic fertilizers and pesticides are introduced, embraced and put into practice, all made from locally accessible materials.

But it also involves building self-esteem. Hazel reports that CEPAD is doing this, even “electrifying” her community of Jiquelite. How? By

giving people a chance to learn and experiment. Further, she says, CEPAD's agricultural training, emphasizing care for the environment, is inspiring. Hazel says that she and other village leaders are increasingly remembering their own heritage of creation stewardship. They are strengthening their “own wisdom and knowledge.”

She is quick to credit God, stating that “with the Lord's help . . . our new knowledge is deepened.” She adds, “You should see the reforestation we are doing! [We can] look at everything ahead . . . and we see that our sowing with CEPAD today will reap good.”

Juana Figueroa, from the Nicaraguan community of Santa Josefina, exemplifies creativity and hard work. She wants to send her son for more schooling but does not have the money. Her walls are adobe





Audrey White

Juana Figueroa receives training from CEPAD and now experiments with a variety of produce. She hopes to be able to afford to send her son off for more schooling.

and she dreams of something more sturdy and safe. She grows corn and beans. But she has begun to receive training from CEPAD and now experiments with a rich variety of produce, including squash, cucumbers, melons, lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, peppers, radishes, onions, beets, jocote fruit, mangoes, avocados and quequisque, a starchy purple root vegetable.

Juana says that CEPAD has been sorely needed in Santa Josefina “to help ourselves . . . move forward, and especially to help our children.”

Central America’s most well-known farmer/trainer, the late José Elías Sánchez, often said there is no bad farming land and no dead spaces. He believed that death and what is bad are in us, in our minds. First, he said, we must change the “human farm.” The future can be changed when we change as people.

CEPAD always has had the conviction that people are made in God’s image, that people are capable—so capable they can convert bad, even dead land, into fertile



Justin Sundberg

Visitors from First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor, Mich., help Nicaraguan workers build a school room.

places that provide food for all.

Though a Nicaraguan organization, CEPAD’s impact extends to the U.S., Canada and Europe. God cultivates the minds and hearts of those who join in its work. It has been a strong partner of the PC(USA) in mission since the 1980s. Today it regularly welcomes teams from Presbyterian churches across the United States. They come to learn and serve. And they say that it is Jesus’ example that leads them here.

When people from the north serve in short-term mission through CEPAD, they marvel at how much they learn. They leave with a sense that God is reshaping them. And the change can be quite strong.

A woman named Kennedy sat with me and her church group from West Virginia to reflect on how God was speaking to them. They were circled up at the end of their third day in Nicaragua, after spending just a brief time in the home of Nicaraguans. She was struck that her hosts’ lack of material possessions did not make them sad, disheartened or angry. Kennedy shared how her attitude toward consumption will be different: “When I get back to the U.S., I have a

big online order sitting in my cart ready for checkout, and I know that none of that stuff will make me happy.” Kennedy has discovered the life-changing truth that though we need some of the material things in our lives, they don’t fill us up or bring us joy, nor do they move us outward in love and service to others.

Every five years CEPAD accepts the requests of 42 new communities and starts over in its training and people and community capacity building. Just as God has sown in Kennedy’s heart, so God sows, it seems, in all who serve through CEPAD.

## EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

- Support the work of CEPAD. If mailing a donation, include “CEPAD—The Next 40 Years of Hope in Nicaragua” on the memo line of your check.

[pcusa.org/donate/E347002](https://pcusa.org/donate/E347002)

- Support the work of Justin and Renée in Nicaragua.

[pcusa.org/donate/E200391](https://pcusa.org/donate/E200391)

# Will peace accord lead to lasting peace?

## Colombian people will make their wishes known by popular vote

Sarah Henken

**H**ave you heard the news from Colombia? After four years of dialogue and negotiations, President Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC guerrilla group agreed to end hostilities on June 23, 2016. The final peace accord, announced on August 24, will be placed before the Colombian people for a popular vote October 2, 2016.

Weary from more than half a century of war, virtually all Colombians are eager to start a new chapter in the nation's history. However, there has been much discussion as to what terms should be included in a peace accord with the guerrillas. The text of the accords allows for "transitional justice" to be applied to all sides of the armed conflict. Penalties will be reduced for those who step forward to confess voluntarily, and more severe

for those who are prosecuted and found guilty. Guerrilla ex-combatants will spend six months in designated transitional zones and carry out a three-phased laying down of arms. The United Nations will provide support and oversight, including safeguarding the relinquished weapons until they can be repurposed as sculptures. The U.S. Congress is considering the allocation of new funds to support the peace process, including a contribution to a global fund for landmine removal in Colombia.

Is this a fair and appropriate agreement? The FARC has employed terrible tactics over the years, including kidnappings and bombings. The Colombian army also has been responsible for shocking acts, with a key example being the scandal of several thousand

extrajudicial killings known as "false positives." Civilian non-combatants make up 81 percent of the casualties of the armed conflict in Colombia—far too high a price for the nation to continue paying.

Even so, former president and current senator Alvaro Uribe has voiced heated criticism of the dialogues since they were announced in 2012, and his insistence that guerrilla ex-combatants face harsher penalties and exclusion from politics strikes a chord with a significant number of Colombians. With a plebiscite on the horizon, Uribe's supporters are actively campaigning for a "no" vote. Meanwhile, a broad spectrum of civil society groups support the government's invitation to embrace the peace accords.

At its assembly in March 2016, the Presbyterian Church of Colombia (IPC)

Sarah Henken



Young and old worship together in the Urabá Presbytery in Colombia.



Rosaline Maria

Sarah Henken takes a turn stirring soup with her friend Eunice, one of over 6 million internally displaced persons who are victims of the armed conflict in Colombia.



issued a new policy for peacemaking that speaks decisively: “the attitude of the church cannot be of spectator, it must be actively committed to peace.” The document denounces fear-mongering and misinformation, stating, “We see with concern the already viral tendency of the media to polarize public opinion with the idea that the country will be handed over to terrorist groups once the peace accord is signed.” The church also draws attention to the ongoing problem of paramilitarism in the form of criminal gangs, called BACRIM, with “actions focused on the selective murder of human rights defenders, unionists and community leaders.”

The IPC’s peace policy identifies patterns that have brought Colombian society to such heights of conflict: “The greatest conflict of our nation is exclusion, the accumulation in the hands of a few of the goods and wealth to which we all have a right. . . . Latin American Theology affirms that we live a spiral of violence, which has its origin in the structural violence and exclusion of the system that gives rise to the subversive violence, which has been answered with the repressive violence of the State and its entire arsenal.” Breaking free of that spiral and building new patterns at all levels of society are challenges facing all Colombians who seek reconciliation.

The IPC understands peacemaking to be its vocation, and has set itself a number of tasks for the hard and hopeful work of reconciliation, including preaching about peace, producing new curricula for different ages and populations, promoting peace-related research and projects at Presbyterian educational



Kara Watkins, a Young Adult Volunteer, leads a weekday Bible class for children in a low-income neighborhood of Barranquilla, Colombia.

institutions, and working with victims of the conflict to promote holistic reparation and reconciliation, as well as with ex-combatants as they integrate into civilian and political life. These efforts will be guided and encouraged by a new synod-level peace commission.

The PC(USA) maintains its historic commitment to partnering with the IPC in this vital ministry. Young Adult Volunteers (YAVs) dedicate themselves to a formative year of service alongside the church. Short-term companions provide a pastoral presence and peaceful witness in vulnerable communities. Five U.S. presbyteries with partnerships in Colombia make regular visits and encourage the Colombian church through prayer. Two PC(USA) mission co-workers share their lives in ministry with the IPC, César Carhuachín teaching Bible and theology at the Reformed University, and myself, Sarah Henken, working with YAVs and Colombian young adults as they live into their Christian vocation as peacemakers in various ways. These are exciting times in Colombia, and a time of great promise and possibility for Presbyterian mission and ministry.

I sit with this knowledge and let it sink in: my Colombian peers have known only a homeland at war, where violence has

been normalized to an alarming degree. The same could be said for me, really, as the daughter of another country plagued by violence. To dream of peace is a bold and prophetic act, and today we see an entire nation united in that dream. What an incredible thing!

As our sisters and brother in the IPC affirm, “Peace is a human aspiration and a gift of God. . . . To participate in the construction of peace is to become children of God, that is to say, find fullness of life. It is a gift of God because God is the one who puts peace in our hearts, who demolishes the walls that humankind has constructed and the divisions we have created.”

These peace accords and the plans they outline are no magical, complete solution. They are a promise of hard work to come, a detailed albeit partial and imperfect vision of a new future that will, by the grace of God, make space for all Colombians to pursue fullness of life.

#### TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES

Support Sarah's work in Colombia.  
[pcusa.org/donate/E200475](https://pcusa.org/donate/E200475).



# The unlawful eviction of El Tamarindo

## Young Adult Volunteer reflects on her time in Colombia

Sophia Har

**B**eneath a tree we gnawed on sugarcane, sucking its juice out of each bite. But our noise could not cover the bulldozer's whir, plowing down Nelson's plantain trees right before our eyes. His was one of the last plots of land to be destroyed in December 2015, when a private company unlawfully evicted over 70 campesinos (peasant farmers) from El Tamarindo.

The campesinos fought to remain on the land, abandoned before they arrived 14 years ago. They came from different parts of the country, displaced by violence from their previous homes. Over time they worked the land to produce crops of all kinds: plantains, yucca, papayas and more.

When the Colombian and U.S. governments made a trade deal, the first invasion of El Tamarindo took place. The U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement expanded the boundaries of existing duty-free zones in Colombia, one of which encompassed El Tamarindo.

A community that had lived in relative obscurity became a magnet for opportunistic businesses. Representatives from Inversiones Agropecuarias Los Turpiales SAS arrived with a land title, though the campesinos were first to cultivate and live on this land. At the request of corporate claimants, police tried to force the campesinos off their land more than 40 times. Homes and farms were bulldozed. Now El Tamarindo is



Sophia Har

Former leaders of Asotrampo, the organization formed by campesinos of El Tamarindo, received checks from representatives of the corporation that evicted them, in order to purchase new land. Throughout the eviction process, neither the national nor local government intervened.

rubble and shrubs.

Under Colombian land law, a person who possesses land over five years becomes the de facto owner. Anyone who tries to claim the land must indemnify the de facto owner. In El Tamarindo, each family received a small amount of money from the company to move. Some families moved to temporary housing, and 10 families used their payment to buy other land, where they are planting crops, building houses and redefining their collective identity. The Presbyterian Church of Colombia continues to provide supplies and support to these 10 families and is working to get in touch with others scattered throughout the region.

As a Young Adult Volunteer, accompanying these families throughout their displacement put me face-to-face

with the power of greed. I learned in college about dehumanizing effects of globalization and free trade. Witnessing El Tamarindo's fight helped me see firsthand how actions taken by multinational corporations and by the government of the United States, a country I call home, could undermine livelihoods of poor people. I saw how greed can move someone to destroy homes and families without remorse.

Despite suffering profound injustice, the campesinos continue to embrace—and share—life. They hug and share their stories of eviction with visitors. They fight for their rights. We all are caught up in a greed-rewarding system, but with each act of compassion, be it hospitality or advocacy, we overcome the power of greed with the power of love.

### INVEST IN YOUNG ADULTS

Support the YAV program.

[pcusa.org/donate/E049075](https://pcusa.org/donate/E049075)



# MISSION TOOLKIT

Ellen Sherby

## Tips for fruitful mission partnerships

### **Focus on being, not doing.**

A strong mission partnership has personal and collective relationships as the foundation. Visit with the people you are serving—your “mission partners”—learn about one another’s cultures, contexts, daily lives, faith and prayers.

### **Listen.**

Enter into mission partnerships with open hearts and open ears. Who are the people whom you are serving? How can you pray for them? How can they pray for you? What is it that your mission partners need? What is it that you need

from your mission partners? Ensure that the partnership includes “bridge people” who help you connect in healthy, faithful relationships across cultures and contexts. The bridge people in your mission partnership may be mission co-workers or staff of a local church or nonprofit.

### **Covenant together.**

Create a covenant partnership agreement together with your mission partners. Work in tandem to define the purpose and proposed length of the partnership.

### **Learn more**

Read the policy statement “Presbyterians Do Mission in Partnership,” approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003). Go deeper in what it can mean to serve God in mission through a spirit of partnership.

Find more partnership resources, including reflections on how to get started, troubleshooting tips and suggestions for writing a covenant agreement at [pcusa.org/missionpartnership](http://pcusa.org/missionpartnership).

## Lessons in mutuality from a presbytery partnership

Presbyterians believe we are called to God’s mission in “partnership.” What does this mean and how do we live out congregational and presbytery partnerships?

### **Lessons in mutuality**

The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Blantyre Synod in Malawi and Pittsburgh Presbytery have been doing mission in partnership since 1991. Here are some lessons they’ve learned:

“We’re really acting with mutuality, holding fast and believing our theology that says none of us is complete; yet each has something to give. The goal being to pursue a God-honoring partnership, based in humility and mutual love. The purpose is not to fix each other’s problems, but instead to walk alongside one another into places of discovery. My resources might help you, your resources might help me; and together we might grow in the service of the Gospel.”

—Dave Carver, pastor, The First United Presbyterian Church of Crafton Heights, Pittsburgh, Pa.

“There must be mutual understanding of one another, and that mutuality must be spelled out in a covenant where both sides agree on certain things they will follow in their partnership. And this is what we did between Pittsburgh Presbytery and Blantyre Synod 25 years ago. . . . Both sides must make an effort to bring something to the table.”

—Rev. Silas Ncozana, CCAP Blantyre Synod, Malawi

Learn more about the Blantyre Synod-Pittsburgh Presbytery partnership by visiting [pghpip.org](http://pghpip.org).

# 222nd General Assembly (2016) reaffirms need to end U.S. embargo on Cuba

Jo Ella Holman

She is called “Fefita.” This diminutive fireball of a woman in her 80s grew up in a poor Cuban family in the 1930s and ’40s. Born Maria Josefa, as a child Fefita met a Christian missionary who told her God had special plans for her.

Throughout her adolescence, a group of Presbyterian Women in the local church embraced and nurtured Fefita. In her early 20s, she was commissioned, along with two other young women, as an evangelist of the Presbyterian Church of Cuba. Sixty years ago, Fefita began a Presbyterian mission center on the outskirts of Havana, where she served people who had little. She befriended children and families, led Bible studies and children’s groups, and generally shined the light of Christ through her life and witness.

The Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba was part of the Synod of New Jersey before the Cuban Revolution in 1959. The ministers, teachers in the Presbyterian schools, and, yes, evangelists like Fefita, were employees of the U.S. church and part of the church’s pension plan.

After the revolution, those pension funds were frozen as part of the U.S. embargo on Cuba. For more than 40 years—long after retirement age—pension funds were unavailable to these colleagues in ministry or to their

descendents, creating great hardship on those families. It was one of the many burdens that the U.S. embargo has imposed on the church and the people of Cuba without resulting in a change in Cuba’s government, which was the aim of the embargo.

Today there are vast and rapid changes occurring within Cuba, from residents no longer needing to ask permission to travel outside the country to the right to own property to Wi-Fi access in parks and other public spaces. More changes are on the way. The PC(USA)’s 222nd General Assembly (2016) received a report on the changing dynamics within Cuba and U.S.-Cuba relations. Based on this report, the General Assembly approved recommendations for public policy witness that reaffirm many positions U.S. Presbyterians have advocated with the

U.S. government since 1969, including ending the U.S. embargo; supporting the Cuban church’s legal recognition in Cuba and political autonomy; returning the Guantanamo base to Cuba; ending the Cuban Adjustment Act and other such preferential treatment of Cuban immigrants to the U.S.

And Fefita? She is now receiving her pension, thanks to PC(USA) advocacy efforts and the efforts of individual Presbyterians and staff at the Board of Pensions. Let’s work together to end measures that are harming our brothers and sisters in Cuba. Together, we can make a difference.

See the complete recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, *New Hopes and Realities in Cuban-American Relations: Un Nuevo Momento*: [pc-biz.org/#/search/3000076](http://pc-biz.org/#/search/3000076).



Jo Ella Holman

Fefita talks with Rev. José Manuel Capella-Pratts of Tropical Florida Presbytery. She has donated most of the pension funds she received to a small Presbyterian church in Cuba to purchase a larger building for worship and service.

## TAKE ACTION

Support Jo Ella’s work in the Caribbean.  
[pcusa.org/donate/E200376](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200376)



# Quest for environmental justice continues in La Oroya, Peru

## Nearly all its children have dangerously high lead levels

Jed Hawkes Koball

In late June, mere days after winning Peru's presidential election by a thin margin, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski turned his eyes on the troubled community of La Oroya, where for more than 15 years Presbyterian World Mission and the Presbyterian Hunger Program have joined with partners Joining Hands Peru (Red Uniendo Manos Peru) in seeking justice for city's residents.

La Oroya is considered one of the 10 most contaminated cities in the world; nearly all its children have lead poisoning due to toxic emissions from a metal smelter owned by Renco Group Inc., a U.S.-based holding company. Claiming that Peru's government unfairly enforced strict and costly environmental regulations, the smelter filed bankruptcy in 2009 and has not been fully operative for seven years.

Responding to the clamors of Peru's mining industry, which claims it can increase profits and stimulate the economy if able to export a refined product, Kuczynski said in July that his administration would make re-opening La Oroya's smelter a top priority. He called for weakening emissions standards in order to do so. Fifteen years of progress is now threatened by the slimmest of electoral margins.

Suffice it to say, we face a new struggle in furthering our progress in securing specialized health care for people contaminated by heavy metals, in holding the government accountable for the remediation of land and water, and in implementing stronger environmental regulations regionally.

This struggle is exacerbated by a



Jed Hawkes Koball

In a march organized by Joining Hands Peru (Red Uniendo Manos Peru), residents of La Oroya protest the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade agreement that aims to provide greater rights to foreign investors, potentially allowing them to avoid their environmental responsibilities by suing the countries in which they operate in a foreign tribunal if they disagree with regulations.

free trade agreement that allows foreign investors, like Renco Group, to sue the government when it believes its profits are threatened. This is exactly what Renco Group did, filing a lawsuit for \$800 million in an international tribunal, alleging that Peru's environmental obligations were unfair and led to the smelter's bankruptcy. The case was recently dismissed on jurisdictional technicalities but will soon be filed again, potentially holding up justice in La Oroya for another five years or more. And, with our efforts to secure better environmental laws, more such lawsuits are expected.

Yet our partners have hope! They hold tight to the Biblical mandate to "Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy" (Prov. 31:9).

Our partners are taking it to the streets to dialogue with local and national legislators, educate the people, and build an international movement. Presbyterians in the U.S. stand side-by-side with our partners in Peru in this long battle for justice. We join in their demand that the health of the people and the home we all share in God's creation, rather than the potential profits of investors, be a top priority—not just for Peru, but for all nations. "Speak out!" The command from Proverbs is unrelenting. Your voice is needed now. Will you join us?

### PROVIDE SUPPORT

Give to support Jed's work in Peru.  
[pcusa.org/donate/E200447](https://pcusa.org/donate/E200447)

Presbyterian World Mission brings God's global family together to address the root causes of poverty, work toward reconciliation and proclaim God's saving love in Jesus Christ.

## God's mission in China

*Proclaiming God as Creator, Redeemer and Lord*

PC(USA) mission co-worker **Myoung Ho Yang** is professor of liturgical studies and sacred music at the Divinity School of Chung Chi College in Hong Kong, the only program of theological education offered within a public university in China.

Myoung Ho, supported in ministry by his wife, Ji Yeon Yoo, both continue to study Chinese so they can reach out in

a greater way to share the love of God through their ministry in preparing future ministers to be effective church musicians and worship leaders.

Myoung Ho writes about inviting a classmate who had studied Chinese with them to a Chinese-speaking church.

She had lived in Hong Kong with her family for five years and was about to leave for Japan to continue her college studies.

"It was the first time in her life she had visited a church," he says. "After the worship service, we invited her for lunch and shared the gospel. She had never heard about the gospel before. She said, 'Every morning, I pray to the sun. But now I know to whom I should pray. I've finally found what I've been looking for. I really want to live as a daughter of God.'" Myoung Ho prayed with her and she accepted Jesus as her personal Savior and Lord.

.....  
**Support Myoung Ho and Ji Yeon in China.**

[pcusa.org/donate/E200521](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200521)



## God's mission in Niger

*Sharing Christ's love and light with young people*

**Claire Zuhosky** is a PC(USA) mission co-worker and youth center development specialist with the Evangelical Church in the Republic of Niger (EERN), the largest Protestant church in the country.

"The teens of Niger, who comprise more than 60 percent of the population, struggle to meet their basic needs because of poverty," Claire says. "We want all youth to realize their full potential through education; then find gainful employment and be able to provide for themselves and their families."

Claire sensed her call to mission during her college years while on a short-term mission in the Dominican Republic.

"I pray for the Lord's guidance as we address the root causes of poverty and injustice through education in one of the most economically impoverished nations on earth," Claire says. She is working to expand computer training programs for youth and grow the community library.

"Vocational and life-skills education is helping these youth," she says.

"The goal," she adds, "is to firmly establish a ministry for youth in a country where youth are the majority of the population. We want this ministry to transform their lives in such a way that the only fingerprint that remains points them to a God who knows them, loves them and reaches out to them."

.....  
**Support Claire in Niger.**

[pcusa.org/donate/E200517](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200517)



## God's mission in Berlin and beyond

*Breaking down barriers that divide people*

Mission co-workers **Ellen** and **Alan Smith** have worked in shared ministry, alongside ministry partners in Europe and the United States, for more than 15 years.

Based in Berlin, Germany, Ellen serves as regional liaison for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. She also coordinates the Congregational Twinning Project, which connects congregations in the U.S. with congregations in Russia and Belarus for mission, friendship and evangelistic outreach in Central and Eastern Europe. Al assists with the Congregational Twinning Project and coordinates PC(USA) engagement with the Roma people in Russia. In the aftermath of massive inflows of refugees into Germany, he is also working to find ways to help these people who have experienced war and violence adjust to their new lives.

In the Russian village of Davydovo, Ellen and Al partner with an Orthodox priest, Father

Vladimir Klimzo, to minister to families of children who are autistic, blind or deaf, or have physical limitations caused by cerebral palsy, Down syndrome or other conditions. Father Klimzo dreams of one day having a small, faith-based model farm where people with special needs can live and have meaningful work opportunities.

The Smiths' ministry is one of reconciliation, fulfilling the biblical call to help people be reconciled to each other and to God through Jesus Christ.

**Support Ellen and Alan in Germany and Russia.**

[pcusa.org/donate/E200406](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200406)

## God's mission in South America

*Restoring God's creation through justice and love*

**Chenoa Stock**, a native of Pittsburgh and daughter of retired Presbyterian co-pastors, serves as companionship facilitator with the Presbyterian Hunger Program's Joining Hands Network (UMAVIDA) in Bolivia. The acronym UMAVIDA is Spanish for "Joining Hands for Life."

Chenoa works collaboratively with our Bolivian partner, Presbyterian World Mission, and partner presbyteries and congregations in the U.S. to address human rights issues related to water and health. She assists UMAVIDA in addressing the root causes of poverty, hunger and environmental injustice, such as water contamination in communities affected by the extractive mining industry. Her husband and native Bolivian, José Luis Claire Villarroel, accompanies her in ministry.

Chenoa's interest in long-term mission service began to become clear while serving as a Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) in India, after earning a teaching degree at Wittenberg University. It was in India that Chenoa was introduced to the Joining Hands program and began to see her role in the world differently. After completing her year of service as a YAV, her next mission with Joining Hands, in a fishing village in Sri Lanka, focused on protecting the land rights of fishermen, tea plantation workers and their families, lost during the 2004 southeast Asia tsunami.

"My faith is grounded in a call to share God's love and compassion in a time when many live in inequality and have lost hope," Chenoa says.

**Support Chenoa in Bolivia.**

[pcusa.org/donate/E200335](http://pcusa.org/donate/E200335)





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Vincent Grossi served two years in the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program in New Orleans before beginning a 1001 New Worshiping Communities apprenticeship, also in New Orleans.



## Support Young Adult Volunteers

Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteers (YAVs) invest a year of service in marginalized communities but experience a lifetime of change. YAVs lead a simple lifestyle, live in intentional Christian community and develop leadership skills as they put their faith into action and discern their vocational future.

Your financial support will give more young adults the opportunity to grow in their faith while partnering with organizations at sites in the United States and around the world. Your gift will have lasting impact as these young adults are shaped into dedicated and mature leaders for our church.

**Give by check:** Make checks payable to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and write **E049075** (individuals) or **D500123** (congregations/presbyteries) on the memo line. A donation envelope is provided in this magazine.

**Give online:** [youngadultvolunteers.org](http://youngadultvolunteers.org).

Encourage young adults ages 19 to 30 to consider YAV service:  
[youngadultvolunteers.org/apply](http://youngadultvolunteers.org/apply).