

# mission **CROSSROADS**

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## PLANTING SEEDS OF INSPIRATION

GARDEN GROWS FROM CONGREGATION'S VALUES



## The hardest thing

It's a time of fragmentation in our society. The divorce rate is higher than at any other time in history. Politics in Washington is mired in gridlock, and "the ability to compromise" is seen as weakness among many of our congressional representatives. Trust across political lines is so low that some question whether anyone can govern our country.

Even in the church, it seems our conversations about issues of vital importance—marriage equality, Israel and Palestine, and a host of social witness issues—divide us, rather than engage us in shared reflection on Scripture. Joshua Searle, a British theologian, has observed, "Authentic conversation is rare today; rather, we exist on intersecting monologues." Each month, several PC(USA) congregations vote to leave the denomination due to what they believe are irreconcilable differences, and some presbytery meetings are marred with seemingly endless debate over hot issues. *It seems that today, the hardest thing required of us is to work together.*

Yet a growing number of congregations and presbyteries are joining forces to make a difference in God's world:

- In mission networks**—Presbyterians from over two dozen congregations in Shenango, Trinity and Redstone presbyteries and beyond are working with South Sudanese church partners and mission co-workers in the Sudan and South Sudan Mission Network. PC(USA) mission co-workers Nancy and Shelvis Smith-Mather, Leisa Wagstaff and Lynn and Sharon Kandel are participating in the effort. Their goal is to improve the quality of education for 70,000 children in 40 towns through teacher training, in ways they could not do by themselves. The vision of making a real difference for some of the poorest children in the world in a sustainable way has already inspired more than \$1.5 million in gifts and pledges small and large and galvanized mission energy in PC(USA) congregations beyond the presbyteries.
- In high-impact projects**—In Egypt, mission co-workers Cinda and Steve Gorman are helping Egyptian and U.S. Presbyterians to take advantage of an unprecedented opportunity. The Egyptian government, for the first time in 156 years of Presbyterian mission work in that country, *is giving properties to the Egyptian Presbyterian Church to build schools and churches*. Jim Davis, a member of Miami Shores Presbyterian Church, has been inspired by the Gormans' efforts and recently made a \$1 million gift to build churches and schools and to strengthen our partner seminary's outreach into Egypt and six other Middle Eastern nations with relevant, Reformed theological education in Arabic.
- In global campaigns**—Jed Koball, now in his sixth year as a mission co-worker in Peru, serves as a catalyst, helping to leverage dozens of PC(USA) congregations' expertise and advocacy, more than \$500,000 of government and nonprofit funding, the political influence of more than 20 religious, environmental and human rights organizations and the media to improve the health of 11,000 lead-poisoned children in a city contaminated by a U.S.-owned metal smelter.

In each of these examples, Presbyterian mission workers are inspiring, equipping and connecting U.S. Presbyterians to do something together that they couldn't accomplish by themselves. Against the tide of fragmentation in our society and in our church, I find it deeply encouraging to see Presbyterians—young and old, liberal and conservative—come together in God's mission. It reminds me of the insight of the former president of Princeton Seminary, Dr. Tom Gillespie: "Our theological differences do not nullify the Great Commission or the Great Commandment."

Mission Crossroads is a Presbyterian Mission Agency publication about the church's mission around the world.

*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:** Grace Covenant  
Presbyterian Church in Asheville,  
North Carolina, created a World  
Garden inspired by the yard garden  
program developed in Haiti by  
PC(USA) mission co-worker  
Mark Hare.

Photo by Jay Hill





## A tale of two supporters

### World Mission gifts of all sizes make a difference

One week last summer Presbyterian World Mission received gifts from two donors whose generosity reminds me of stories from the New Testament. The first gift came from a Presbyterian widow who apologized for “only being able to send what must be a drop in the bucket” toward meeting the desperate needs of our world. I was deeply moved by her concern for hurting people.

Given her marital status and humble attitude, my mind quickly drew a parallel to the story of the widow’s mite. Upon further reflection, I also began to see her “drop in the bucket” as an act of faith that resembles a young boy’s gift of five loaves and two fish. Jesus blessed the boy’s modest offering, and 5,000 people were fed. I believe Jesus blesses every gift given for the sake of the gospel, including the gift of this World Mission supporter.

Like the gift of the loaves and fishes, gifts to World Mission also are multiplied. This is achieved through Christ-honoring partnerships and faithful and effective mission practices. For example, World Mission addresses poverty by emphasizing sustainability and mutuality rather than charity and dependence. We seek to break the cycle of poverty by walking with communities, helping them claim their assets and celebrating alongside them as they move to self-sufficiency. Thus World Mission gifts to support poverty alleviation, like gifts to all World Mission ministries, make a lasting difference. Their value is multiplied many times across the years.

Just days after we received the widow’s gift, a \$1 million gift from Florida Presbyterian Jim Davis arrived. Jim, a member of Miami Shores Presbyterian Church, gave in support of new church development and pastoral training in Egypt. His gift will aid new church construction within the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Egypt and theological education at the denomination’s seminary, the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo. It will also provide support for some mission co-workers who serve in Egypt.

This gift comes at an opportune moment. The current government in Egypt is open to Egyptian churches having a more significant role in society. It recently gave the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Egypt 14 parcels of property for church and school construction. More pastors will be needed, so our partners at the seminary in Cairo are offering online classes and other innovative programs.

Jim’s gift came from his conviction that “sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with people around the world is the most important thing we can do as a church.” He is a person of means who generously devoted some of his resources to help the church fulfill its calling.

According to Luke 4:18, Jesus began his ministry by declaring his call “to bring good news to the poor.” He made people on the margins his focus, but he also drew followers such as Joseph of Arimathea who had wealth. After Jesus

died, Joseph asked Pilate for his body, wrapped it in a cloth, and placed it in his own tomb.

While Joseph thought the tomb would be Jesus’ final resting place, it instead became the site where God raised Jesus from the dead. Joseph’s generous gift became a witness to the Resurrection of Jesus. The empty tomb was a central part of the early church’s proclamation that Jesus is alive.

The new churches that our Egyptian partners are building will also stand as a testament to the risen Christ. Even if governmental restrictions are eventually reinstituted, these churches will continue to serve as brick-and-mortar beacons of the gospel. I am tremendously grateful to Jim and others who are aiding our Egyptian partners at this crucial moment in history.

The generous acts of the widow and Jim Davis reinforce for me World Mission’s deep conviction that we need gifts of all sizes. We need your gift. Through it, you will help sustain World Mission’s enduring witness to Christ’s love.

*Terri Bate is senior director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Funds Development Ministry. Contact her at [terri.bate@pcusa.org](mailto:terri.bate@pcusa.org)*

#### SUPPORT GOD’S MISSION

Help new and growing churches around the world.

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200102](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200102)

# Pacific Presbytery embraces critical global initiatives

## Three-year focus brings clarity to God's mission in the world

Tammy Warren

I think it has moved us to a new place as a presbytery," says the Rev. Heidi Worthen Gamble, mission catalyst at Presbytery of the Pacific, referring to the presbytery's approach to engaging in the three critical global initiatives of Presbyterian World Mission. These initiatives are reconciliation in cultures of violence, addressing root causes of poverty and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.

In 2013 Pacific Presbytery devoted its September stated presbytery meeting to mission and introduced the initiatives to its 52 congregations. The introductory year gave a snapshot overview, laying the foundation for a three-year plan to bring clarity to each initiative. In 2014 they focused on reconciliation and peacemaking in cultures of violence, including our own, with a focus on gun violence. In 2015 they are addressing the root causes of poverty. And in 2016 congregations will focus on training pastors and lay leaders to share the gospel.

"We are evolving into a presbytery that is less concerned about politics and polity and more concerned about the integrity of the church's mission witness today," Worthen Gamble says. "These annual presbytery events have helped us have the conversations we need to have."

This is a step toward missional formation, joining God in mission locally and globally. "It is a movement of the Spirit that is renewing our sense of call as disciples of Jesus," she says.



Rosario Munoz purchases basic items from Nueva Vida's "Pacífico Grocery Store," one way Pacific Presbytery is addressing root causes of poverty in Nicaragua.

"This framework has produced so much rich conversation for church mission teams in our presbytery," Worthen Gamble says. "Now we ask, 'Is this mission work witnessing the deep peace of Christ in places of violence?' 'Is it addressing root causes of poverty and changing systems that make people poor?' 'Is it building up the church today?'"

She says gun violence, for example, is a tender issue politically and a difficult subject to talk about as a church. To address this topic in 2014, the presbytery partnered with the National Black Presbyterian Caucus of Southern California. Together they organized a panel to speak to congregations about gun violence. The panel included mothers who have lost children to gun violence and men who used to be in gangs or prison. These men now have hope through nonprofits that provide training and support.

"Gun violence is real here in L.A.," Worthen Gamble says. "The panel helped us see that kids are dying here in L.A., in certain neighborhoods and not in others."

Pacific Presbytery currently is working to move past paradigms of "power relationships" and "charity only" models for addressing the root causes of poverty.

"For the presbytery meeting on addressing root causes of poverty, we will ask our churches to bring their lists of mission projects, while hearing from speakers who will be challenging us to think 'big, big picture.'" This year's focus on root causes of poverty will be facilitated by Tracey King-Ortega, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission co-worker and regional liaison for Central America.

Worthen Gamble is excited about the future. "We're going to keep working on these issues, to be bold and go deeper together, and to keep moving forward."

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Help address the root causes of poverty.  
[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200101](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200101)

# Sojourners in God's mission

## Transforming the world together

Barbara Chalfant

**I** don't know, but let's find out together."  
It's a phrase I have used for years at teacher training sessions.

Having spent time over the years supporting mission trips and participating in discussions with congregations making difficult decisions about where and how to engage in mission, I have come to understand that this simple statement has traction.

**"I don't know."** We used to step into mission settings knowing just what we could do, how to help and what skills were needed to "fix" the situation. Now we step forward into mission being clear that we do not know all. We listen, walk alongside, serve and accompany one another.

**"Let's find out."** We try new things, meet new people, learn to think and act in new and challenging ways. We are willing to



Rosaline Maria

fail ... and fail miserably. Only when we try new ways of being and working together do we ultimately find the sweet spot where God meets us and graces our effort with joyful fellowship and peaceful resolution.

**"Together."** We are called to be in community, in partnerships, in authentic relationships that center on the love of Christ and God's reforming action in the world. We do our best work when we are invited into relationships and bring our best and our worst ... our wholly authentic selves to the party. That means we often start a new partnership with coffee and conversation among people who are not like us at all, and we do more listening than speaking, more learning than teaching and more praying than physical action.

With the support of Presbyterian World Mission, we continue to learn how to engage in mission, locally and globally. Isn't that the great goal of every educator, to birth the drive for lifelong education?

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*Barbara Chalfant is associate presbyter for mission at the Presbytery of West Virginia. She leads mission involvement efforts for older adults, hunger action, peacemaking, social justice and disaster assistance/prevention.*

### Singing mission's song to another generation

There's always been a drive in my family to make a difference in the world. After my grandparents returned to the U.S. from mission in China, they started Meals on Wheels in Baltimore, where Grandpa was a physician. By the time Grandpa died, they'd opened three kitchens, and after his death Grandma opened 13 more.

That same focus on making a difference continues in my life, though my goal is not to be the soloist, the leader receiving accolades. Instead, I would

much rather be sitting in the back pew, looking up and seeing the adults I used to know as kids being the leaders and heart-song of the church. I don't care if anyone remembers what I did as an educator as long as the lives of others reflect that they've consistently heard and learned the music of God's love from me and others.

These days we don't have to be first or take the credit. We don't have to be the center of attention—we are co-singers in God's choir.



# Myers Park Presbyterian Church

## Transforming communities in the Congo through education and health care

Elizabeth Little

**M**yers Park Presbyterians are passionate about global mission,” says Frank Dimmock, catalyst addressing the root causes of global poverty for Presbyterian World Mission. “They are committed to improving health care and education in the Congo, especially education for girls.”

The connection between Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo began in 1931 through the church’s support of a missionary in the town of Lubondai. This connection continues today in partnership with Presbyterian World Mission.

Since 1996 Myers Park Presbyterian has invested more than \$1 million in ministry in the Congo. The congregation has supported Good Shepherd Hospital, a 160-bed facility in the village of Tshikaji. It also has built six schools in collaboration with the Congolese Presbyterian Church: one in Lubondai, two in Tshitalala, two in Tshikaji and a girls’ school, Dipa Dia Nzambi, which opened in Kananga in 2013. Myers Park provides scholarships for the neediest of students and annual funds to assist in purchasing supplies.

“Dipa Dia Nzambi means ‘gift of God,’ says Fay Grasty, chair of the Myers Park Presbyterian Church Congo ministry team. “The school has 255 students and 10 teachers in primary grades in the morning and another 148 students and 12 teachers in secondary grades in the afternoon,

reminding us of what partnership in God’s mission can do.”

Dimmock traveled with seven members of the Congo ministry team from Myers Park to visit Dipa Dia Nzambi girls’ school in May 2015.

“Frank was invaluable in interpreting ‘things Congolese’ as well as ‘things PC(USA),” Grasty says. “And Gwenda Fletcher, Presbyterian World Mission co-worker, is our ‘boots on the ground.’ When we were interviewing teachers, Gwenda translated all of the teachers’ applications before the interviews. We couldn’t have built the girls’ school without Gwenda.”

“Myers Park’s goal is to make a long-term, sustainable difference to enable Congolese communities to be self-sufficient,” says Fletcher Wright, former chair of the Myers Park Presbyterian Church Mission Council. “The spirit-led devotion and commitment of Presbyterian World Mission has been inspirational

and has deepened the faith of those of us involved. It has served to attract additional disciples who see the impact on those participating.”

Millie Cox, former director of international studies at Charlotte Country Day School, and Courtney Pender, elementary school teacher in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, observed in classrooms at Dipa Dia Nzambi and held workshops for teachers.

“We were both impressed with the quality of teaching,” Cox says. “We felt the school was well managed and the principal has established a supportive working environment.” She says the students are receiving a high-quality education.

The conditions for learning at Dipa Dia Nzambi are an improvement over many schools in the Congo, thanks to the partnership of Myers Park and the Congolese Presbyterian Church.



When the students at Dipa Dia Nzambi were asked how the all-girls’ school differs from the school they previously attended, they said, “It is quieter and calmer [without boys].”

### SUPPORT EDUCATION

Help help address the root causes of global poverty through education.

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052143](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052143)

# Mayfield Central Presbyterian Church tackles sexual violence

## Courageous congregation hosts 'Courageous Conversations'

Tammy Warren

It's been nearly five years since Mayfield Central Presbyterian Church, in Mayfield, New York, burned to the ground after a lightning strike shattered the church bell. Although firefighters from Mayfield and surrounding communities did all they could to save the 188-year-old building, it was a total loss.

"On that tragic day, we realized more than any other day in our history that the people are the church," says the church's pastor, the Rev. Bonnie Orth, a founding member of the Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network (PADVN) of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association. "In the years that have passed since the fire, we have continued to be a strong congregation and have not missed a single Sunday worship."

Reborn, renewed and resilient, the 150-member Mayfield Central Presbyterian Church began breaking the silence on the topic of sexual violence after a congregant nearly died from a domestic violence incident last year.

On Domestic Violence Awareness Sunday in October, the church held a worship service with a sermon on the rape of Tamar, daughter of King David (2 Samuel 13:1-22). They also hosted a service of healing and wholeness the following Wednesday evening.

"We have a special fifth Sunday offering four times a year," Orth says. "Our November offering will support Sandi Thompson-Royer and Leslie Vogel, PC(USA) mission co-workers who work to stop violence against women in Guatemala.

"All churches have been silent on the subject of domestic and sexual violence," Orth says. In fact, many pastors still



Leaders of a CEDEPCA-sponsored domestic and sexual violence workshop gather in Guatemala. Left to right: Flor de Maria Cox Mendoza, Cobán, Guatemala, facilitator, Women's Ministry Program; Betty Carrera Paz, Guatemala coordinator, Women's Ministry Program; and the Rev. Bonnie Orth, pastor, Mayfield Central Presbyterian Church.

tell her they do not have any in their congregations who have experienced domestic and sexual violence.

"This just tells me there is still so much work to do. I know from experience if you talk about it, they will come. They will come seeking help, seeking support, seeking strength and a companion to help walk the journey," Orth says.

"After the fire, our congregation learned what it is like to lose something very dear. We experienced what it feels like to be in exile, and we now understand the Psalmist who wrote, 'How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?' We learned the importance of lament in the healing process and that lament takes time. We learned how necessary it is to grieve what has been lost."

In February 2016, members of the congregation will travel to Pachaj, Guatemala, where they will address

domestic and sexual violence issues alongside PC(USA) mission co-worker Sandi Thompson-Royer.

In September 2016, Orth and the Rev. Kevin Frederick, pastor of Waldensian Presbyterian Church, Valdese, North Carolina, and moderator of PADVN, will hold couples workshops in Guatemala through the Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA) to address violence against women and children. They will use the "Men in the Mirror" curriculum, which Frederick created and which recently has been translated into Spanish. To download the curriculum, visit [pcusa.org/padvn](http://pcusa.org/padvn).

### TAKE ACTION

Speak up! Stop Sexual Violence.  
[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052145](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E052145)

# Grace Covenant Presbyterian planting the seeds to end food insecurity in Asheville

## A natural outgrowth of the congregation's values

Kathy Melvin

A trip to Haiti and a community conversation planted a seed at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church that is bringing fresh vegetables and fresh hope to Asheville, North Carolina.

In January 2009, church member Bill Gettys traveled to Haiti to work on a project in the medical laboratory of PC(USA) mission co-worker Jenny Bent. While there, Bill learned about the agricultural work of Jenny's husband, Mark Hare, who is also a PC(USA) mission co-worker. When Bill returned home, he enthusiastically introduced the church to Mark's garden program.

In October 2009, Grace Covenant hosted a forum on health care needs in the community. Discussion eventually focused on how the congregation could contribute

to the wellness of the community surrounding the church. After identifying potential community partners and acquiring the necessary approvals, tilling began on the garden on the church lawn at the end of January 2010.

Here's how the program works: at the beginning of the growing season, about 40 church and community members divide into four teams to till, plant, weed and harvest crops on alternating weeks. Summer crops vary from beans, squash and eggplant to peppers and tomatoes. In the fall, the teams plant cool weather vegetables. The volunteers box and deliver about 75 percent of the vegetables to local food pantries and community kitchens.

Then-pastor Mark Ramsey was supportive from the beginning and

received approval from the session. Everyone liked the idea, but there was some hesitation about digging up the church lawn to plant vegetables. Some suggested that the garden might be in the back, hidden from the road. Ramsey said firmly that if the church was going to undertake the project, it was going to be front and center. And the Community Garden was born.

The Rev. Kristy Farber, associate pastor, has been equally supportive. "The church often uses words or metaphors, which are important, but so is this ministry of substance and sustenance, offering nurture to body and soul in a way that goes beyond words. Just like the gospel this ministry shines a light that conquers the darkness of at least this little corner of the world," she says.

In the spring of 2014, children's ministry coordinator Heather Gast and long-time member Otis "Buzz" Durham talked about the possibility of creating a version of Mark Hare's yard garden to get children and families involved. Buzz, retired from the U.S. Forest Service, had been to Haiti and worked alongside Mark Hare.

"Our World Garden is modeled on Mark's work in Haiti," Durham says. "It is one way we have found that gives us a foundation to join hands with the young and old. The garden was built by our K-8 children over a period of several days in the spring. Then in the fall we added to the garden during an overnight camp on the church lawn. The garden is tended by families throughout the growing season."

After workshops on charcoal making, tire cutting and soil preparation, the tire garden was born, making miniature garden



Jay Hill

Just like mission co-worker Mark Hare's agricultural work in Haiti, Grace Covenant Presbyterian has turned old tires inside out and transformed them into vegetable planters.





PC(USA) Mission co-worker Mark Hare works with several teams of Haitian farmers in a program that shares ideas about how to grow a lot of food on small plots of land. The teams base their work on key Biblical themes.

plots inside discarded tires. In Haiti's dry season, there is no rain for five to seven months and food can become scarce. The small tire gardens allow families to grow food at a time when they normally can't.

Using the same techniques Mark Hare teaches in Haiti, the children planted lettuces, herbs, cabbage, eggplant and carrots. This wasn't a project in which the adults worked and the children watched. The drip irrigation system was researched, designed and built by a 13-year-old, Phoebe, and a crew of church members. In the fall, the tires were planted with kale, spinach and collard greens.

The children learn that the agricultural work Mark teaches farmers in Haiti is both old and new. For instance, agricultural waste products such as coconut husks and other organic materials can be used to make "bio-char," that when mixed with native soil helps release water and store nutrients. The children at Grace used corn cobs and shucks to make their bio-char.

Heather said working together in the garden has given families an activity they can enjoy together. "So many service projects force us to choose something that is appropriate for either adults or children. This garden allows children of every age to be involved and provides a rich experience

for families. It's a beautiful thing," she said.

The gardens have acted as a billboard for the church, attracting a number of new members, particularly young families, Heather says. "We get so many visitors saying they found us because of the garden. They see the garden before they see the church. They love that this is a service project they can do as a family."

Buzz and his wife Pat Durham joined other parents and grandparents in adding raised beds to the garden during the spring campout in 2014. "Buzz and I retired early and I went to sleep smiling, listening to the next generation of parents exchange stories and share their faith," Pat says.

On Sunday morning, everyone cooked breakfast at the church before services began. "There was just something so magical about driving up to the church and seeing 15 tents in the church yard," Pat says. "Everyone was wrapped in flannel and sleepy from working hard and sleeping outside. It was messy, beautiful fellowship."

The garden has ministered in ways they never envisioned, Pat explains. She was working in the Community Garden one day when she saw a couple standing off to the side. They looked curious, and she motioned them over. She found out they were from out of town visiting a terminally

ill friend in the hospital.

"We invited them to walk around," she says. "It seemed to provide them solace. I realized once again that the impact of the garden reaches much farther than just the people who work there."

The church is constantly trying to re-invent the garden to stay relevant. Last year a partnership with the neighborhood YMCA provided an indoor location for a "tailgate market" with 30 farm vendors. The vendor fees were used to support scholarships for youth to participate in YMCA programs. Haitian art is sold at an annual auction to support a Haitian medical clinic and school, but also helps the congregation gain greater awareness of life and culture in the community.

In a slideshow prepared by the church, two sentences encapsulate the project well: "We will bring the kingdom of God a little closer. We share the Peace of Christ with the bend of our back and the work of our hands as we practice our faith."

#### PROVIDE SUPPORT

Support Mark Hare and Jenny Bent's work in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.  
[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200356](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200356)

# Meet Dick and Joy Dorf

## Expressing support for the world church through generous giving

Pat Cole

**O**n a Sunday evening in Edinburgh, Scotland, Dick and Joy Dorf began a love affair with the world church that has continued for more than 50 years.

In 1961 Dick was invited to teach electrical engineering for a year at the University of Edinburgh. While in Scotland, the newlywed Dorfs attended a Church of Scotland congregation. There they made friends with Florence Baillee, whose husband, noted theologian John Baillee, had recently died. She invited the Dorfs to a Sunday evening gathering of friends she regularly hosted. The gatherings included some who, like the Dorfs, were from other countries.

"People from all over the world were there, and she could speak to every one of them about the churches in their countries," Joy says. "I thought, 'I want to be like that. I want an awareness of the world church.'"

Gradually their connection with global Christianity grew from interest to engagement. The most recent example of their involvement is a \$100,000 commitment to mission in Egypt. It will benefit the church growth effort of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Egypt and expanded pastoral training opportunities at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo. The gift will also help support four PC(USA) mission co-workers in Egypt.

After leaving Scotland, Dick continued teaching at the university level. He spent most of his career at the University of California, Davis, teaching both engineering and management until retiring in 2012. While living in Davis,



Joy sensed a call to ministry and entered San Francisco Theological Seminary. She was ordained in 1976 and spent the next 25 years in full-time service to the church in Northern California congregations and on her seminary alma mater's administrative staff.

As a pastor, Joy built on her interest in global Christianity. She visited Ghana and Kenya with her presbytery and traveled to Nicaragua. In addition, she spent a study leave in Geneva to learn more about the World Council of Churches' work.

While Joy was serving in ministry, Dick's academic career blossomed. He has written 25 books, including some textbooks that were published in several editions. The royalties, Dick says, have greatly enhanced the couple's capacity to give.

"If you get it, you give it away, and that's what we do," he explains. In addition to World Mission, Dick and Joy have supported Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the universities they attended, UC Davis, and various causes

in Davis, where they continue to live. They attend Davis Community Church, a Presbyterian congregation that Joy once served as a minister.

"The fact that we have resources is an amazement, and it's a tremendous responsibility," Joy says. "It's also been fun because our giving is an extension of our values."

Consistent with the high value they place on education, the Dorfs have made significant gifts through World Mission to Forman Christian College in Pakistan. An interest in contextualized theological education as well as the Egyptian government's openness to a larger role for the church helped motivate their gift to mission in Egypt.

"I read very consistently about the world," Dick says. "Egypt is a country that's been in transition for 10 years. They need help in building stability."

The church can contribute to Egypt's well-being, Joy adds. "I think God working through the church can be a source of renewal and hope for peace in that part of the world."





## 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](http://presbyterianmission.org/supportwm). You may also write the name of the mission co-worker on the memo 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:

- Visit [presbyterianmission.org/supportwm](http://presbyterianmission.org/supportwm).
- Call 800-728-7228 x5611.

### Please send gifts to

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### For additional information, please contact

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# Meet our Presbyterian World Mission area coordinators

## Africa

The Rev. Debbie Braaksma  
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 502-569-5916

Debbie is responsible for facilitating and resourcing PC(USA) partnerships in Africa. She supports regional liaisons in their work with 34 African partners and 45 mission personnel serving in Africa. Debbie grew up in the First Presbyterian Church in Cambria, Wisconsin. Her call to cross-cultural service began during her high school years when she served as a literacy teacher in a Mexican migrant worker camp as part of her congregation's Operation Friendship program.

An ordained minister, Debbie served as a Reformed Church in America (RCA) mission worker in ministry with semi-nomadic Muslim pastoralists near the Kenya–Somalia border for 11 years and as RCA's Africa supervisor for seven years.



JR Lee/Mian Yoo

Debbie Braaksma receives an enthusiastic welcome by children at Ditekemena, a program of the Presbyterian Church in Congo that integrates children living on the streets into homes in the community.

Debbie served as a PC(USA)/RCA mission worker engaged in peacebuilding and trauma healing in Sudan from 2005 until 2010. She also served as principal of Reconcile Peace Institute and led community-based trainings in areas of South Sudan experiencing high levels of interethnic conflict. Debbie co-authored a children's book and leader's guide, "Bringing Healing to Traumatized Children," and has been involved in the Sudanese peacebuilding and children's ministry of Beechmont Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky. Debbie received a Bachelor of Science in social work from the University of Minnesota and a Master of Theology from the University of Edinburgh.

## Asia and the Pacific

The Rev. Mienda Uriarte  
*mienda.uriarte@pcusa.org*  
 502-569-5354

Mienda's ministry and mission experience spans nearly three decades.

As case manager of the Refugees of the World Program for Kentucky Refugee Ministries, she helped resettle more than 1,000 Asian, south Asian, and southeast Asian refugees. She also worked as coordinator for Youth and Young Adult Ministries at the national office of PC(USA) before beginning her duties as coordinator of the PC(USA)'s mission work in Asia and the Pacific in 2011. Mienda earned her Master of Divinity degree at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

"Nearly two-thirds of the world's inhabitants live in the Asia-Pacific



Valery Nodern

During a solidarity visit with global partners in the Philippines, a woman shows Mienda Uriarte, Presbyterian World Mission area coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, where her house stood before Super Typhoon Haiyan.

region," Mienda says. "It is home to so many who live in poverty. It is the poverty that creates desperate situations that drive people to desperate measures just to survive."

She says the good things happening in the region may not make the evening news, but progress is being made to alleviate poverty; strengthen the economy; confront issues of hunger and food security, human trafficking and access to basic health care; and address environmental challenges, including natural disasters and climate change.

There are several things people can do to join global partners in addressing adversity and strengthen the Christian witness in the Asia-Pacific region: pray for the people, grow in cultural understanding, support global partners and projects, and support PC(USA) mission co-workers.



## Latin America and the Caribbean

The Rev. Valdir França  
[valdir.franca@pcusa.org](mailto:valdir.franca@pcusa.org)  
502-569-5315

Valdir brings a global partner's perspective to Presbyterian World Mission through his experience growing up, attending seminary and pastoring churches in Brazil. He also is experienced in serving as a missionary and with Latin America Missions as director of International Partnerships for the Reformed Church in America, and as mission supervisor for the Americas. Valdir has a Bachelor of Theology from Northern Presbyterian Seminary, a Master of Theology in missiology from the Evangelical Center of Mission, both in his native Brazil; and a Doctor of Ministry degree from



Valdir França, area coordinator of Latin America/Caribbean, accepts a T-shirt from Mulaire Michel, an executive with Mouvement Peyizan Papay, a farmers' organization in Haiti that has partnered with the PC(USA) for many years.

Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia.

Valdir supervises and supports mission co-workers serving in Latin America and serves as a bridge between global church partners and U.S. Presbyterians.

Born in southern Brazil and raised in Manaus, Amazon, Valdir became a Christian and Presbyterian as a teenager. After completing his theological studies, he was ordained as a minister in the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil in 1984. He has served as an adjunct professor and director of missions at Faculdade Teologica Sulamericana (South American Theological Seminary).

In the late '90s Valdir was a missionary in Birmingham, England, serving in a variety of multicultural urban ministries. In 2002 he moved to the United States, where he began working with new church development among Portuguese-speaking immigrants in Florida.

## Middle East and Europe

Amgad Beblawi  
[amgad.bebrawi@pcusa.org](mailto:amgad.bebrawi@pcusa.org)  
502-569-5314

"I was 13 or 14 years old when an elder at the church where I grew up [Presbyterian Church in Suhag, Egypt] invited me to do some simple repair work at his office," Amgad said. "He compensated me very handsomely, and I felt proud!"

Before moving into his role as coordinator of the PC(USA)'s mission work in the Middle East and Europe, Amgad worked in the General Assembly's office of Middle Eastern Congregational Support for five years. He has more than two decades of experience in parachurch ministries,



Amgad Beblawi, area coordinator for Presbyterian World Mission in the Middle East and Europe, with Assyrian children at a refugee camp in Erbil, Iraq. There the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Iraq is collaborating with the Chaldean Catholic Church to care for hundreds of thousands of people who fled their homes before advancing ISIL fighters in 2014.

higher education administration and academic and career counseling. He holds masters' degrees in theology and biblical studies from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

Helping repair a broken world is much more challenging than physical repairs of a church office, but that is Amgad's passion, and also God's mission, he says.

"I enjoy introducing PC(USA) constituents to members of the body of Christ in other parts of the world and seeing them live out being one in Christ Jesus 'a holy nation, God's own people.'" (1 Peter 2:9)

"The whole world needs the church, as Christ's witness, to model the new humanity that we have in Jesus, the kingdom of God that is 'here but not yet,'" Amgad says. "The church is God's agent of healing and reconciliation in our broken world."

# Couples receive mission co-worker appointments to Asia, Zambia and Cuba

Pat Cole

**T**hree newly appointed mission co-worker couples will begin ministry in their assigned countries in early 2016. Their places of service will be Asia (a regional position based in the Philippines), Zambia and Cuba.



## **Cathy Chang and Juan-Carlos Lopez Carrasco**

Cathy and Juan will help facilitate the efforts of churches and governmental organizations across Asia to address human trafficking. The couple also will resource various programs of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and U.S. congregations involved in the issue.

Previously, Cathy was associate pastor of Memorial Presbyterian Church in Midland, Michigan. She also has served as pastoral intern at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania and as a PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer in Egypt.

Cathy holds a bachelor's degree from Carnegie Mellon University in public policy and management and economics (a double major) and a master's degree from Carnegie Mellon in public policy and management. She began her professional career as a consultant for

Accenture, a multinational management consulting and technology company.

Cathy's theological degree is from Princeton Seminary. She is a member of Lake Huron Presbytery.

Juan worked for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Great Lakes Bay Region, where he was a site supervisor. He has also been a social worker with Foyer Jeunesse Charles Frey (Hearth of Youth Charles Frey) in Strasbourg, France.

Juan grew up in France and served in Egypt with Action Chrétienne en Orient (Christians in Action in the East), a mission agency supported by French Protestants. He and Cathy met while both were in mission service in Egypt. Juan holds a master's degree in sociology from Marc Bloch University in Strasbourg and is also a member of Memorial Presbyterian Church.

## **Support Cathy and Juan in Asia.**

*[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200533](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200533)*

## **Charles and Melissa Johnson**

Food security and community development will be the focus of Charles and Melissa Johnson's work in Zambia. Charles will serve as a development specialist, and Melissa will assist him as they work in partnership with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Zambia Synod.

Much of their work will center on Chasefu Model Farm, a project of the Chasefu Theological College in Lusaka. The farm enables future pastors to learn agricultural techniques they can teach to the communities they will serve.



The pastors also will be able to use their farming skills to supplement their incomes. The farm feeds the students and provides local farmers opportunities to learn innovative approaches to agriculture.

Charles worked for 21 years at an agribusiness in Pearsall, Texas, before entering mission service. He holds a bachelor's degree in agronomy and a master's degree in business administration from Texas A&M University.

Melissa worked for 15 years as an assistant to the managing partner of a San Antonio law firm. After leaving that position in 2010, she devoted considerable time to church and community volunteer activities. Like her husband, she studied at Texas A&M.

Both Charles and Melissa are ruling elders and members of Northwood Presbyterian Church in San Antonio.

## **Support Charles and Melissa in Zambia.**

*[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200534](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200534)*





### David Cortes-Fuentes and Josefa Saez-Acevedo

David and Josefa will be serving in Cuba alongside the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba. David will teach New Testament and Greek at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas, and Josefa will assist the Cuban church's Christian education ministries.

David served as pastor of Emmanuel

Hispanic Presbyterian in Claremont, California, for four years prior to entering mission service. For nine years, he was director of academic services and a professor at San Francisco Theological Seminary's Southern California campus. He also has been director of the Hispanic Ministries Program at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago and pastor of Ceiba Baja Presbyterian Church in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico.

Josefa comes to mission service after serving seven years as director of children's ministry at La Verne Heights Presbyterian Church in La Verne, California. Previously, she was interim director of Christian education for children and family ministry at Claremont Presbyterian Church in Claremont, California.

David and Josefa are natives of Puerto

Rico and began their higher education studies there. David earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Puerto Rico and a Master of Divinity from the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico. He also holds a Master of Theology from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, and a Doctor of Philosophy from Northwestern University/Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

Josefa received an Associate of Arts from the University of Puerto Rico and did additional study at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, California, and San Francisco Seminary.

### Support David and Josefa in Cuba.

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200519](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200519)

## Mission appointment will resume full-time presence for the PC(USA) in Cuba

David Cortes-Fuentes and Josefa Saez-Acevedo will be the first Presbyterian mission co-workers sent to live and work in Cuba since the 1959 revolution led by Fidel Castro.

After the revolution, all but one Presbyterian missionary, Lois Kroehler, left Cuba. Kroehler went to Cuba in 1949 to work in education and music ministries. She remained there until her retirement in 1992.

In 2002 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) appointed Tricia Lloyd-Sidle as a mission co-worker to serve alongside Cuban Presbyterians and U.S. Presbyterians as they worked together through congregational and presbytery partnerships. She made periodic trips to Cuba while residing in the United States.

Jo Ella Holman assumed responsibilities for the more than 90 Cuba partnerships after her mission appointment in 2010. She is regional liaison for the Caribbean and is based in the Dominican Republic.

The Presbyterian movement reached Cuba in the late 19th century through the initiative of a Cuban layman rather than missionaries, according to Dean Lewis, a founding member of

the Cuba Partners Network. Lewis wrote a summary of Cuban Presbyterian history that is posted at [cubapartnership.org/summary-of-presbyterianism-in-cuba](http://cubapartnership.org/summary-of-presbyterianism-in-cuba).

Lewis says that in 1890, Evaristo Collazo invited the Presbyterian Church in the United States (the Southern church) to offer counsel and oversight for worship services. Collazo and his wife were holding in their home in Havana.

In response, the Southern church sent a Presbyterian pastor from Mexico, Antonio Graybill, to Cuba. Graybill held services, baptized 40 adults, ordained two elders for the session, and ordained Collazo and installed him as pastor.

The first missionaries from both the Southern church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (the Northern church) arrived in Cuba about a decade later. The Northern church organized the Presbytery of Havana in 1904 and placed it under the Synod of New Jersey's jurisdiction. In 1930 the presbytery became the Presbytery of Cuba.

The presbytery's ecclesiastical ties to the U.S. continued until the Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Cuba was formed in January 1967.

# Become a 'sending congregation'

## Engagement strengthens ministries of local churches and mission co-workers

Pat Cole

**W**hen the church at Antioch laid hands on Paul and Barnabas, those believers began a practice of congregational support for people in mission that continues today.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission co-workers are appointed by the entire church, a cherished tradition that reflects the PC(USA)'s connectional polity. Yet mission co-workers want and need individual congregations to walk alongside them.

Chris Roseland, a World Mission church support associate, says the relationship between a co-worker and a "mission-sending church" includes financial support, prayer and correspondence. "A mission-sending congregation is a church that is very much involved in the life of a mission co-worker," he adds.

Supportive congregations are the "spiritual bedrock that sustains us in our service," says Les Morgan, a PC(USA) mission co-worker and physician who has served with his wife, Cindy, in Bangladesh since 1989.

"There is no way I would be able to walk through the dark, narrow alleys of a Dhaka slum to the home of an infant with severe cerebral palsy, hold him in my arms, listen to the deep sadness of his young mother and receive her words into my heart if I did not have the



Mission co-worker Les Morgan, who serves with his wife, Cindy, in Bangladesh, says supportive congregations are the "spiritual bedrock that sustains our service."

church, the body of Christ, there with me," Les says.

The Morgans are among the mission co-workers on the prayer lists that appear in bulletins and newsletters at First Presbyterian Church in Kingsport, Tennessee. In addition, the congregation's pastor, David Cagle, frequently asks congregants to pray for the mission co-workers it supports, says Betty Dickson, chair of First Presbyterian's Outreach and Evangelism Committee. "One Sunday school class talks about them and prays for them every Sunday," she adds.

The congregation also has a history of thoughtful gestures toward mission co-workers. For example, First Presbyterian mailed the Morgans and their children parts of a Christmas tree in three separate boxes to help the children with the transition to Bangladesh. "It arrived before our first Christmas here, and we

have used it ever since," Cindy says.

Since New Testament days, people in mission have communicated with supporters by letter. Email has greatly sped up these communications, and the Mission Connections website ([pcusa.org/missionconnections](http://pcusa.org/missionconnections)) gives ongoing access to them. Many congregations post these letters on bulletin boards and websites as well as including excerpts in newsletters.

Other digital media, such as blogs and various social media platforms, have added more opportunities for congregation/mission co-worker communications. Skype conversations between mission co-workers and congregational groups also are becoming popular.

A mission co-worker relationship can expand a congregation's sense of purpose, Chris observes. "They see what the mission co-worker is doing as an extension of what the church is doing."

Mission co-workers often help congregations develop international partnerships. For example, mission co-workers in Guatemala have facilitated First Presbyterian's involvement in Guatemala for several years. The congregation currently supports Richard and Debbie Welch, a mission co-worker couple under PC(USA) appointment in Guatemala.

Supporting mission co-workers "gives us a sense we are doing God's work," Betty says. "We like to do local mission work as well as international mission work. Our witness lets people know we are trying to spread the good news here and around the world."

### TAKE ACTION

Start a relationship with a mission co-worker. Call 800-728-7228, x5611, or email [nicole.gerkins@pcusa.org](mailto:nicole.gerkins@pcusa.org).



# MISSION TOOLKIT

Christine Coy Fohr

## The heart of mission

When children from the community gathered to help Mark's mission team build a new house in a Nicaraguan village, Mark fumed under his breath. "These kids are making this process too slow!"

The group Mark was with, a congregation in the U.S. that had visited several Nicaraguan villages year after year, had just seven days to accomplish their goal of building a house. It was hard work: mixing concrete, laying cinderblocks, and strategically planning how to turn a vacant lot into a house so quickly. Mark thought the last thing he needed was the help of children.

But despite the best planning and preparation, mission trips rarely if ever go perfectly according to plan.

Children sang and played, running near the worksite – adding the joy of laughter to the sound of construction. Community leaders also pitched in, sharing their best practices for building. Families brought food and water to share in the heat of each afternoon.

At week's end, as the church group gathered to reflect on their work, their leader asked, "What have you learned?" Some shared songs Others mentioned new building techniques that the local people had shared. After much silence, Mark finally said, "I learned that this trip was not really about building things. It was about building relationships."

Mission has a tremendous knack for teaching us that our work is not about projects but partnership. Partnership is how we as Presbyterians do mission – valuing the gift of relationship, honoring the wisdom of others, celebrating that together, God will empower us for incredible ministry.

Remember, partnership is not about projects and spreadsheets, it's about:

- Relationships and storytelling
- Arriving empty-handed, prepared for God to set the pace
- Walking alongside, allowing one's footsteps to align in unison
- Prayerfully declaring that we are called as partners in Christ's mission

## Tips for starting a mission partnership

Mission partnerships happen when communities formally commit to work together in God's mission. Here are a few tips to get you started:

**Consider:** Is there a particular issue your church is passionate about? Do you have connections in specific countries?

**Connect:** Mission co-workers work as "partnership facilitators" connecting U.S. and international communities.

**Covenant:** Make a list of ways you and your new partner will be in mission together. Writing a partnership covenant can provide a foundation for a long, fruitful and mutually life-giving relationship.

**Contact:** Presbyterian World Mission staff can guide you in finding a good partner community.

## Mission resources for your church

World Mission supports you in your church's mission activities – short-term mission trips, mission partnerships and mission projects. Contact Equipping for Mission Involvement for information, 800-728-7228 ext. 5284.

World Mission Today webinars  
[pcusa.org/worldmission/webinars](http://pcusa.org/worldmission/webinars)

Mission trip tools  
[pcusa.org/missiontriptools](http://pcusa.org/missiontriptools)

Mission partnership helps  
[pcusa.org/partnership-resources](http://pcusa.org/partnership-resources)

Congregational mission strategies  
[pcusa.org/missioncommitteetools](http://pcusa.org/missioncommitteetools)

Connections with mission co-workers  
[pcusa.org/start-mission-partnership](http://pcusa.org/start-mission-partnership)

Read letters from mission workers  
[pcusa.org/missionconnections](http://pcusa.org/missionconnections)

Visit [pcusa.org/missionresources](http://pcusa.org/missionresources) for these and other resources.

# YAV alum reflects on life-changing year of service

## Inspiring, equipping and connecting people to God's mission in Peru

Blake Collins

**B**lake, if you give a person a fish they eat once; if you teach a person to fish they eat for a lifetime. But what do *you* do when all the fish in the river are dead? What do you do when the source of the fish is polluted? You go upstream and advocate.”

This is what the Rev. Jed Koball, mission co-worker in Peru, said to me as I entered my year of service as a Young Adult Volunteer (YAV). Jenny Valles Koball, the Peruvian YAV site coordinator, echoes a similar story as she and her husband partner with the Joining Hands Network to address the root causes of poverty. Their message: death will not have the final say. Jenny and Jed use the story of Lazarus’ resurrection and Jesus waiting four days before going to see his friend (in the Hebrew tradition, only after four days was a person considered dead). Jed posits that perhaps Christ wept because those around Lazarus’ tomb accepted death too easily. Similarly, today we, as the body of Christ, need a message that resonates deeply to nurture and motivate us. We were learning how to be inspired continually to do the work of God’s kingdom. This is why I am so grateful for my YAV year.

When a group visited from First Presbyterian Church of Howard County, my home congregation in Columbia,



Jenny Valles Koball

Blake Collins, right front, and other 2013-2014 Young Adult Volunteers, with artisan workers who partner with the Joining Hands Network in Peru. Blake is now the YAV program’s mission engagement specialist, connecting supporters and congregations with transformational giving and partnership.

Maryland, we learned about Peru’s 20 years of terrorism, about the ripple effects violence and injustice have on the surrounding communities and about current imbalances. In La Oroya, Peru, 98.6 percent of the children in a town of 11,000 suffer from severe lead poisoning due to an U.S.-owned metal smelter that ignores environmental policies. How do we ask Lazarus to take off his grave clothes knowing what’s beneath them is smelly? That’s why when First Presbyterian of Howard County chose to help fund Jed and Jenny’s work, invite Jed to speak with the youth about advocacy, preach in their Sunday services and present on an Earth Care Forum panel, I was encouraged. The church in Peru and the church in the U.S. are

growing in partnership and equipping one another through resources and prayer. The belief that a dead river can come back to life reveals that the church can be a meaningful force against worldly inequality. Life *will* have the final say.

It was amazing for me to live with a host family in Peru without being fluent in Spanish. To have no voice forced me to learn how to be an ally, walk alongside my Peruvian neighbors and discern the power of presence. Through the YAV program, the work of the Joining Hands Network and the support of my home congregation, I witnessed God’s people inspiring, equipping and connecting one another to continue God’s kingdom building with our partners in responsible and loving ways. Glory be to God!

### HELP TRANSFORM LIVES

Support the YAV program.

[presbyterianmission.org/supportyav](http://presbyterianmission.org/supportyav)

# Update on Presbyterian Mission Agency's global campaigns

## Educating children, training leaders, stopping sexual violence

There are many issues in the world that break God's heart. Addressing the root causes of these issues is the goal of Presbyterian Mission Agency's critical global initiatives, adopted in 2014 by the 221st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Here is a brief update on each campaign.

### Educate a Child, Transform the World

**Goal:** Provide quality education for 1 million children by the year 2020.  
[pcusa.org/globalpoverty](http://pcusa.org/globalpoverty)

Addressing the root causes of poverty by strengthening quality education for children domestically and internationally continues in collaboration with the Compassion, Peace and Justice ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. A website, webinar, Facebook page, blog and various articles relate stories and practices of partnerships in education (see page 4). Projects are being developed with global partners in Africa, Latin America,

Asia and the Middle East that strengthen quality education for many children. Opportunities exist for partnering early childhood programs, hosted by U.S. Presbyterian congregations, with preschools in rural Africa and Asia. Please visit websites listed on this page for ideas to get your congregation involved in these campaigns.

### Training Leaders for Community Transformation

**Goal:** Develop 2,000 leaders worldwide by 2017 for evangelistic sharing of the gospel in community-transforming ways.  
[pcusa.org/internationalevangelism](http://pcusa.org/internationalevangelism)

Through holistic training in disease prevention, community development, evangelism and discipleship, Community Health Evangelism (CHE) is transforming lives in Congo, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Malawi, Dominican Republic and Haiti. Collaboration with global partners may assist in launching CHE in Asia.

Several donations and pledges continue to be received toward the strengthening of the church in the Middle East through high-quality theological education in Arabic offered by the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo. The Rev. Dr. David Cortes-Fuentes has been identified to serve as mission co-worker as member of the faculty of the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Matanzas in Cuba. This will be the first placement in Cuba since the revolution (see page 13).

### Speak Up! Stop Sexual Violence

**Goal:** Build peace and reconciliation in cultures of violence, including our own.  
[pcusa.org/reconciliation](http://pcusa.org/reconciliation)

God has given all believers the ministry of reconciliation in our broken world (2 Cor. 5:18). This campaign is gaining momentum in Presbyterian congregations through "Courageous Conversations."

More than 100 U.S. congregations have chosen to teach, preach or hold a service focused on sexual violence this year alone (see page 5). When we speak up about the violent realities faced by women around the globe, we fertilize the ground to become a life-giving, healing presence for those most disproportionately affected by violence in their homes and communities. Men and women are keen to share their efforts and work together to develop ways to address the systemic issues that lead to violence against women and other forms of gender-based violence locally and globally.



Education is transforming the lives of girls in Rajshahi, Bangladesh.



# Evolving global partnerships

## Changes in ordination and marriage standards impact PC(USA) relationships

Greg Allen-Pickett

**T**he Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through Presbyterian World Mission, has more than 100 partnerships worldwide, most with Presbyterian and Reformed churches in countries where we work together in mission.

Some have celebrated the decisions made concerning changes in ordination standards and the definition of marriage, passed at the 2010 and 2014 General Assemblies. Others have challenged those decisions but chosen to stay in partnership with the PC(USA). Three churches have chosen to break relationship with the PC(USA) over those issues.

Two church partners in the Middle East and Latin America reached out to the PC(USA) following the change in the definition of marriage. Although they publicly disagreed with the decision, they reaffirmed their commitment to the PC(USA).

One of these churches wrote, “Considering the historical relationship that binds our two churches together, we believe that it is possible and even necessary for us to express ourselves honestly, and in a spirit of love to our brothers and sisters in the PC(USA), by openly sharing how their decision on this matter affects us. It is a source of pain within our church, and a source of embarrassment in the larger context of a culture that finds this decision deplorable. We seek to preserve the historical ties between our churches, and are grateful for the long and glorious heritage of the ministry of faithful missionaries, who established the Presbyterian work here and who

contribute to the building and reviving of the church and its institutions.”

The other church wrote, “After an overture by two presbyteries to definitively break relations with the PC(USA), by majority vote of our church, we confirm the partnership agreement that we maintain with our sister church, the PC(USA). We ask that the PC(USA), based on the agreement we have signed, continue in [a] relationship of mutual respect and collaboration, taking into account the idiosyncrasies, culture and theological principles of each church. We also ask, based on our understanding of biblical principles, that you not send mission

.....  
**“We take the voice of the Brazilian church very seriously. We are grieved by their decision, but we want to emphasize that we are grateful for their witness and our history together and will listen carefully as we engage in dialogue about where God is leading us in mission.”—Hunter Farrell, director, Presbyterian World Mission**  
.....

workers that are married to people of the same gender. We will communicate to our presbyteries that it is not prudent to break relations with the PC(USA).”

In 2011 the Presbyterian Church of Mexico voted to break relations with the PC(USA) after the change in ordination standards.

In July 2015 both the Independent

Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPIB) and the Evangelical Presbyterian and Reformed Church of Peru (IEPRP) voted to break relations with the PC(USA) over the change in the definition of marriage.

The partnership with the IPIB started in the 1970s when the IPIB received several PC(USA) mission workers. The fruit of the partnership with the IPIB over the last 40 years includes projects in the area of mission as well as educational and social outreach.

In its decision to end the partnership, the IPIB wrote, “After a debate that began in 2011, when the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States introduced changes in the criteria for ordination, as well as the recent changes concerning the definition of marriage and permission for ministers to celebrate marriages between persons of the same sex, our church, [which] had initially decided to continue in partnership, in this last General Assembly made the decision to interrupt the official partnership with this beloved church.”

Hunter Farrell, director of Presbyterian World Mission, responded, “We take the voice of the Brazilian church very seriously. We are grieved by their decision, but we want to emphasize that we are grateful for their witness and our history together and will listen carefully as we engage in dialogue about where God is leading us in mission.”

Two PC(USA) mission co-workers, Tim and Marta Carriker, currently serve with the Independent Presbyterian

.....

**“We have a deep respect for the voice of international partners because partnership is at the core of our understanding of Christ’s mission around the world, so we have listened very carefully to these church leaders. As the church continues to be reformed and always reforming, we hope in the future that we can be reunited in partnership with these churches as we work together to build God’s kingdom.” –Hunter Farrell, director, Presbyterian World Mission**

.....



Church of Brazil. The PC(USA) is in conversation with the Carrikers and the Brazilian church to determine next steps.

The partnership with the Evangelical Presbyterian and Reformed Church of Peru (IEPRP) started in 2007 and has been fruitful. Much of the partnership has centered on the hosting of short-term mission teams. In the letter declaring its intention to break relations, the IEPRP wrote, “The General Assembly of the IEPRP on June 26, 2007, signed a covenant of cooperation with the PC(USA), although some representatives had certain doubts. One of the points at issue was the discussion of homosexual marriage in a PC(USA) presbytery. The president of the IEPRP expressed the IEPRP’s concerns with respect to the change in the PC(USA) Book of Order in 2011 that allows the ordination of homosexuals to the different ministries of the church. And on March 17, 2015,

the PC(USA) approved homosexual marriage. The IEPRP in its General Assembly, which met June 24–26, 2015, voted unanimously not to renew the covenant between the IEPRP and the PC(USA) ... The IEPRP gives thanks to God for these years of partnership and expresses its gratitude to the PC(USA) for the diaconal support received from June 2007 to June 2015 in the form of different service projects benefiting children, young people, women and the different governing bodies of the IEPRP. The IEPRP and PC(USA) signed a covenant which was renewed for several periods; nevertheless, the IEPRP decided unanimously not to renew its

covenant with the PC(USA) and not to ratify the covenants signed by governing bodies of the IEPRP as of June 2015.” Currently the PC(USA) has no mission co-workers serving directly with the IEPRP.

Farrell said, “We have a deep respect for the voice of international partners because partnership is at the core of our understanding of Christ’s mission around the world, so we have listened very carefully to these church leaders. As the church continues to be reformed and always reforming, we hope in the future that we can be reunited in partnership with these churches as we work together to build God’s kingdom.”

## Questions about Presbyterian World Mission?

Learn how you can support God’s mission around the world by calling 800-728-7228. Ask to speak with the World Mission office for the region related to your question: Africa; Asia and the Pacific; Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean; or the Middle East. For more information, visit our website at [pcusa.org/worldmission](http://pcusa.org/worldmission).

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

## God's Mission in Africa

*Providing sanitation and living water in Malawi*

**Dr. Rochelle Holm and Tyler Holm,**

PC(USA) mission co-workers at Mzuzu University and University of Livingstonia, respectively, work in partnership with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Synod of Livingstonia.

Rochelle's work at Mzuzu University, a government university, brings together the mission of the CCAP in collaboration with ecumenical partners. Tyler's work at the University of Livingstonia, through the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia, trains students in education, health, theology and social development.

"It's clear that God has called us to Malawi," Tyler says. "We haven't always known the next steps, but we know God is leading the way."

Rochelle and Tyler's ministry to the people of Malawi began during five years of short-term mission trips, after which they became long-term volunteers. Effective January 2015, they have renewed their call as PC(USA) mission co-workers based in Mzuzu until 2018.

A recent interfaith project of Mzuzu University, in collaboration with the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia, has focused Rochelle's attention on water, sanitation and hygiene access for people with disabilities in a nearby rural district.

There is a great need in many congregations for a trained minister, as statistics show there is only one pastor for 7,000 congregants in Malawi. Tyler's theology classes at the University of Livingstonia have never been more important in meeting the need to "Train Leaders for Community Transformation," one of three Presbyterian Mission Agency global campaigns.

**Support Rochelle and Tyler in Malawi.**

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200532](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200532)

## God's mission in Asia

*Working for reconciliation and peace in Indonesia*

PC(USA) mission co-workers Dr. Bernard Adeney-Risakotta and Dr. Farsijana Adeney-Risakotta, help prepare Christian and Muslim leaders to serve church and society in Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country.

Bernie helps lead the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Farsijana is director of the House of Authentic Sense, which empowers poor villages. Both are faculty members at Duta Wacana Christian University.

While dedicated to teaching, Bernie and Farsijana share a commitment to mission that goes beyond the classroom. Reconciliation between Muslims and Christians is more than words and includes living in community. In the late 1990s, they built their home in a Muslim neighborhood during a period when tensions between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia were at an all-time high. Their home is a center for community outreach and hospitality.

"I am amazed by the richness and diversity of the church and surrounding cultures," Bernie says. "I love being in a position of always learning, always struggling to catch up and participate in all God is doing in Indonesia."

"Both of us strive to be bridge people," Farsijana says, "bringing together Christians and Muslims to work together to achieve common goals. Through Ph.D. education of top leaders and telling stories to simple village children, we are blessed to be able to share the light of Christ."

**Support Bernie and Farsijana in Indonesia.**

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200303](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200303)





## God's mission in Central America

*Addressing hunger and poverty in El Salvador*



PC(USA) mission co-worker

Kristi Van Nostran is companionship facilitator of Joining Hands Network—El Salvador, a ministry of the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

Kristi's ministry of accompaniment focuses on raising awareness, empowering and equipping Salvadorans to advocate for their human rights

to food and water. Priorities include building resistance and resilience to climate change by promoting healthy, sustainable and chemical-free farming practices; and campaigning peacefully and prayerfully—in strategic collaboration with local, national and international partners—to restore wholeness, healing and hope.

The realities of hunger, injustice and violence that are lived daily in El Salvador make it difficult to see transformation. Yet Kristi and the Joining Hands Network work to connect farmers to learn from one another, keep healthy food on their tables and provide a dignified living. “As farmers come together, they recognize that they are not alone,” Kristi says. “And by connecting with U.S. Presbyterian partners, they feel that their struggles matter and that their voices will be heard.”

Kristi has played a key role in advocating for more just, sustainable and creation-friendly food systems, and in a very vulnerable country, she continues to promote reconciliation and community development, and sow seeds of faith and God's love.

**Support Kristi in El Salvador.**

[presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200479](http://presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200479)

## God's mission in the Middle East

*Providing 'Care with Love' in Egypt*

After a need in her own family, Dr. Magda Iskander, PC(USA) associate for ecumenical partnership in the Middle East, created Care with Love (CWL), the first home health care program in Egypt. CWL provides dependable, high-quality, compassionate in-home health care for those who need it, as well as employment opportunities for young adults.

The comprehensive four-month certification course provides more than knowledge and skills: it includes a values curriculum to ensure students become compassionate, accountable caregivers. The CWL values curriculum is being adopted by schools in the Synod of the Nile and is already being used by the Gouna Technical Nursing Institute in El Gouna.

Since 1997 more than 1,500 students have completed the program. Those employed by CWL enjoy full benefits, including social and health insurance. Other institutions are replicating the program to meet demand.

Dr. Iskander is a co-founder of Health and Hope Oasis, Egypt's first supportive care center for children with cancer and their families. The center promotes the nutritional, physical and emotional well-being of children with cancer and their families in an environmentally healthy and safe community.

“Children who have undergone chemotherapy, radiation or surgery need proper nutrition and a clean environment to protect them from secondary infections between treatments,” says Dr. Iskander. “They also need to be surrounded with love and allowed to express themselves and play without fear.”

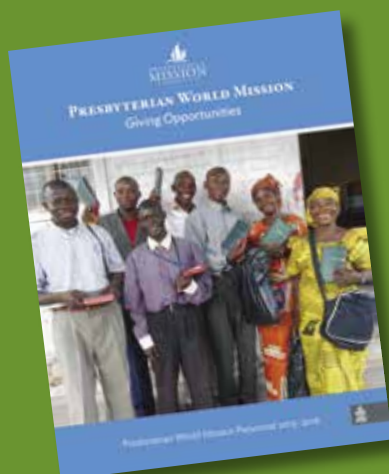


**Support Magda in the Middle East.**

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Presbyterian Mission Agency  
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# 2015–2016 Presbyterian World Mission Giving Opportunities



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