



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

The Heart of Mission

August 4, 2020



I've been doing a lot of walking lately for my health. On my walks I pass by people. I try to wear my mask and that gets in the way of my usual smile and nod. I heard on CBS that just making eye contact and saying "Hi" to a stranger can actually increase your Oxytocin (feel good hormones). We are social creatures. God, Being in relationship, Three in One, created us to touch, shake hands, hug, move in close, laugh together. We are made in God's image. Lately, we have been limited in our ability to do those things. So, walking is good, not just for my body parts (and letting go of the many pounds I have to shed!) but for the social body in which I live, move and have my being. Walking is good. Jesus walked. He walked in other people's shoes with his mind, his heart and his deeds. Jesus showed us who to walk with (our neighbor) and how to walk. He showed us walking could be loving. That is the heart of mission! Just yesterday morning I read in *Su Voz*, our Cuban Partner Network e-devotional, a poem about walking. It talks about what to walk away from which adds a nice balance to all the other walking I am doing. In case you missed it, I will share it again:

WALKING IS THE BEST EXERCISE

I Timothy 4: 6-10

"...stay away from such".

I Timothy 6: 5b (Reina Valera)

*Walk away from arguments that don't lead you
anywhere but into anger*

Walk away from people who freely put you down

Walk away from any thought that reduces your value

*Walk away from failures and fears
that paralyze your dreams*

*Walk away from people who don't care about you
and who are opportunistic*

*The more you walk away from things
that poison your soul, the happier your life will be*

So, walk . . .

Prayer: Beloved God, thank you for each of the blessings that you have placed in my life. Lord, I put this day into your hands praying that your will may be done in me. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Peace,

Rachel Matthews, Temporary Mission Coordinator

More Mission Announcements:

Frontera de Cristo – First Presbyterian Church raised \$3250 to this point for the Raindrop Offering which goes this year to Frontera de Cristo. There may be a little more coming in in the next couple of weeks as happens with offerings but I wanted to share the good news with you and with Frontera. We hope it will lessen the impact Covid19 has had on our neighbors on the border. Thank you all who contributed in whatever way you did. Your help doesn't have to stop with the Raindrop Offering! You can continue to help this ministry with your prayers and also with your own education and advocacy about what is happening on the border. Notice that the 'Coffee, Conversations and Compassion' will continue in August:

On Thursday, August 6th, we will resume our "Conversations." We welcome your ideas and suggestions for topics or ministries that you'd like to know more about. Please send your ideas to mark@fronteradecristo.org.

The coffee "special" will continue through August 31st. You can continue to order your coffee online here and help your sisters and brothers during the pandemic. You will receive delicious 100% organic coffee cultivated, roasted, and shipped by the Café Justo cooperative and your purchase will continue to help families affected by COVID-19. We invite you to comment on the campaign on our [Facebook page](#) and invite friends [to order Café Justo](#).

Courage Connection:

Courage Connection Needed: Diapers (not size 3) sizes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6. Baby wipes, Clorox wipes. Take them to Michael Hogue's house and he will deliver them.

CU at Home:

Needed: men's (and women's) underwear, sanitizing wipes, prepackaged snacks, and volunteers! Take items to Rachel's Church Office or to CU at Home directly. If you are able to volunteer, call CU at C-U at Home, 70 E. Washington Street, Champaign, IL 61820 217-819-4569 www.cuathome.us

Also, CU at Home has partnered this month with a local jewelry company, Almsey.com! Shop at Almsey.com now until September 1st and 20% of all proceeds will be donated to C-U at Home! *Almsey produces minimalist jewelry with a social impact. Live alive. Give life. Do good.* AlmseyTM products lead our movement to do good, propagate acts of kindness, and spread love & unity in the world. Learn more at almsey.com Every AlmseyTM purchase supports a charity or positive effort detailed in the product description.

Friends of P.E.B. PEB recently sent out a newsletter about the Summer Science projects the schools were doing despite the pandemic. I encourage you to read it. Also, a little trivia in there about the P.E.B. school we sponsor in Sangla Hill:

- Sangla Hill got its name because of large hill just outside the city.
- There are unconfirmed stories of Alexander the Great passing through Sangla Hill during his invasions.
- The Sangla Hill School is the largest school in terms of area in all the PEB schools.
- The Sangla Hill campus also houses the offices of SHE & SHA Projects of PEB.

Cuba Partner Network – Conversation with Rev. Liudmila Hernández

Vice Moderator of the IPRC Synod

Rev. Liudmila Hernández regularly joins the monthly meetings of the CPN Steering Committee, providing updates on the situation in Cuba. Here is a summary of her report from our July meeting:

Most provinces in Cuba have entered Phase 2 of re-opening. With the exception of Havana, where there are still new cases each day, the other churches have reopened and are joyously worshipping, at a distance.

The economic situation continues to be dire; severe shortages continue, with long lines for food, hygiene supplies, medicines and other essentials. Restaurants, bars, B&B's, so helpful to the economy in the last two years, remain closed. In the communities, people have formed WhatsApp groups to communicate on the availability of medicines. The churches continue to provide for their communities however they can.

The Steering Committee asked Liudmila what life is like for pastors in the isolated setting of the pandemic. She says that pastors have had to be creative in caring for their congregations through visiting, providing meals, maintaining hope and taking care of the peoples' physical and spiritual needs. In her experience there is not a feeling of isolation, but rather, there is so much to do and so many to take care of, there is no time to feel isolated or discouraged. Congregations are caring for their pastors and caring for each other.

Liudmila sends all of the US churches warm wishes from Cuba. She affirmed that our churches are like a family, always in prayer for each other.

Save the date!

CPN Virtual Gathering: September 25 - 26, 2020

The Cuba Partners Network Virtual Gathering will be held via Zoom from Friday, September 25 to Saturday, September 26. The CPN Program Committee is working on a full program which will include many items of interest, from advocacy to partner communications. Look for more information and a link to register via email in early August.

With regards to our sister church in Luyano, please keep them in your prayers as they have opened up the church for in person worship now.

DREAAM HOUSE The Summer program is coming to a close. The COVID19 interrupted what would have been a trip to New York City but that has not kept the DREAAMers down. Already DREAAM is looking ahead to 2021 or 2022 when they hope to take that trip to the Big Apple! More about that later!

Salt and Light: Salt and Light are offering gift cards now. If you have a friend who is in need or have a friend you'd like to thank, consider these gift cards. It will get double duty!

Kemmerer Village - I wanted to report on the good news happening at Kemmerer Village. Read their Summer Newsletter here:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/564e3957e4b0ebe1a4b5f512/t/5f21b7ab509f742614dfe482/1596045230256/195272+Voice+Newsletter+-+July+2020_v7.pdf?bbeml=tp-fnJ026uBG0qkcZHu5DiuVA.jaZd1cWYvfUe7AJwsGbMqLw.rb1DsRFNtH02fuTfUswwqbQ.lzGbxGrKDnUKq5R7vBI4UDQ

Opportunity International:

Opportunity International has been having virtual webinars during this time of COVID19. In their next webinar we'll be joined by our colleagues from around the world, **Wednesday, August 5 at 11:00 a.m. CT**, to hear how the pandemic has impacted the lives of women and girls specifically, learn about research that's changing how we serve this critical group, and discover how you can be a part of the response. Register at this link:

<https://opportunity.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAIf-6urDsvGd0nUfoAuACChARwvrXsvWco>

The webinar will be hosted by Muffy MacMillan, Opportunity International's Global Ambassador for Women & Girls. Guest speakers will include:

- Renée McAlpin, EduQuality Manager

- Dana Lunberry, Digital Financial Inclusion Manager
- Mary Pat McVay, Research and Knowledge Manager

Let us keep all our mission partners in our prayers, those who are waiting to go back to their place of ministry and those who are able to work where they are. Listen for God's call to you in their ministry.

Our PC(USA) Mission CoWorkers:

Mark Adams and Miriam Maidonado Escobar (Mexico)
Farsijanna Adeney-Risakotta (Indonesia)
Jeff and Christi Boyd (Central Africa)
Jo Ella Holman (Caribbean and Cuba)
Bob and Kristi Rice (South Sudan)

Our regional and global mission partners:

Kemmerer Village (and Camp Carew)
Lifeline Pilots
Marion Medical Mission
Mission Aviation Fellowship
Opportunity International
Friends of Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan Presbyterian Cuba Partnership
Special Offerings of the PC(USA)
Theological Education Fund
Young Adult Volunteers

Here in Champaign – Urbana:

CU Better Together
CU at Home
CANAAN S.A.F.E. HOUSE
CANTEEN RUN
COURAGE CONNECTION
DREAAM
eEMPTY TOMB, INC
FAITH IN ACTION
JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY
THE REFUGEE CENTER
RESTORATION URBAN MINISTRY
SALT & LIGHT

Here at First Presbyterian Church

FPCC Amateur Preachers

FPCC Environmental Committee working with Faith in Place

FPCC Presbyterian Women

FPCC ESL

FPCC Children, Youth and Families

FPCC Mission Possible/Go and Serve



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