

# The Heart of Missions: First Presbyterian Church of Champaign's Missions Magazine

## November Missions Events and Meetings

Sundays: *English as a Second Language Bible Study*  
10:30am in Room 204

Mondays-Thursdays: *English as a Second Language Classes*  
9-11am on Second Floor of Education Building

Wednesdays: *SAFE House Applied Psychology Class*  
1:30pm-2:45pm in Westminster Hall

November 8: *Mission Team*  
Noon in Westminster Hall

November 12: *Adopt a Highway*  
8:00am

November 12: *A Look at the U.S. and Mexico from the Other Side of the Border* with Mark Adams  
10:00am in Centennial Hall

November 13: *Mark Adams Presentation*  
10:30am in Centennial Hall

November 14: *Compassion Peace and Justice*  
4pm in Westminster Hall

November 10: *Film in the Fall*  
6:30pm in Chapel

November 21: *World Mission*  
5:30pm in Westminster Hall

November 21: *Environmental Stewardship Committee*  
3:30pm in the Parlor

**Cuba Steering Committee will not meet in November.**

**Community Mission Deacons will not meet in November, but will meet in December at an unusual time to accommodate for holiday travels. The December CMD meeting will be on December 6th at 6:30 in Westminster Hall.**

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# **“A Look at the U.S. and Mexico from the Other Side of the Border”**

**Speaker: Rev. Mark Adams,  
PC(USA) Pastor and Mission Co-worker  
on the Mexican Border**

**November 12th  
10am in Centennial Hall**



Rev. Mark Adams, pictured with his wife and  
fellow Mission Co-Worker,  
Miriam Maldonado Escobar

Mark Adams, an ordained pastor from Clover, South Carolina is a PC(USA) mission co-worker serving the border city of Agua Prieta since 1998. Mark serves as the U.S. coordinator of the binational ministry, Frontera de Cristo. Mark is responsible, in partnership with Rev. Angel Valencia of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, for the coordination of the six ministry areas: church development, health, family counseling, the New Hope Community Center, mission education, and the Just Trade Center.

Through Frontera de Cristo, Mark brings together people from both sides of the border, building relationships and understanding between them. Mark met Miriam Maldonado Escobar when he first came to Agua Prieta. After working alongside her husband, Miriam was invited to serve as a mission co-worker under PC(USA) appointment in 2011. Together, Mark and Miriam continue a ministry of reconciliation, bringing people together around issues of migration and faith.

Mexico has been described as a land of contrasts. Natural beauty and urban blight and poverty and affluence exist very close to each other. Yet most Mexicans have little chance of attaining an economically prosperous lifestyle. Many impoverished Mexicans come to the United States in search of better incomes. Death from thirst and heat exhaustion are not uncommon as migrants make their northbound trek, and more than 1 million are arrested each year for working in the United States without proper documentation.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has been engaged in mission in Mexico since 1872. The PC(USA)'s joint ministry with the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico along the border is a major focus of PC(USA) involvement in Mexico.

Mark will be at our church in Centennial Hall, **Saturday morning at 10am, November 12**, to speak about the **life south of the border, their view of life in the U.S., the Wall, migration issues and related topics**. Hopefully, you will learn about another perspective than the rhetoric we have been accustomed to believing. Then, **Sunday morning, November 13 at 10:30am**, he will speak again in Centennial Hall about **PC(USA) ministries in Agua Prieta** to the thousands of Mexican citizens who have no thoughts about migrating to this country, or to those that have tried and failed, or who are either deported or disillusioned and returning to Mexico. **He will also be preaching in all three November 13th worship services**. Please plan to attend and welcome Mark to our congregation.

Sincerely,  
Steve Gritten

**Where was God?**  
**Submitted by: Harry Bremer**

Once again, I was in Zambia, staying in the towns of Lundazi & Chipata. There would be days of driving over 2 hours before getting to the first well. My partner and I drove nearly 1,800 miles, and completed 96 wells. As a result, over 2,400 households now have clean water, serving over 24,000 people!

Where was God?

- Outside of Chipata, the villages were set in open plains with the mountains in the background. How beautiful.
- Villages' gardens, so green, often next to the new wells
- Women singing with wonderful harmony at the wells
- Villagers' excitement (especially children) when the truck would arrive
- Willingness of the villagers to help carry the hand pump parts to the well
- Children shouting *muzungu* (white person)
- Children wanting to hold hands with *muzungu* walking to/from the wells
- The excitement of all the people trying to get a taste of the clean water from the new well

Words cannot describe the feeling one has when you see clean water coming from a new well after walking by open contaminated water holes.

Thank you for your prayers and support of this mission trip.



Dear members of First Presbyterian Church in Champaign,

We know you probably already received the official receipt for your May gift of \$850 to the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

Even so, we in the Hunger Program saw that you had given and wanted to say thank you. Please feel free to share this note in your bulletin or newsletter so all your members will know how grateful we are.

Gifts like yours make a difference in lives around the world, helping families feed themselves and communities thrive. They also support the work inspired by Proverbs 31:8-9, which calls us to speak up for those who cannot and defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Thank you for joining us in the mission of alleviating hunger and eliminating its root causes. Enclosed is an impact report giving you a glimpse of how gifts to PHP made a difference last year. Thank you for helping the work continue.

With a grateful heart,

Ruth Farrell, PHP Coordinator

Below is an excerpt from the impact report mentioned in the note.

*"... I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever."* Psalms 52:8

### Presbyterian Hunger Program—2015 Impact Report

In 2015, your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing and the Presbyterian Hunger Program made a difference in lives around the world. Working to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes, **together we:**

#### 1. Root our work in communities through partner grants

Over 120 partners received \$1.2 million in grants. Half of the grant partner work was in the U.S. Internationally more than 1,044 communities were served, impacting more than 52,608 people directly & 113,782 indirectly.

#### Developing Leaders and Building Capacities

More than 5,413 people participated in trainings in agroecology, nutrition, water and seed management, beekeeping, and small business skills. Nearly half were women leaders.

#### Sustainable Livelihoods

Food production increased in over 1,000 communities, raising income and improving food security for over 100,000 people.



Grant partners in 28 countries planted/distributed/installed:

- ✦ 11,787,300 native seeds
- ✦ more than 300 animals
- ✦ 127,000 trees
- ✦ 50 fuel-efficient stoves
- ✦ 20 solar dryers
- ✦ 14 wells/water systems
- ✦ 10 treadle pumps
- ✦ 119 toilets & latrines (built/repaired)
- ✦ 560 micro-credit loans to women

### "Closing the GAP" on Hunger and Poverty (in the U.S.)

**GROW. SERVE. EAT.**

- Over 244,110 pounds of food was grown in community or church gardens and eaten by 524 families. Over 220 churches have gardens.
- Families in Maine and Kentucky purchased \$146,998 of food from local farmers, helping local farmers and improving healthy food access for low-income communities.
- SNAP (food stamp) assistance sites were opened in 122 communities and in 58 congregations, including 11 Presbyterian.
- Over 200 congregations participated in gleaning projects, recovering more than 7 million pounds of food for low-income families.
- More than 8,000 Presbyterian congregations participated in a local hunger ministry.

#### 2. Change laws and practices so communities can flourish

- In Peru, a Specialized Environmental Health Program for persons affected by environmental contamination was ratified, and monitoring of implementation has begun. This impacts thousands of children and families and sets a precedent for mining areas throughout Peru.
- Land mapping is effectively engaging communities in the Chaco region and helping to secure their land rights; this helps set a precedent for other land struggles.
- An essential aspect of advocacy work is the capacity to build convergence, common vision and shared strategies. This work is strong in 4 countries—from coal mining in the Philippines to environmental health in Peru and agroecology in Central America.

It has been a busy October in Missions, as you likely learned from last month's edition! November is a bit more restful as we look forward to the Advent and Christmas seasons.

As we learned last month, children in the Democratic Republic of Congo have been suffering in the midst of violence. Our World Mission group jumped into action and allocated \$1,000 of restricted funds to help. This money will help provide sorely needed food supplies and care for the children in the Ditekemana program, hit hard by the recent unrest.

The second disbursement of \$20,000 of Forward 150 Mission Funds was completed last month. The chosen project is through Opportunity International and serves the Dominican Republic. The funds are used for educational loans so local private schools can expand services to be able to help more children.

Harry Bremer returned safely from his trip to Zambia where he helped Marion Medical Mission install wells for clean drinking water. Keep your ears open for an event related to this trip the beginning of the next year.

We welcome another visiting Mission Co-worker, Rev. Mark Adams, this month. Rev. Adams is speaking at all three Sunday worship services, and offering two separate speaking events where those interested can learn more about his ministry in Mexico. Rev. Adams isn't able to visit us often, so please take this opportunity to get to know him and his ministry if you have a chance.

We have enjoyed help in Missions this semester from Alex Burris, an School of Social Work Intern from the University of Illinois. She has played a role in many projects, including the creation of the stewardship missions video. She has worked hard to put together a social services packet and organized the missions closet near the chapel, volunteered at partner agencies, assisted with preparation for the SAFE House Class, and volunteered with the DREAAM House. What a blessing she has been!

Through recent crises, injustice, unrest, and natural disasters, the PC(USA) and our local church keep seeking to reach out and share Christ's love through missions. What an honor it is to serve in missions with all of you.

Blessings,

Kristi

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