

Mikes' Mission Notes

Greetings in the Name of the Lord!

As some of you may already know, the Mission Specialist position has been cut due to a drop in Unified Mission Giving. So this will be my last "Mikes' Mission Notes". Although I am sad that I did not have more time to build more relationships across the Presbytery, I feel blessed by those of you I have met and have interacted with. It has been a wonderful experience, learning from all of you about such a diverse array of topics and ways to engage in both the local and global community.



As I close out my time in this position, I wanted to take some time to highlight some of the most exciting things I have seen across the great presbytery of ours.

Day Laborers Ministry: a collaboration between many Arlington Churches across denominational lines with Church of the Covenant NCP's representative. The group was able to secure a local mission grant to hire a chaplain who leads worship on Saturdays at a Shirlington Park Pavilion where day laborers regularly gather. There is singing, prayer, fellowship and a meal, while partnering with the Shirlington Employment and Education Center to help the men there gain job training and important resources.

Cooking around the World: Calvary Presbyterian Church expanded their relationship with Mount Eagle Elementary school to include a chef-taught hands-on cooking program. The program teaches the children about food from various cultures as well as what a healthy meal looks like, all while instilling a love for cooking.

Refugee Network: A brand new network has recently formed to help congregations share resources and information around working with Refugees. This was identified as a need following the work of churches like Chevy Chase, Capitol Hill, Bradley Hills and others. For more info contact nancytfox@gmail.com

Puerto Rico Disaster Assistance: This is maybe the most exciting thing I have seen emerge as Mission Specialist. A relationship is being developed with Levittown Presbyterian Church outside of San Juan, a church hit particularly hard by Maria. The presbytery is helping fund a counseling program to help those with post-traumatic stress related to the hurricane. If interested, there are weekly phone calls you can join in on, contact KChamis@thepresbytery.org

Young Adult Volunteer Program: If you are not already aware of this program, take some time to get to know not only amazing young adult volunteers that come through every year, but also the organizations that they work in. It's a great way to see that the next generation of church leaders are already being trained and sent to be servants in this world.

Knox Kids Club Program: I got to visit this program a few weeks ago following up on a grant they received from the Mission Coordination Committee and what a wonderful program of outreach to the local community it is. What I love about this program is that it was created on a dime with passion and a deep need to do the work. Every week the church offers activities, fellowship and a meal for the local youth surrounding their church. This has been an important community building tool not only for the

children in the neighborhood, but also for Knox. It is a perfect example of how when that deep pull on the heart is recognized, a way emerges.

And this does not include all the amazing international work being done, whether the Cuba Network (a true testament to mutual international ministries), or the Kenyan orphan programs in Njoro, Kibwezi, Kisima and Moi's Bridge, or the Peace potato project through Riverside or Fairfax's work in Honduras or Reve Kandale in DR Congo, or the amazing work of Community Coalition for Haiti, initially started in part by Vienna. This list could go on and on and on.

The bottom line is there is amazing examples of mission efforts across our presbytery. We are rich with efforts and passion and commitment. Be bold and explore what other churches are doing, be willing to partner on projects, learn from one another, together we are truly making a difference.

Again, it has been an honor to service such a wonderful and committed group of people across the presbytery and I hope that some of you will take the opportunity to visit congregations and interact with various mission leaders and engage in some of the Mission Networks that will continue to exist. I look forward to what else will emerge, for as is said in Isaiah 43:19: "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" I leave this position knowing that God is working in amazing ways for new things are springing forth across the presbytery, do you not perceive it!

In Christ,

Mike