

PRAYER AND ACTION FOR COLOMBIA

Prayer for Colombia

Today our voices and hands are joined together with yours, God, to work and speak for all those who have no voice in Colombia.

Today we join our voices to pray to you, O God, for the children living the horrors of war, neglect and lack of love.

Today our voices and hands are joined in prayer, O God for women used in the war who are victims of a system that oppresses and takes away their dreams of a better world.



The Rev. Adelaida Jimenez

Today our voices and hands are joined, O God in prayer for the youth of our Colombia, for those who, because of war and lack of opportunities, have lost Hope.

Today our voices and hands are joined in prayer, O God for all the men who suffer the rigors of violence and destruction.

Today our voices and hands are joined in prayer, O God, for all Colombia, for the millions of displaced, for the persecuted, for the exiled, for the disappeared, for the children, the youth, the women, the men, and for all those who make up the armed groups, for your Creation.

Liberate Colombia, O God.
From its mountains and rivers may there flow a song Hope,
From the smiles of your innocent people, may justice shine forth,
As symbols of love, may peace spring from simple and generous hands.
O God, your people in Colombia are waiting for Redemption. Amen

--Adelaida Jimenez, Chicago, January 2008

The Rev. Adelaida Jimenez, her husband, the Rev. Milton Mejia, and their two children fled Colombia in August 2006 after receiving numerous death threats because of their commitment to human rights and justice in that country. They are currently studying at McCormick Seminary in Chicago through the generous gifts of Presbyterians across the United States.

PRESBYTERIAN PEACE FELLOWSHIP ACCOMPANIMENT PROGRAM

Gert Walsh, an Elder from First Presbyterian Church in Sheboygan, served as an accompanier in Barranquilla, Colombia with Elizabeth Jernigan and Susan McNut during the month of February 2007.

Our mission: "See, Be Seen, Share What We Saw"

The month went by very quickly. We three accompaniers (normally it was only two) stayed at the Reformed University Campus, which is also the headquarters for the North Coast Presbytery and the National Office of the Presbyterian Church of Colombia.

The first week was spent in a lot of meetings hosted by various people who tried to orient us to the very complicated military and political situation. We also learned much about the background of the church and education in Barranquilla.

We visited a farm where nine families had been resettled from an Internally Displaced Persons Camp. The church helped them rent the land with the hope that they would be able to buy the land in the future. The first year was pretty bleak. They planted and harvested corn and beans. These were intended for the use of their families with the excess to be sold for income. The harvest barely yielded enough for the families. When we were there they were making charcoal to sell as an alternative. They were hopeful in spite of setbacks. The land they were renting was all hillocks with scrub growth and very dry soil. These farmers were displaced from the very fertile Amazon Basin where farming was a natural--not so here!

I was exposed to the cultural aspect of life more than most accompaniers since ten days of the month were during Carnavale (Mardi Gras). There were parades, music, dancing in the streets, costumes, shows in the parks and schools, much of it 24 hours a day. All celebrations stopped abruptly at 12 midnight on Ash Wednesday.

Thank you to Winnebago Presbytery and others who helped make this trip possible for me.



Read additional accompaniment reports at
<http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/colombia/reports.php>