

On The Wind

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Members of the mission trip delegation to Cuba from PSK are (front row from left) Mary Buchele (Garden City), Cinda Weisgerber (Covenant), in yellow - Jennifer Barten (Pratt) and in the center, directly under the cross, Nita Whitman (El Dorado).

What a joy it was for four women from the Presbytery of Southern Kansas to join with nine people from the Presbytery of St. Augustine, Florida to visit El Centro Presbytery of Cuba! We flew from Ft. Lauderdale to Santa Clara, Cuba and were hosted by the Presbyterian Church at Caibarién (say “kay-ba-ry-en”), February 16-23, 2018.

A welcome party Friday night in the church included a musical trio with percussion, guitar and bass, and dancing. We visited three churches on Saturday, meeting with elders, deacons, and pastors to learn about their activities and social programs. Sunday School began with everyone dancing and singing in the sanctuary pews and the school offering was collected in a frisbee, before splitting into classes. Worship was energetic and Spirit-filled, and included communion led by three pastors, Edelberto Valdez, (our host pastor and guide/translator for the week), Wain Wesberry, and Nigel Pusey, pastors from Fernandina Beach, Florida and Kingston, Jamaica, respectively. After lunch the FL group left as they moved on to visit the Presbyteries of Matanzas and Havana. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the remaining PSK travelers visited three churches each day, with the goal of learning about all 13 churches in El Centro. We finished the week with another party at the Caibarién church, this time to say good-bye to us. More great music and dancing with a quintet that played together for the first time – guitar, percussion, bass, flute, and a singer.

We found our brothers and sisters in Cuba truly living out the Gospel, sharing with their community, not just their congregations. They have hardships in many ways, but their joy in Christ and in their fellowship was contagious.

(Thanks to Mary Buchele)



Rebecca Coryell ~ Dominican Republic ~ 3/2018

In March 2018, Rebecca Coryell (granddaughter of Ken & Nora Coryell, FPC Derby) made her 6th trip to the Dominican Republic with Medical Ministry International (MMI). She spent the week traveling to villages and helping run a medical clinic for those with minimal access to healthcare. The team uses the cloth bags made by church members back home to give patients medications, toothbrushes, and integrated health supplies. This specific MMI team travels to Las Matas de Farfan every March and always appreciates the prayers and support of our church families back home. Additionally, in the mission group, was Rev. James Ayers and wife Michaela Ayers and members of Westwood Presbyterian Church, Wichita.

(Thank you Ken & Nora)

Isaiah 58:5-9 Reflections by Pastor Amy Baumgartner

We are well into Lent as this month's newsletter goes to press. Lent is a necessary time of preparation, but it can be a difficult time. Too often I feel guilt that I am not taking it more seriously than I ought. Perhaps like me you go into Lent thinking, "this year will be different. I'm really going to try hard to *(fill in the blank—from reading the Bible every day to being a better person)*." And yet, somehow by now, we already feel like we have failed because we haven't quite followed through with our expected plans for Lent.

Growing up, my best friend was Catholic and "gave up" candy for Lent. I distinctly remember her counting the days until Resurrection Sunday when she could enjoy sweets again. In my family, Lent was treated just as any other ordinary time. When I reached my twenties, I desired for Lent to mean something, so I also tried "giving something up" from chocolate to caffeine to even sleep one year! While the exercise had some value, I wonder about my motivation and God's perspective on the situation. God continually stresses the importance of true worship, not just going through the motions. Rituals can become very dead, very quickly if our heart is not behind them.

So, in pondering Lent 2018, I have two thoughts for you to consider. Even though we are a third of the way through Lent, consider how you can make a heart-conscious effort to prepare yourself for Resurrection Sunday. Is there something that is distracting you that you might do away with for a few weeks? When I was in seminary, a professor strongly encouraged us to take a media fast for a month—no TV, no newspapers, no social media. (I wish he had included no emails, but they were ironically a requirement for the class.) After completing a few media fasts since then, I am amazed that my attitude seems to perk up a bit when I'm not weighed down with the cares of the world. Let's be honest, most of the news we encounter is less than uplifting. And you have probably read or heard the statistics that many people feel worse after spending time on platforms like Facebook because you start to question your own life and worth. So, give yourself a break from it all and see if you can hear the voice of God a little bit better. 

I'll be upfront as I present consideration number two; it is somewhat in the opposite vein of consideration one. In Isaiah, God presents His desire for a true fast—instead of giving something up, it is taking on something: injustice. We live in a scary world. Instead of only fire drills, our young children now have to practice "active shooter" drills in school. Yet God is very concerned with justice and treating people with honor and respect. So, perhaps this Lent, you can spend some time and energy seeking out ways to "do something" to make life for those less fortunate better. Volunteer, speak up for those who are unable, lend a helping hand, be the face of Jesus to those who need it.

The beauty of Lent is that it is a six-week short time frame. But who knows what can happen. Perhaps by incorporating a media fast or taking on injustice, we may experience our light breaking forth like the dawn and experience real healing. Wouldn't that be a Lent to remember? For God's glory, may it be so!

(Thank you Pastor Amy Baumgartner and Melodie Parman, FPC Arkansas City, *The Window* (newsletter))

Women's Retreat Westminster Woods Camp

April 27th and 28th 2018

Rev. Amy Baumgartner - Retreat Speaker

Katherine Holmgren - Worship Leader

Visit www.westminsterwoodscamp.com

**Presbytery of Southern Kansas
Meets on Tuesday, May 8th
Grace Presbyterian Church, Wichita**

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