

Growing in Christ

Our Presbyterian Hispanic Ministry



July 2014

Keeping in Touch

Current news from

Sanford-Area Presbyterian Hispanic Ministry (SAPHM)

What's new with the Hispanic Ministry?

➤ A new name and two new grants! ◀

Misión Presbiteriana de Sanford (Sanford Presbyterian Mission) has been named one of the PC(USA)'s *1001 New Worshiping Communities*, with a grant that will help us continue Rev. Miguel Aragón's leadership for the rest of this year. In addition, we received a Health Insurance Grant, which came just at the right time (see next article)! Your ongoing support is still vital.

Mission Highlights

Summer Vacation?

Summer often means time at the beach or in the mountains, but Rev. Aragón's time off this summer has been spent moving, taking exams, and "relaxing" in the hospital!



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Mission Highlights (continued)

A foot injury while coaching soccer turned into a limb-threatening infection for Pastor Miguel in mid-June. Complicated by chest pains, he spent about a week "vacationing" at Central Carolina Hospital while friends near and far prayed for his recovery. The infection finally responded to high-powered antibiotics, and Miguel did not lose a toe as his doctor had feared. The antibiotics did cause complications with his kidneys, which led to dangerously high potassium levels and inflammation over the next few weeks.

Three hospitalizations in about four weeks are no cause for celebration. But Pastor Miguel's experience this summer has given him and his family so many reminders of God's power and grace that his teenage daughter called it the best month of her life!

First, they were encouraged by the number of people who kept praying for him, and by God's healing power. Their faith was strengthened as they faced anxious times.

Second, Rev. Aragón's ministry was affirmed as he received many calls from former members while he was sick. You may be aware that the number of participants in our Hispanic Ministry continues to be small. What you may not know is that Pastor Miguel puts in many hours shepherding individuals and families who begin to

respond to the good news of Jesus Christ – and then move away from Sanford as they find better jobs.

But while he was sick he received call after call from about thirty former members, most of whom are now involved in a church where they live. "God is working!" Rev. Aragón says. Our local group remains small, but our Hispanic Ministry is changing people's lives and building the Church of Jesus Christ.

Finally, Pastor Miguel and his family have been reminded of their family of faith during these challenging weeks. During his first hospital stay, one of the hospital staff asked him why he was so "famous." She had never seen so many non-Latinos visit a Latino patient! "You are my family," Miguel reminded Steering Committee members recently. "My extended family is far away, in California and Mexico. But my Christian family is right here, all of you."

- ♦ Keep praying for Pastor Miguel's health.
- ♦ Pray for him as he completes the last written exam required for his transfer into the Presbyterian Church (USA).

♦ Send cards to him at their new home:
314 Rhynewood Drive, Sanford, NC 27330.

And give thanks to God for **God is good!**

MINISTRY CALENDAR

(Misión Presbiteriana de Sanford's activities will gradually resume as Rev. Aragón recuperates.)

Join us for

➤ **Tutoring on Tuesdays**

beginning again in September

➤ **Steering Committee**

September 16, 7 p.m. at Euphronia PC

Conversations

with Pastor Miguel

What ELSE is happening in your family?

Our daughter, Jocabed, who will turn eighteen this month, graduated with a dual degree in May from Lee Early College.

That means she has a high school diploma as well as an associates degree from



CCCC. In August

she will leave for UNC-W where she plans to double-major in Communications and Film.

My relatives do not understand why we are letting her leave home. It is uncommon to encourage this kind of independence in Latino culture, but I know that she will benefit from the university experience.

Our recent move to a smaller house recognizes the fact that we are becoming a smaller family as Jocabed leaves home. Please pray for us all as we adjust to this important step.

Why are you taking exams when you're not even in school?

From the beginning of my ministry in Sanford, I have wanted to become a member of this Presbytery. In the past, there was no clear process, but now I am almost to my goal. And that means exams!

Email suggestions or feedback to newsletter editor Kathryn Dudley at pastorkdudley@windstream.net.