



MISSION CONNECTIONS

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Partnership in the Gospel

Cathy Chang and Juan Lopez

Mission co-workers serving in the Philippines

I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God's grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ~ Philippians 1:3-7, NRSVUE

Dear Friends and Family,

Like the apostle Paul speaking of the believers in Philippi, we are also grateful to carry you in our hearts, for the sake of the gospel (1:7). True we were never imprisoned like him – but we attest to your partnership in the gospel. This gospel is preached and proclaimed through the prophetic ministry and pastoral accompaniment of children and their families, impacted directly by drug-related killings, to the ongoing campaign for clemency of Mary Jane Veloso, and support for her family. Through their assertions for justice, peace, human rights, and human dignity, you also join them with your prayers and action. The latest news stories of former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's arrest and detention at the International Criminal Court, and late last year with Mary Jane Veloso's homecoming, and the campaign for clemency, are more than headlines – they also mark our shared ministry.

This newsletter is the last one that you will read from us as mission co-workers. This March marks our 9th anniversary of moving to the Philippines. Later this year in October, would have marked our 10th anniversary of commissioning as mission co-

workers. Our daughter Aurelie has spent her childhood in the Philippines – this May, she will become a teenager! Some of you we've known before our family's call to mission service. Over these years, you've affirmed and sustained this calling with your prayers and financial support. Together we have witnessed the triumphs and trials of individuals, and communities around Asia and the Pacific. When we visited the U.S., or made virtual visits during the pandemic, we shared stories about mission partnership through sermons, children's Sunday school, fellowship lunches and dinners with presentations, online worship services, and presbytery meetings. Some of you even traveled to the Philippines and Hong Kong, through a Peacemaking Travel Study Seminar about the root causes and responses to forced migration. Your prayers and financial gifts also supported specific projects and activities related to migration and anti-human trafficking, as well as Cathy's doctoral studies.

Maybe you are aware of the changes happening in Presbyterian World Mission – but others are just learning these updates through this newsletter. The Interim Unified Agency (IUA) is embracing a new and evolving approach to PC(USA)'s global ministry. This transition moves from a model centered on "mission co-workers" to a structure where "global ecumenical liaisons" will facilitate relationships between our global partners and the congregations, networks, and mid councils of the PC(USA). This shift is part of an intentional effort to create a sustainable model for global ministry



Juan enjoys a fun-filled Christmas party with colleagues from Children's Rehabilitation Center.



Cathy joins supporters of Mary Jane Veloso, during her homecoming at the Manila airport.

that prioritizes global partner leadership. These changes impact 79 staff members, including all mission co-workers and the World Mission staff who have faithfully supported them. All current World Mission staff have been informed that their service in its current form will end in March.

Mixed emotions from grieving to gratitude and everything in between, accompany these changes for our World Mission colleagues, and our family. Maybe you're also experiencing those emotions. In late March, Juan will conclude his mission service. Interim Unified Agency leadership have invited me

(Cathy) to a new position. After prayerful discernment, I have decided to accept this new position of International Ecumenical Liaison. Details of this new position are evolving. This mixture of emotions includes how honored and excited I am to serve in this new capacity. One major transition is that our family will prepare to relocate to the United States, after Aurelie finishes this school year. Michigan and California are two possibilities right now, but this is still the beginning of this next chapter of life and ministry. We appreciate your prayers for our family during these changes.

As you can imagine, this season is overwhelming in anticipation, curiosity, wonder, and uncertainty. Join us in giving thanks to God who began a good work in the Philippi church -- centuries later, more and more good works followed through the faithful service of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission co-workers and varied expressions of mutual ministry. Together these mission co-workers served alongside global partners, with support from mission networks that included but not limited to, individuals, local churches, mid-councils, and worshipping communities. Looking towards the future, I invite us to pray for the Interim Unified Agency leadership and on-going organizational restructuring. May the new structure enhance and sustain partnership in the gospel.

Your friends in Christ,

Juan, Cathy and Aurelie

Thank you for reading this letter and for your faithful support!

A new model of PC(USA) global ministry is emerging at the end of March 2025, even as the World Mission ministry area concludes in its current form. To learn more about this transition, please visit pcusa.org/wm-transition. Your prayers of support and financial gifts to E132192 for global ministry are needed more than ever as we partner with you, other supporters and global partners to build upon the good work laid by all our mission co-workers in partnership with global partners.

*Gifts may be given online at pcusa.org/donate/e132192 or sent to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
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Questions? Write to feedback@pcusa.org.