

Newsletter

November 2013

Dear Brothers, Sisters, Partners
and Friends:

Greetings to all from the City of Syracuse, New York, where I serve as a Global Ministries appointed Missionary/Church and Community Worker to the *Syracuse Westside Urban Mission* located at Brown Memorial United Methodist Church. I am thankful for your support which allows my mission service to continue.

This is my last newsletter of 2013. I've been in this mission for a year and four months, learning, listening, building relationships, working in different areas and today I can say I am grateful to our Lord and God who is good, merciful and faithful. We still need to do more and more, but this time even though it has been a time of hard work and challenges, God is at work here in the Westside of Syracuse.

For me as Church and Community Worker it has been a time of challenges. I came from Puerto Rico on June 2012 and with God's and people support I'm still learning English, learning more about the UMC, learning about different cultures in our community, visiting churches to tell the story, and dealing with a lot of details in our work. I want to

share this Scripture with you that express my feelings about this time here in SWUM. Remember, it is God's mission, for His glory and His purpose.

Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV) 20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

For those who don't know too much about our mission, the Syracuse Westside Urban Mission is located in one of the 7th poorest zip codes of the Nation. Syracuse is a lively city. It is almost 4 hours driving distance from New York City and it is located in Central New York, near to Rochester and Buffalo. We have a lot of opportunities for education: Syracuse University, Onondaga Community College, Lemoyne College, etc. Health insurance is available for most of the population. Unemployment is a big challenge in our community. We serve people from different cultures: Caucasian, African American, Hispanic/Latino and others. The Syracuse Westside Urban Mission has programs like Adults Life Skills Class, Youth Life Skills Class, Tutoring Program, Free Legal Clinic, Food

Pantry, Clothing Closet, Bilingual Bible Study, English Bible Study, summer program and soon we will start a Young Parents Conversation Group. Our mission statement is: **“To develop a community of persons who, through partnerships based on faith, take responsibility for the neighborhood, leading to positive and sustainable change.”** As a Church and Community Worker we work to bring the community to the church and the church to the community. We offer our participants a safe space where they can come and see the grace and love of God. Our program is growing. We have new participants in the Tutoring program and new tutors, but we still need more tutors. We have new participants in the Adults and Youth Life Skills class. With the support of volunteers from different UM Churches and people from the community, this year we served 52 kids in our summer program and we sent 30 kids to camp.



Snacks Station
Summer Program 2013

As part of our work and continuing education we visited churches like Penn Yan UMC, Christ UMC at Sherrill, NY. We participated of the Mission "U" at Cazenovia, NY, Upper New York Annual Conference, Mental Health First Aid workshop, New England School of Congregational Development, Path 1 at Pennsylvania. As you can see, we need your prayers and support to do this work. Without you we cannot do it.

We have different ways that you can do God's mission with us. You can pray, you can give your time and gifts as a volunteer, you can donate money to SWUM or you can donate your money to our Advance Special fund. I invite you to prayerfully consider supporting my Global Ministries CCW salary. To give your time, you can email: swumccw@gmail.com or call 315-475-8996. If you want to donate to SWUM please send your check by mail to: Syracuse Westside Urban Mission, 226 Davis Street, Syracuse, New York 13204 and write in the memo part SWUM Advance #3110. I invite you to partner with me by supporting me with prayers and gifts. Pray that I will remain healthy and faithful to do the work that the Lord has placed on my heart. To support my CCW Salary through the Advance Special, you may use:

1. Global Ministries' website: www.umcmmission.org. At the bottom of the page, click on "Missionaries". Scroll

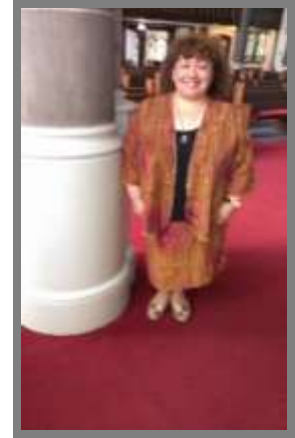
2. to my name on the missionaries' page and my profile will appear. At the bottom of my profile is a link to make an online donation.
3. Through mailing a check. Make your check payable to ADVANCE GCFA. Write "For Olga Gonzalez, #3021524" on the memo line of the check. Send your check through your local church or to:

Upper New York United Methodist Church Conference
324 University Ave., 3rd Floor
Syracuse, NY 13210

4. You can also invite us to your church to share more information about SWUM work. To coordinate a visit: email: swumccw@gmail.com or call Olga E. Gonzalez at 315-475-8996 for more information.
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In Christ love,

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**Remember it is Jesus
Birthday...**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
BLESSED AND HAPPY
NEW YEAR 2014!!**