



Presbytery of Southern New England – PC(USA) - VISIT OUR BLOG: www.presbim.com

NEWSLETTER

August/September, 2015



Get on the Boat – In September I attended a Presbytery meeting. The worship was very inspirational. Its theme, “Get on the Boat”, invited us to get together on the journey to search for a renewing time for our congregations. The picture above

shows the altar decorated with a boat symbolizing the journey we were asked to join. I was really moved by that worship. But besides the invitation to that journey, the boat made me remember the small and fragile boats that thousands of people are embarking in, looking for a better life away from conflict zones, away from poverty, away from violence. This is not only about what is happening in Europe. It’s about what is happening right here in the USA. I have heard many stories of people who entered in the USA, crossing the Rio Grande in inflatable boats. They preferred to risk their lives in this journey rather than continue to face the struggles to survive in their own countries. But those who made it are fortunate compared with those whose bodies are someplace out there in the desert. From 1994 to 2004 almost 2,000 were reported dead, plus an unknown number whose bodies were never found. By boat, by foot, or another way, they are embarking on a journey looking for a better life. When I think about them I understand that we, as Christians, have been challenged to get aboard with them, to help them pursue the happiness that by natural

Missionaries:

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Steering Committee: Rev. John Webster, Elder Penny Webster, Rev. Jeffrey Wood, Rev. Jovelino Ramos, Ms. Joan Ramos, Ms. Kátia Cunha, Rev. Paulo de Tarso Ribeiro, Rev. Donald Parker, Elder Pat Wales, Mr. Roland Chase, Mrs. Ruth Ann Chase.

Advisory Committee: Rev. Dana Lindsley, Rev. Dr. José Pezini, Rev. Wayne Parish, Rev. Dr. Mário Silva, Rev. Jefferson Ritchie, Rev. David Watermulder, Rev. Cláudio Carvalhaes.

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right belongs to everybody. Let’s get on the boat with them through our prayers, asking God to protect them on their journey; let’s pray to God to provide open hearts among the people of the countries where they are going; let’s pray to God for peace around the world, to allow people to stay safe and to pursue happiness in their own countries, with no need to jeopardize their lives in an uncertain journey. Also, I ask you to get on the boat with me on the journey to assist those whose travels ended in detention centers. I need your prayers! I need your support!

Read the following article about this issue:

<http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2015/10/05/445985671/never-leave-your-house-survival-strategies-for-el-salvador-s-15girls>

Donations received:

- Bethel Presbyterian Church, Marlboro, MA
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August/September Attendance

Day	Prison (all units)	Attendance
08/05	Boston	17
08/06	Plymouth	30
08/07	Bristol	15
08/12	Boston	19
08/13	Plymouth	31
08/14	Bristol	16
08/19	Boston	26
08/20	Plymouth	32
08/21	Bristol	14
08/26	Boston	25
08/27	Plymouth	29
08/28	Bristol	13
09/02	Boston	27
09/03	Plymouth	31
09/04	Bristol	14
09/09	Boston	24
09/10	Plymouth	28
09/11	Bristol	12
09/16	Boston	33
09/17	Plymouth	27
09/18	Bristol	20
09/23	Boston	30
09/24	Plymouth	Lock down
09/25	Bristol	16
09/30	Boston	31

Anderson was released – Anderson is a young Brazilian man who came to the USA when he was 19 years old. Trying to get away from problems related to his parents' divorce in Brazil, he faced many struggles here as well. He got married and divorced, and was in a turbulent relationship. From his marriage a child was born. This 5-year-old boy was the reason Anderson fought for more than one year to stay here in the USA. His son has many health problems because of a cerebral malfunction. During the time Anderson spent in prison he became a Christian. He always attended the Bible studies, except for three weeks when he was very depressed. I missed him at that time. So when I was leaving the unit where he was, as I was passing close to his bed I decided to

give him some words of encouragement. But only four words came out of my mouth that day: "Do not give up." The next week he was there again with his Bible to attend the study. He told me then: "I was so depressed, and the night before that morning when you came to my bed, I was praying to God to give me a signal that I should continue to fight my case. I had been pressured to sign my deportation. I was feeling so fragile, powerless to continue fighting. Then you came and spoke those simple words to me, and I immediately understood that those words were the signal I was waiting for."

Anderson continued in prison for 5 months more. He was transferred to another prison where I also do the Bible studies. There he became a tool in God's hands to bring others to the Bible studies. I remember one Thursday morning while I was doing the studies in a certain unit, I was asked by Jose, a young man from Honduras, "What can I do to become a Christian?" When I asked him the reason he wanted to become a Christian, he told me that he had met Anderson on his way back to the prison from the Court House. Both were frustrated because the judge's decisions were not what they wanted, but even so, Anderson was at peace. Jose asked Anderson how he could be at peace. Anderson told him that the reason for his peace was Jesus. And as Anderson continued testifying about his faith, Jose was compelled to confess Jesus as his Savior and Lord.

Anderson was released at the end of August, and I have talked with him by phone. He is attending a church. I had not heard from Jose because he was transferred to another facility to serve time for errors he committed. But a few weeks ago he returned to an ICE detention center where I met him again. He continues growing in faith, and now he is one of those who invite the inmates to the Bible studies, giving his testimony about how Jesus changed his life.

Visit our website. You can read our newsletters, watch videos and learn more about our ministry. Help us to share our website: www.presbim.com

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