

ON Broadway

Ann Arbor Christian Reformed Church Newsletter

May 2017

Parish Nurse News

Barb Okonkwo RN, FCN



It has been my privilege to serve as parish nurse for our community of faith for the past almost three years. It has been a journey of learning, listening, of receiving and giving grace. I am very grateful for this opportunity to minister to some of your health care needs—physical, emotional, and spiritual.

With the guidance and support of the Health Ministry committee we have hosted or presented several seminars and adult education sessions on various topics related to health, aging, walking with one another through acute health crises or chronicity. I have had the opportunity to visit several of you in your home or in the hospital or in a rehab facility. I've enjoyed advocating for some when deliberating health care decisions.

As of June first, Godwin and I will be on our way to Savannah, Georgia to begin a 6-7 month grandparent "sabbatical." Our daughter and son-in-law are expecting twins, and we will have the joy of helping to care for these babies. We will really miss our community here but look forward to what God has for us in this new adventure.

I will continue to be available to you all by phone (734-476-4440) or by email (bjokonkwo69@gmail.com) so please don't hesitate to contact me.

Amazing Love

Mark your calendars for this year's Adult Choir finale on Sunday, May 21 at 6:00 pm. We will sing familiar hymns and hear background information about some of them. The choir will share anthems in which those hymn texts have been set to new music by composers such as Dan Forrest, Elaine Hagenberg, and David Rasbach. Please join us, won't you?!



Pain and Hope, at Casa Adobe and Beyond

Jim & Ruth Padilla DeBorst

Invitations to speak and teach in different places grant us the opportunity to get a broader picture of the world than if we remained solely in Costa Rica. Friendships in INFEMIT and MicahGlobal also bring global realities very close to home. The scene we encounter is bleak, and young people and children are the most vulnerable. Extra-judicial killings of young people in the slums of Manila; summary executions of young men and women in the streets of San Salvador; children packed behind fruit and sent across borders to uncertain futures; young women sold by desperate family members. Pain. Too much pain.

The pain around us, the horror of a world in rebellion against its Creator, is so horrendous, so bottomless, so dark, that the more we see, the more tempted we are. Tempted to give up hope. Tempted to lose faith and close our doors. Tempted to deafen our ears to the cry of men, women and children whose voices are imperceptible over the din of our crowded cities and our rush to consume. Tempted to blind our eyes to signs of oppression and injustice underneath the slick varnish of progress and technology. Tempted to just see only numbers, victims, “the poor.” Tempted to remain distant and self-righteous donors. Tempted to see only statistics and projects, and miss recognizing Jesus’ face in the children, women and men whose humanity and dignity are being robbed from them daily. Tempted to build higher walls and deeper trenches. Tempted to protect ourselves from the risk of inquiring further, getting more personally involved, and opening our homes, our churches, our borders to those our world considers disposable.

If those are not appropriate responses, which are? What does planting hope look like in the midst of this reality? For the Casa Adobe community, it looks like this:

- Accompanying a few refugee families from El Salvador as they overcome the traumas they’ve undergone and attempt to settle in Costa Rica.
- Gathering the neighborhood associations so they work together and begin community gardens.
- Inspiring people through concerts and music nights.
- Praying for friends and communities in tough places like those mentioned above.
- Welcoming young people seeking home and vocation into our community.
- Listening and learning to live as a community.

Thanks for your prayers for all who compose our community, for your encouragement and visits. They help us plant hope at Casa Adobe and beyond!



Members of Casa Adobe with neighbors, celebrating the launching of “Urbanica,” the urban gardening project in Santa Rosa de Santo Domingo de Heredia.