

First Baptist Church of Central Square

January 2020

701 North Main Street
P.O. Box 476
Central Square, NY 13036

www.fbc-cs.com
315-668-2138
fbccsny@gmail.com

Birthdays:

Karl Backman 1
Emily Schaefer 6
Lynn Cuny 9
Pat Harrington 20
Mark Heitmann 22
Kay Springer 25
Jeffery Desrosiers 25

Anniversaries:

Maggie & Scott Heitmann 30

Please submit witness articles and prayer requests to
fbccsny@gmail.com

2020 Missions

In an effort to target our mission works, we will now have monthly specific offerings. In January, we will be collecting boxes of cereal. Please bring them with you to church on Sunday. Also we will be collecting an offering during the weeks in January for the Retired Ministers and Missionaries.

Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting will be January 19th, 2019 after church. We will have a special meeting to vote in Lillian Cabral as our new pastor before the meeting. This meeting will be different than years past. We will have a regular church service, then stay in the sanctuary and have a special interest meeting, then STAY IN THE SANCTUARY AND HAVE OUR ANNUAL MEETING. The Council has decided that this would help us ensure all people have equal access to hear. We also hope this helps us stay on track and have a quicker meeting than years past. We will eat after, promise. We will encourage all boards and committees to give 3 minute updates from the year so please be prepared to share only the highlights. Please bring a dish to pass this day! It is essential that we have as many people as possible at this meeting.

Pastoral Search Committee

The Pastoral Search Committee is pleased to announce that we have asked Lillian Cabral to fill the position of part-time pastor. We will have a congregational vote on her on January 19th.

Trustee Updates

No Updates.

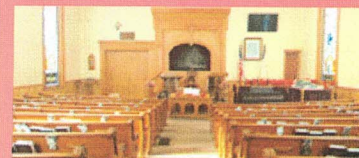


Upcoming Events

January 19
Annual Meeting (11am)

God will always be
here for us when
nobody else will be.

David didn't
need to
know
Goliath's
strength
because he
already
knew God's.



Diaconate Updates

No Updates.

Christmas Tree

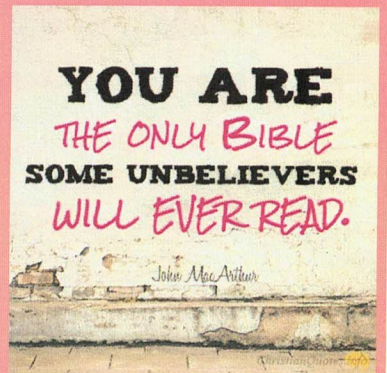
As beautiful as our tree is, we cannot keep it up year round. Please look for email updates to see when we will take it down.

Adopt a Missionary

After thoughtful praying, researching, and discussing, we have decided to adopt a missionary. Her name is Mercy Gonzalez-Barnes. She is a missionary on Latin America. Included in the witness is more information about her and from her. Praise God for the opportunity to do more missions outside of our own community.

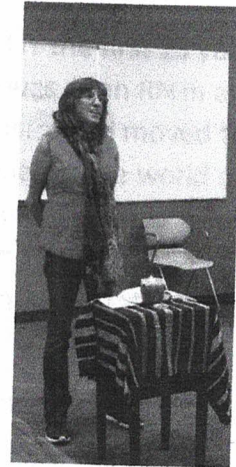
Christian Education Updates

No Updates.



Dear Lillian and all

Happy Advent! Advent is a time when God surprises us with unexpected good news. Just recently I was about to begin preaching at a Haitian congregation. I sat down on the pew and heard the praise group singing. I tried to concentrate on my sermon but was surprised by the Spirit of God touching my heart. God's voice was so clear, and God told me, "*Mercy, you have to be open to my vision for you, your vision is too small*". I cried as I realized that the sermon that I was going to preach was primarily for me.



God wants to do amazing things if we just make space and listen for that vision. I want to share that vision with you, and I would love for you to listen with an open heart to this invitation to dream. God has given me a real longing and passion for the Church and for preparing our leaders. I would love to have some time to share this passion with you and see how we can partner together to make this happen.

During the past three years I have had the opportunity to hear the stories of leaders from Mexico, Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic and the United States. These leaders are students in the online master's in theological studies program (MTS). They are all responding to unique situations in their countries and are being used by God in times of unrest and uncertainty. They are using their talents and gifts to transform their communities and train other leaders. ***One thing they all share is the desire to learn, to grow and to be used by God.***

Countries in Latin America are living through times of political unrest, increase in crime and political instability. Within this context of uncertainty, our leaders are rising up and being used by God to minister with the least of these. They are creating leadership training programs with indigenous groups. They are providing support with women that are victims of domestic abuse. They are providing shelter and food to immigrants that are waiting at the Mexican border for their appointments. And they are providing education to those that hunger for knowledge. ***God is doing great things through the Church.***

I have been working alongside my colleagues at IM with these new and innovative partnerships and am truly amazed at what God is doing. I believe that God is using me and this ministry to bless others and to be part of the greater vision that God has for the people in Latin America and the Caribbean. I am also looking for others that feel called to this life changing ministry.

I would like to give you a call in the next few days to see if you would be interested in setting up a meeting. I would love to share more of my story, hear more of yours, and invite you to partner with me in this ministry. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Together in the journey,

Mercy

Biography of Mercy

I've been an American Baptist all of my life. I was raised in Brooklyn, NY the first 15 years of my life and then we moved to Puerto Rico until I was 25. My first career was as an RN in an Intensive Care unit. In 1985 I responded to God's call to train for ministry and moved to Kansas City, KS from Puerto Rico to study at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. The world opened up to me and I spent a year in El Salvador as a volunteer missionary. I met my husband Rick at seminary, and we served in Iowa and Massachusetts before responding to God's call to International Missions. My husband Rick was a Senior Pastor and I worked on staff with the ABC of Connecticut doing Ethnic Ministries and New Church Planting.

In 1999 we responded to God's call to serve and spent a year in Costa Rica where Rick learned Spanish and I worked with the Convencion Bautista de Costa Rica writing Church School Curriculum with a team of exceptional writers. In 2001 we came to the border area between Mexico and California to work in the area of Theological Education and New Church planting with the Convencion Bautista Dios con Nosotros in Baja, Mexico. I loved teaching our students, watching them grow in their journey and growing alongside them. We also mentored students and I worked with our female students.

In 2011, my husband left International Ministries to begin work as a Chaplain. He is currently working as a chaplain in a detention center located in Calexico, CA which is right on the border with Mexicali. We have discovered that God places us in ministries that really use our talents. The call to serve is never boring. I continued to teach at the Seminary and in 2013 I was invited to become a regional global servant serving in the area of theological education in Latin America. This new ministry has been exciting and stretching me in many ways. I have been in Cuba, Brazil, Bolivia, Mexico and the Dominican Republic. I also work with Hispanic leaders in the United States, so it is truly "Missions TO, FROM and WITHIN".

One of the doors that has opened for unique and innovative mission is a partnership between Eastern University, International Ministries and Home Mission Society providing an Online master's in theological studies, completely in Spanish and using Latino theologians to leaders in Latin America. This has been a lot of work but I can witness like in the story of Esther, this has been a program "For such a time as this". The graduates of our program are ministering to the least of these, with immigrants on the border, with victims of domestic abuse, training leaders in indigenous settings and so forth. Our graduates have responded to Natural disasters in their countries such as earthquakes in Mexico and during the recent election chaos in Bolivia.

A new door which is opening at the present time is that I am working with my colleague Tim Long to do a series of retreats for pastoral teams in the Dominican Republic. Leaders all over Latin America are searching for spiritual refreshment, guidance and renewal for the new thing that God is calling them to do. We are flying out in February for this training session and the pastoral teams will be diverse as they represent the Dominican population and the Haitian population.

Biography of Mercy

Each time I travel to a new country I am amazed at how God is working. Be it Cuba, Brazil or the DR, the churches are full and vibrant. They have ministries that deal with clean water, health, the elderly, children and those on the fringes. It does not seem to matter that they have few financial resources, they are faithful, and God blesses their work. They minister to my life in so many ways.

I understand that you are searching for a ministry to support. I know that all my colleagues do wonderful work. I just ask that you pray and ask for guidance as to who to support. I would truly appreciate your partnership in ministry and mission. I ask that you continue to pray for our three adult children, Aida, age 29, who is married to Isaac and lives in Charlottesville, VA. Richie, age 27, who is currently living in Ushio, Japan teaching English and Josh, age 20, who is studying at Bard College in NY State.

Together in the Journey,

Mercy