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PCUSA MISSION WORKER ASSISTS WITH PERU EARTHQUAKE RELIEF Jacob Goad helps open food kitchens for rural communities

Even though his first full-time assignment as a PCUSA mission worker started just eight months ago, 24-year-old Jacob Goad has already been airlifted into an earthquake zone in Peru, slept amid the crumbling ruins of a city nearly shaken off the map, and helped to launch two feeding programs for hungry quake survivors. He is working with ecumenical partners in response to the deadly quake that struck off the Peruvian coast Aug. 15.

The earthquake was Peru's worst in 37 years, killing at least 540 people, injuring some 1,500 and leaving an estimated 176,000 people homeless. Power supplies, telecommunications and road links were severely disrupted.

Jacob is based in Lima, which was largely spared by the temblor. Plans are in place to team with Joining Hands, a ministry of the Presbyterian Hunger Program, to provide blankets to hundreds of earthquake survivors in the hard-hit city of Chincha.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is working in cooperation with partners in the area and fellow members of Geneva-based Action by Churches Together (ACT) Emergency Alliance. Susan Ryan, PDA's coordinator, reported: "Our partners are providing soup kitchens. They've carved out certain underserved areas and are feeding people there."

There's been \$50,000 in rapid response money sent to initiate initial work in Peru from ACT."

Read more at <http://www.pcusa.org/pnews/2007/07528.htm> and Jacob's letters linked to his "Mission Connections" Web page at <http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/profiles/goadj.htm>. Read about the PDA response at <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/response/latinamerica/peru-index.htm>

"EXCITING TIMES IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)"

Bulletin inserts and two short videos are coming to every church

Every PCUSA congregation will be able to participate in Mission Challenge '07, the largest itineration of mission personnel in recent memory. Mission workers will be visiting hundreds of congregations in October, but even those congregations not playing host to a mission worker can be involved in Mission Challenge '07.

During the first week of October, a package will arrive in every PCUSA church with bulletin inserts equal to the church's average Sunday attendance. The inserts include a call to action, inviting all Presbyterians to participate in mission by praying faithfully and giving generously. There will also be a DVD containing two short, compelling videos that bring to life a sample of the work of PCUSA mission workers around the world.

Another October mission event, World Mission '07: A Celebration of Grace, is set for Louisville Oct. 2 to 6. Registration for that event recently closed with more than 600.

One missionary couple wrote about Mission Challenge '07:

This new emphasis on mission is exciting because it involves the whole church. It is exciting because it lifts up the worldwide mission of the Presbyterian Church, a mission that has been continuing for 173 years! It is exciting because every church and every Presbyterian can participate. How? By choosing to support a Presbyterian mission co-worker. By increasing their church's support to world mission. By upholding Presbyterian missionaries around the world in their daily prayers. By relating personally to a missionary through regular correspondence. By becoming aware of the interconnectedness of our world and the fact that every one of us can make a difference. Yes, these are exciting times in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).—Carol Chou Adams and Daniel J. Adams, South Korea

For more about Mission Challenge, visit <http://www.pcusa.org/missionchallenge07/>

Read the Adamses' full letter at http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/adamsd/adamsd_0708.htm

EBOLA OUTBREAK IN CONGO

Mission worker requests prayer

Larry Sthreshley, a PCUSA health consultant who works with SANRU, a rural health agency in the Democratic Republic of Congo, e-mailed colleagues Friday, Sept. 14, about efforts to contain the Ebola epidemic. Larry writes:

Ebola cases and deaths come in waves. We have been through two waves and it looks like the third has just started. My colleague Bill Clemmer is traveling with a team from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for two days to assess the situation. He just sent me a text message saying that there are a lot more deaths than expected at Luebo since his visit there last week.

There are 12 dead at the state hospital, 18 at the Presbyterian hospital and many more at ground zero, 15 Kilometers north of Luebo. I also received a call from Bulape where they now have three confirmed cases. CDC has asked SANRU to set up a base of operation for them at Luebo and work with them to do surveillance and community education to help contain the epidemic. Until the team returns tomorrow night, I will not know exactly what it will all entail.

As you can imagine there is a great deal of anxiety at our mission hospitals. They are calling my staff every day asking what we can do for them. We have arranged for Mission Aviation Fellowship to have a plane available seven days a week for us and we will probably be flying into the area two or three times a week for the next month bringing materials and shuttling the CDC team around. Please continue to pray for the Congo.

FROM A WATER TANK HOME TO A BLOCK HOUSE OF HIS OWN Community organization in Honduras

Anibal Vargas and his wife, with their three small children, for some time made their home in a water tank while he worked on a hacienda in Guatemala. Then some development organizations, with the encouragement and assistance of mission teams from the United States, started a housing project for the landless in the area. Anibal worked hard on the project and spent so much time making cement blocks for his house that the owner of the hacienda fired him and made him get out of his dwelling on the hacienda.

Without a job, Anibal and his family built a temporary stick frame house plastered with mud on the property of the housing project. A year of hard work paid off when he moved into his new block house. His dedication to the project earned him community recognition, and he was named president of the community organization. Now more than 15 families call the new community of La Canada home, all having built their 6 x 8-meter block houses with the assistance and encouragement of several church mission teams.

In Anibal's new house there are Bible studies every Thursday afternoon. And here voice is given to continuing dreams and plans, which include installing electricity in the homes, a water project, and planting trees.

Read more of Anibal's story in a letter from Tim and Gloria Wheeler in Honduras:
http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/wheelert/wheelert_0708.htm

TRAFFICKING: MODERN-DAY SLAVERY

The problem is prevalent on every continent

In August a three-day consultation sponsored by the Church of North India and the Council for World Mission was held in Darjeeling, India, to address a growing problem: human trafficking. Every year 800,000 to 900,000 women and children end up in "servitude" due to force, fraud or coercion.

The consultation brought folks from around South Asia and from as far away as Zambia and New Zealand. They came from the church pews, from NGOs, and from the U.S. State Department. They were lawyers, bishops, and other church leaders who came to focus on an issue that is prevalent on every continent. Between 1,500 and 2,200 people are even trafficked from Canada to the United States annually in this multi-million dollar business.

Women and children are becoming the new commodity, or economic collateral, arising from globalization, which creates horrendous conditions for the poor. Young women and children become the most vulnerable targets for servitude in the sex trade, sweat shops, as domestic servants, as brides for sale, in embroidery factories, as workers in rice mills or the circus, as bonded labor in heavy construction, as camel jockeys, or as beggars. Sometimes these women and children are moved continents away from their homes. The challenge of tracing them down is daunting.

Various groups are dedicated to breaking this vicious cycle by addressing the core underlying issues and—when possible—by intervening, rehabilitating, and reintegrating.—David and Susan Hudson, India

Read more in an August letter from the new PCUSA regional liaisons for South Asia, David and Sue Hudson, at
http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/hudsond/hudsond_0708.htm

AND MORE . . .

- "MADE IN CHINA." In her August letter Judy Chan, PCUSA mission worker in Hong Kong, reflects insightfully about the recall of products made in China:
http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/chanj/chanj_0708.htm

- **PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE** in Thogoto, **KENYA**, is now **PRESBYTERIAN UNIVERSITY**. The college received an interim letter from the Commission for Higher Education that enabled it to open its doors as Presbyterian University. A ceremony of thanksgiving was held on Aug. 10. Read more about the university and its long relationship with Jim Costen, former General Assembly moderator, who died in 2003, at <http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2007/07535.htm>.

- The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program encourages congregations to use all or part of their share of the **PEACEMAKING OFFERING**—received by most Presbyterian congregations on World Communion Sunday, October 7—to fight HIV/AIDS in the United States and globally. The funds generated will be used for education, prevention, care, and treatment of HIV/AIDS in the most afflicted areas of the world. "AIDS AND PEACEMAKING," a new one-sheet leaflet describing the work of the PCUSA's International AIDS Ministries in Africa and how that work relates to peacemaking, is available at no cost. Visit <http://www.pcusa.org/aids-international/index.htm>

- **OCTOBER 14 IS HIV/AIDS AWARENESS SUNDAY**. For worship resources and suggestions visit <http://www.pcusa.org/aids-international/resources.htm>

- **INTERFAITH LISTENING TEAM AND INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKERS**. In late September and early October, an Interfaith Listening team and 10 International Peacemakers will be visiting presbyteries and congregations around the country. The Interfaith Listening Team consists of a Christian and Muslim from the Philippines. The International Peacemakers are church leaders from nine countries.

For information on the Interfaith Listening Team visit

<http://www.pcusa.org/listeningproject/> To read more about the International Peacemakers visit <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/intl/international.htm#2007>

- The World Mission program unit is seeking a permanent, full-time coordinator for its **OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL EVANGELISM AND FRONTIER AREAS**. Interested persons should visit <http://www.pcusa.org/onedoor> and look under full-time positions listed under Kentucky (the location of the World Mission offices).