



## We welcome Colombian Church Leader Delegation to our Presbytery

Four key leaders of the Presbytery of the North Coast in Colombia are spending September 7-15 in the Miami Valley, working with representatives from our own presbytery to strengthen and deepen long-standing relationships between our two presbyteries. **Rev. Cristhian Gómez (presbytery executive), Rev. Vilma Yáñez (presbytery moderator), Elder Gina Zabala (presbytery recording secretary), and Elder Belkys Teherán (administrative director of the Colegio Americano, a school connected to the presbytery) form the North Coast delegation.** We look forward to their presentation during today's presbytery meeting, and to their leadership as we worship together.

For 27 years, the Presbytery of the Miami Valley has developed and maintained an “hermanamiento” (partner relationship) with the Presbiterio de la Costa (Presbytery of the North Coast) in the Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia (Presbyterian Church of Colombia). Over the years this mission-based connection has included support for “sister church” pairings between congregations in both presbyteries; delegations and individuals traveling north and south to spend time together in worship, learning, and discernment; and equitable sharing of action and prayer for each other's mission priorities. Listening, learning, coming alongside, and mutual respect are key elements of the shared hermanamiento. The goal of this week together is to imagine new ways we can do mission with mutuality and integrity, while maintaining the strong existing elements of our relationship.

Besides being part of today's presbytery meeting, the delegation's planned itinerary has included:

- ❖ Meeting with the presbytery Leadership Council and Network Support and Grants Committee;
- ❖ A visit to the Dayton International Peace Museum and to the Dayton Dragons;
- ❖ Chances to learn about justice, poverty reduction, and intensive English learning programs in Dayton and Oxford;
- ❖ Sharing time with members of PMV churches who have been to Colombia;
- ❖ Moments to share their perspectives on Colombia's current situation and ways the Colombian church is making a difference on justice, refugee, and peace issues in their nation;
- ❖ Connecting with the four active sister churches in our presbytery: Dayton: College Hill Community, Springboro: Covenant, Dayton: Westminster, and Oxford. For more information on becoming a sister church with a congregation in the North Coast Presbytery, contact Susan Stewart at 937-286-0073 or Melanie Monzon at 937-510-8978.