

JOURNALS POSTED ON NOVEMBER 20, 2018

Gary Baits has an invitation for you!



MYLINDA BAITS



SUPPORT PLEDGED



November 2018

Dear Friends:

This is Gary Baits, Mylinda's husband, supporter, and fan for over 30 years. While we prepare to enjoy Thanksgiving with Jamie and Micah, and friends here in the Northwest, I find myself thankful for them and for you. I also give thanks for Mylinda's upcoming ministry trip to Nicaragua (more about that later) and ask your prayers for her journey there.

I'm writing to you because you know Mylinda Baits and know of her ministry as a Global Consultant with International Ministries of American Baptist Churches, USA. Many of you have given financially to support her ministry as a missionary, an artist, a pastor, and an activist, and for that we are grateful. Gracias!

What follows is a straightforward request for you to partner with Mylinda's ministry around the world. No shame, guilt or manipulation. I'm simply asking that you consider giving to support Mylinda's ministry with your finances. She currently needs an additional \$1017 per month to reach her support goal. If you are not currently a giving partner, would you consider becoming one? If you're already giving financial support for Mylinda, would you consider increasing your support in 2019?

I remember being at Deborah's House, a refuge for victims of domestic violence in Mexico. Some of us were working to put bunkbeds together for recently arrived families. I greeted one of the ladies, Anita.* She withdrew and looked down. It made sense; like other women there, she had suffered severe beatings at the hands of men. The staff told me that Anita never smiled and rarely spoke, even to the therapists.

Mylinda was at the shelter to do trainings; arts-based, experiential workshops. The women were invited to express how they were feeling, using color, movement and dance. Mylinda reminded Anita and the other women, "you are beautiful, and made in God's image." This message is new to most of them, as they have been beaten down over and over again by fathers, husbands, or boyfriends who called them "worthless and stupid." As trust was built and the workshop progressed, Anita began to move, to look up, and even to smile. Eventually, she was able to dance, twirling a colorful scarf and saying out loud, "I make the world more beautiful." Anita's still had a difficult path ahead, but she had been reminded of who she was; God's precious daughter.

This is the creative, redemptive work to which Mylinda has been called. In looking at the arc of Mylinda's life, it becomes apparent that her current ministry position is a coming together of her pastoral and cross-cultural experiences, her artistic gifts, her pastoral heart, her passionate activism, and her adventurous spirit. This is her unique way of following Jesus, and it's a joy to see it unfold.

I invite you to consider the following:

1. Sign up to receive her journals. You can do this through the website at internationalministries.org, or you can send your e-mail information to Mylinda at mylindabaits@gmail.com or mylinda.baits@internationalministries.org. Reading Mylinda's journals is one of the best ways to keep up with her most recent ministry adventures, see

some cool art, and learn about her needs and prayer concerns. You can also print it off and post it at your church for others to see.

2. Partner financially. Giving from you and others makes it possible for Mylinda to come alongside communities and offer friendship, teaching tools, community art-making, empathy, and hope. All donations are appreciated and make a difference. Monthly donations via bank draft provide a sense of stability and sustainability. Mylinda and I have found that monthly automatic giving is a joyful discipline. Please consider this method. Be sure that Mylinda's name is listed in the *I Would Like to Support* pulldown box. If you lean old school, you can write checks and send them via snail mail to:

International Ministries 1003 9th Ave Suite A , King of Prussia, PA 19406

3. Pray especially for her upcoming trip to Nicaragua, a country recently torn by conflict and violence. Mylinda has been invited by our mission partners there to come alongside of health workers and other leaders who are asking for tools and trainings that will help them continue to serve faithfully in seemingly impossible situations. Pray for safe travel and health. Pray for encouragement for the people of Nicaragua who long to hear a good word as they move forward step by step in the face of threats and obstacles.
4. Stay in touch. Mylinda has been encouraged by your kind cards, notes, and updates, and loves to hear about your activities and your families. You can also ask her to do a training for your community, to speak at a retreat, or to preach in a worship service.

What follows are quotes I've pulled from Mylinda's journals and photos of some recent art projects. Enjoy.

Though sometimes we hear dishonest descriptions of the long-term impact of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rico by those who want to boost their own ego, what we saw with our own eyes, heard with our own ears, and what our hands have touched tell a different story... A story of hope and healing, not superficial sappiness that denies the damage, but of robust resiliency that rebuilds and repairs lives that grow stronger through the struggle.

Create like you did as a kid: invent new food, play with color, make silly sounds, scribble, dance just because you're happy or to move through the sadness. Pay attention to the small things, notice the understated beauty all around you.

Justice work can be hard, don't run from the hard, but stay steady and rooted in restorative practices. Stay with others when they are going through the hard stuff...Stay connected to life-giving friends, family and community. Stay close to your resources of faith, refreshment, rest and renewal. We are not made to go it alone, we need each other.

We do indeed need each other. Please be in touch.

Thank you,

Gary Baits

p.s. If you have questions about Mylinda's ministry or the website, please contact her at mylindabaits@gmail.com or call her at (360)-688-3932.



Debriefing Group Drawing activity



Facilitating Community Art at ICAP Global Conference





Exploring expression through movement in Kenya

Expressive Arts PhD cohort at the European Graduate School



Resilient Women Mural painted at the eEspacio de Mujer in Caugas, Puerto Rico



Children and Youth Ministry in La Carpio, Costa Rica



Facilitating art exploration at the ABC Central Pacific Coast Annual Gathering's Innovators Hall