

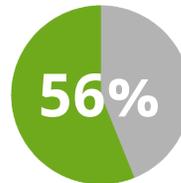
JOURNALS POSTED ON NOVEMBER 14, 2018

On the Road - October 2018

international ministries



RUTH MOONEY



SUPPORT PLEDGED



COSTA RICA

October 2018

Dear friends,

I have been humbled and blessed as I have traveled through the Midwest visiting churches over the past month.

Many of my hosts have been retired pastors, missionaries, and church leaders. Their long history of faithfulness and service have inspired me. They have shared stories of their ministries that made me want to cry out, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" They have included me in their devotional times, allowing me to experience their deep relationship with God.

Some face the final challenge of old age, sickness, loss of mobility and memory. I have been deeply humbled to see the courage and faith with which they live in the midst of uncertainty and pain. Their words are not of bitterness or despair, but of thankfulness for a life well lived and trust in God's continuing presence in their lives.

I have also heard, over and over, frustration and pain over the divisions in our country, and over the Christians that give a bad name to our God by advocating hate, exclusion, and prejudice rather than love, inclusion, and acceptance. I have seen wonderful examples of loving service. In one church, a member walks the streets at midnight to offer help to the homeless. In another, the women make sleeping mats from plastic bags for those who sleep on the streets. In one town, all the churches coordinate to provide meals for teams of Habitat for Humanity. I was impressed to meet a transgendered woman who was actively involved in her church and completely accepted by the congregation. Others reach out in love to immigrant communities.

This trip has been more than anything a re-encounter with old friends and an opportunity to say thank you. Some of these churches and people have accompanied me in all my 32 years of ministry, with prayer and financial support that have made it possible for me to serve in El Salvador, Cuba, and Costa Rica. I keep being surprised to find pastors that I had known in one church show up in a different church. I have taken greetings from one to another, because the American Baptist family is small enough that people know one another.

My trip thus far has included Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. In November I will travel to California and Oregon before heading home to Costa Rica on November 14.

Thank you to all of you who walk with me in this ministry.

Warmly,

Ruth