Help Keep Our Family Together

Cristina is a loving mother of three children aged 14, 12 and 8. She has been an active member of the First Presbyterian Church of Douglas since 1997 raising her children in the Christian faith. She was raised in the Lirio de los Valles Presbyterian Church in Agua Prieta and served in the church’s daycare center for many years. She is currently a deacon of FPC Douglas and serves at the Vacation Bible School each year.

On Friday, May 17, her life, the life of her children, and the life of our community of faith was turned upside down after she was stopped for a minor traffic violation. The Sheriff did an immigration check and discovered that her visa had expired—Cristina was immediately taken into custody by the Border Patrol and deportation proceedings were begun. After 11 days of being separated from her children, Cristina is now out on bond awaiting a hearing before the immigration judge.

Morris Eckhardt, an elder of the FPC says: “Cristina has been a steadfast worshipper and worker at this church. She has also been a hard worker supporting her family and the community of Douglas.”

Sylvia Valenzuela, a deacon of the church, is grateful for the gentle and loving care Cristina showed her in-laws in their last years of life and for her love of her own children: “We have watched her raise her 3 children with the same values she herself was raised with. The children have excelled in school and are very respectful, kind and fun children.”

Pastor Carlos agrees: “Cristina’s three children are the best reflection of her faith. They are very good students. They are polite and well mannered. The boy was awarded with the Diamond Scholarship last year; the oldest girl is an A and B student on her 10th grade; and the younger daughter is a gracious ballet dancer. As a single mother Cristina has been done an excellent job.

Cristina has been serving God since an early age in different forms and ministries. Her family is an excellent example of a good, strong Christian family.”
According to Shirley Jewell, founder of Frontera de Cristo and elder of FPC, Cristina’s children “always come first in her life, and they adore her. We love her too! She is such a good person.”

We are grateful to God for the excellent pro-bono legal support of Margo Cowan, the generosity of a member of the FPC Douglas, the advice and counsel to Cristina of some Guatemalan women who were housed in the same detention facility, the perseverance of her family and the prayers of many who have made it possible for the family to be reunited.

Please join us in prayer that Cristina and her family will be able to be united in the town that they love and with the family of faith that has helped nurture them and has been nurtured by them. Also please prayerfully consider donating to a fund that the FPC is starting to help provide for legal and other costs associated with the process that Cristina has to go through while seeking to have her legal status regularized.