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SERVING THE LORD IN

Latin America

News from Rev Dr Jonathan & Deaconess Cheryl Naumann

“Él que habita al abrigo del Altísimo Morará bajo la sombra del Omnipotente.”

*(He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will dwell
under the shadow of the Almighty." Psalm 91:1)*

International missionaries usually work in foreign countries - and you are reading this newsletter because you are interested in God's work in far-away places. Psalm 91 issues an invitation to all believers to go to a "secret place" (authorized version), the "shelter of the Most High." It is indeed a hidden sanctuary; a place of refuge.

Like the 23rd Psalm, there is a remarkable personal quality about Psalm 91. While it describes the sanctuary from danger that a believer may enjoy, it does not deny the reality of threats that surround the Christian. However, we are in the safety of the shadow of the Almighty amid threats that could bring widespread destruction to us, just as we might observe happening to others.

The faithful need not fear the threats described in the Psalm, neither the visible nor the invisible; "neither the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness." Either way, God's Word promises shelter in the midst of any type of danger or forces that oppose us.

Those who trust in the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ have the comfort of knowing that whatever befalls them, including physical death, nothing can separate them from God. This is the message that we continue to bring to the people we serve here in our Latin American and Caribbean region.

Thank you for your prayers and support! *Pastor Jonathan*



The New Normal!

The "new normal" is an expression that has been on many people's lips as they try to describe what life looks like for them during the current pandemic and perhaps even after it is all over. Of course it is understood that everyone's new normal is in flux, changing with the variously defined "phases" designed to gradually "open" a return to socialization.

Like many of you, our current normal includes an increased use of the internet - for worship and Bible study; for teaching confirmation or other classes; and even for attending training workshops about how to use the technology that is now in place!

We praise God that even while our ability to do face-to-face work has been limited, that much is still being accomplished in the name of Christ in the Latin America Caribbean region.

Please include in your prayers

+ That God would grant Jacqui - director of our DR mission language institute - a good recovery from the Covid-19 virus; + That God will bless His missionaries with good health and keep them safe from every evil; + That God will give comfort, patience, and strength to all who are coping with life changes, loneliness and isolation during the pandemic, particularly the three missionaries in our region who have had to delay wedding plans, and others who have not been able to visit family or carry out scheduled "home service;" + That our mission support fund will continue to receive ample gifts to keep us working here in the DR; + That many more will be brought to faith in Jesus Christ; + That our LCMS mission team and the people of our Guatemala Lutheran partner church can quickly work together to help those needing both physical and spiritual food during this time of famine and economic emergency.

Dear friends in Christ,

Our apologies for the tardiness of our May newsletter - which wasn't due to a lack of news, but rather due to a busy schedule!

As Pastor Jonathan finishes another year of teaching English catechism classes to the children of missionaries, we rejoice with several young people who are being confirmed this month, including Rolf Preus, Esther Krey, and Andrae Fritsche. Rather than being confirmed in the office chapel by Pastor Jonathan, who provides lessons for them as their regional chaplain, the confirmands become communicant members after the confirmation rite is held in the mission congregation where they worship with their families, and very often where their father is the pastor. All children of missionaries are provided with Spanish lessons, but it's also important that they have the opportunity to fully understand what is being taught to them about their Lord and God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - in their native tongue.

Spanish (and English) lessons provided by our LAC Regional Language Institute have continued via computer screens throughout the last three months of "social distancing." We heard late last week that the institute director, Jacqui Llenas, tested positive for Covid-19. Her symptoms are mild and we pray that she will make a full recovery and continue the fine work that she is doing on behalf of LCMS missions.



Rolf Preus stands with his father, Rev. Dr. David Preus, on Trinity Sunday - the day of his confirmation at Concordia Lutheran Church in Palmar Arriba, DR.

My work with the Mercy Center has had two areas of focus in May. The first was the completion of the six-week "zoom" workshop on Life Issues led by Pastor Michael Saleminck of Lutherans for Life. The LAC region has been blessed to see nurse Jamielynn Tinkey transition from a two-year GEO-missionary position into a career missionary position. She will be responsible for the development of education on Life and Health issues throughout our region. The two of us have begun to work together to identify topics for needed workshops for church leaders and congregation members in this important area of LIFE, so that subject experts can be raised up in our missions and LCMS partner churches. We also look forward to coordinating with Deaconess Tiffany Manor, who recently accepted a call to serve as the LCMS Director of Life Ministry.

It isn't hard to see need here in the Latin America and Caribbean region during this time of pandemic. There has been some government assistance here in the DR, but the help that our mission congregations have been able to give to members of the parishes and their communities has been greatly appreciated when the other assistance falls short of what is needed. We have a particularly difficult situation in Guatemala right now, with a famine that is said to be responsible for 40 percent of the population being at the point of starving. My second area of concentration at the moment is to work with LCMS Disaster Response and our Mercy Center teacher in Panama to provide some needed Disaster Response education for the Guatemalan Lutheran Church, as well as collecting information that could help for the distribution of food. The LCMS assisted in Guatemala two years ago after the eruption of a volcano and has a good relationship with people on the ground there.

There are, of course, other needs in the region. There is flooding in Belize; Puerto Rico continues to have earthquakes; and here in the Caribbean we have begun preparations for the hurricane season. We've had the joy of seeing "Sol" the Parrot (April newsletter) several times since finding her home, and look forward to opportunities to witness more to her owners. The chickens are healthy and still laying eggs and they love to sit right outside the window to listen to Pastor Jonathan video record worship - especially when there is singing! We praise God for the many ways that through LCMS missions we can serve our neighbor physically while also sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. May God keep you safe and healthy! **Thank you for your loving gifts and your prayers! *love in Christ,***

Deaconess Cheryl

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