



D E C E M B E R - 2 0 2 0

SERVING THE LORD IN

# Latin America

News from Rev Dr Jonathan & Deaconess Cheryl Naumann



## *A blessed New Year!*

This New Year's Eve photo is our way of smiling at you - wherever you happen to be right now - and wishing you a blessed 2021.

## *Please pray:*

+ That God will continue to bring many to faith here in the DR and other Latin American countries, as God's Word is preached and the Spirit works through that Word to create and grow faith in the hearts of the hearers;  
+ that God will bless this new Seminary term starting the second week of January; + that God will bless the Disaster Response courses to take place in Bolivia and open the door to other opportunities for the Mercy Center to bring the love of God to people in LAC;  
+ Thanksgiving for good health and stamina throughout the difficult days of 2020 and for continued health so that we may continue to serve throughout 2021.

## *Soy un extraño, en una tierra extraña*

(Exodus 2:22)

As we receive another batch of new missionaries into our LAC region for field orientation, I routinely remind them that an international missionary volunteers to be an immigrant, following the call of God! Like the apostle Paul, missionaries try not to complain about the vicissitudes of life. Sometimes we may find our work to be frustrating and disappointing. At the very same time, we may find missionary life to be the most rewarding, and most exciting thing we have ever done. It is infuriating, and it is gratifying. It is excruciating, and it is exhilarating. It is crazy, and yet it makes perfect sense. We embrace these paradoxes. For, in the final analysis, the life of a missionary is a pilgrimage of faith. It is the life of a disciple of Christ, who is both at home, in our Father's house, and a 'stranger in a strange land' (Exodus 2:22).

As the people of God, we all acknowledge that we are *strangers and exiles on the earth* (Hebrews 11:13). However, the great comfort for all Christians is the same, whether we are in our home countries or abroad: that in the Gospel we have the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ. We have 'life and salvation' (a sacramental gift), including heavenly support from the one from whom we receive our 'competence'. *Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God* (2 Corinthians 3:5). Thanks be to God! And thank you - all of you - for your prayers and support!

Pastor Jonathan

## Tax-deductible gifts to support our work can be given:

- + Online at [www.lcms.org/jonathan.naumann](http://www.lcms.org/jonathan.naumann)
- + By phoning the LCMS donor care line: 888-930-4438
- + By mailing checks to The LCMS, PO Box 66861, Saint Louis, MO 63166 with "Jonathan Naumann - Latin America" on the check memo line





Dear friends in Christ,

We hope that all of you had a wonderful Christmas, marking the coming of Jesus to earth, to fulfill our Heavenly Father's plan to reconcile the world to Himself in the death and resurrection of His Son!

The two photos above and one to the left were taken at the Christmas Eve service led by Pastor Jonathan in the back yard of one of the missionary houses here in Santiago. This annual service - for all LCMS missionaries and seminary students who were unable to go to their "home" country - is always followed by a shared meal and the singing of seasonal songs chosen and "performed" by groups or families. At a time when the rest of our extended biological family is often together in the US or elsewhere, it is wonderful for missionaries to experience the kinship that we have together in the Lord. The bottom left photo shows the main meat dish for that evening's gathering - delicious roast pig!

You can see from these photos that our mission team takes precautions relating to Covid-19 as directed by the government of the Dominican Republic. Our celebration was in accord with curfew and other regulations. At the moment, the Monday through Friday curfew is at 5 p.m. (until 5 a.m.) and on Saturday and Sunday the curfew is 12 o'clock noon. The government also closed churches at the beginning of January, but thanks be to God, there were so many objections to closing churches that the government has allowed them to be open again, with masks and social distancing.

As the new year begins I'm looking forward to several ways that the Mercy Center is positioned to bring education and mercy to our mission sites and partner churches across Latin America. My first project, already underway, is to plan and execute a series of Disaster Response workshops for the pastors and congregation members of the Lutheran Church in Bolivia.

Some of our seminary students here in the DR come from Bolivia, which makes it even more special for me to be able to meet young men who will go back to their countries and, God-willing, will experience as pastors in their future congregations, the benefit of the education that we are able to provide their future parishioners right now.

In the area of translation, I'm happy to report that we have just distributed daily devotions for 2021 to all the pastors and seminary students in the Latin America Caribbean Region, and the first week of February we will be able to send out (via eBook from the VDMA Project) a copy of the *Christology* volume of the Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics series.

We are both well, as are the chickens! Our guard dog, Canchita, is recovering from a cut on her paw received during a brief encounter with a motorcycle while she was chasing a cat! She still "smiles" and wags her tail and barks at strangers! She is already starting to walk on that foot again, so we anticipate a quick recovery.

**Thank you to each one of you who supported our work here in Latin America in 2020, and who will continue to do so in 2021.** We are uplifted by your prayers and words of encouragement, and of course your monetary gifts make it possible for us to continue to serve here in the field. A blessed New Year!

love in Christ, *Deaconess Cheryl*