



M A R C H - 2 0 2 1

SERVING THE LORD IN

# Latin America

News from Rev Dr Jonathan & Deaconess Cheryl Naumann



## Palm Sunday Procession!

Some of you may recall seeing a video of our 2020 Palm Sunday procession, simply walking around the perimeter of our house and singing hymns, due to Covid restrictions. We praise God that it was possible for all LCMS mission congregations in the DR to hold services this year, and to have a "Palm Sunday Procession" where we witnessed to the church community about our King who came to save us!

## 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 the Mercy Center events and courses taking place in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Chile, as our mission congregations learn more about evangelism, Christian reconciliation, and how to proceed in times of disaster; + Thanksgiving for nine baptisms in the Santo Domingo mission on Easter Day; + Thanksgiving for the fruit that we have seen from the mission congregation field work carried out by seminary students; + Thanksgiving that our colleague, Pastor Carlos Schumann, survived a massive heart attack at his home here in the DR, and is recovering in the US after medical evacuation to Florida.

## Él fue herido por nuestras transgresiones

(Isaiah 53:5-6)

It seems to make sense to human beings, at some level, that we have to beat ourselves up in prayer in order to be heard by God. Some have even inflicted physical damage to themselves, as in the self-flagellation practiced by Roman Catholic monks (including Martin Luther, before he understood that salvation came through faith alone).

Jesus once commended a penitent man for his prayer, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner' (Luke 18:13), and He also taught *"And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him."* (Matthew 6:7-8).

A good Lenten thought in this context is the prophecy about Christ in Isaiah 53:5-6:

*He was pierced for our transgressions;*

*He was crushed for our iniquities;*

*upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with His wounds we are healed.*

*All we like sheep have gone astray;*

*we have turned—every one—to his own way;*

*and the LORD has laid on Him  
the iniquity of us all'.*

'He,' 'Him,' Jesus. Christ crucified and risen, and what He has done for us by His sacrificial suffering for our redemption should be foremost in our minds as we grapple with guilt, and struggle for salvation. We are right to humble ourselves before God because of our sins. But beating ourselves up over our iniquity is counterproductive compared to the god-pleasing response of giving glory to Christ and trusting in Him for the pardon that He purchased for us, and for all time with His blood.

Yes, we should pray, but as we do, we pray that we get over ourselves, and fix our eyes on Jesus, in this great Easter season of the Church and every day of our lives.

May God bless all of you in your prayer journey. And we thank you for including missionaries and LCMS missions in your prayers.

*Pastor Jonathan*





One of the blessings of working in a tropical country is that worship services can be taken outside to accommodate larger numbers of people and stay within government guidelines. This Vespers service is being led by Pastor Jonathan in the back yard at the home of our Regional Director.

Dear friends in Christ,

We didn't manage to get a newsletter out in February with so many things vying for our time. There was a trip to PA for Pastor's annual cardiology check-up, as well as other normal medical checkups for both of us. We enjoyed seeing a few of our children and grandchildren while there. On our return, a mama cat gave birth to two babies in Canchita's outdoor bed, and there seems to be an assortment of cats that claim our carport as their home, as long as Canchita isn't out there to bother them. Mangoes are ripening on our trees and we look forward to eating them and the avocados that will also be ready soon.

In all of the seasons one thing remains constant - the continued need for people around us to know the saving love of Jesus. Having fruit trees can be a benefit in evangelizing people who are poor and appreciate the gift of fruit. That person might be a man who empties the street garbage bins, the people who deliver water to the house, or people that we encounter while walking on the street. A gift of fruit. A conversation. A gift of the New Testament or Luther's Small Catechism or a Bible if they will accept one. An invitation to the church. And working out how we might be able to see those people again, to have a follow up conversation. To water the small seed that has been planted. This is how it works.

Our mission congregations have the assistance of seminary field workers, LCMS missionaries, and congregational members, including indigenous deaconesses, to make calls - every week - on congregation members and other interested people in the community. To follow up the "leads" that lead to the planting of a Lutheran congregation.

Then there are those who bring a friend who lives too far away to attend worship every week. The pastor and field workers make visits - and before we know it there are multiple baptisms taking place in a new community; a preaching station is established, and then a new mission congregation with a pastor of its own, or a pastor shared with another congregation. To see the work advance in this way is truly a gift that not all Christians get to see.

Last month another pastor was added for the work in the DR capitol of Santo Domingo. The young pastor and his new bride come from The Lutheran Church in Brazil, a church body established as a result of LCMS mission work that started there over 100 years ago. Pastor Jonathan and I were pleased to be part of the field training for this man and seven others, along with their families, also from Brazil. Three more of these pastors will stay in Latin America - in Guatemala, Uruguay and Peru, while the other four transition to LCMS missions in Africa.

In May I will begin to lead one of the Zoom Bible classes designed for girls whose parents are LCMS missionaries in Latin America. Until now the group was led by a deaconess intern who will be returning to the US for her graduation and first placement. I will miss these young gals who bring great ideas and zeal to the field.

As Coordinator for the DR Mercy Center, I'm currently sorting through logistics for educational mercy events in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Chile. We also hope to sponsor some activities here in the capitol soon. The DR has many refugees from Venezuela, and our church in Osama is working hard to assist them with both spiritual and bodily needs. What a blessing that the pastor of the LCMS mission there is himself from Venezuela! God works in mysterious and wonderful ways to advance the Gospel to the peoples of the world. One of those ways, of course, is that He has given YOU a heart for missions, and has led you to pray for us and to support us financially as you are able. **Thank you!**

*love in Christ, Deaconess Cheryl*

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