



J U L Y & A U G U S T - 2 0 2 1

SERVING THE LORD IN

Latin America

News from Rev Dr Jonathan & Deaconess Cheryl Naumann



Many Members - One Body

Missionary families serving in the Latin America Caribbean region normally gather together in the DR once a year for five days of continuing education, worship, and time to share with one another about their work. Last year the conference wasn't held due to Covid restrictions, so this year's conference was even more joyful for those who were able to attend.

Meeting under the theme, "Many Members - One Body," we were privileged to hear presentations from Dr. Erik Herrmann (professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis). During breakout sessions, Herrmann provided further instruction for the men, while the women engaged in presentations led by Deaconess Kristin Wassilak (Director of the Deaconess Training Program at Concordia University Chicago).

As Chaplain to all LCMS missionaries in the LAC region, it was Pastor Jonathan's privilege to organize morning and evening worship for each day of the conference. Since some of our missionaries originate from within our LCMS partner churches in LAC, some of the services were in English and others were in Spanish.

'...ní aun así se arrepintieron de las obras de sus manos' (Revelation 9:20)

Those who are familiar with the book of Revelation and other biblical descriptions of the Last Days, may be surprised to read that great suffering in the world does not always bring about repentance, with multitudes turning to God. On the contrary, great suffering – even on a global scale – is often accompanied by people 'doubling down' in their rebellion against God. Revelation 9, quoted above, states that those who survived plagues and judgement from God that "killed a third of mankind," still "did not repent of the works of their hands."

God allowing suffering, as a consequence of human sin, is just and righteous. However, after recognizing their sin, what leads people to repentance and trust in God is His kindness (Rom. 2:4). This is why, in the midst of a world that seems to be descending lower and lower into wickedness and sins of every description, LCMS missionaries teach and preach not only God's Law, but also His Gospel.

According to God's law, His judgment rightly falls on those who rebel against Him, which of course, includes all of us. In the Gospel we hear the soothing good news that God has also provided a gracious rescue from eternal consequences (eternal death) to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

By His death that made atonement for human sin, and His resurrection that conquered suffering and the grave, Jesus '*opened a new and life-giving way*' for those who repent and leave the destiny of their souls in His kind and forgiving hands (Heb. 10:20).

If you look around, and it seems the world is heading for destruction, you are right. But, thanks be to God, we still have a Gospel to proclaim, that there is life and salvation available by faith in His Son, the world's Redeemer. This is why we continue to work in the Dominican Republic and Latin America. And this is why we are so grateful for your support of this important mission of bringing love, forgiveness and eternal salvation to those who still do not know Jesus as their Savior.

Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel!

Pastor Jonathan

Dear friends in Christ,

Thank you for your prayers for our safe travels in July. We had a delightful family reunion in St. Louis, which included a day at the St. Louis Zoo, square dancing with a live caller, time at a large adventure park, and of course, lots of games and cuddles with grandchildren. Pastor Jonathan was also able to visit his mother while I attended our niece's wedding (where I saw my brother and his family). Pastor Jonathan's brother and family also traveled to St. Louis for a visit, and he took part in the ordination of our son-in-law's father in St. Louis. We give thanks to God for the gift of family; for their support, and understanding that we need to live in a different country to carry out God's calling.



Time with children and grandchildren at the St. Louis Zoo.

Please pray:

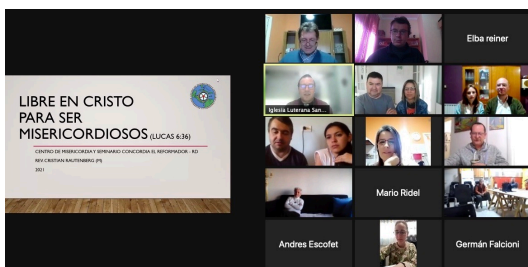
- + That God will bless LCMS Disaster Response efforts in Haiti; particularly where our partner Lutheran congregations are located; + Thanksgiving for the Argentina Disaster Response Conference and prayers that we can hold the second part of the conference in person in February. + That the many LCMS missionaries on home service would be kept safe as they travel; + Thanksgiving that Pastor Carlos Schumann has been able to return to work in the DR after recovering from his heart attack; + That God will bless the monthly Mercy Center classes on "Every One His Witness" that are taking place in Venezuela and the "Shepherding Our Strays" lessons that are taking place in Jamaica; + Thanksgiving for some new Zoom office equipment in the main Mercy Center meeting room, which will allow people to attend conferences remotely while others participate in person.
- + 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; and that at the same time, God would bless the field with sufficient workers to keep up with the growing numbers of missions and work!

You are all aware of the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that shook Haiti on August 14. We live about an hour from the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. We didn't feel the quake, but other LCMS missionaries living in our neighborhood did. No damage was done to any of our homes or missions here. Our DR team has been helping LCMS Disaster Response with damage assessment in Haiti and creating a strategic plan for assistance to Haiti for the over the next 12 months. We ask you to continue to keep the Haitian people in prayer, especially as they continue to have aftershock quakes (4.4 on August 21; 4.5 on August 22; 4.2 on August 25). If anyone is interested in helping with our assistance to Haiti, contributions can be made online to LCMS Disaster Response at the LCMS website:

<https://www.lcms.org/give/disaster>

The first part of the Disaster Response conference for southern Argentina (held on August 15) went very well, with 35 zoom accounts logging in; often more than one person participating on the same zoom call. The eight hours of study, led by Pastor Cristian Rautenberg in Argentina, covered the themes of Mercy in the Old Testament, Mercy in the New Testament and Mercy in the Church. At first this might seem like a strange way to teach disaster preparedness and disaster response to people. But as missionaries, we have learned that it is very important for people to understand, from a Biblical perspective, why we do what we do in the name of Jesus. When people understand the Biblical basis for "loving our neighbor as ourselves" - and that this is a regular part of the Christian life - they are much more enthusiastic about assisting others, and in sustaining love and action toward their neighbors of their own initiative.

The second part of the Argentina Disaster Response conference will take place in February 2022 - hopefully in person. Right now Argentina is a "closed" country due to high Covid numbers, so we would ask you to pray that the country will be opened up by February. The themes of preparing for disaster and all of the practical carrying out of response in time of disaster are covered in two days of classes during the second part of the course. These lessons are far more effective with in-person "hands on" exercises.



"Free in Christ to be Merciful"
Participants from The Lutheran Church in Argentina learn about how God expects us to show love to our neighbors, especially in times of natural disasters. Covid lockdowns have taught us that Zoom courses can be very effective for some types of classes or workshops.



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