



J U N E & J U L Y - 2 0 2 0

SERVING THE LORD IN

# Latin America

News from Rev Dr Jonathan & Deaconess Cheryl Naumann



## *Pueblo Nuevo Divine Worship*

What a joy it was for us to return to worship at "New People Lutheran Church" mission on the second Sunday in June! One of our colleagues took this photo of us at the front railing, where communicants received the Sacrament one family at a time. That day we also said farewell to Vicar Mario (on the right in the above photo), who finished his vicarage in the DR and has returned to Spain.

It seems we have a long way to go in this mission field before things return to the way they were before the pandemic. Meanwhile, we are truly encouraged - and hope that you will also be encouraged - to see that LCMS mission efforts continue to bear fruit here.

**Thank you for your prayers, your kind messages, and your financial support that allows me to carry out this calling!** With thankfulness I dare to say with St. Paul: "Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of His power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that He has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him." (Ephesians 3:7-12)

*"... este misterio, Cristo en ustedes,  
la esperanza de gloria" (Colossians 1:27)*

God is known for doing the unexpected. At times the apostles themselves were taken by surprise. For example, St. Paul, a Jew with impeccable credentials explained that *"God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Col. 1:27).

As we continue to live through an unexpected time of global pandemic, we *can* expect that God and His Kingdom among us will not be defeated, because He has the power to continue to surprise us - even when many things look bleak. Jesus did promise that "the gates of Hell" will not prevail against His church (Matt. 16:18); that He is with us to the end of the age (Matt. 28:20) as we bring the message of salvation to the ends of the earth. Yes, even in the midst of a global pandemic, we see hopeful signs that Jesus continues His mission among us, and through us. The photo below was taken on a Sunday in June, when it was my joy to witness the confirmation of some of the young people I have been teaching in English over the past two years, along with others who were taught in Spanish by the missionary pastors and seminary field workers.

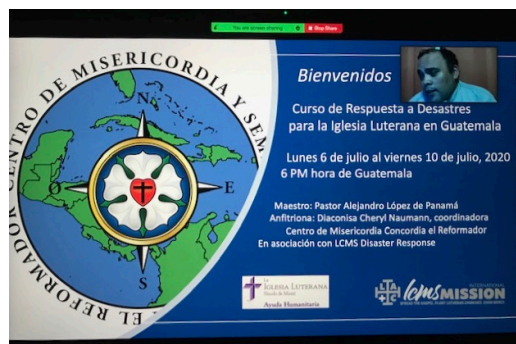


God bless you! *Pastor Jonathan*

Dear friends in Christ,

With the presence of social distancing, we have learned that when certain doors to carrying out mission work have been closed, God opens other doors for that work to be accomplished!

One example of this was the Disaster Response workshop that I was able to provide last month for the Lutheran Church in Guatemala. In a total lockdown due to Covid-19, it was impossible for Guatemalan church leaders to meet together in person. Limitations on travel between Latin American countries also meant that we could not get teaching resources from the Central America storage point in Panama to where they were needed in Guatemala. However, with the gift of modern technology, it was possible to organize a week-long Zoom Disaster Response Workshop, with Pastor Alejandro Lopez in Panama teaching the course; to provide Spanish workbooks via the internet to each of the participants; to include our area facilitator from his home in Belize; and to provide a final session for discussion and questions with Pastor Ross Johnson of LCMS Disaster Response in St. Louis. Four countries, three time zones, and mission accomplished, by the grace of God!



As in all events coordinated through the Mercy Center, our goal is to help the missions and partner church leaders to learn how to re-teach the skills they acquire, so that capabilities for showing the mercy of Christ in close connection to Word and Sacrament ministry are multiplied within their own church contexts. In the last few weeks I've received requests for teaching materials or workshops in Argentina and Bolivia - so these events will be part of my focus over the next few months. In the meantime, Missionary Nurse Jamielynn Tinkey and I continue to plan how to best present a Mercy Center conference on "Life Issues" so that it will serve the needs of many different Latin America and Caribbean countries. Laws regarding gender issues, abortion or euthanasia (to name a few) are different in the various countries, so we want to provide a good basic resource on a range of topics. Like many people in North America, individuals here often know that certain things, such as abortion, are not in accord with God's will, but they might not understand why, or how to defend their beliefs, and we hope to engender that ability with education from God's Word.

There are many things for which we thank God at this time (please include them in your prayers!) Two new missions have opened in Belize, where we met with the regional leadership team in January. Many contacts have been made here in the DR with people who have watched online worship services during Covid-19. Last week's tropical storm brought less damage than initially expected. Lutheran Heritage Foundation has printed more Spanish books for children and more Spanish Bibles, which LAC missions will soon receive when distributed from Brazil. Our two mango trees have had the most abundant crop of fruit we have ever seen and the chickens are laying eggs like crazy - to the benefit of both ourselves and others in the church and community. We also have avocado windfalls from the neighbor's tree!

At the same time we face the same types of challenges that you face during this time of uncertainty. Our real comfort is in knowing that God never changes. He loves you and He loves us. He loves those who still have not heard about what He has done for them. This is why we are so thankful for your partnership in this venture to share that good news. Thank you for your support and prayers as we go about this work in the name of Jesus!

love in Christ, *Deaconess Cheryl*

**Since our September/October "Home Service" is not taking place due to travel restrictions, we will be giving mission presentations via Zoom.**

If you've never used Zoom, it is a free application that can be downloaded to your computer.

So far we have scheduled two mission presentations, on Sundays Sept. 20 & Sept. 27, at 1:30 pm PacificST; 2:30 pm MountainST; 3:30 pm CentralST; 4:30 pm EasternST.

If YOU would like to view one of these presentations from home, please email us at [cheryl.naumann@lcms.org](mailto:cheryl.naumann@lcms.org) and we'll send you the meeting ID and Passcode.