

SERVING THE LORD IN

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

NEWS FROM MISSIONARY COURTNEY ZALMANOFF



November 2019

If you have received a paper copy of this and would like to help me save paper, please email me at courtney.zalmanoff@lcms.org. Thank you!



This day marked the first of monthly women's fellowship gatherings at one of the Santiago churches, Cordero de Dios (Lamb of God). We played an icebreaker game, shared snacks and drinks, and began a study on women in the bible.



The Dominican Republic indeed has mountains! In the foreground you can see *tayota*, a squash-like fruit grown in the mountainous regions of the country.

Cultural adventures

Greetings in Christ from the Dominican Republic! Last week I celebrated my one-month-aversary of being on the field! It has been a crazy month of learning about Dominican culture, practicing Spanish, getting to know the team, and becoming familiar with the involvement of the LCMS in Latin America.

Aside from a day trip to the capital, Santo Domingo, to begin the application process for my temporary residency, my typical day thus far consists of devotions in the morning with our regional chaplain and Spanish class. My classes are conversationally and culturally focused. This means that some days my teacher and I explore cultural topics and talk about experiences I will have in the Dominican Republic. Other days this may include cultural outings to see supermarkets, art galleries, cultural centers or the Santiago monuments and cathedral. My afternoons are spent in various workshops or meetings with team members to learn more about specific aspects of the mission field here in Latin America. Through these, we learn about things like church planting, showing mercy, short-term teams, the role of communications, the Dominican seminary, and safety and security in the field. Before I can be efficient in my work, I must have a grasp of what life is like here and how our church is working diligently around the region. Although I have not jumped directly into working in my assigned role, the purpose of the first few months on the field is very clear: learning language and culture.

In order to put more emphasis on these two things, my new missionary class was the first to be engaged in a weeklong language and culture intensive. Two other new LAC missionaries and I spent one week in the mountain town of Jarabacoa to be completely immersed in Spanish and learn about Dominican culture outside of the city of Santiago and inside a Dominican home.

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Part of this week consisted of spending time with a Dominican family, walking and shopping around town with them, and learning how to cook Dominican food. We learned so many new recipes and were able to try so many traditional dishes! The other part of the week consisted of traveling to smaller towns around Jarabacoa to see how the local people live and work in the mountains. We visited small, rural communities where farming and artisanal products are the main source of one's income. We learned how to make *casabe*, a traditional, crunchy bread made from ground yuca (or cassava), and how to make furniture out of bamboo. We visited a strawberry farm, a chocolate factory, a rural school (with only 7 students in all of the elementary classes!), a coffee plantation, a national park, and many Dominican homes and farms. We even made fresh hot chocolate from homegrown cacao!

Overall, our week in Jarabacoa was a very special trip that most foreigners never get the chance to experience. I am grateful for this cultural event and how I am now able to understand and better appreciate the life that people have in the Dominican Republic. As my language skills continue to improve, I am hoping to start working more in my position very soon. There will continue to be cultural adjustments and acquisition of new knowledge and skills as my time in the field continues. Thank you all for your prayers and support! Feel free to reach out and let me know if you have questions or just want to stay in touch. I look forward to having more updates for you next month. Blessings!



Here, a local woman is making *casabe* on a traditional stove made of cement over an open fire. She told us she “burns” three days a week, starting at 4am. She cooks all day until she runs out of harvested yuca for that day. Someone from her family then packages the bread and takes it to town to sell in local markets or grocery stores.

Verse of the month!

“Por eso me acuesto y duermo en paz, porque sólo tú, Señor, me haces vivir confiado.”
Salmos (Psalm) 4:8

Prayer Requests

- For continued health and safety as many new LAC missionaries are adjusting to life on the mission field.
- For our mission churches and national churches in Latin America and their members.
- For those affected by political violence, protests and unrest.
- Give thanks for the many congregations and individuals who support me financially and through prayer.



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LCMS
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Mission Central
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