

missionaryMAC

News from Erin Mackenzie, serving the Lord in the Dominican Republic (DR) | missionaryMAC.blogspot.com

This December, I'll be attending a conference with fellow missionaries who hold a similar role in other regions.

Recognizing that it's not a competition, and emphasizing quality over quantity, I was still curious how LAC stacked up in terms of # of teams hosted* and thought you might be, too!

LAC: 13 (32%)
Eurasia: 12 (29%)
East Africa: 11 (27%)
West Africa: 4 (10%)
Asia: 1 (2%)

*Data is from FY2019 (7/1/18-6/30/19)

(If you received a hard copy of this and would like to help me be green and save on postage, please send an email to erin.mackenzie@lcms.org.)

In Christ

You may have received an email or a thank-you note from me ending "In Christ, Erin." I've been "in Christ" since my Baptism: "a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come," (1 Corinthians 5:17).

The first time I stopped to think about the hastily scrawled salutation, though, was during Bible class at my home congregation, a verse-by-verse reading of the book of Mark. I'm not sure what passage triggered it exactly, but the pastor leading the study drew two mutually exclusive circles on the whiteboard: a large, empty one and a teeny one with a cross in it.

The phrase gave me pause once again during the DR contingent's October all-team Bible study as we discussed suffering and, in particular, the number of times in Scripture when Christians are urged to be joyful in the face of hardships (c.f. Romans 5:3-5). The author of the [study we're going through together](#) referenced the story of Jesus calming the storm. Clearly the disciples were suffering as their vessel reeled against the elements and threatened to overturn. Yet they were supposed to rejoice? Boast, even? It seems unimaginable, but one story element cannot be overlooked: Jesus was with them in the boat. They were with Christ. Inside the teeny circle. In Christ.

The past few months have seen the missionary community riddled with illnesses, car accidents, travel woes, and other setbacks. And yet we boast. Not *because* missionary life is hard but *because* Jesus is with us as we ride out the waves and vice-versa; we are in the boat with Christ—in Christ. The following verse recently came up in my daily Bible reading:

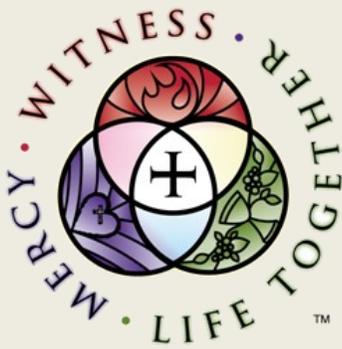
Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good. (1 Peter 4:19)

Suffering is inevitable, but with the "faithful Creator" on my side, there's no time for idleness!



Stopping to smell the...bougainvillea...on an afternoon stroll through San Borja, Lima, Peru.





Praises and Petitions

1. Thanksgiving for the acquisition of a new worship facility/mercy center property in Ponce, PR.
2. Thanksgiving for the arrival of the books for the Concordia the Reformer Seminary library.
3. Thanksgiving for fellowship amongst the ladies at my church thanks to a new women’s ministry.
4. For all LCMS college students preparing for church work careers, especially those considering long-term missionary service.
5. That God would raise up a faithful new tenant for the home I still own in south St. Louis.

Hitting...and Unloading...the Books!



Among the things I missed while in Peru was the LONG-awaited arrival of the books—and shelves—for the seminary library! For months, a container earmarked for Palmar Arriba had been waiting at [Theological Book Network’s](#) Grand Rapids, MI, headquarters to be filled, inventoried, and prepped for overseas shipment. All pieces fell into place a few weeks ago, and the truck pulled up on Saturday, November 23. Many hands were on deck to unload the 300+ boxes (not ALL are for the library; missionaries around the region took advantage of the opportunity to import mass quantities of mission-critical resources). Now begins the arduous task of cataloging and organizing the books so that current and future generations of students have a quiet space to study amidst the largest known conglomeration of Lutheran theological resources in their heart language.

Right: Short-term teams from coast to coast served in LAC during calendar year 2019! *Below, left:* Lenny, our faithful bus driver in Jamaica, and I at lunch at the Ocho Rios Jerk Centre.



Left: Being introduced as a member of the PR team at the October 2019 FORO, held at the FL-GA District office.

Quote of the Month!

If you aren’t in over your head, how do you know how tall you are?

–T.S. Eliot

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