



LAC's two Volunteer Coordinators! A huge thanks to Erin who is teaching me all I need to know about organizing volunteers and events in Latin America.



During their visit, the short-term team from Concordia Seminary had the opportunity to visit the school children at Concordia Lutheran School in Lacey. Here, they join the preschool class for craft time (and to practice saying their colors in Spanish!)

## Education Expansion

Greetings in Christ! January was a busy month on the mission field! While your missionaries have been working away making plans for the new year and catching up from missed time in the office over Christmas break, January brought many significant events as well. The first of these was our biannual regional team meeting. Each year, the regional team gathers to discuss strategies and plans for the LCMS in Latin America for the following six months. Normally these meetings are held in the Dominican Republic as the majority of our team lives here. However, this time around the setting was somewhere new for me: Belmopan, Belize! We met at Camp Concordia, a lovely property that the Burch's, another missionary family, are gifting to the LCMS. While our time there was mainly focused on a few days of deliberate meetings and lengthy conversations, we also had the opportunity to check out the church and school building on another property also being gifted to the mission. Our team made significant progress in the time spent at Camp Concordia, with only a few interruptions by members of the team leaving early due to earthquakes occurring in Puerto Rico.

Speaking of Puerto Rico, as Erin (LAC's Volunteer Coordinator) and I prepared for a short-term team's arrival in the DR immediately following our meetings in Belize, we learned that she would be part of the second round of support heading to our neighbor island to assist the team of missionaries on the ground in this turbulent time. With this in place, I took on the role of sole Volunteer Coordinator for my first ever short-term team! The team consisted of 2 deaconess students from Concordia Seminary St. Louis, visiting for a mission education experience in the Dominican Republic. I served as local guide and interpreter for the team throughout the week as together we explored each mission site and spent time with fellow missionaries.



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](https://lcms.org/service).

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Join my Facebook group where I share more frequent updates: Courtney in the DR



The *chicas* and I participated in bible studies, deaconess classes, toured the seminary, churches, and schools, observed school classes, ate in missionary homes and heard the stories of locals and missionaries alike. I am grateful to have such a supportive team helping me navigate how to host a short-term team, assisting me with interpreting, and showing me how to expose visitors to all the amazing work God is doing in this place.

January also brought the Dominican Republic another short-term team from Texas for the same purpose: mission education. Through these teams, we are able to share about the work that the LCMS is doing in Latin America and give a firsthand experience to those who are interested in learning more about mission work. It is such a privilege to show others around my new home and show them the vast work that each of our missionaries, pastors, seminary students, deaconesses and lay leaders are doing in the Dominican Republic and beyond. As I spend more time here, I am becoming more comfortable and confident in my new country. As new missionaries and visitors arrive (which is frequently at our regional hub in Santiago), I am excited about the opportunity I have to show them around, teach them about our missions and interpret for them. Moreover, I want to give a warm welcome to fellow GEO missionary Ashley Lehr who will be with us in the Dominican Republic for a few months before heading to Puerto Rico. This month we also welcome career missionary Tirzah Krey who serves on the regional human care team.

Thank you for reading and staying up to date with my missionary journey. Your prayers and encouragement are much appreciated! Blessings to you as together we serve our Creator.

“He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’” Mark 16:15



The short-term team from Texas visited Concordia Lutheran School in Palmar Arriba. Sometimes interpreting means standing in front of the room with a microphone and other times it looks like this: mixed in with the crowd, explaining as much as I can and adding in cultural tidbits as I go!

#### Verse of the month!

“Hermanos míos, considérense muy dichosos cuando estén pasando por diversas pruebas. Bien saben que, cuando su fe es puesta a prueba, produce paciencia. Pero procuren que la paciencia complete su obra, para que sean perfectos y cabales, sin que falte nada. Si alguno de ustedes requiere de sabiduría, pídasela a Dios, y él se la dará, pues Dios se la da a todos en abundancia y sin hacer ningún reproche.”

Santiago (James) 1:2-5

#### Prayer Requests

- For our missionaries and church members in Puerto Rico in distress during this period of continued earthquakes.
- For an upcoming short-term team serving in Lima, Peru.
- Thanksgiving for those in catechism classes at our churches in the Dominican Republic.
- Thanksgiving for the safe arrival of new missionaries Ashley and Tirzah.

To support the LCMS through me, you may give a tax-deductible gift:

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