

missionaryMAC

News from Erin Mackenzie, serving the Lord in Latin America & the Caribbean | missionaryMAC.blogspot.com

Most any time LAC missionaries break bread together, we say (sing!) the same meal prayer, followed by the common table prayer in Spanish—with a final line that was new to me when I moved to the DR!

// Gracias, damos, Señor, por el pan. // Por el pan espiritual que alimenta cada cual, y también por el pan material. Amén.

Cristo, nuestro Pan de Vida, ven y bendice esta comida y a nuestras familias. Amén.

// We give you thanks, Lord, for the bread. // For the spiritual bread that nourishes each one of us, and for the physical bread. Amen.

Christ, our Bread of Life, come and bless this food and our families. Amen.



Taking a break from Phase 10 to watch the president, Danilo Medina, address the Dominican populace live with regard to COVID-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.)

The Best-laid Plans

This seems an apt season to write about plans. It's in my title: "Coordinator." My core function is to make plans—to meticulously draw up schedules and budgets for airport transfers, ground transportation, meals, lodging, work projects, cultural activities, and more. I'm typically juggling these arrangements for multiple teams at once, oftentimes in different countries, months prior to their actual arrival. There's not just a spreadsheet for that; there's multiple.

Plans are just that, though: plans. They anticipate reality; they don't dictate it. Adapted from Robert Burns' poem "To a Mouse," the line "the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry," rings doubly true on the mission field. There are flight delays, traffic jams, and injuries. And lest I fall into the trap of thinking every deviation is negative, there are also unforeseen witnessing opportunities, random acts of kindness, and opened doors.

Spreadsheets, then, only go so far. Preparation picks up where plans leave off. Preparation is a mindset; an expectation that things aren't going to turn out as planned; a readiness to adjust, sometimes on the fly, to a new reality.

Such is the life of faith. Proverbs 16:9 says

The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.

Even—and especially! — when I can't plan beyond the current presidential edict, I can be *prepared*, trusting in the One who spoke these words through the prophet Jeremiah:

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

The ever-turning wheels in my head can slow to a halt because He knows the plans He has for me, and they'll never go awry.





Praises and Petitions

1. Thanksgiving for the “essential personnel” that risk COVID-19 exposure daily to provide needed services.
2. Thanksgiving for the many technologies that allow work, study, and socialization to take place from afar.
3. For team leaders and participants on the 9 LAC STTs unable to serve as scheduled due to COVID-19.
4. For LAC missionaries stranded far from their home bases due to travel bans.
5. For OIM missionaries in LAC (Tirzah, Jamielynn) and other regions (Sarah, Stephanie) who are also trained medical professionals.

Are You in Your Right Mind?

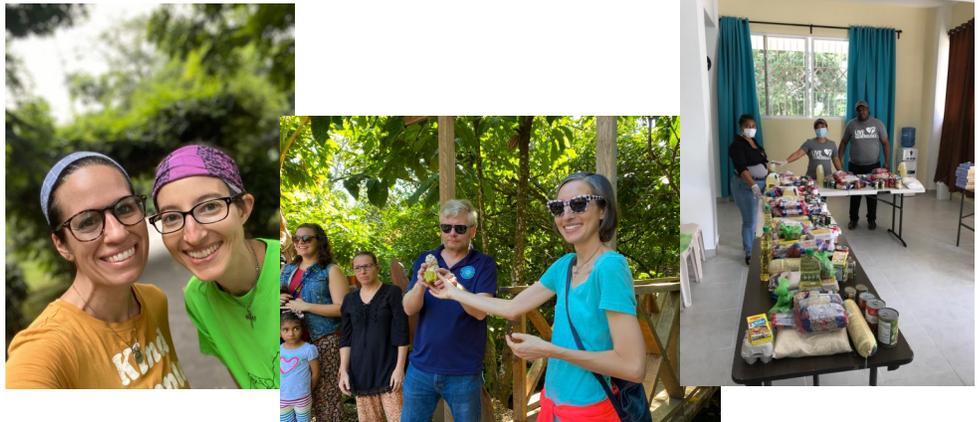
Sheltering in place has given me ample time to explore my creative side. Using the right brain is not only soothing and enjoyable; it can be a stimulating technique for contemplating God’s Word with greater profundity and clarity. [Visual Faith Ministry](#), the brainchild of two LCMS district presidents’ wives, is a community founded on that notion. Its mission is “To serve and equip believers in the Kingdom with visual faith tools that they may bring the hope of Jesus to the world.” Blog posts, FREE downloadable resources, in-person workshops, and more provide an outlet for bringing the Scriptures to life through artistic pursuits. The content is timely: Lent and Easter is currently featured, and there’s a category called “COVID-19 Resources.” There’s even a selection of *recursos en español* and a newly created Facebook group called [Visual Faith Community-Latin America](#). Who’s ready to take a walk on the creative side?



Home Service Corner

Due to COVID-19, my home service plans are on pause indefinitely.

Left: With my Peru STT morning walking buddy, and [fellow blogger](#), Mel. Center: Interpreting at the Chocolala chocolate factory on cultural day of the March DRLM FORO. Right: COVID-19 food relief for members of Cordero de Dios Lutheran Church in Licey al Medio, DR.



Quote of the Month!

“Deep is my trust for the hope beyond all of this.”

–Tanner Olson, Written to Speak

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