



Immanuel at Easter time fills my heart with joy! Pictured here is what the sanctuary looked like this Easter. *Alleluias* abound and the cross is glowing with good news!



My small Easter gathering was indeed a jubilant celebration of Jesus' resurrection! Pictured are the missionaries I am sheltering in place with.

## *Alleluia! Christ is risen!*

*He is risen indeed. Alleluia!* My home church, Immanuel, has a Lenten tradition regarding this mysterious word, *Alleluia*. On the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, during the children's message, all the children take a brightly colored piece of paper with the word *Alleluia* written on it. The children all place their paper in a treasure chest and lock it up tight for the Lenten season. On Easter Sunday, the chest is opened, and *Alleluias* are spoken and sung for the rest of the Easter season with great enthusiasm! It is shouted among Christians all over the world: "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" (Luke 24:5-6). What is the meaning of this tradition? *Alleluia* comes from a Hebrew word that means "Praise the Lord". This word is not spoken or sung during Lent, the 40 days leading up to the death and resurrection of our Lord. And while it's never a bad time to praise the Lord, Lenten traditions reserve this jubilant exclamation for a time of celebration, not to be shouted during the time set aside for the preparation and meditation of our Lord's death on the cross.

This month I reflected on traditions. Easter is full of traditions, as most holidays are. Many traditions are shared by the world, entire cultures, countries, states, communities, and individual families. All our traditions probably look a little different right now, as our world has changed drastically in the past few months. Living in the Dominican Republic has taught me that yes, cultures and traditions can, and do, look different everywhere in the world, but we can still celebrate those traditions and what they represent wherever we are. So that's what I did!

This Easter, while sheltering in place, I celebrated cultural, familial, and Christian traditions and remembered the great memories I've made over the years. I dyed Easter eggs. I went to church (virtually). I had an Easter brunch with my missionary family.



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).

How to reach me:  
Email: [courtney.zalmanoff@lcms.org](mailto:courtney.zalmanoff@lcms.org)  
WhatsApp: +1-314-541-1142

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Courtney in Latin America



We even had an egg hunt with chocolate and prizes! I sang *Alleluias* loud and praised my risen Savior. I chatted with my family and we celebrated together. Although I couldn't be with my loved ones at home, we still worship together the same God who is with us always, wherever we are.

April also helped me focus on another tradition and hobby I loved growing up: art! I participated in a 30-day bible lettering challenge with many other missionary women and children from around the LAC region. We had so much fun encouraging one another, creating art, lifting one another up in prayer, and reading scripture together. While I am no Picasso, I learned that with practice, I got better throughout the month and will continue to letter and use art to dedicate time to praying and reading Scripture.

Another tradition that we celebrated together as the Latin America & Caribbean region this month was a Spirit Week! I always enjoyed these special weeks of celebration during big events at school or camp growing up. Each day for a week, missionaries from all over the region submitted photos of them dressed up in fun costumes, using what we could find in our homes. It was a week of fun and encouragement all around! Hebrews 3:13 tells us to "encourage one another daily" and that's exactly what we continue to do!

I give thanks and sing *Alleluias* for my missionary family, friends, and each of you reading this, even though our interaction looks different these days. Let us continue to take comfort in the Easter promises given to us through the death and resurrection of our Savior. Know that I am praying for each of you, brothers and sisters, as we go forth together and serve the God who still has bigger and better plans than we could ever imagine! "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps" (Proverbs 16:9). Blessings!



Lettering! The art of drawing letters.

Left: On our last verse of April's lettering challenge, the missionary women and children created a collage of Psalm 27:4. Right: One of the daily verses I practiced lettering this month, John 8:36.

### Verse of the month!

"Pon tu esperanza en el Señor; ten valor, cobra ánimo;  
¡pon tu esperanza en el Señor!"  
Salmos (Psalm) 27:14

### Prayer Requests

- For our team and church members in Puerto Rico in the aftermath of continued earthquakes.
- For all those affected by disease, poverty, and loss.
- For those separated from loved ones.
- For mothers expecting children.
- Thanksgiving for a loving and merciful God!
- Praises for technology and the people we are able to share the Gospel with via the internet.
- Thanksgiving that I am able to continue working and for a supportive community.

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