

NEWS FROM
HOGARES LUTERANOS EL BUEN PASTOR
IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

August 2020
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Family!

We are so thankful for our aunts and uncles who daily take care of our kids. Over the next few months, we are going to take some time to tell you about them. Four of our six caregivers have been serving in the group home since the kids came to live with us in January of 2011! This allows for familial relationships of trust to form and creates a loving, stable home for the kids.

Tía Mella (*may-a*) is what we call her but her real name is Elizabeth Hernández. Mella has been an aunt to our kids from the very beginning. As one of our first church members in Palmar Arriba, she would visit the kids on a weekly basis when they still lived in the government orphanage.

Mella has been the group home program manager for 5 years. She oversees the implementation of the kids' individualized care plans, arranges the staff schedule, does the grocery shopping, accompanies the kids in activities outside the home, and helps in our thrift-gift store. She is on-call 24/7!

Deaconess Mella, (*on the far left in the picture*) was consecrated as a deaconess in 2017. A deaconess is a woman who is theologically trained to assist in care for people in their body and soul needs. Besides serving as an aunt in the group home, her responsibilities as a deaconess include teaching Bible classes in our Concordia Lutheran elementary school. Weekly she also helps her pastor in an outreach program in the local public school where they share Jesus' love through Bible stories, song, and prayer! Being a deaconess is a natural vocation for Mella as she has the gift of joyful service!



Photos: Top Left- Ramona, Francis, and Mella; Top Right- Estefani, Junior, and Mella
Bottom- Deaconess Consecration in Palmar Arriba, 2017

*But be doers of the word,
and not hearers only... James 1:22*

Devotions



When we could not meet for church due to COVID-19, devotions became even more important for the kids! They love to dress up as the characters in the Bible stories and act while Estefani narrates a simple play. Unfortunately, a few weeks ago we had to lock down tighter due to an outbreak in the town so Danelle did not go to the home to do the devotion. On his own, Moisés (pictured far left with Junior and Mella) got out the picture Bible and insisted that Mella (pictured right) do an impromptu devotion! We love seeing how the Lord works in the faith-life of the kids!



Change of Government

On August 16th a new political party will take control of the government here in the Dominican Republic. While we expect a peaceful change of power, many things are uncertain. Over the past eight years with the out-going government, public services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) have slowly grown in number which means more support for families and individuals. Societal awareness has improved, and there are more opportunities for inclusion of people with IDD in the greater community. We ask you to pray that the new government protect the lives and dignity of people with developmental disabilities, form and implement public special education services, and work toward creating programs that serve adults with IDD who currently have no public supports. We remain hopeful and ready to share the love of Christ and to advocate for the precious lives of people with disabilities!



Please keep us in your prayers during this time of pandemic.

We are doing our best to stay healthy!

Prayers for Tia Mella and our other caregivers.

We will also remember you in our prayers as the Lord provides for us through you!

Thank you so much!

Love: Estefani, Francis, Junior, Moises, Ramona, Randy

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