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Missouri Synod

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News from the Rickman Family serving in Latin America

Webpage: [www.lcms.org/rickman](http://www.lcms.org/rickman) Email: [Arthur.Rickman@lcms.org](mailto:Arthur.Rickman@lcms.org)

## Letters from Latin America

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I will hope in him.’”

-Lamentations 3:22-24-



Panama



Colombia



Mexico

....and other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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As this pandemic spreads, the United States and Latin America both are currently in the midst of a challenging time. The virus continues to spread putting strain on hospitals and health care workers, many are out of work, and at times it can seem like there is no end in sight. Yet, God continues to faithfully walk alongside each of us through whatever we are facing each day. He does not abandon His people and as the Body of Christ, we have the opportunity to reach out to our neighbors in need with His mercy.

In the past few weeks, Panama has rapidly become the hardest hit country in Central America. While it is a country of only 4 million people, it has a per capita infection rate over twice that of the USA and second only to Chile in all of Latin America. Hospitals have been on the verge of collapse with more patients than they can handle, and health care workers have threatened to strike due to a shortage of protective gear. Convention centers are being converted to provide extra space for more patients. Mexico has also been hit hard, especially in the border towns where severe weather and flooding has compounded the crisis.

We give thanks that one congregation in Panama has been completely spared as it is more isolated and thankfully there are no reported cases in that community. The other congregations, however, have been directly affected with many members, family members and members of the community infected with Covid-19. The strict quarantines and movement restrictions have also hindered the available work and increased the poverty in these communities. We give thanks for all who have helped us by contributing to the mercy projects providing funds for church workers and food for members of the churches and their communities in Mexico, Panama and other parts of Latin America.

During this challenging time, please join us in praying for God’s mercy upon all those affected by this illness as we trust in his steadfast love and put our hope in him each morning.



## Requests, Praises, and Thanks

- ...for health and safety for our family as we serve.
- ...pray for the seminarians, vicars and deaconess students throughout Latin America as they prepare for a new school year.
- ...for the safe return of our family to Panama once travel bans are lifted.
- ...thanks for the grace and eternal promises from the one who gives us all good things.
- ...thanks for all who make it possible for us to serve.
- ...for God's mercy for all those affected by this illness.

## Ministry Update cont.

In addition to coordinating relief efforts in Panama and Mexico, we have been busy preparing and sending out daily devotions and prayers for the members of our congregations. We have weekly live worship services via zoom each Sunday followed by a Bible Study in addition to a live zoom Bible Study for all the churches in Panama on Friday mornings and evenings. Portions of the service are then posted on the church's facebook page, for those who are unable to attend services live. They are also being shared by our members, so they are reaching others in their extended families and communities. We are encouraged as we are hearing about how former members, family of members and others are hearing God's Word from these resources, and we have been continuing to make contact with them individually. Both of us also continue encouraging fellow missionaries with God's Word by leading weekly men's / women's Bible studies for missionaries throughout Latin America. As we continue to check on members individually and provide them with continued support and spiritual care we rejoice with those who rejoice as loved ones fully recover and mourn with those who mourn as they lose friends and loved ones. Indeed these are trying times, but God continues to be faithful, drawing people to Him. As cases continue to rise, the airport in Panama extended their closure, so we continue to wait to return. Thank you for your prayers!

*Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!  
2 Corinthians 9:15*

We thank all of you for partnering with us and making it possible for us to share the most important message with those in Latin America! We are thankful for each of you walking alongside us!

In Christ <\*>

*Arthur and Eva,*

*Bethany, Zoe, Noah, Nathaniel and Mary Anna*



To support the work of the Rickman Family, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
P.O. Box 66861 St. Louis, MO 63166-6861.

ALSO, you can send your gift to:

Mission Central at 40718 Highway E-16, Mapleton, Iowa 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Support of the Rickman Family." Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at [www.lcms.org/rickman](http://www.lcms.org/rickman).