

missionaryMAC

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

Call me a delinquent Lutheran, but I've never read the *Book of Concord*...until 2021, that is. Instead of following a one-year Bible reading plan as I customarily do, I'm going to follow a one-year [Book of Concord reading plan](#). If you need a refresher from confirmation, the *Book of Concord's* table of contents consists of:

1. the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian);
2. the Augsburg Confession;
3. the Apology of the Augsburg Confession;
4. the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope;
5. Luther's Small and Large Catechisms; and
6. the Smalcald Articles.



Tirzah, Jamielynn, Courtney, & I enjoying sunset from the rooftop of Tirzah's apartment complex.

(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.)

There's No Reason to be Tense

English is weird. One way to elicit all of its oddities is to try teaching it. Some of its peculiarities are veiled until considered from a grammatical perspective. Take, for instance, the future tense. According to the [online TEFL certification course I'm working my way through](#), there are seven ways to express something that will happen, will be happening, or will have happened at some point in the future. *Two of them are disguised as the present tense.*

Stay with me. "Spring training starts on February 27" indicates the return of Major League Baseball next month by using the present simple verb "starts." Likewise, the sentence "I'm going to the beach" expresses a planned escape by using the present continuous verb phrase "am going." Before you go off on *too* much of a tangent about a language in which one drives on parkways and parks on driveways, Spanish uses the present to communicate the future, too, as does the language of the Christian faith.

I *am* baptized. That reality daily assures me that the promise of Romans 6:8 is mine for all eternity: "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him."

I *have* God's living and active Word at my fingertips. Psalm 119:105 declares, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." The Spirit-inspired Scriptures illumine my heavenward journey until I reach its blessed destination.

And lastly, I *taste* Christ's true body and blood in His Holy Supper, but Isaiah 25:6 points to the banquet foreshadowed in this meal: "On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine..."

Indeed, anxiety and worry have no place in a present that points with such certainty to a glorious future.





Praises and Petitions

1. Thanksgiving for the first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine in the US.
2. Thanksgiving that the Dominican government reinstated corporate worship after just one week of a ban that took effect as of 1/1/21.
3. Thanksgiving for the launch of a second *Castillo Fuerte* after-school program in Lima, Peru.
4. Thanksgiving for the faithful service of the Schlund family (Mexico), transitioning to a call in New Orleans, LA, this month.
5. For fellow missionaries Justin & Jordan (Belize) and family at the sudden loss of Jordan's sister the week before Christmas.

New Year, New Preaching Station

As the calendar flips to a new year, we celebrate not only the start of 2021 but the fact that the DRLM counts a new and utterly unexpected preaching station amongst its ministry sites: San José de Ocoa. This initial phase in planting a church in the community a ~2 hr. drive west of Santo Domingo originated with a connection only our Almighty God could have brought about, which led to the Baptism of seven residents at Iglesia Luterana Amigos de Cristo in Santo Domingo in September 2020. Regular visits (devotions and children's activities) by the Santo Domingo ministry team commenced in October and progressed to the first service of the Word with four more Baptisms on December 12. That same joyous day, 18 children expressed a desire to be baptized. Pastoral visits with each of their families are a priority in the new year, as is seeking a more permanent meeting space than the street or an open-air covered patio.

Home Service Corner

Watch for more details regarding my 2021 home service plans soon.



Top left: Learning about the Christian symbolism of the candy cane at Pueblo Nuevo's women's Advent event. Bottom left: Fellow missionary Clarion subbed for Courtney, my usual partner in crime, for the last ESL class of 2020 in Licey. Right: Grocery stores here don't always have "American" sweet potatoes, but they're more common at this time of year. I found a supersized one recently!



Quote of the Month

"The Lord gives burden, but He also gives shoulders."

—Yiddish proverb

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

- **online**, securely from any device: lcms.org/givenow/mackenzie;
- by **calling** a donor care representative: 1-888-843-5267; or
- by **sending a check** (with "Mackenzie/Latin America" on the memo line) to:
 - ⇒ LCMS, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861; or
 - ⇒ Mission Central, 40718 Highway E 16, Mapleton, IA 51034.

*Muchi
risimas
gracias*