



## missionaryMAC

News from Erin Mackenzie, serving the Lord in Latin America & the Caribbean | [missionaryMAC.blogspot.com](http://missionaryMAC.blogspot.com)

Thank you for your prayers “for a peaceful resolution to my ongoing housing dilemma.” After months of anxious waiting, I learned that I will NOT be returning to my first home on the field. Even as I continue to grieve this loss, I’m excited to leave behind the apartment I’ve been calling “home” since July 1, 2021. In the spirit of gratitude, here are five positive things about a temporary landing place that’s...had its moments:

1. I’m a staircase away from fellow missionaries and friends living in the unit below mine.
2. I can count on one hand the number of cockroaches I’ve seen in the past 9 months.
3. No yardwork (er...paying someone to do yardwork)!
4. Freddy enjoys being able to look out the floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors that lead to the balcony off the living room.
5. I know the owner of the closest *colmado* by name, and my regular delivery person is a sweet older gentleman who carries my 5 gallon *botellones* of water right to my [2nd floor] front door.

(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](mailto:erin.mackenzie@lcms.org).)

### I Am a “d”eaconess

In my October 2018 newsletter, I wrote about how I am a Church Planter.

In my March 2020 newsletter, I wrote about how I am a Teacher.

I am also a lowercase “d” deaconess. Not a capital “D” Deaconess trained in the history and practice of this special role within our Church body and with a closet full of navy, but a woman of God who works within my vocations to demonstrate Christ’s mercy to those around me and point them back to Him. It’s right there as the 3rd of the emphases embraced by all OIM missionaries: Spreading the Gospel, Planting Lutheran Churches, and *Showing Mercy*. As a lay missionary in a supporting role, this looks like

1. **Learning the connection between mercy and church planting.** God has me in the right place—the seat of a mission born out of disability ministry—for a master class in how caring for others’ physical, mental, and emotional needs is a natural segue for the means of grace.
2. **Facilitating short-term volunteer service.** Looking after the basic needs of visitors to the island and putting them at ease in unfamiliar environs is, in and of itself, merciful. Moreover, I open doors and create avenues for them to perform merciful acts for their brothers and sisters in Christ in a culture and language not their own.
3. **Being the Church.** Good Shepherd Lutheran Homes, a DRLM NGO, functions as the mercy arm of its five congregations, instilling a culture of compassion in the hearts of members. Together with my local body of believers, I reach out with hands and feet of mercy to those inside the fold and out.

My shoulder doesn’t bear a cross insignia, but my prayer is to ever “bind [mercy and truth] around [my] neck, write them on the tablet of [my] heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man,” (Prov. 3:3-4, NKJV).





### Praises and Petitions

1. Thanksgiving for [the Josephs'](#) arrival in the DR for on-field orientation before they deploy to Uruguay.
2. Thanksgiving for [Gary & Sue Kessler](#) (Belize), who recently accepted a Solemn Appointment to serve as GEO missionaries.
3. Thanksgiving for a successful first short-term team-hosting experience for fellow missionary [Ashley Lehr](#).
4. For LAC's regional leadership as they divide and conquer during this busy season of FORO partnership meetings.
5. For CMSCR's two residential pastoral formation graduates as they wrap up their studies and prepare their families for international moves.

### The Brazilians are Coming!

I've made the roughly 2 1/2 hour (one way) drive from Santiago to Santo Domingo a whopping FIVE times for work-related reasons already in 2022. On one occasion, my mission was to pick up three Vice Presidents from the *Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil* (IELB). They'd join delegates from LAC, Africa, and the OIM executive leadership team for three days of meetings in Santiago to hash out the continuance of a historic Alliance missionary partnership forged in 2021. Together, the multilingual group delved into the nitty gritty of a concept



*IELB Alliance missionary Rev. Lucas Elberhardt celebrated his birthday AND 1 yr. of service in the DR on 2/27.*

that's as complex as it sounds: calling cross-cultural missionaries from sister church bodies, such as IELB, to serve alongside their North American counterparts, and supporting them at the field level. And yet, what a beautiful picture of the generational nature of mission work in action! There are currently four IELB missionaries in LAC, and we look forward to welcoming more in God's perfect timing.



*Above: All 3 Santiago congregations now have active women's ministries. Here, I participate in Pueblo Nuevo's love-themed February fellowship event.*

*Below: My church hosted a wedding on 3/6 as Anne, an expat friend of mine, married Lester, whom she met here.*



*Above: Rocking the first aid kit I got at the 2021 Volunteer Coordinators conference while hosting a recent short-term team. (No, I never had to use it!)*

### Quote of the Month

"Don't dig up in doubt what you have planted by faith."

—Elisabeth Elliot

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