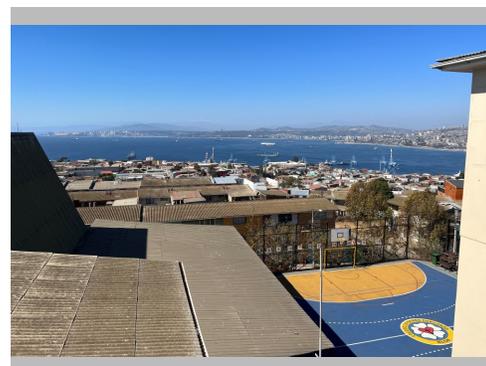




## “I Facilitate an Area”

*What is an Area Facilitator and what do I do?*



**Left** Having lunch with some of the kids and teachers of Castillo Fuerte Mercy House in Lima. Director Laura Mendoza is in the foreground on the left and Pastor Walterson Siewert, an alliance missionary from Paraguay, is at the other end of the table. **Right** There's a lovely view from the roof of Concordia Lutheran School in Valparaiso, Chile. **Below** It took about an hour to get through customs in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, with 700 newly-printed copies of Luther's Small Catechism in Quechua, spoken by about 10 million people in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and parts of Chile and Argentina.



Elias is home!

*We are all together again in Montevideo while Elias is home for his summer break. He just finished his sophomore year at the Synod's boarding high school in Concordia, Missouri, and we are very proud of him. He made the trip back all by himself (he assures me it's "no big deal").*

*He'll spend the summer with us before he heads back in August for his junior year—and Ambrose will be joining him as a freshman this year. We are very thankful for this wonderful Christian school that has been a place where Elias has grown and thrived.*

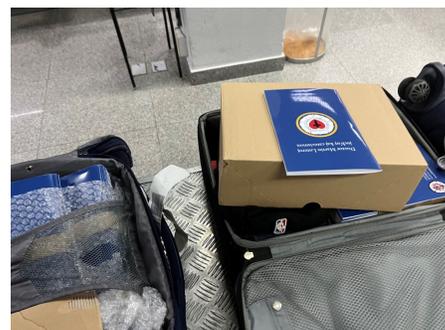
To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to [james.sharp@lcms.org](mailto:james.sharp@lcms.org) with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

For the last couple of years, part of my assignment as a missionary has been as Area Facilitator in our Latin America & Caribbean region. People ask me what an area facilitator does and I invariably answer, “Uh, I facilitate an area.” It’s a little joke I think is funny (not many people agree), but there is truth to it.

We have four area facilitators in our region. We work as part of the regional leadership and report to the Regional Director. The countries we work with—either our missions or partner churches—are then divided up among us. My countries I “facilitate” are Uruguay, Chile, Peru, and Bolivia. I also work sometimes with Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina when it comes to mission cooperation. What I do depends on the country. With Peru, which is an LCMS mission, I am the supervisor of the mission. I approve vacations, meet regularly with the team, approve budget reports, and lots of other things. With Chile and Uruguay, for example, where we have partner churches, I might help with a grant request form. I funnel questions for the LCMS to the right people. My joke definitely has truth to it—I work to make mission easier in my area.

I have been blessed to do some neat things as area facilitator—to be present for the first ordination of a national pastor in Peru, and to be the one who

brought the Small Catechism in the indigenous language of Quechua to the assembly of the Lutheran Church of Bolivia, or to help the Confessional Lutheran Church of Chile get a grant to purchase a handicapped-accessible van to expand its ministry to adults with disabilities. I also really enjoy working with the younger pastors whom I can



mentor and encourage. Of course, it's not all “neat” - most of it is working on budgets and other administrative things that aren't fun but are very necessary.

While I still spend the majority of my time and energy working on planting new churches in Uruguay, I know that work as an area facilitator is important. I especially like applying what I've learned to help other missionaries learn and grow and be happier and more effective in their lives and ministries.

# Canelones Mission



*Pastor Elvis Carrera leads the congregation in Los Olivos, Lima, Peru, in worship. Pastor Carrera is one of the young pastors whom I mentor.*

## PLEASE PRAY FOR US:

- Thank God for time together as a family for all of our kids, and for our kids' spiritual, physical, and academic growth.
- Pray for our sister churches and missions throughout South America. Pray for our missionaries and (often young) national pastors to be faithful and diligent, for the Lord to add many to the number of believers, and that every believer be moved to share the Good News with their neighbors, friends, and families.
- Pray for Ester, the widow of Roberto, upon his death. Ask the Lord to give her strength and comfort. Roberto heard the Word of God and asked for a Christian funeral. Pray that the promises of God in Christ be a comfort to those who mourn his passing.
- We are still looking for a more permanent home for the downtown mission. Pray that we find one soon, and give thanks that we will be opening a new location in the northern mission in Salto.



Montevideo's metropolitan area. The two stars are our main church in Prado and the downtown mission. You can see how Costa de Oro is a densely populated area along the coast. This area is a focus of our church planting effort in the area. It's about 25 miles from my house to Ciudad de la Costa and takes about 45 minutes to drive. (Google Maps)



***Our next congregation is beginning to form in Costa de Oro.***

## CHURCH PLANTING

I have mentioned over the last couple of years how we are working east of Montevideo ("on the other side of the airport") in what I was calling "Canelones Mission" after the name of the "department" (kind of like a county). We have narrowed our focus in the increasingly heavily populated area that was historically called "Costa de Oro" (Gold Coast). It's not necessarily a wealthy area but is "golden" because of the long stretches of sandy beaches. It was an area of small towns called "balnearios" - beach towns and small resorts that people went to on weekends and in the summertime. Over time, people who worked in Montevideo began moving permanently to this area, turning it into a bedroom community. This has been the fastest-growing part of Uruguay for many years now. In

1994, the balnearios closest to Montevideo were merged into a new city—Ciudad de la Costa, which in 2011 passed the northern city of Salto to be the second-largest city in Uruguay. We have many confirmed members and contacts who have moved to this area. One of the reasons it's so important to plant new churches is not only to reach new people but also to hold on to the members you already have.

We now have three groups of members and new contacts meeting in houses along this route. As these new groups grow, the next step will be looking for a convenient building where we can begin more public ministry, including English classes and other outreach activities to make new contacts, as well as Bible studies and worship services. The goal is grow this area into a self-supporting parish and to identify and train leaders, both laypeople and potential church workers, to carry on the work indefinitely. Pray for our mission in Costa de Oro!

*We know we would not be doing this important work without your help.*

*For your prayers, support, and encouragement, THANK YOU!*

*Yours in the True Light,*

*James, Angie,  
Elias, Ambrose, Callie, and Maggie  
John 1:9*



To support the LCMS through the work of James and Angie Sharp and family, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

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

or

Mission Central  
40718 Highway E 16  
Mapleton, Iowa 51034

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](http://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."