



THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

NEWS FROM THE FRITSCHÉ FAMILY

March/April/May 2019

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Coat of Arms from the flag of the Dominican Republic

HOME SERVICE JUNE 2019

6/2 (Sunday)

Our Savior - Houston, TX

6/3 (Monday)

Immanuel - Houston, TX

6/5 (Wednesday)

Gethsemane - Houston, TX

6/9 (Sunday)

Immanuel - Bossier City, LA

6/12 (Wednesday)

LCMS International Center

6/16 (Sunday)

Hope - Jerseyville, IL (morning)

Redeemer - Peoria, IL (evening)

6/17 (Monday)

Redeemer - Peoria, IL (VBS morning)

Christ our Savior - Freeburg, IL (7pm)

6/19-21 (Wednesday-Friday)

LWML National Conv. - Mobile, AL

6/23 (Sunday)

Hope - St. Louis, MO

6/24-27 (Monday-Thursday)

Higher Things - CUNE - Seward, NE

6/30 (Sunday)

Holy Cross - Collinsville, IL

We will share our JULY schedule in the next couple of weeks!



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to joel.fritsche@lcmsintl.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

Shout for joy to God, all the Earth!



Transformation of the new sanctuary at our mission in Pueblo Nuevo!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! The joyous Easter refrain still rings out as we celebrate our Lord's Ascension and round out the Easter season. We have been joyfully engaged in mission and ministry here in the DR and we finally have a few days of breathe before we head to the states for two months of home service.

The last three months have been filled with FORO, travels, a church move, our second theological symposium with 70 in attendance, a mercy conference and the first official seminary graduation. That has kept me incredibly busy, but also left me with much to write about.

Let's start with our work at the local mission in Pueblo Nuevo. The congregation is about eight years old. It has worshiped in three different locations during that time, each one serving well, but having its challenges. The second of those locations was on the second floor, which was challenging. All the spaces, however, have been small, which has of late proven to be a challenge. Not long ago we started noticing that when visitors came and didn't see many empty chairs, they tended not to return. So after nearly four years in our location, we began looking around the community for another space.

One of our members mentioned a house that was for rent on the main street near our former location. It had ample space outside. We wanted some space for our children to be able to have activities and play after services. We went to check it out, but were distracted by a large commercial 5-story building next door. We decided to sneak a peek inside. We noticed that there appeared to be no current tenants. The building manager opened up for us to take a look at the first level. We liked what we saw and scheduled a meeting with the owner. The price was much higher than our current rent. But after sharing a proposal with our partners at the Spring Foro, two congregational partners stepped up each to help cover the rent. Thanks to Our Savior in Houston, TX and St. Michaels in Ft. Meyers, FL. With their support and the commitment of the owner to transform the space, we signed a contract. You can see above what it looked like when we signed the contract and about six weeks later when we had our dedication service.

There is much to rejoice in at Pueblo Nuevo as we now have a bigger space and plans for more community outreach. Please pray for us as we continue to plant churches, share God's Word and show mercy in Pueblo Nuevo, Santiago, DR! Christ is risen! Alleluia!

CMSCR Symposium and Graduation



Presenting on our seminary at the symposium

These past three months have been a whirlwind. Lots of time and energy went into our Pueblo nuevo move. On top of that, we have spent the last several months planning for a second annual Theological Symposium. An event like this is a team effort. It required weekly meetings for the past three months to make sure every detail from travel, transportation, housing, meals and worship, among others, are all taken care of.

This year we hosted church body presidents, Bible Institute and Seminary directors from 19 countries around our region. For the first time at our symposium we had guests from Haiti, Costa Rica Nicaragua and Cuba. Both of our LCMS seminaries were represented as well.

Last year's symposium celebrated 500 years since of the Heidelberg Disputation, focusing on the Theology

of the Cross. This year we considered the theme "The Comfort of the People of God in the Midst of Suffering." We covered five perspectives on this theme: 1) Old Testament, 2) New Testament, 3) Early Church, 4) The Reformation, and 5) Latin America. I was privileged to kick things off with a paper on "Comfort" in the Old Testament.



Symposium group photo

After three days of Symposium, our Mercy Center offered a 1-day conference on reconciliation with Ambassadors of Reconciliation. Our goal was to give a taste of this workshop that is being offered on a more in-depth level in individual countries around the region.

This grand event culminated with our first official graduation service in which 8 men (5 residential and 3 SMP distance students) graduated with their respective degrees in theology. Three



8 CMSCR Graduates of 2019

are already ordained and serving congregations. The other five, Lord willing, over the next few months will be ordained and begin serving in their respective countries, or perhaps in another country as one of our alliance missionaries.

As Director of our seminary, I was privileged to preach for the service. Nothing would be possible without our Lord's hand in providing fantastic colleagues and wonderful partners like all of you. To God be the glory!

Pastor Joel Fritsche



Preaching at the graduation

Seminarian Elvis Carrera (PERU)



You have no doubt seen pictures of Seminarian Elvis Carrera in previous issues of our newsletter. Elvis is a third-year student from Lima, Peru. He is a third generation Lutheran. He is preparing to return to Peru for his vicarage, after which he will be our first ordained Peruvian pastor of our LCMS mission in Peru. Elvis was studying Systems Engineering when he made the decision to study to be a pastor. He has been quite an evangelist as we engage the community in Pueblo Nuevo. He has been a pleasure to mentor and work with. Elvis is 26 years old. He is married to Rosalba and they have one daughter, Kaory. Please keep Elvis, Rosalba and Kaory in your prayers in the days and weeks ahead as they return to Peru for this critical part of his formation for ministry!

Updates from the Missionary Wife

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- The eight graduates and six new vicars of Concordia Seminary the Reformer.
- Our family as we head to the USA for 8 weeks of home service.
- Our congregation in Pueblo Nuevo as we adjust to our new location, especially during the absence of Pastor Fritsche during his home service.
- The short term team from Our Savior Houston coming to the DR June 2-8.
- The father of missionary colleague, Pastor James Sharp, who is in critical condition in Texas.

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- Paul Flo, our former vicar who received his first call to serve as Associate Pastor at Hope Lutheran Church in South Sioux City, NE.
- One baptism and three new confirmands in Pueblo Nuevo this past Easter.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- New missionaries headed to our Latin America and Caribbean field in the coming months.
- You, our wonderful supporters! We are looking forward to seeing many of you this summer.



Andrei with his friends in "tardes creativas"

Home service, here we come! We are so excited to be headed back to the US this month to visit churches and have some time with family.

The past few months have flown and we are so blessed with the experiences we have had.

It was our joy to participate in the move of our church in Pueblo Nuevo to a new location. The boys hauled boxes, took apart shelves, put new tables together, organized chairs, and ran errands to the neighborhood shop for us. It was so heart warming to see the infectious excitement of a new location effect them as well. They are so proud of their "new church."

They were also so proud to see the graduation of some of their seminary friends. It has been really fun to see the relationships that the boys have with these young men. There was much celebrating with the first graduating

class of Concordia seminary the Reformer. We will miss all of our friends but wish them the best!

We had a great finish to the school year, ourselves. Viktor finished his first year at Wittenberg Academy with a 2,500 word paper on God's promises. Sergei and I enjoyed the happy endings in Shakespeare's "As You Like It" Andrei didn't quite finish his level 1B of Well Ordered Language and is determined to finish it over the summer before he starts level 2 next year. We have learned a lot and are ready for summer.

We look forward to seeing many of you this summer on home service. We are so blessed by your prayers and support. We wouldn't be here without you and can't wait to share our lives with you as we visit your church. Bendiciones y abrazos!

Clarion



The Fritsche boys helping out at the new location!

We are blessed to be serving our Lord in the Dominican Republic. The Lord is blessing the preaching of His Word and the administration of His sacraments. We are grateful for your partnership in this work. God bless you all!

In Christ,

**Rev. Joel & Clarion Fritsche
Viktor, Sergei and Andrei**



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. Click on "Service Opportunities."

To support the LCMS through the work of Joel & Clarion Fritsche, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

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

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Support of Rev. Joel Fritsche." Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at lcms.org/fritsche.

Mission Central
40718 Highway E16
Mapleton, IA 51034

MARCH TO MAY IN PICTURES

