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## The Calm Before the Storm



Viktor Fritsche with a pallet of water bottles in our van in preparation for Hurricane Irma.



Coat of Arms from the flag of the Dominican Republic



### THANK YOU TO...

St. John's Lutheran Church in Washburn, Illinois. The congregation has supported missionaries for over 20 years. They not only support us financially, but they contact us regularly to check on us and let us know that we are loved!

To learn more about the TIM program visit the website...

<https://www.lcms.org/TogetherinMission>



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Greetings in the name of Jesus from the Dominican Republic! Our last newsletter was entitled, "And so it begins." The first two months back in the DR after home service were filled with re-adjusting to life in the field, including the change of living in two cities, making preparations for the opening of our seminary, and pastoring our congregation in Santo Domingo. Honestly, I thought that was a lot. Literally, it was the calm before the storm. Well, let's say two storms. That is, two hurricanes to be exact. Although, thanks be to God, both hurricanes passed far enough north to spare us major damage, preparations were necessary. Before Irma, our team, including a few newly arrived seminary students prepared disaster response kits to distribute in our communities. The kits included things like rice, beans, soap, laundry detergent, baby wipes and other essentials. We also loaded an entire pallet of bottles in our van and

another in the Preus family van. Teams of missionaries and church members assembled the kits. A plan is in place to distribute the kits once the hurricane season passes. For now, they stand ready and assembled in case of a storm. I was proud of my boys, Viktor and Sergei for helping assemble the kits. It was a spur-of-the-moment course of action, but it was wonderful to see our missionary community, one of our church communities and our new seminary community come together to be the Lord's hands and feet in front of a potential disaster. What a thing for our new students to be a part of, even before setting foot in the classroom to study theology. Our theology of mercy was put into action even as they stepped off of their planes into a new country for their new journeys toward pastoral ministry. How is that for opening the doors of a seminary. God's mercy in action. As seminary Director, that fills me with great joy!

# Beyond the Storm...

Even as both hurricanes passed us by, there was no calm afterwards. What I mean by that is that things have not slowed down. September and October were filled with the arrival of seminary students, the beginning of classes, a week with a short-term team from Plymouth, Wisconsin, a trip to Ft. Wayne for Disaster Response Conference, our Fall FORO, ordination of our second Dominican Lutheran pastor, consecration of four Dominican deaconesses, LERT training workshops by LCMS Disaster Response here in the DR, re-establishing times with our members for weekly evangelistic visits in Las Americas, bringing seminary student field workers into our church plants, three family birthdays and two flat tires on our van. We also celebrated 500 years of the Reformation with all of our mission congregations.

Currently at the seminary we have 8 students in residence from six different countries, including the Dominican. We are still wrestling with visa complications for two students from Bolivia. For now, they are participating in classes online. We just finished a workshop on culture shock for students and their wives. Even though they are all Latino, not all Latino cultures are the same, and the Dominican Republic isn't Chili, Mexico or Peru.

One of our supporting congregations sent a short-term mission team to Santo Domingo for a week in early September. They landscaped, put in a new drainage system and poured a concrete walkway. They also provided funds for a project to build a basketball

court on the back side of our property. We hope to start moving on that project in the near future.

Joel attended the LCMS Disaster Response conference in Ft. Wayne. A significant number of presidents from our Latin American church bodies were in attendance. This gave him the opportunity to meet them and establish a relationship with them as we work together to receive their students and send them back prepared for pastoral ministry.

Our Fall FORO brought a number of our major partners of the Dominican Mission, congregations and organizations who not only support in a big way financially, but also take a seat at the table, bringing their knowledge and experience to assist us in planning our work on the field. They are a tremendous blessing to us.

We have a new Dominican Lutheran pastor, Idjon Fritz, serving at our mission in Palmar Arriba. This is a critical part of our work as we plant churches and raise up pastors to shepherd not only those congregations, but to plant new ones. This is at the core of why we have established a seminary here in the Dominican Republic. They go hand in hand. Pastor Justin Massey, former DR missionary vicar, joined us for the celebration.



Thursday evening weekly Bible study in Las Americas



The ordination of Idjon Fritz as the second Dominican Lutheran pastor.



## GETTING TO KNOW OUR SEM STUDENTS

Concordia Seminary the Reformer, although being a regional seminary, is first and foremost a seminary for the Dominican Republic Lutheran Mission. Our first priority is to have Dominican students. The second is to have students from our active LCMS mission fields in Latin America. The third is to have students from our partner Lutheran church bodies in Latin America. We are blessed to have two current students from the Dominican with another possible student beginning next trimester. Our students are active in the classroom, but also in the field.

Pictured on the left is first-year student, **Adonis Jimenez**. He is from Palmar Arriba where the seminary is located. I have known Adonis for the nearly three years we have been on the field. He is a very active member of his congregation, has participated in pre-seminary Bible study and activities and is now serving as a field worker with us on the weekends in Las Americas. Last Saturday we visited Hilda, a member of our church who cares for her homebound husband, which makes it difficult for her to be in church regularly. Adonis shared God's Word with her.



Our new seminary t-shirt with logo designed by Pr. Jonathan Naumann

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

- Pastor Willy Gaspar and his family. He is on medical leave for the rest of the year.
- Our new evangelistic efforts, including regular weekly visits in Las Americas.
- Joel's father, Alvin Fritsche, who is having health issues and will be starting dialysis in the near future.
- A solution to the visa struggles of our Bolivian students, so they can arrive soon.

**GIVE THANKS FOR:**

- Wonderful birthday celebrations for Vik, Joel and Clarion during September and October.

**PRAISE GOD FOR:**

- Joel's parents will be able to visit us in the DR for Christmas!
- Fellow missionaries who labor alongside us to accomplish the Lord's mission here in the DR.
- The celebration of 500 years of the Reformation!

# Updates from the Missionary Wife



*Clarion spent her birthday at a deaconess class with several ladies from our church.*

Where does the time go? It seems we just arrived back from home service and it is already the end of October!

We are so happy to report that things are going well for our family here in the Dominican Republic.

We continue to travel to and from Santiago. While this definitely has it's ups and downs, we enjoy the time in both places.

We are very fortunate to be moving into a home in Santiago in November for the days that we spend there, which is usually Monday through Thursday. Our friends, the Lohmeyers, are moving back to the US and we will be able to move into their house. The house is right next door to Pastor Fritzler and his family. So, we are overjoyed to make

the move. It also has some outdoor space for the dogs and boys. Hence, Pop and Mom really can't wait!

Schooling continues to go well and every day the boys are learning and growing. November holds the opportunity to play bells in a choir directed by Cheryl Naumann. Piano lessons with Rebecca Krey have begun for Viktor. Andrei has been cleared to have Human Growth Hormone therapy treatment. We hope to get him started before the end of the year. We are blessed with three energetic boys who are ready for what missionary work will throw at them.

For this missionary wife, I am humbled to be here and serve in any way I can. I enjoy being a help and support. I am encouraged by the women pictured with me above. Although it is not always easy living in a foreign country the love of God shines through those that I work with, pray with, celebrate with, and mourn with. Those faces and people are what missionary work is all about. The body of Christ, showing His mercy and caring for one another. We praise God for the opportunity to do so!

Abrazos y bendiciones a todos! Hugs and blessings to all!

*Clarion*

*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](http://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  
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