

The Preus Family in the Dominican Republic

To print this newsletter, please click here for the pdf version in order to make available to interested parties who don't have email access. Thank you!

Also, we are putting together a picture gallery from the past few months and will be sending it soon, as well as sharing many pictures to our mission's Facebook page.

Feliz Epifanía!

Dear Christian friends and partners in Christ's mission: Happy Epiphany! On Christmas Day, Christ joined our family forever. During this season, we celebrate the same Jesus who now invites us to become part of His family and share in His glory. The pace of life has really picked up here in the Dominican Republic. We hope you enjoy our updates and photographs that tell the story. Your continued prayers and support are so appreciated.

"Poco a poco"

"Poco a poco," a common phrase I'm sure I overuse each day, means, "little by little." That's the life of the Preus family in the Dominican Republic. We have just entered our third month of missionary life, and each day has its new challenges even as we march forward to accomplish our four-month goals. (The orientation period officially lasts four months, and then I will assume by fulltime load as pastor.) We keep plugging along with the Spanish-in the classroom every Tuesday to Friday, through occasional preaching, teaching the Augsburg Confession to our deaconess students, and conducting the liturgy each Sunday morning and Wednesday evening. This Wednesday, Vicar Idjon and I began visiting each member and former member of our congregation, while looking for opportunities to make evangelism calls in the community. Soon, I will add to my routine the regular preaching at the Escuela Luterana la Concordia (Concordia Lutheran School) every other Friday morning. Meanwhile, during the evening hours, I am working hard to develop a curriculum proposal for our new seminary, which is due to open this July.

I look forward to my installation as pastor of Iglesia Luterana la Concordia (Concordia Lutheran Church) on March 5 at the eight o'clock morning service. God has given us a tremendous opportunity to feed the people of Palmar Arriba with his everlasting Word, the food that endures forever (John 6:27).



While, it is true that we have more to do than is possible, we command all things to God for whom nothing is impossible (Matthew 19:26). In addition to work and study, the family has enjoyed a few outings around town, mostly shopping excursions, and we've also visited a few cultural sites on the city center. We are certainly enjoying the Dominican cuisine and we are blessed to be surrounded by good people. We look forward to many more adventures and continued blessings from our caring Savior.

"Who can this be?"

Everything in the Bible was written to answer the question Jesus' disciples asked with astonishment upon watching their Lord calm the ferocious sea. "Who can this be," they ask, "that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" This is the most fundamental question in all of Scripture: Who is this? He is an ordinary man who sleeps because He's tired. He's like you and me: flesh and blood, born of a woman, born under the law, living under certain weather conditions. And this man is also God. He is the Lord and Creator of everything. He is the eternal Son of God by whom and through whom all things were made.

His Word sustains the world; His voice directs its course and authorizes its seasons. He is both 100% God and 100% man. That is what we know about Jesus because that's what the Bible, which is God's Word, reveals to us.

During Epiphany, we celebrate the God-man. "Who can this be?" Who is the baby in the manger? Who is the twelve-year-old boy in the temple? Who is the humble guest with his mother at the Wedding of Cana? Who is the man sleeping in the boat? Who is the man who stands upon the Mountain of Transfiguration, His face shining as bright as the sun? Who is the man who sets His face to Jerusalem to carry the world's sins to the cross? He is our powerful Savior. He is our gracious Lord. By His might He has ordered heaven and earth to serve His grace towards us sinners. As great and powerful as God is, He is even more gracious. Everything He did from His birth to His death to His resurrection to His ascension to the right hand of God-everything He is from eternity to eternity-is pure love-in-action for us. How blessed we are to know as missionaries that the One who has been given all power in heaven and on earth is the One who sends missionaries to bring His mercy to every nation! He is with us, and even when we are assailed by tempests and trials, the sea rises against us, and our best efforts are fraught with difficulty, our mission-no, His mission-will succeed!



Reflections from home, by Jennifer

We have been up to *muchas cosas* (many things) since you last heard from us! The older kids have been studying American history in homeschool as well as their daily math and other subjects. Our free time consists of game nights, reading aloud as a family, frequent get-togethers with other missionary friends, and playing

outside with the water-hose, on the (fenced-in) rooftop, picking lemons and peas from our backyard trees, or just lounging on the porch for an afternoon siesta. We have also taken some field trips around Santiago as well as attending weekly church services at the mission plants. Hans has started reading the Inheritance series and Rebekah is enjoying the Babysitter Club stories. We have recently gotten a membership at a local school's library that rents out books in English, which is helping to quell their unceasing appetite for more books! Having received an electronic keyboard from Jenny's parents for Christmas, the older four kids have resumed piano practice again. The little boys (Søren and Leif) have recently started attending a nearby preschool during the weekday morning hours of 8am-12pm. The main reason for this is to give them a start on learning Spanish while also making it possible for Jenny to leave the house for three hours every morning for her formal Spanish language lessons at the Berlitz language center. David is in his third month of language learning there and has about one more month of classes to go before he is done with initial, formal language training.

Meanwhile, he continues to assist with the liturgy during church services, provide visitation with members, and many other various tasks as need arises, such as most recently helping to paint the church sanctuary in Palmar Arriba. We are thankful for an overall smooth transition toward establishing our family home here, and we pray for continued good health, productivity, and contentment in the months ahead as we live and serve for the purpose of teaching the pure and saving gospel of Jesus Christ, whose perfect sacrifice on the cross covered the sins of people in every nation, and here in the Dominican Republic!



Hasta la Proxima!

Until the next edition of "The Preus Family in the Dominican Republic," we wish you safe passage through this present winter. (I heard it got pretty cold up there!) Soon we will be in that holy season of Lent anticipating the dawn of Christ's righteousness through His glorious resurrection from the dead. How blessed we are to have such a solid hope! Please stay with us as we



Freshly painted sanctuary in Palmar Arriba.

journey through the Lord's vineyard in the Dominican Republic. We love you and cherish your thoughts, prayers, and financial support!

In Christ,

Pastor David Preus and family

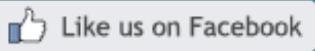
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