

July 12, 2024

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

At Grace

Greetings in His name. We pray that this letter finds you well. We are writing to thank you for your support and prayers and to share what is happening.

Our Sunday service at 10am has received many visitors during these summer months. It is a blessing to receive fellow LCMS members who are visiting Puerto Rico, some to visit family and others to get married! Last weekend, Gustavo shared God's word with a hundred people gathered for a beach wedding. We are continuing with the Wednesday Bible study, craft and mealtime fellowship. This connection time allows relationship building in the church family and strengthens our faith.

We thank God for your prayers for our church members. Jose, an electrician, has been serving as treasurer and helping with our church paperwork. Carlos, a contractor, and Madeline, a hair stylist, frequently cook food for our gatherings. Emmanuel and Miriangely, call center specialists, serve with music, attendance and bulletins. Sandra, a teacher, has been using her crafting-skills for outreach opportunities in our church. (At her first workshop, eleven women joined to learn card making and several continue to gather). Sonia, a grandmother, prepares the Lord's supper. Our fellow missionary, Ashley Lehr, a social worker, is currently studying to be a deaconess. Pastor Gustavo preaches Christ crucified, Ruth helps with the piano accompaniment while the baby Ivanna (3 months) is content, and Mikhaela (4), Isaiah (2) have been learning to listen quietly (and play) without running around.

Family update: we continue to transition to life with three active young ones. One blessing of having young children is the opportunities to gather with young families! In June we had an event with 3 families where we played games, read a bible story; did a craft and sang "Jesus loves me." We plan to have another such event next week.

Baby Ivanna is learning how to make eye contact and loves to smile. She can make cooing sounds and turns her head to the noise and movement of her siblings. Her sister Mikhaela loves to hold her. Mikhaela also loves to prune the bushes and make "soup" with leaves and flowers and play with magnetic tiles. Isaiah loves monster machines, which he calls "Monster-chines." He also loves balls, bikes, and digging in the dirt.

In the fall we will begin English classes for adults and a new class for kids. We have received a donation of books from Ascension Lutheran in North Carolina and have been organizing a space for children to learn to read. Only 40% of fourth graders in Puerto Rico

can read at their grade level. I will continue making a monthly event with the mothers and young children. I'm also organizing a weekly Wednesday craft so that I can invite and encourage the ladies to join us for that craft and the Bible study that follows.

Thank you for praying for these activities and all others currently happening.

God bless you,

Thank you family in Christ!
We love you.

Gustavo, Ruth, Mikhaeala, Isaiah and Ivanna Maita

♥ Maita family