

# The Next Chapter...



Picture taken by: Corry Frazier Photography

by **Kari (and Justin) Eller**

Global Mission Personnel - ELCA

August - November, 2015

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*let the peace of christ rule in your hearts,  
since as members of one body you were  
called to peace. and be thankful.*

-Colossians 3:15

On Sunday the 22nd, we celebrated Thanksgiving early with friends. There was great conversation, delicious food, and children playing. For just a few hours, the signs of spring all around us gave way to the smells of fall and tastes of traditional family recipes both from the U.S. and Argentina, reminding us of all that we are grateful for in our lives: our families and friends, health, a safe place to live, food to eat, opportunities to work and go to school...

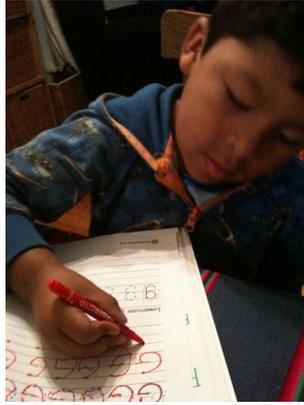
We gave thanks to God for the abundance of blessings in our lives and later we discussed those who currently live in situations where on a daily basis these basic blessings are threatened. Inwardly and aloud we expressed our desire for the peace that passes all understanding, countering oppression, racism, and injustices; historical and modern day plagues affecting our ability to love one another as Christ loves us, without fear, unconditionally, and as family.

Our conversation reminded us of how we are called to peace and how each day, in our own communities, we have an opportunity to put peace into action, sharing God's love with one another, as members of one body, spreading a message of hope in a world desperate to hear Good News. It is a big responsibility, but we are not alone in this endeavor and it is with thankful hearts that we enter into Advent. As we await the unknown, reflect, and anticipate something new. May God prepare our hearts, homes, and churches for the birth of hope, joy, love, and faithfulness, renewing our spirits and calling us into action. -Kari

# August, 2015

- Everette's birthday!!!
- Family vacation

- Returning to Argentina after home assignment



**5  
YEARS  
OLD!!!**

### Current likes:

- Hotwheels and monster trucks (some things never change!)
- Collecting rocks and visiting museums
- Paw Patrol and playing cats and dogs
- Volcanoes and doing science experiments
- Minions, singing, and dancing (he's quite good!!)
- Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Transformers
- Swimming and ice cream (they go hand in hand really...lol)
- Learning his letters and numbers

## Psalm 146

Praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord, my soul.

<sup>2</sup> I will praise the Lord all my life;  
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

<sup>3</sup> Do not put your trust in princes,  
in human beings, who cannot save.

<sup>4</sup> When their spirit departs, they return to the  
ground;

on that very day their plans come to nothing.

<sup>5</sup> Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God.

<sup>6</sup> He is the Maker of heaven and earth,  
the sea, and everything in them—  
he remains faithful forever.

<sup>7</sup> He upholds the cause of the oppressed  
and gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets prisoners free,

<sup>8</sup> the Lord gives sight to the blind,  
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord loves the righteous.

<sup>9</sup> The Lord watches over the foreigner  
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,  
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

<sup>10</sup> The Lord reigns forever,  
your God, O Zion, for all generations.

Praise the Lord.

# September, 2015

- IELU consultation on theological formation and ministerial education

- CPD Skype conferences- 2015 Gathering
- 2016 Budget preparation
- Fun with friends



## A Visit

We were overjoyed to receive an email from Pat and Wayne Godsted from Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Chicago, IL saying that they were planning a trip to Buenos Aires and wanted to catch up with us. Thank you both for a wonderful lunch and taking time out of vacation to spend with our family!!



## Fun with Friends

To escape the hustle and bustle of city life, many Argentines head to the provinces over the weekend seeking a bit green space, a different pace of life, and a little sunshine. We were invited to an *asado* (barbecue) for a friend's birthday and immediately understood the importance of this pastime.

## Budget Prep

Every year around the end of August, we begin accompanying our companion churches and institutions through the annual budget, project renewals, and new project proposals. This is a time of deep discernment, tedious evaluating, frequent communications, and much prayer as together with our companions we discern our mutual gifts, resources, needs, and possible support depending on proposed budget forecasts.

ask companions to create a project based on a set amount of funds, nor do we create projects for our companions based on our perception of their need. A "project", as we understand it, is a technical term for one expression, among many, of mutual accompaniment as companions. *Diakonia*, or social service, is not a separate ministry in and of itself, but rather is an expression of a church's mission, gospel proclamation, and diverse ministry expressions. Therefore, any project that has a social impact also has a gospel purpose and message of God's abundant love and grace. -Justin

One powerful movement in our region is the integral sustainability of churches. As the ELCA we don't



## **IELU consultation on theological formation and ministerial education**

“We have to know who we are before we can know how to equip ourselves,” proclaims Rev. Lisandro Orlov. Theological education and ministry formation is a movement afoot in Lutheran churches in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, especially in the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Argentina-Uruguay (IELU).

At the beginning of September, the IELU hosted a consultation of leaders, presidents, and bishops from several LAC Lutheran churches to discuss this theme, envisioning where they, individually and collectively, want to go as a church and within the regional context. Pr. Orlov continued, “If theology doesn’t impact life, then it’s not worth it,” commenting on the relevance of contextual theology for our everyday lives.

Themes that were discussed included: theology of hope, what’s happening in society and our response, diverse ministry and leadership formation and its impact on theological education, the needs of our churches today and in the future, and intercultural experiences in theological education and ministry formation, among others.

Pr. Orlov, reminded the conference that the theology of the cross is the first liberation theology and that Jesus wasn’t crucified between candelabras, but rather between criminals. This a point to talk about the contextualization of theological education. A theological institution without students is a sign of poor health.

For many, theology is a practical ecclesiology and theology is something that has to be done today, a narrative interpretation of now because the world



around us continues to construct itself. This means that there is a new relationship between religion and the world that has produced a non-religious spirituality, a very complex concept.



**At the end of the consultation, we were able to spend time with Pastor Ángela Trejo Haager, a dear friend and colleague, discovering with her Buenos Aires’ famous Puerto Madero. Of course, Justin and Everette just had to sneak in on her picture!!**

# October, 2015

• CPD Regional Lutheran Educator Gathering

- Halloween
- Everette's school show
- Cuzco and Lima, Peru trip

## CPD 2015 MESOAMERICAN REGIONAL LUTHERAN EDUCATOR GATHERING

October 1-5, 2015 Lutheran educators from the ELCA companion churches of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, alongside educators invited from the ELCA, Colombia, and Peru gathered in Managua, Nicaragua to get to know each other, share about Christian education in their contexts, and to create Lutheran Christian education didactic materials using Popular Education methodology based on the current needs of the church.

Materials created include: a family board game on Christian values, Bible studies on contextual Lutheran identity, a song on anti-violence to be used in church reflections, gatherings, and social protests, and a guide for developing a creed (as well as the creed educators from the Gathering created) on gender equality / sexual diversity based on the popular reading of Genesis 1. Many of these materials, are finished and already available for free on the CPD website and as the others are finished, they will be shared in this same way.

Also during the Gathering, Zulma Ojeda Fernández from the CPD-Colombia team shared

the new VBS materials for children ages 3-13 using Popular Education methodology the team has worked diligently to produce this year in collaboration with CPD. These fantastic materials will be shared with all Sunday school professors in Colombia during their annual workshop as well as on the CPD website for free!

Earlier in the year, Roberto Chávez Gutiérrez was nominated by CPD to attend EPES' International School on Popular Education. As a part of his project upon his return, he was invited to facilitate several sessions during the Gathering on Popular Education and music. These sessions got us moving, helped us reflect on the liturgies used in our communities, and tapped into our creativity. The concluding small group work activity was to add verses to the song, *¡Canta, Alelyua!* which he composed with Karina García Carmona as a CPD-Mexico project in 2013. These sessions were recorded, edited and will be shared as well on the CPD website as a tool for other educators interested in learning more about how Popular Education has a profound impact on music and liturgy.

Other highlights of the Gathering include participating in a worship service of the ILFE ("Faith and

Hope" Lutheran Church-Nicaragua), the host church for the Gathering, and visiting the Masaya volcano, Catarina look-out point, and eating supper in Granada.

The Gathering was a success! We talked, laughed, cried, prayed, sang, danced; we got to know each other, existing in that vulnerable state of entering into a relationship with another person and we were able to make connections. Some of these connections existed before, others did not. Regardless, the group left strengthened by each others' presence and with a renewed spirit to continue our work.

CPD, is a project of the ELCA. It began in 2011 and was recently renewed until 2017, the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. During these next few years, the project aims to spur a collaborative renovation in Lutheran Christian education alongside educators from the Latin America and Caribbean region. For more information and to find the materials mentioned in this article, please visit the project's website:

[capacitandoalpueblodedios.org](http://capacitandoalpueblodedios.org)

-Kari



# CPD 2015 MESOAMERICAN LUTHERAN EDUCATOR GATHERING



TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER FOUR LADIES PICTURED BELOW FROM EVERETTE'S SCHOOL, I ORGANIZED A HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL!! IT WAS QUITE THE EVENT, COMPLETE WITH LOTS OF GAMES AND FOOD (WE MAY HAVE LOOKED AT PINTEREST QUITE A BIT. HA!) WE EVEN TALKED TO THE NEIGHBORS AND THE KIDS WERE ABLE TO GO TRICK-OR-TREATING (THIS IS NOT A CUSTOM HERE IN ARGENTINA)!! EVERETTE WENT AS A RACE CAR DRIVER, JUSTIN AS MR. BEAN (HA!) AND I WENT AS FRIDA KAHLO.



## Cusco and Lima, Peru

In October, I spent 10 days between Cusco and Lima, Peru with the Lutheran Church of Peru (IL-P) and the Help the Children Association-Huch'uy Runa (HR). In Cusco, I was blessed to be able to lead worship with the members of the Talitha Kum, an IL-P congregation of women and children who speak Quechua as their first language. It was a lovely evening of listening to stories, sharing the good news of Jesus, breaking bread together, and holding each other in prayer.

At Huch'uy Runa, I had the privilege of learning from the children how they are making embroidered place mats in the fabric workshop and also how to cut, bend, solder, and paint metal Christmas ornaments and angels in the metalwork workshop. In addition to visiting the occupational workshops, I also sat with the director and administrator to help them through the paperwork to renew the project for another three-years.

When I arrived to Lima, I spent several days with the IL-P Pastoral Conference and Directive Council before leading a workshop on Conflict Analysis & Lessons Learned. I was invited to preach at the communal IL-P Reformation worship.

An excerpt from that sermon: "But, Paul continues, even though we are sinners, we are also forgiven and this is true through the redemption of Jesus, who paid our debt, who died our death, who, raised from the dead, gave us his life. Who fills our begging cup with the richness of his grace. Yes, *"we are beggars, this is true"*, but now we are saved, this is also true! We are loved and liberated, transformed and made holy, by the good news of God in Jesus Christ. And we are called to be healing voices to a world so wounded and sent to be messengers of hope and proclaimers of the love of God to everyone. We are called to testify to what God has done in our lives, not so that people will look at us, but rather to point to the love and grace of Jesus Christ." -Justin



# November, 2015

- Santiago and Valparaiso, Chile trip
- CPD-IELCO Skype meeting

- Thanksgiving with friends
- Mosaic class and swimming lessons!
- Lima, Peru trip

In November, Global Mission leaders of the ELCA (Raquel Rodríguez, Vitaly Vorona, and Justin) visited Chile, spending time with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) and the EPES Foundation.

Raquel and Justin met with the executive council of the IELCH to discuss their church vision, mission, priorities, and dreams. They also had the privilege of accompanying one of the IELCH pastors who would like to begin an immigrant outreach ministry with Haitian refugees. Concluding the visit with the IELCH, he was invited to preach at the Belén Congregation in the San Bernardo neighborhood of Santiago, Chile and visited the ecumenical seminary (CTE), learning about the IELCH's needs for pastoral training and theological formation.



With Vitaly, Raquel and Justin spent time with EPES Foundation. EPES, the acronym for Popular Education in Health, was originally “created in 1982 to promote health with dignity for the poor through empowerment, mobilization, and collective action. It began as a program of the IELCH and maintains close ties nationally and internationally with the Lutheran church and is an ELCA Global Mission supported ministry. EPES became an independent, non-profit Chilean foundation in 2002.”

Today, the ELCA continues to support many of its projects and programs such as: the Community Health Teams, the Women

Leadership Course, Mobilizing for Justice and Dignity in Health, Disasters and Emergency Response, Nutrition from a Gender Perspective, and the International Training program.

Visiting Valparaiso and Tongoy, Raquel, Vitaly, and Justin heard first hand from those living in communities ravaged by natural disasters how EPES with support from the ELCA has and continues to make a difference. The delegation also visited Chile's National Congress, learning about the advocacy work carried out by the Tobacco-Free Chile Coalition, spearheaded by EPES.

Shared from <http://www.epes.cl>



*During the CPD-IELCO Skype conference, we discussed the new VBS materials, that CPD supported through a mini-grant. Below is a blog excerpt from Katie Andert Kline, ELCA missionary living and serving in Colombia, about a workshop they recently held to present the new material to several teachers, one from each of the four regions of the IELCO.*

<http://800feetandcounting.blogspot.com.co>

“We shared with the teachers what the methodology used to prepare the material was, what each of the lessons is about, and general tips for a successful VBS. As the Lutherans around the world are gearing up for the 500 Year Celebration of the Reformation, in 2017, one of the goals of this material is to educate the children in VBS about what it means to be Lutheran and to follow Jesus, specifically in Colombia. The material has 5 lessons: Walking with Jesus, The Journey/Paths of the First Christians, Luther, Journey of the First Missionaries, and The Footprints of Jesus Today.



One of the young men in the IELCO offices, Sergio, did all the drawings for the book. Above is one of the drawings. He drew them all to relate to each lesson, and all in the same style to help unify the book. He has incredible talent.

The material is divided into three categories: ages 3-6, ages 7-10 and ages 11-13. The VBS will be December 14-20 in most of the congregations. I will be helping teach at one of the mission congregations in Caracoli (southern Bogota) along with Zulma ...and my parents! (My parents will be here for Christmas and will be helping with the VBS also.)

This is the group that we shared the material with on Saturday. They will go and share it with their congregations and each lead wonderful VBS, I am sure of that! (The last photo is taken by Pastor Angelica's daughter, age 5, Sara)”

-Katie



# Prayer requests



For those who hunger and thirst for justice and righteousness, that they may be filled.



For those affected by natural disasters, especially earthquakes and tsunamis in Chile.

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We pray for peace throughout the world knowing that the answer to our prayer may require that we transform to be active peacemakers not only in words, but also in deed. In being agents of peace wherever we are, may we understand the power of forgiveness and reconciliation.

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For those who feel they are in darkness and struggle in search of light, hope, and a chance to survive, may they feel God's ever-presence and peace

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We pray for missionaries around the world. (See the next page for links to fellow missionary websites/blogs!).



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For those who feel that the only way is violence and blood-shed, that they may know your peace.

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**Thank you for your support and prayers!! If you know of another congregation or individual interested in supporting us as well, please feel free to share with them the following information...**

Congregations may include their gift in their remittance to the synod office, clearly marked with our name and 7-digit code [\[Kari and Justin Eller \(MSG0682\)\]](#) **OR** congregations and individuals may write their checks directly to "ELCA Global Church Sponsorship" and write our name and 7-digit code in the memo line.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
ELCA Gift Processing Center  
P.O. Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

In addition, sponsors may also arrange for gifts by credit card, or for automatic monthly withdrawals from their bank account, by contacting 800-638-3522. Please let us know if you have any questions!

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*The Next Chapter..*

*Kari Eller*



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Also, check out the ELCA's *Hand-in-Hand* newsletter and the *Global Links* newsletter <http://www.elca.org/Resources/ELCA-Global-Church-Sponsorship>

*In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

*-Matthew 5:16*

**Also, be sure to check out fellow global personnel websites/blogs:**

Cameroon	Elisabeth Johnson	<a href="http://camerooniangrace.wordpress.com/">http://camerooniangrace.wordpress.com/</a>
Central African Republic	Susan Smith	<a href="http://susan-car.blogspot.com/">http://susan-car.blogspot.com/</a>
Colombia	Curtis and Katie Kline	<a href="http://8000feetandcounting.blogspot.com/">http://8000feetandcounting.blogspot.com/</a>
Egypt	Kirsten Fryer	<a href="http://kirstenincairo.com/">http://kirstenincairo.com/</a>
India	Megan Ross	<a href="http://megsthewanderer.wordpress.com/">http://megsthewanderer.wordpress.com/</a>
Japan	Laura Fentress	<a href="http://30monthsinjapan.blogspot.com.ar/">http://30monthsinjapan.blogspot.com.ar/</a>
Japan	Caroline Keenan	<a href="http://carolinekeenand.blogspot.com.ar/">http://carolinekeenand.blogspot.com.ar/</a>
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Jerusalem	Carrie Smith	<a href="http://knightpurlpraypreach.blogspot.co.il/">http://knightpurlpraypreach.blogspot.co.il/</a>
Jerusalem	Danae Hudson	<a href="http://hummusnotwalls.com/">http://hummusnotwalls.com/</a>
Jerusalem	Angela and Martin Zimmann	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ZimmannsInTheHolyLand?notif_t=fbpage_fan_invite">https://www.facebook.com/ZimmannsInTheHolyLand?notif_t=fbpage_fan_invite</a>
Liberia	Brian Palmer	<a href="http://tryingsmall.wordpress.com/">http://tryingsmall.wordpress.com/</a>
Madagascar, West/Central Africa	Morsal Collier	<a href="http://westafricabound.org/">http://westafricabound.org/</a>
Malaysia	Wendolyn Trozzo	<a href="http://flungforthanew.wordpress.com/">http://flungforthanew.wordpress.com/</a>
Mexico	David Brondos	<a href="https://sites.google.com/site/dbrondos/home">https://sites.google.com/site/dbrondos/home</a>
Nigeria	Mary Beth Oyebade	<a href="http://www.marybetho.blogspot.com.ar/">http://www.marybetho.blogspot.com.ar/</a>
Papua New Guinea	Ann Klavano	<a href="http://newguineacall.blogspot.com.ar/">http://newguineacall.blogspot.com.ar/</a>
Russia	Bradn Buerkle	<a href="http://www.russiancorrespondent.blogspot.com.ar/">http://www.russiancorrespondent.blogspot.com.ar/</a>
Tanzania	Randy and Carol Stubbs	<a href="http://s421181158.onlinehome.us/">http://s421181158.onlinehome.us/</a>
Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda	Joe and Deborah Troester	<a href="http://africanwaterlog.blogspot.com.ar/">http://africanwaterlog.blogspot.com.ar/</a>