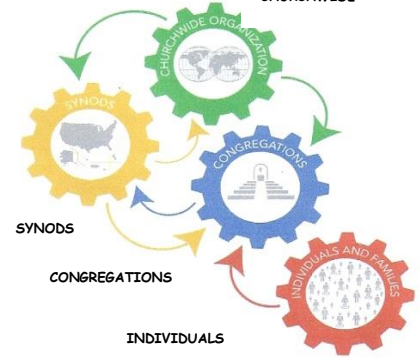


July 2019

Mission Support

CHURCHWIDE

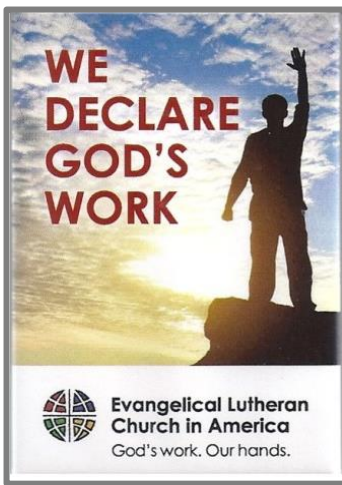


Missional Storyteller

We say **THANK YOU** and **SHARE MISSION SUPPORT STORIES**.

Did you know?

- Mission Support equips members and leaders to advocate with lawmakers in order to support policies that promote justice and peace.



ICE arrests Racine Student Pastor

Immigration and refugee issues are frequently in the news, but they may seem to be somewhat distant for many of us. Events in the past week have shown that they are directly impacting the church. Pastor Betty Rendon, who serves at Emaus Lutheran Church in Racine, was detained by ICE on Wednesday, May 8. Her daughter, who has DACA status, was also detained and later released. Bishop Paul Erickson of the Greater Milwaukee Synod said Rendon was a "candidate approved for ordination" but could not be ordained until she had legal status in the United States. A doctoral student at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, "She was caught in this in-between time," Erickson said. "She's a good preacher and she was filling in as kind of an independent contractor ... but she was helping out, preaching some Sundays at Emaus in Racine." Rendon has been trying to receive asylum for several years and was recently rejected. After she was arrested, Rendon moved to appeal the decision. More details about this frustrating situation, including more on Pastor Betty's need for asylum, and the robbery of her home when she was taken to jail are on the Emaus website. Prayer vigils are being, or have been held for the Pastor and her family. It is another reminder of the need to work for solutions to the immigration and refugee issues that we face.

An Update from Pastor Betty

In spite of an outpouring of support for Pastor Betty and her husband, ICE moved quickly and deported them on May 28, thus separating another family. In spite of her personal travail, Pastor Betty is seeking to help others.

Here is a message posted by Pastor Betty shortly after she landed in Bogotá where she had been deported from the United States. Not surprisingly, in the middle of her suffering, she is planning to launch a new ministry... please take the time to read:

"Thank you God and thank you to all of you who are praying for peace and justice. The suitcases prepared by ICE for people arriving in their destination cities have only these items in them: papers...letters received by people we love, and the medicine we receive. I think it is necessary to develop a Ministry in the Colombian consulate that provides better care and a better welcome to these people who arrive with broken hearts, without suitcases, without clothes, without possibilities of making a call and without money to eat and buy the passage to finish arriving at the destination place. Each person has felt violently attacked by ICE, either because they violently entered their home or were attacked at their place of work, on the street, or in their car. The prisons seem purgatory, a place you only hear the crying and the gnashing of teeth.

I am now in Bogota because I found a good Samaritan. A family that has given me solidarity and support. Thank you, Beautiful family for all your care.

Pastor Betty Rendon

We pray for the safety of Pastor Betty and her family and hope they may be reunited.

Second Chances: A Migrant Story - By Rev. Jaime Dubon (different ending with a different solution)



In 2013, Juan began the journey to the United States, spurred by extreme poverty and lack of opportunities in El Salvador. He left his wife, Ingrid, and their two children behind. After several days of walking and taking a public bus in El Salvador and Guatemala, Juan made it to Mexico. There, he attempted to get on "La Bestia" (The Beast) - a network of Mexican freight trains used by migrants to travel from the southern region of Mexico north towards the U.S. border. During his attempt to climb aboard, his legs were trapped by the wheels of the train, causing him to lose both his legs. The seriousness of the injury caused Juan to be in an incredible amount of pain. He almost died. With the aid of a friend, Juan arrived at a local hospital, where he spent several weeks before returning to El Salvador.

A block from Juan's home is Our Redeemer, a congregation of the Salvadoran Lutheran Church (ILS). The pastor, Francisco Aguilar, heard about Juan's story. Pastor Aguilar is one of many pastors who were trained through ILS's migrant program, La Pastoral del Migrante. Pastor Francisco visited Juan and Ingrid's home to offer spiritual support. After talking and listening to their story, he prayed and gave them a food basket.

Through another part of the program, Juan and Ingrid were given seed money to start their own business. Because Juan knew how to weave before migrating and having learned the Mexican style of weaving while recovering in Mexico, he used the seed money to buy supplies to make hammocks. This new style for Juan is highly valued and sought after in El Salvador. Now, Juan and Ingrid sell their products at the local market, and that income allows them to support their family.

After the horrible experience in Mexico, including the loss of his legs, Juan never gave up hope. Instead, he, Ingrid, and their children have grown stronger together as a family. And with the accompaniment of the church, they are moving forward.

The Salvadoran Lutheran Church, with support from Lutheran Disaster Response through the AMMPARO Strategy, works to go beyond pastoral and psychosocial care, to offer practical and economical means for families, like Juan and Ingrid, to thrive in El Salvador.

Churches in the Americas: Witnessing together for justice and peace -

Nearly 60 church leaders from the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) and the North American region of the Lutheran World Federation gathered for a regional leadership conference in Lima, Peru, May 10-14. Leaders committed to strengthening collaboration throughout the Americas, particularly relating to issues of migration, theological formation, public witness, youth action, climate justice and gender equity. The conference emphasized the importance of grounding all aspects of ministry in faith in Jesus, which compels the body of Christ to action in responding to the needs of all people.

EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT IN GUATEMALA

The Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala's MILAGRO ("miracle") Women's Education Center is a place for young women from rural communities to continue their secondary education, faith formation and development of vocational and life skills — among them sewing, cooking, baking, carpentry, masonry, music and gardening — that will help them be financially independent in the future. This important work is supported by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger.

Video: ***AMMPARO Strategy Supports Migrant Minors | ELCA*** 6:15 minutes
Youtube, ELCA channel

AMMPARO Strategy

The ELCA has developed this strategy based on the following commitments:

- Uphold and guarantee basic human rights and safety of migrant children and their families;
- Address the root causes of migration in countries from Central America's Northern Triangle and Mexico and the treatment of migrants in transit;
- Work toward just and humane policies affecting migrants in and outside the U.S.; and
- Engage as a church body with all of its companions, affiliates and partners to respond to the migration situation and its causes and to advocate for migrant children and their families.

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