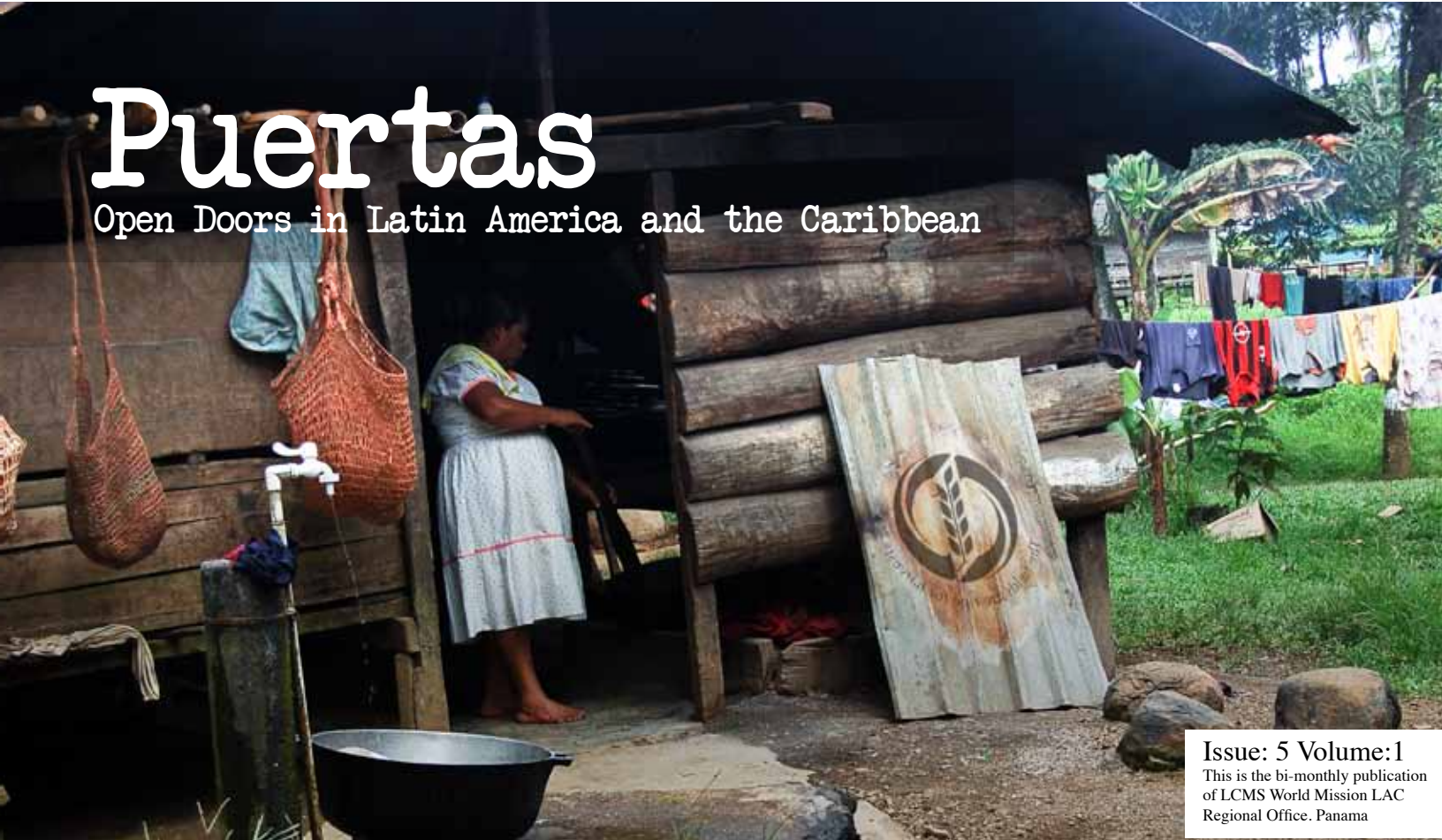


Puertas

Open Doors in Latin America and the Caribbean



Issue: 5 Volume: 1
This is the bi-monthly publication
of LCMS World Mission LAC
Regional Office, Panama

Heartbreak at the Bocatoma

Rushing floodwaters crash through the new dam in Peru.

This summer brought devastating news to the many short term teams who toiled alongside Peruvians to rebuild the Bocatoma dam in Lunahuana after it was shattered by a 2007 earthquake. The newly finished dam broke under the strain of the summer floodwaters, washing months of hard work down stream and again cutting off the critical water supply to the village of Lucumo.

The Bocatoma project was a key component of new outreach endeavors in Peru, countless volunteers participated in redirecting the rushing waters towards the village and irrigate the crops vital to the prosperity of the small town of Lucumo. Without the dam, life in the harsh foothills of the Andes is very difficult, without water to irrigate their crops, villagers have no income or means of support.

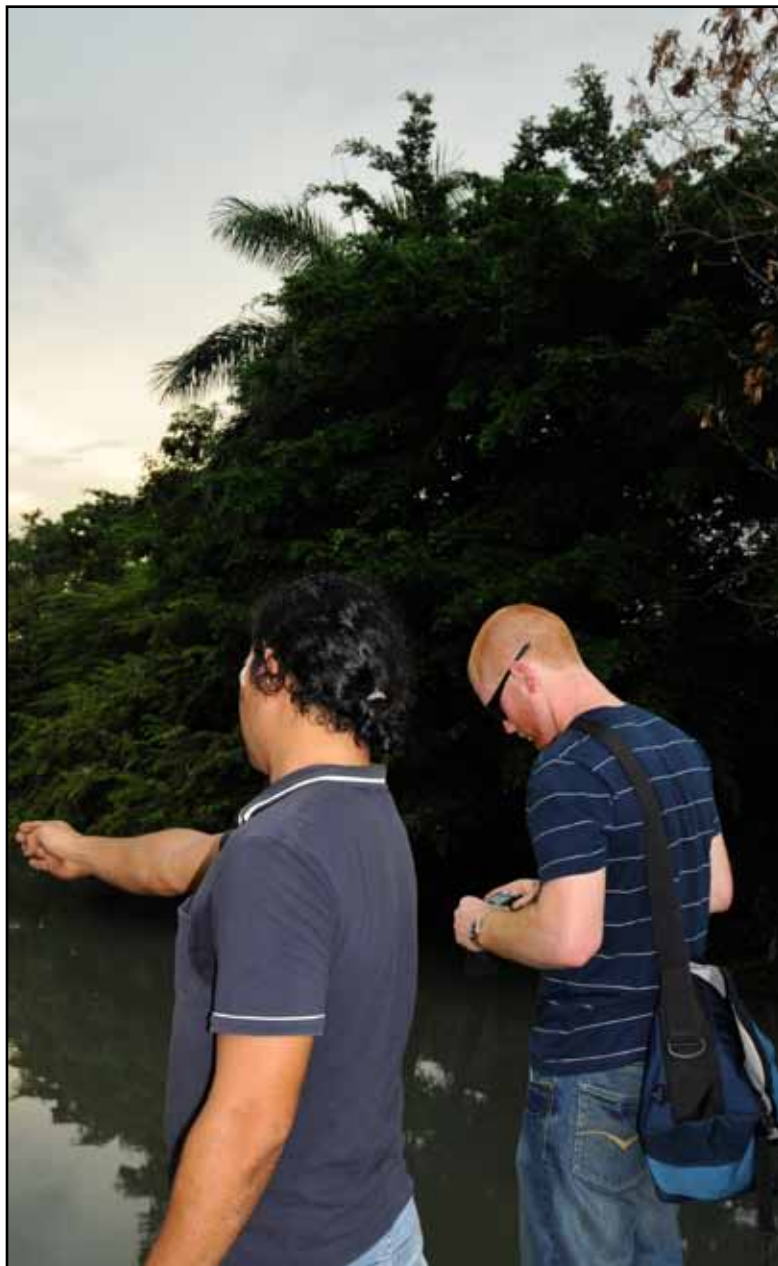


While in many ways the destruction of the dam in Peru is a major setback, the dam is not the only thing that the teams helped to build in Peru; important lasting relationships with people in the village remain and as plans are drawn up for a newly designed dam the Gospel will continually be shared in Peru.

GEO Anthony Diliberto the LCMS World Mission Volunteer Coordinator for Peru, and the man on the ground for the Bocatoma project is actively searching for a solution to the new challenge presented.

“The break in the Bocatoma is heart wrenching for both the community of Lucumo and all the short-term mission teams that sacrificed so much for the sake of sharing the Gospel with their brothers and sisters there. With the fracture of a dam the entire community relies so heavily upon for the well being of their crops, you can imagine the pressure this new challenge puts on them just to survive. Even still, in the midst of the difficult situation, the Lucumenos remain grateful for all the hard work done by the strangers that came to lend them a helping hand two summers ago.”

But despite the need to reorganize and regroup on the Bocatoma project, the mission work in Peru continues full speed ahead. Villagers in the town of Lucumo continue to push for a greater role for the church in their community and are asking continually for a full time missionary to help them establish a congregation. The search for a church planter to serve in Peru is still underway.



Anthony examines a new dam design with an architect during a visit to Panama.

Anthony requests the prayers of everyone as this project again moves forward in Peru. “Please pray that God’s will would be done as we decide how to proceed from here and that God would once again use a seemingly negative situation to grow His kingdom in Peru! One thing is certain, God will never leave or forsake His children in the desert coastal region of Peru... and we don’t plan to either!”

Confirmation in the Dominican

The end of August marked an important day for the young congregation of Palmar Arriba in the Dominican Republic, as they celebrated their first ever confirmation service. Three adults and nine youth were confirmed in the service, marking the completion of a year of classes.

As Ted Krey reports in the team's latest newsletter, "Something that is very beautiful about this group of confirmands is that the youth have come to class faithfully on their own, without parental support - there are no moms or dads driving them to the classes, no one checking up to see if they have completed their homework... They have come, led by the Holy Spirit, eager and excited to study God's word."

Guests from the United States and Brazil (including Lutheran Church of Brazil Vice-president Mario Lehenbauer) attended

the confirmation and together with other confirmed members of the Lutheran church in the Dominican Republic gathered around the altar with the confirmands for their first communion.

When the confirmands had communed they gathered behind the "older" members to lay their hands on the shoulders of their Christian family while they too communed with them.

The confirmation marks an important milestone for the mission work in the Dominican Republic, as more and more Dominicans become full members of the young church body and work alongside their brothers and sisters throughout the world in sharing the Good News.

Remember to keep these new confirmands and the church in the Dominican Republic in your prayers.



The new confirmands (not in order): Yaquelin, Emily, Johanildrez, Juileta, Yasmelin, Danielsy, Yohairy, Elizabeth, Yordania, Anideisy, Manuel, and Alvaro.

Meet Latin America's Area Facilitator



Latin America's new area facilitator for the Caribbean and Peru, Bruce Wall, is probably a familiar face to many, formerly in charge of Short Term teams through LCMS World Mission and the driving force behind the Beautiful Feet mission conference, Bruce brings a unique experience to the mission field.

Already extensively involved in the mission in Peru, he will now be working together with Jorge Groh, Latin America's regional director to organize and direct missionary work in that country and in the Caribbean islands.

Together with his wife Sarah and their two children, Stephanie and Benjamin they will be soon moving to Panama where the LCMS World Mission Regional Office is established. Bruce says the kids are prepared for the move, "Our daughter is excited to learn a new language and culture," he explained, "She is excited to live where Dora the Explorer is from."

Bruce says that their transition to management from learning in Latin America will be a slow one "We're gonna come in and learn, there is a lot of history of LCMS Work and partner churches [in Latin America], we'll want to spend the first year or two just learning; the language and the culture and history. We want to start in a learning mode, not a management mode, especially when it comes to our partners."

Bruce believes a priority for his work in Latin America will be connecting the field with congregations in the United States, "We want to find ways to link LCMS people and congregations to the work in Latin America, ways to use the people and resources of LCMS congregations back home in Latin America."

Keep the Wall family in your prayers as they make this exciting and difficult transition.



New Training for Missionaries



After an international partnership meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay September 15th, Regional Director Jorge Groh reports an exciting development. In coordination with our sister churches in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, LCMS World Mission will be launching a joint training project for missionaries.

The target location for this first international co-training is Ciudad del Este in Paraguay, a location with a very large Islamic population, a key component in training missionaries for cross-cultural outreach.

By combining their efforts all of the involved partners will be able to provide a better missionary training and orientation experience than was before possible, and from the very beginning new missionaries will be connected with those of other countries who can help inform and shape their work in partnership for years to come.

The first joint orientation is planned for May of 2010.

Puertas is a bi-monthly publication of the LCMS World Mission Regional Office of Latin America and the Caribbean. All content produced by LCMS World Missions Communication Specialist James Neuendorf unless otherwise stated. Please email any comments, questions, or subscription requests to lcmswmlac@gmail.com

Be sure to check out the LCMS World Mission blog at blog.lcmsworldmission.org as well as our own regional blog at latinamerica.lcmsworldmission.org!

On both sites you'll find plenty of up to date new information as well as lots of ways you can get involved in the mission effort!