

## Un Pueblo Que Camina Por el Mundo: Walking with our Chilean Partners

Two weeks ago Pastor Carolyn Lesmeister and I traveled to Bogotá, Colombia, to meet with Lutheran Global Mission leaders from throughout the Americas, including Carolina Ramirez Silva, the Treasurer of the Iglesia Evangélica Luterana en Chile, one of our companion churches. At this gathering we talked about the sustainability of the church and of our global relationships, and we looked forward in hope to how the Spirit will work in our mission partnership.

The model of our relationship with partners in Chile is one of mutual accompaniment – we walk together in our shared life of faith. As the hymn sings,

“Un pueblo que camina por el mundo gritando “¡Ven Señor!”

*“The people walk throughout the world together and cry out, “Come, O Lord!”*

- *Un Pueblo Que Camina, ELW #706*

We walk *together* in this relationship of faith. We walk *together* as a church. Hand in hand. United in faith. Sisters and brothers. With much to learn from each other, and much to give to one another. We are partners and companions in mission. We are one body of Christ.

There are five values at the core of a relationship of mutual accompaniment – **mutuality, interdependence, empowerment, vulnerability, and sustainability**. As we walk together in faith in our renewed relationship with the church in Chile, we seek a mutual and interdependent partnership that empowers each other, that allows for us to be vulnerable with each other, and which is sustainable into the long arc of God’s promised future.

*What does this mean?*

It means that we spend time together in prayer and study and conversation, in person when possible, but more often using online video chatting platforms, such as Skype, Facetime, and Google Hangout. We’re seeking to set up opportunities for online prayer, Bible study, and even worship, perhaps monthly, between groups in Chile and groups here in Indiana-Kentucky.

It means that when we do send delegations to travel to Chile, we send them ready to learn from, and to walk alongside of, our Chilean sisters and brothers in their God-given mission, expecting to see God at work in their churches and communities. We share our challenges. We share our joys. We expect to learn from one another.

It means that we connect folks of common interest from the church in Chile and from our synod. The Chilean church is active in ministry with immigrants and with victims of domestic violence, and some congregations even have micro-businesses that provide income for church members and for congregations. Connecting like-minded leaders from Indiana-Kentucky with Chilean leaders, we can grow our global partnership, share wisdom across cultures and miles, and work together for the benefit of Christ’s church.

We have an ambitious vision for our partnership. Yet we start with baby steps – small steps, walking through the world, in different places yet together, in different languages yet united, shouting out, “¡Ven Señor!” “Come, Lord Jesus!”

*As we rebuild our global missions team, we are looking for folks who are interested in serving with us, particularly people (lay and rostered) who are bilingual in English and Spanish. If that sounds like you or someone you know, please contact Pastor Chris Duckworth at [chris.duckworth@gmail.com](mailto:chris.duckworth@gmail.com), or Pastor Carolyn Lesmeister at [clesmeister@iksynod.org](mailto:clesmeister@iksynod.org) for more information or to be considered to serve in this capacity.*