



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

August 2018

Newsletter

Keeping in Mind Global Mission In South America

IELB - BOLIVIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH 80th Anniversary

The week of September 5 to 12, 2018, will be very special in the Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church. On Sunday, September 9, the IELB will celebrate their 80th anniversary with a liturgical celebration in El Alto, La Paz, with the participation of thousands of members, brothers of other Bolivian churches, the ELCA companion Montana synod, Lutheran organizations, churches of Latin America and the world, and civil authorities.

On this special Sunday, there will be fiesta at El Alto, in the congregations, in the churches, in the streets, in the amphitheater, in many other churches that accompany the IELB in its mission and its diakonia. In Latin America, the original nations have been marginalized and excluded, but in Bolivia, in the last decades there has been a strong process of liberation of these stigmas and abuses against the original communities

The Evangelical Lutheran Bolivian Church emerged in 1938, from the missionary work of the World Prayer League among Aymara and Quechua communities. The church grew rapidly sharing the gospel in the language of the indigenous peoples of the Bolivian highlands.

IELB is the largest Lutheran church (as a result missionary work) in South America. IELB membership are scattered mainly in the highlands and in La Paz, which belong to sectors with few economic resources, diakonia ministry in IELB is strong, contextual, and growing in new fields as formal education through the Lutheran schools

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LEADING A GROWING CHURCH

The Evangelical Lutheran Church Bolivia is in a phase of growth and development, both quantitative and qualitative. One of the characteristics of churches with a healthy development is that their leadership inspires and empowers others for service. Leaders in a growing church seek that each member of the church, each believer, reach their spiritual and missionary potential according to the call of God for each one of them. Leaders in developing and growing churches encourage and give space to new leaders; this is one of the good works moved by the Holy Spirit in the IELB nowadays.

Rev. Emilio Aslla Flores is Presiding Pastor of the IELB since 2011, next year he will serve two periods of four years each as Pastor President and Leader of the IELB. Pastor Emilio has been IELB's secretary of development and diakonia before 2011, also a local pastor at the Monte Sinai Congregation in El Alto, La Paz, Bolivia. Also, he has completed his theological studies at the Andean Ecumenical Institute of Theology and is a lawyer graduated from the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, in La Paz Bolivia.

Pastor Maritza Castañeta is one of the first women pastors of the Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church. She is also an educator and is in charge of the area of Christian Education and pastoral education of the Lutheran School in El Alto, La Paz. Pastor Maritza is responsible for coordinating the study plans and activities of students and teachers in the Lutheran College, by the study curricula determined by the Bolivian state, and in coordination with the educational policy that has defined the IELB recently. She is also leading a mission outreach project related with youth and parents connected to the Lutheran School. Pastor Maritza and Pastor Emilio are spouses, and mother and father of two children and they have a grandchild.



Three Young Women Leaders in IELB



Luz Eli Ticona (left, 24 years old) is the IELB national youth coordinator. Since she was teen ager collaborated in the children's ministry of the church. In 2016, the IELB Assembly extended a call to serve as the National Youth Coordinator just after finishing her studies as a Social Communicator and Journalist. Luz says: "My work with IELB youth, coming from all over the country, is a huge responsibility; and an opportunity because my studies are very useful for my ministry. I find great happiness because my gifts serve the mission of God, even though I am not a pastor or a theologian. "

My responsibilities are to plan, implement and evaluate the IELB youth agenda. On weekends I lead meetings, workshops, and consultations that take place in the districts, traveling from one location to another in Bolivia. On weekdays I plan the next event, evaluate, communicate and prepare narrative and financial reports. "

For Luz, has been a challenge to coordinate so many young people, with them she learned many things: " I have a great opportunity to help other young people and, in a certain way, to be a model for them. Now I see the work of the church with different eyes, I see the depth and transforming meaning of the ministries of my church, much more than when I saw only the

local level of my congregation. I have changed in different aspects, on my life of faith and in my professional side.

Heidi Flores (right), 24 years old, coordinator of the children's program in Cochabamba and president of the IELB Cochabamba Congregation. Heidi says "The ministry with children in our Congregation began in 2013, providing school support on Saturdays for five children. We work with the valuable support of brothers and sisters in the church, people like Lourdes, Mariluz, Moises. Currently, Heidi coordinates the activities the "Educational Support and Community Development" project (funded by World Hunger Campaign) which takes place from Monday to Friday in the afternoon, for 4 hours. Heidi Flores is a lawyer; recently graduated and already in her first professional employment. Heidi says: "The life of the congregation and the church has taught me many things, mainly the foundations of my faith with a Lutheran identity; but also taught me, from a young age, to take responsibility for activities, to lead the youngest and adults, to develop and implement plans and budgets in a participatory way".

Corina Ninachoque (right), 24, is an educator and the director of the Verena Wells Center whose objective is to receive and integrally accompany the development of the girls of the Aymara indigenous family, in the zone of influence of Caranavi, in the Amazonian area of Yungas. The rural areas only offer primary education, to continue the studies it is necessary to go out to the city, for the girls is much more difficult than for the boys. The Verena Wells Center provides girls a safe and comfortable environment that allows them the opportunity to attend high school and have a place of housing and care after school. As the director of the Center, Corina is aware of the life of each of the girls and their families; who visit them two or three times during the month.

Corina's dream is to complete her undergraduate studies in Educational Sciences; she hopes to *achieve that goal with great effort and with the help of a scholarship to support her effort.*



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Make check payable to "ELCA Global Church Sponsorship" with "Gustavo Driau GCS2045" in the memo line.

ELCA missionaries have helped establish growing churches throughout the world. As a result, we are now part of a much larger story — a global community of more than 70 million Lutherans in 79 countries

PRAYER REQUESTS

-The Pastor President of the Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rev. Emilio Aslla Flores.

-IELB pastors and lay leaders (men and women) serving in missions and outreach ministries.

-The IELB Lutheran Schools in El Alto and Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

-The Day Care Centers and Educational Programs in IELB, in El Alto, Cochabamba, and Cobija

-The ELCA Montana Synod; congregations, pastors, lay leaders, the Bishop Jessica Christ, and the delegation that will be visit IELB in September 2018.

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