

Osias, Desiree & Nikolas Segura-April

Serving as UMC Global Ministries Missionaries in Latin America & the Caribbean

Greetings from Honduras... On day 20 of Home Quarantine!

*"May the God of peace... equip you with all you need
for doing God's will." (Hebrews 13:20a-21a)*

We are surely living in very strange times, no? We thank you for your prayers for us, as we have also been praying for you, in the midst of this pandemic around the world. It is time for our quarterly update, and we find ourselves living yet another adventure in life on the mission field. This time, we were given the option of evacuating or staying. **And for now, we are staying.**

We want to start by celebrating, even in the midst of these unknown times. We were so blessed yesterday to have a virtual installation worship service for Osias. As of April 1st, he was appointed as a licensed local pastor, serving in his current position with Global Ministries. He continues in the ordination process, but this appointment means he can now preside over the sacraments in his local placement as a regional missionary for Latin America & the Caribbean. **We praise God for this milestone!** He can now be called Rev. Dr. Osias Alberto Segura Guzman. (Say that 10 times fast!)

Honduras has been in relative lockdown since March 15th (Osias' birthday, coincidentally). Most people are working from home and not going out at all. To make things more exciting, my mom came for a visit just before all of this started. It was great to have her here to help with the start of Nikko's online home learning, but it was scary for us to worry about her getting sick because the hospital system isn't adequate for a crisis of this magnitude.

We were finally able to get her a flight home last Friday, and I cried tears of both relief and panic that she might be exposed while she was traveling. She is in self-quarantine with my dad at their Arizona home, and as of now (day 6), neither have any symptoms. For this we are praising God!! **Please keep praying with us that mom and dad will be well.**

Read on below for how you can continue to pray with us...

Mission & Ministry Continue

Yesterday the last flight leaving Honduras to the U.S. left until May. The U.S. embassy worked with the Honduran government to lift the ban on travel in or out of the country in order for U.S. citizens stranded here to go home. We really debated, prayed, discussed, and agonized over the decision of whether to go or stay. Since Honduras took extreme measures as soon as the first two cases of COVID-19 were identified, we have not left our home for 20 days, except for Os to take mom to the airport.

We are able to get groceries and drinking water delivered (at a high price), and we decided the risk of exposure while traveling was too great. As well, we live in a gated community with only 31 houses, so Nikko is able to play with a few kids every day outside (scrubbing hands and removing shoes afterward), and we felt that the least disruption for him was best. We are hoping and praying that the hospital system won't collapse, and the extreme lockdown measures will flatten the curve sufficiently that we will not need to leave. ***Please pray with us that people will continue to abide by the government mandated quarantine in order for this to work.***

So, what about our work in mission? We are actually busier than ever! We are thinking creatively and exploring new ways of doing our trainings virtually and via video conferencing. I hope to be able to start the process of developing child protection policies with the Methodist Church in Colombia at the beginning of May, despite not being able to make my scheduled trip there for a face-to-face consultation. I am also creating materials that the churches can use with children and youth during these difficult times. Osias continues to mentor and consult with the leaders of the small group ministries in Honduras, Argentina, Uruguay, and Costa Rica, and he is also doing some writing about theological and missiological issues related to this crisis. He is working on developing online trainings for these partners also. ***Please pray with us that we will be able to connect virtually and keep moving these trainings forward.***

We are in constant contact with the pastors here in Honduras, helping them to figure out ways to do ministry from their homes. The United Methodist Mission of Honduras is currently determining the needs of families in their churches and communities in order to try to get food to them.

The government has made it possible for people to go out once a week (to get groceries, but many of the folks in the congregations here work at hourly wage jobs where if they don't work, they have no income. The government is slowly taking bags of staples to people in the most marginalized communities, but it will take a long time to reach everyone in need. Our Methodist Churches are hoping to provide for the families in their care soon. ***Please pray with us for sufficient funding so the churches can provide this help.***

There has been some protesting the last few days here, mostly because some people are hungry, and they feel the government is taking too long to deliver the food supplies. So far, there is no looting, but we fear this could happen at some point. There are military and police in the streets enforcing the mandatory quarantine, which for now goes until April 12th, but will most likely be extended. ***Please pray that people will be patient and calm so that the government (with church and NGO support) can get supplies to the people who need it.***

We are safe. We are healthy. We are able to get food and water. The water for bathing/laundry/etc. finally came on today (we get it only once a week now). Nikko is doing school online. We are continuing our ministry and connecting with our mission partners online. ***For all of these things we give thanks to God!***

“Pray for us. We have no doubts about what we’re doing or why, but it’s hard going and we need your prayers. All we care about is living well before God...

May God, who puts all things together, makes all things whole... who led Jesus, our Great Shepherd, up and alive from the dead... provide you with everything you need to please him. All glory to Jesus forever and always!

Oh, yes, yes, yes.”

(Hebrews 13:19-21 The Message)

Thank you for praying for us, and please let us know how we can pray for you. We know that you are all dealing with this pandemic also, and we join you in praying for your families and ministries.

Sending hugs from Honduras!

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1. Confirm donation is for Latin America Undesignated Advance #00427A
2. Check box: “Yes, I would like to send an E-Card” Gift Type: In Honor Of: First Name: Children at Risk. Last name: Small Groups. Email: dseguraapril@umcmmission.org (essential)
3. Check box: “Yes, I would like to give credit to my local church.” Fill in details.

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