



# Newsletter

## Keeping in Mind Global Mission In South America

### IELCO—Evangelical Lutheran Church In Colombia

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia is a companion church of ELCA/Global Mission and a Lutheran World Federation church member. The relationship began many years before the formal establishment of IELCO and ELCA. The Lutheran mission in Colombia began in the mid-1930s

IELCO proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the reconciliation and transformation of the Colombian society. It is a missionary Church, fighting against the social injustice, the loss of Christian values and the deterioration of God's creation.

The church has developed a missionary plan until the year 2020, which expresses that IELCO is a historic Christian church, of Lutheran confession, committed to the mission of God, which proclaims the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for the liberation and salvation of the human being and the creation.

IELCO announces the good news of our salvation through its ministries, engaged in education, formation of theologians, reconciliation, justice, and peace, cooperating with sister churches and other national and international development agencies, reinforcing local, national and international ecumenical relations.

IELCO companion synods are Southeastern Minnesota Synod, South Carolina Synod and ELCIC Synod of Alberta and the Territories, Canada.

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8*



### Contributing to Peace Building in Colombia

Curtis Kline is ELCA/GM Missionary in IELCO and Colombia. Curtis is an international human rights expert who partners with local communities and organizations to advocate for the defense and promotion of their rights, peace and conflict resolution. Congregations and communities in IELCO are accompanied by Curtis in their processes of understanding, participating and building up peace in Colombia. Curtis

serves in "Justice and Life" ELCO's project, whose objective is to facilitate training processes and advocacy actions around peace and reconciliation within and outside IELCO, to increase the capacities of active participation of leaders of the church in favor of human dignity and peace.

Katie Andert Kline, accompanies IELCO in the Christian Formation/Education department. Lead trainings and retreats for teachers of the church, leadership trainings, and teach at the Lutheran Seminary (ELT for the name in Spanish). Work with groups of teenage girls in impoverished communities to provide education and trainings including life skills and health.

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Matthew 5:9*



# A Lutheran Missionary Church in Colombia, since 1936

Latin American history has been linked unquestionably to the role of the Spanish Crown and the Roman Catholic Church. A crucial period was after the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and the foundation of the Roman Inquisition in 1542, with the purpose “to spread sound Catholic doctrine and defend those points of Christian tradition which seem in danger because of new and unacceptable doctrines.”

Before that, the Spanish crown issued in 1492 and 1502 decrees ordering Jews and Muslims to convert to Catholicism or leave Spain. The Spanish Inquisition is an example of religious intolerance, repression, and violence. According to modern approximations, around 150,000 were prosecuted for various offenses during the three centuries of duration of the Spanish Inquisition, out of which between 3,000 and 5,000 executed.

Repression, violence, and intolerance took various forms: condemnation of the Protestant doctrine, prohibition of any publication that could mean some threat to the Catholic Church, excommunication to all those accept the new doctrines, physical and verbal violence towards missionaries or Protestant believers. In Colombia the religious intolerance had its maximum expression in the twentieth century, in the violence generated by the death of Jorge Eliezer Gaitán, when the fight between conservatives and liberals took religious dimensions and also meant the persecution of evangelicals, then many churches Protestants were closed and destroyed and some pastors killed.

The 1991 Colombian Constitution legislated in favor of freedom of cults. The new Constitution brought the novelty of a secular State and religious pluralism in which different religious organizations can participate freely, supposedly, without the preference of the Government

The official presence of the Lutheranism in Colombia started in November 1936, two women, Myrtle Nordin and Marie Thomson, arrived in the country as missionaries. Due to violence and religious persecution, many Lutherans had to escape to the cities; progressively the church moved from being rural to urban. Between the decades of 40 to 80, the church spread out to other provinces

On January 18, 1982, the existing congregations decided to have an autonomous government without depending on the administrative and missionary decisions of the Lutheran churches of the United States, so a national church was established under the name of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia. On January 11, 1998, the reverend Liria Consuelo Preciado in Sogamoso (Boyacá) was ordained as the first woman pastor in IELCO

On February 2002, was established the Lutheran School of Theology (ELT). This program is part of IELCO's theological and ministerial training area, and also prepares members and leadership in congregations. ELT courses focus on Biblical Formation, Ministerial Formation, Bible, Theology and Human Rights, Leadership Development and Formation and Accompaniment to Lutheran Schools Teachers

On August 2016, Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez was elected, as well the Vice-president Rev. Olga Rocio Morales.

*“No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light. Luke 8:16-18*

## YOUR SUPPORT

### A COMMITMENT WITH GLOBAL MISSION

#### HERE'S HOW TO GIVE:

Give through your synod office or mail your check to:  
ELCA, Gift Processing Center, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.

By credit or debit card:

<https://community.elca.org/Argentina-Uruguay> or call  
800-638-3522

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 Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez, and the Vice-president Rev. Olga Rocio Morales
- The IELCO National Executive Council (CEN)
- IELCO missions and congregations, pastors and lay leaders
- The Lutheran School of Theology (ELT)
- The missionaries Curtis Kline and Katie Andert Kline, serving in IELCO.
- The missionaries in Chile:
  - Ryana Holt, serving in Chile
  - Karen Anderson, serving in Chile
- The IELCO Companion Synods: Southeastern Minnesota Synod; South Carolina Synod; ELCIC Synod of Alberta and the Territories, Canada, supporting their commitment to IELCO.