

EMMAUS ROAD FOUNDATION

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF COLOMBIA



2023 Annual Report



Christian leadership
for family, church
and society!





Dear mission friends:

Joyful and thankful greetings from Bogota Colombia. I am Stella Lizarazo. For the last 20 years, I have had the joy of serving as Executive Director for Fundacion Camino de Emaus. As we celebrate this milestone of 33 years of faithful service to God's mission in Colombia, we praise God for all and each one of you our mission companions.

Someone has said that "gratitude is the memory of the heart". We are forever grateful to God for you. Your generosity continues to empower individuals, families, communities and to advance Christian leadership among the congregations and ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia. This celebration is truly God's gift of grace and our fresh invitation to see the world through the lenses of gratitude, compassion, mission solidarity and renewed purpose. **From our home to yours, Blessed Advent and Christmas Seasons!**

Holistic Mission Impacts 2023: Entrusted with your empowering generosity, Emmaus Road Foundation soundly stewards and multiplies mission impacts for the sake of God's mission in Colombia. Together we are ensuring formal education in 21 communities throughout Colombia where the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia is present. This colorful kaleidoscope of mission outcomes could not happen without you. **Thank you in the name of Christ!**

- ◆ 278 students, from elementary to university education, achieved their academic goals this year. 16 students graduated from high school. 2 students graduated with Degrees in Computer Engineering and in Banking & Financial Services.
- ◆ 16 high school students received training to improve their academic scores when taking a governmental test required to apply to university. 5 peasant women & 2 indigenous women fulfilled their academic goals thanks to additional financial support to cover transportation, food and rent.
- ◆ 91 elementary school students and their parents were trained in areas of life skills, self-knowledge, interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, assertive communication, empathy, stress and emotions management.
- ◆ 22 women with hearing and cognitive impairment were trained on how to make products out of leather and synthetic materials and thus ensure sustainability for their families.
- ◆ 35 boys and 15 girls from vulnerable families, who live in temporary housing, received workshops about selfcare, prevention of violence, martial arts and overall psychological support. 170 students from 6th to 11th grades participated in workshops focused on peace and reconciliation.



Offered two Global Voices Virtual Broadcasts. These broadcasts involve voices by our network of supporters in USA and Canada. Provided leadership, logistical support and financial resources for The Lutheran Missionary Society of Colombia, most commonly known as **SOLMICOL** by its acronym in Spanish.

Facilitated bilingual communication for the Good Shepherd Senior Center in Soacha. Thanks to the generosity of the Synod of Alberta & the Territories of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, 40 vulnerable elders in Soacha receive weekly holistic services. Emmaus Road Foundation facilitate communication between the Lutheran Church of Colombia, the USA and Canada through written and verbal translation. This year we facilitated planning logistics related to the visit of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories in Canada.





From our Board President: This year 2023 we are celebrating our 33rd Anniversary as Fundacion Camino de Emaus (Emmaus Road Foundation). What started with a humble offering of pennies by 12 Sunday School children at Trinity Lutheran Church in Edgemont South Dakota, is today a growing movement of compassion, social empowerment, formal education, and Christian leadership. We praise God for you our mission companions whose generosity makes possible this joyful milestone. As Board of Directors, we are passionately committed to our shared mission of **“empowering individuals, families, and communities as agents of social change in Colombia”**.

We are equally committed to lay the foundations for growing sustainability. In this spirit, we are delighted to announce the **LIZWAN**

Endowment Fund. Thanks to the generosity of the Lizarazo-Wangsness family, the goal of this growing endowment is to ensure sustainability for Fundacion Camino de Emaus (Emmaus Road Foundation). This endowment welcomes gifts of any amount and at any time, including our legacies gifts at the end of life. The LIZWAN Endowment Fund is managed by the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest.

Gifts of any amount are welcome for the LIZWAN Endowment Fund. If giving by check, make it payable to Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest and mail it in care of **Pastor Natanael Lizarazo at 2281 Olive Hill Drive, New Braunfels, TX 78130. If giving by credit card, secured online giving is available at our website www.fundacioncaminoemaus.org/en. Please select LIZWAN Endowment or Fundacion Camino de Emaus.**



◆ **Ministry of Education:** our Scholarship Program is part of the Ministry of Education of the Lutheran Church of Colombia. Along with other programs and the Lutheran Schools who are part of this Ministry, we worked together in the areas of Child Protection Policies, Christian Formation and Peace and Reconciliation training seminars.

◆ **Children’s Protection Policy:** Working collaboratively with the Education Ministry of the Lutheran Church of Colombia we are assessing our current Children’s Protection Policy. Our aim is to know what needs to be improved and changed so that safety is in place for our children wherever we are present as Church and as Foundation.

◆ **Elders Ministry Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia:** Working collaboratively with a Coordinating Team of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia and thanks to the leadership and fundraising efforts of Pastor Natanael Lizarazo, this recently established National Ministry is fully engaged. From its very beginning, the National Elderly Ministry is being built upon gradual sustainable foundations. The fruits of this

collaboration will allow the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia to make visible and to serve holistic needs of elders within Congregations and Missions of the National Church.

◆ **Growing National Sustainability:** Our 2nd National Campaign “Ora y Colabora Campaign” (Pray & Give Campaign) aimed at socializing the work of the Foundation and to invite national generosity toward scholarships for 10 new elementary school students in 2024. Our gratitude to individuals, families and Churches in Colombia who donated precious resources to make possible elementary education for children.

◆ **National Sponsorship Pilot Project:** This Pilot Project invites the generosity of graduates who accomplished their formal education through Emmaus Road Foundation. Two secondary school students received sponsorship thanks to the generosity of two women who in the past benefited from our Scholarship Programs.

◆ **Endowment for Formal Education:** We are grateful to IELCO-Finland Scholarship Program for its foundational gifts to this endowment in Colombia. The more this endowment grows, the more sustainability it will provide for the expanding mission of Emmaus Road Foundation.



Bishop Atahualpa Hernández

With joy and thanksgiving, I greet you on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia and its ministries. As we celebrate another year of the Foundation's significant outcomes in formal education, leadership formation, evangelizing initiatives, mission relationships, Casa Emaus and Senior Care Ministry, we praise God for all and each one of you our beloved mission companions. These mission outcomes truly are the fruits of your empowering generosity!

To the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), to the Foundation's network of supporters in the USA, to our Companion Synods in Southeastern Minnesota, South Carolina and Alberta (Canada) our heartfelt gratitude. Working together, we continue to weave the rich and colorful tapestry of God's mission here in Colombia. Yes! Together! Together we are strengthening the missional and evangelizing capacity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia. From our homes to yours, a grace-filled Advent and Christmas Seasons!



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