

Many Gifts, One Spirit Part 1

This is a story of two Salvadoran Lutheran pastors, pastors in contrasting situations, yet with remarkable similarities...



In the communities of Dos de Mayo (Mountains of Penzberg Lutheran Church) and Jayaque (Bread of Life Lutheran Church), services are led by Pastor, or as female pastors are called in the Spanish-speaking world, Pastora, Blanca Irma Rodriguez. These communities, in the barrio of La Libertad, sit at the footsteps of the mountains of El Salvador. Although nothing in El Salvador lies far from the equator, the weather here can be relatively temperate.

The drive from San Salvador is a slow, upward-winding passage that takes us first to Dos de Mayo and ultimately on to Jayaque. Pastor Blanca Irma's congregations survive in communities with a history of tragedy and violence. Before her, these congregations were led by a husband and wife pastoral team, Francisco and Jesus Carrillo, who had a tremendous impact on the area. On November 4, 2006, both were assassinated after worship as they left Mountains of Penzberg

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A memorial near the church commemorates their sacrifice.



Today both towns, like many in El Salvador, are torn by violence. The churches Pastor Blanca Irma serves, including the sister churches of Abiding Savior and Memorial Lutheran Churches in Milwaukee, are especially torn by the memory of the martyrs who died so close by and so recently. Allegiance to the Carrillos remains strong. Despite these challenges, Pastor Blanca Irma, with her family beside her, strives continually to win back the confidence and hearts of the people. She has a strong faith, and she has visions of a better life for the people she touches. One such vision includes plans to open a bakery that can provide the people with a sustainable source of income. The power of the Lord is strong in her.



Our story of the two Salvadoran Lutheran pastors will continue in next week's story...

Submitted by Abiding Savior ELCA, Milwaukee, WI. Abiding Savior and Bread of Life are sister churches.

Your gift to the Salvadoran Lutheran Church Pastors Endowment Fund will help to provide a sustainable source of salary support to Pastor Blanca Irma and the other clergy of the Salvadoran Lutheran Church. For more information about the fund or companion synod ministries with the Salvadoran Lutheran Church, email info@partnerswithelsalvador.org