

## Day 4 – Friday, June 22

Good evening from the Dominican Republic; it was a busy and productive day here! We started our ritual of team devotionals at 7am led by Ryan and Roel. Ryan led us in worship with a short sermon accompanied by a song, then Roel read through examples of God's many promises to remind us that being a Christian is not only believing *in* God but believing God. There are over 5,000 promises God has made to us, and all but one has been fulfilled (the return of Jesus Christ). A meaningful reminder to us as we go out into the community to share the word of God.



After breakfast and a bus ride into the community, we unloaded and divided into groups for prayer walks, house painting, and home visits. Rick and Paul helped a young boy, Jose Miguel, who had a recurring tooth abscess. After Paul examined him, they prayed for his healing. Rick then worked with the community pastor to set up an appointment with a dentist at the local medical center. We keep praying that God will use us to reach kids like Jose who have no other means of medical and dental care.

Rick and his prayer group also encountered a young girl who asked him, "Eres Dios?" (are you God?) – confused, Rick had the translator ask the girl what she meant and why she was asking. The girl responded, "I had a dream last night that I would meet God today."



Lunch in El Almirante was the "Dominican Flag," which is the traditional Dominican dish of rice, beans, and meat (usually chicken or beef with sautéed vegetables). Like yesterday, we followed it with assembly lines to pack kids lunches of chips, juice, and a sandwich.



Before VBS but after lunch, we made our annual stop at the community women's school. Angela, the leader of the school, teaches women to create and sell various home goods such as shoes, dolls, pillows, dishes, and much more. Everything in the shop was colorful and unique; Brennen and I (Alison) bought two pairs of sandals and a doll for our nieces 😊.



Next was the big event for the day, children's feet washing! During the feet washing lesson, we file kids into the community church to learn about Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and the importance of serving others. Once they have heard their lesson, they move to a seat across from one of our team members to have their feet washed. Although there is a language barrier for some of us, we can usually ask their name, tell them God loves them, and share a few smiles. Once their feet are clean and dry, we send them on their way with a sack lunch. We ended our day in the community with church clean-up and many "Hasta Mañana's" to ensure the children we'd be back the next day.

We returned to the hotel around 7pm and headed straight to dinner. We had a private meal of fried chicken, french fries, and rice. One of Vicki's previous sponsor children, Carlos, joined us for dinner with his new wife. He shared his story, recounting how excited he felt when missionaries would come to his village every year. The first gift he was given from Vicki's son was a Bible. Carlos smiled and told Vicki that he first decided to read his Bible because he was



nervous they would come back the next year and ask him questions. Although that's how it started, he continued to read and grow closer to Jesus over the years. He is now married, and both him and his wife work for Food for the Hungry, an organization here in the DR that reaches out to other countries to bring groups of missionaries to places such as the Dominican Republic, Uganda, and Haiti. What a fantastic journey God has given Carlos!

Our evening wrapped up with a devotional led by Nellie and Tia – Nellie started with a worship song followed by a verse from Isaiah 40. Both Nellie and Tia reflected on the day and shared how even though there are personal struggles we may be battling in a new place, whether it's feeling uncomfortable or homesick – we are reminded that we are not here for ourselves, but for others and to serve God. Amen!

