

## **A Greeting Sent from Christian Chavarria**

*The following message was sent to us from the Reverend Christian Chavarría Ayala who lives in San Salvador and is a strong advocate and friend to the Seeds of Hope Sponsorship Program. He has made many visits to Minnesota and our SOH sponsoring churches, most recently in October 2023. He is known world-wide for the beautiful crosses he designs and paints. The one pictured was created for the 500th Commemoration of the Reformation in 2016 and is housed in the chapel of the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, Switzerland.*

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,  
Sister Churches and Companion Synods in the USA

Receive from your sister church in El Salvador a fraternal greeting, filled with love and hope in Christ our Lord, the Prince of Peace.

As sister churches, united by faith, communion, and our commitment to the Gospel, I wish to express our deep solidarity and closeness in the midst of the difficult reality you are facing today as the people of the United States. As brothers and sisters, we are grieved and deeply concerned by state violence, the persecution of migrant people, and the persecution of those who struggle to defend their human dignity. We are troubled by the lack of humanity in government policies, for they sow fear, pain, and exclusion among God's people, who seek only to live with dignity and in peace.

The Salvadoran Lutheran Church, your companion church, affirms that all life is sacred and must be defended. The Gospel reminds us that God hears the cry of the oppressed, and that Christ himself identifies with the foreigner, the persecuted, and the marginalized. Therefore, when a human life is threatened and human rights are trampled upon, the Church cannot remain silent.

We recognize and also give thanks for the courageous witness of your communities, which even in adverse contexts continue to accompany, protect, and defend migrant persons. This is a true testimony to God's merciful love. In this way, the Kingdom of justice, peace, and compassion is built.

From our Lutheran church in El Salvador, together with our Bishop Guadalupe Cortez, pastors and deacons, we lift up our prayers for all of you—for all the affected families, for those who live in fear, and for those who work tirelessly for justice. We pray for an end to violence, abuse, and the deaths of innocent people. You are not alone in your struggles. We join you and your cry, and we reaffirm our commitment to walk together, to raise our voices prophetically, and to continue proclaiming that true peace is only possible where the dignity of every human being is respected.

May our God of life sustain you, grant you strength, and give you all HOPE in the midst of the struggle.

*“The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.” Isaiah 32:17*

You do not walk alone; we walk with you. You are in our thoughts and daily prayers.

Fraternally in Christ,

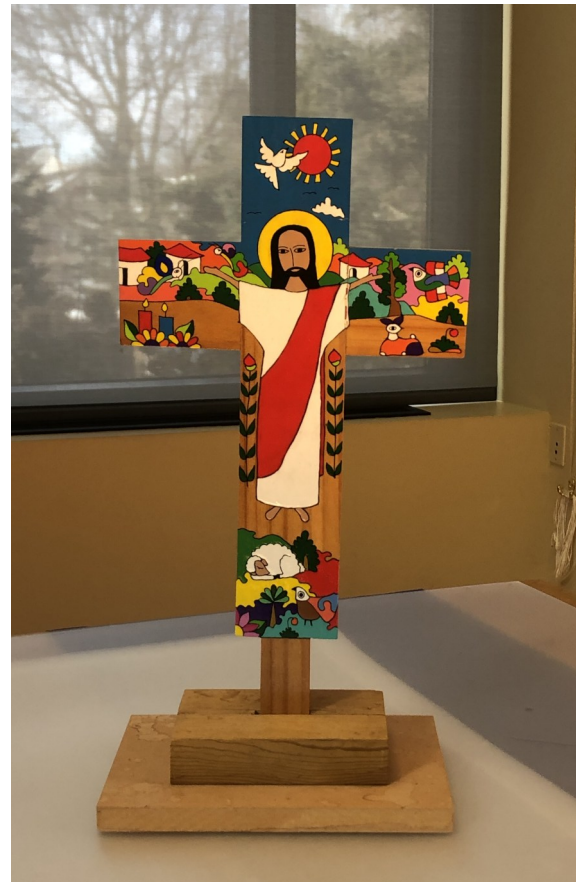
The Rev. Christian Chavarría

*Coordinator*

*Sister Churches Office*



**Cross at Our Saviors Lutheran**



**Cross at Trinity Lutheran**



**Cross at Family of Christ**



**Christian and cross for 500<sup>th</sup> Reformation Anniversary**