



Light in the midst of darkness?

One would have to cover one's eyes to not become keenly aware of the cloud of darkness descending on our world. Children held in cages. People of color brutalized. Nation after nation closing its doors to the millions of uprooted people who are fleeing untold violence. Waters rising, deserts growing, fires raging uncontrollably. Hundreds dying in the Northern hemisphere during the hottest summer in recorded history. Not a bright picture by any means.

What then? What are common people like you and me called to feel, say and do in the midst of such dense dark? We're dedicating this newsletter to some reflections along those lines in connection to our life in Costa Rica. Thanks for reading on!

1. Acknowledging the darkness

Much as we might rather insulate ourselves and fabricate bubbles of brightness, responsible living in the creation community demands awareness, painful acknowledgment and deep-felt lament. No room for this:



We must see. We must hear. We must cry out! The Psalmist of old, prophets and poets of yesterday and today can give words to our heart-felt lament for all that is depriving people and the whole of creation of the full life God intends. As long as our planet is wrapped in darkness we not only *can* but *must* groan along with the whole of creation!

2. Digging into the facts

One of our Casa Adobe community members is Fabio Salguero. His painful experience as a refugee could have led him to sink into the darkness. Instead, he took up studies with CETI, and for his Master's thesis, he researched the reality of other people forced to flee violence, and ended up proposing the refugee condition as one that opens up new and deep theological understandings. Far from simply delivering pre-packaged theological concepts to Fabio and his fellow-students, CETI has given Fabio tools to engage his own experience and that of others from a biblical-theological and interdisciplinary perspective in order to dig deeply and shed light into their context. Please join us in congratulating Fabio (you can write him

and his wife, Erika, at [Casa Adobe](#)) and in praying for the on-going educational ministry of [CETI Continental](#) as we accompany students from across Latin America.

Darkness also threatens to leave no followers of Jesus in the land in which God-made-human lived. I (Ruth) was privileged to spend a few days at [Christ at the Checkpoint](#), fellowshiping and digging into the facts that are constricting the life of Palestinians and sending so many of them into exile. If you pray, please remember my friends Tony (Palestinian) and Sarah (Bolivian) and their baby, who are unable to live together in Bethlehem, where he teaches and they own a flat, because Israel will not grant her a visa.

3. Sowing seeds of hope

Our lament and our acknowledgment of the facts need not paralyze us. Instead, they can become incentives for us to become agents of change. Martin Luther is known to have stated: “Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree.”

We are convinced that even if we cannot push the darkness out of the whole world—and are not even called to do so—we can sow seeds of hope in the place where we’re planted. So the [Casa Adobe Association](#) continues walking with our neighbors in Santa Rosa de Santo Domingo. English and math classes help kids stick to school and not drop out. Guitar lessons and community art projects refresh their imagination. Community gardening and seed sharing open new ways of relating to food and the land. A newscast with children journalists increases their sense of dignity.

We are grateful for the work of volunteers sponsored by the [Cohort of Missioners](#) and Wheaton College [HNGR program](#)! Also, in June we received a team of leaders of [Resonate Global Mission](#) at Casa Adobe for a time of fellowship and visioning. We are grateful for partnerships such as these, and invite you to explore other such possibilities with Casa Adobe.





4. Living justly

Seeds take a while to grow. And meantime light needs to shine in the darkness TODAY! As eyes are opened, doors and borders also need to be pried open so not one person is left without a home. The latest addition to Casa Adobe is an entire family of four from Venezuela whose lives were under threat. We find that what we might not have been able to do alone we are able to do as a community. Doing things together allows us to live more justly! Prayers are appreciated in their favor:

may they find employment and may the Costa Rica government grant them refugee status.



Nothing sweeter than being cared for by a three-year-old Venezuelan girl (the youngest member of our community and among the most recent arrivals) when you've sliced your finger!

PLEASE consider an extra donation today to facilitate our accompaniment of refugees,

With gratitude,

Jim and Ruth Padilla DeBorst

**MANY THANKS to churches and friends
who are faithfully and generously giving!
We are still significantly underfunded.
Would you please pray and consider if you are
able to support our ministry?**

You can donate by check:

*Resonate (for the Padilla DeBorsts) 1700 28th St SE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49560*

or online:

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Our e-mail



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