



Extreme makeover: Hand in hand doing God's work in the world

I spend a great deal of time in airplanes. In my experience, in-flight conversations often begin with the question, "What do you do for living?" If I respond "I am a pastor," the conversation ends there. I've learned to answer this question with another question: "Have you watched the TV show Extreme Home Makeover?" Their faces light up. "Do you work for them?" they ask. "No," I reply, "but I do something similar."

In Extreme Home Makeover a team identifies a family in need and a house is built for them. The community comes together to offer their gifts and talents to assist. In the job my colleagues and I do, we work with people and communities all around the world, sharing gifts and talents to address needs. Response efforts include health-care services, primary and vocational education, access to clean water, food security, housing, micro-finance, and bringing hope by sharing the good news.

By this time my seatmates are engaged in the conversation and want to know more about this job. I really enjoy the moment they ask, "What kind of organization does all this?" "Most people call it the church," I reply. "I am a Lutheran pastor working in the global mission unit of our church."

Thank you for your continued support to Global Mission Support: ELCA Missionary Sponsorship and ELCA Global Gifts. Your gifts allow ELCA missionaries to work alongside local companions sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in restoring people's lives. We are part of this Extreme Global Makeover, hand in hand, together!

The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla is executive director for ELCA Global Mission.



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