

## January/February 2023

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Isaiah 52:7

During the last few months, I have frequently thought about what it means to live life "on mission." When I was living as a missionary in the Dominican Republic, it was very easy to feel like I was ministering to people daily. However, something I have had to learn in this new season of being a full-time student is that missions does not depend on my living in a different country or dedicating all my time to ministry. I think sometimes we assume that serving God requires some tremendous self-sacrifice or a grandiose plan. Yet, how often do we overlook the impact of a simple act of kindness? In a world where darkness and animosity seem overwhelming, we, the light of the world, are called to love. So, I want to extend a challenge to you (and myself). Be the light. Smile at someone today. Say something positive. Show the love of Jesus, even if you don't speak His name. You could change the trajectory of someone's day, week, or even their life.

The picture above is one that I saw hanging above the door in a church in Platteville while I was home for spring break, and I have taken its message to heart. The moment I step out of my door, I am stepping onto a mission field, one where "the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few" (Luke 10:2). Missions is not reserved for pastors or missionaries, nor is it limited to a specific place or country. Missions is a mindset; it is a choice to see, serve, and love the people that God places in your path.



## Update from the Dominican Republic

In the sunny isle across the sea, Jaime and Jacqueline are continuing to work with many Haitian pastors to plant new churches and minister to people who are hungry for God's love. They are currently in the process of building a new little chapel for a congregation in Las Tablas. (chapel construction so far →)

I'm also counting down the days for our next mission trip to the DR at the end of May. I miss my Dominican family and all my sweet students! I plan to provide more information about that upcoming trip in my next report, so keep an eye out for it!



## Spanish Ministry

After a couple months of working through some logistics, I am finally able to launch a Spanish-speaking small group through the church that I attend here. I definitely feel like I am stepping into uncharted waters, at least for me, but I am excited for the ways that I will learn and grow through the new experience of leading a small group.

## Highlands Highlight

The first term of this spring semester kept me very busy! Between my two academic classes, a ministry leadership course, and my practicum assignments, I had lots of homework to do and papers to write. Nevertheless, there have been many fun moments as well. This semester I started a new small group with some of the ladies at my campus. I look forward to the fellowship (and food :D) that we share each week! At the beginning of February, some of my fellow students and I had the opportunity to serve some of the people who volunteer every Sunday at the Tuscaloosa campus. We enjoyed seeing a different campus and meeting new people. That same weekend, my mom came down for a visit, and it was so fun for her to get a glimpse of my life here! Finally, we had the privilege of hearing from Chris Tomlin in chapel! He shared some of his testimony as well as the inspiration for some of his songs.



(small group with the ladies; with my Tuscaloosa serve team; picture with Chris Tomlin!)

## Gratitude

- I'm thankful that my mom got to come visit during the first weekend in February! It was such a blessing to have her here, and I had so much fun introducing her to my friends and my church community.
- I'm thankful for the mission trip in May! I can't wait to see everyone and hear about everything God has been doing down there. Also, I miss the food, the ocean, and even the loud music... crazy but true!
- I'm incredibly thankful for the ways God has been moving in my life and in my school! (my mom and I with my roommate →)



## Prayers

- Please pray for the construction projects in the Dominican Republic, for the new churches being planted there, and for the upcoming mission trip.
- Please pray for the Spanish-speaking small group that I am finally starting this term!
- Please pray for continued personal growth – that I can love God and love people more each day!

## Information

If you have questions or would like to hear more about my adventures in the DR, or my current adventure in Alabama, please email me at [emily.stader@516NOW.org](mailto:emily.stader@516NOW.org) or message me through Facebook.

You can also visit my webpage at <https://516now.org/emily-stader/> to receive updates or to learn more about the organization of 516NOW.

If you would like to join me on this adventure as a financial supporter, there is a link to donate in the webpage above, or you can go directly to <https://516now.org/donations/support-emily-stader-ministry/>

Thank You and God Bless!  
Emily