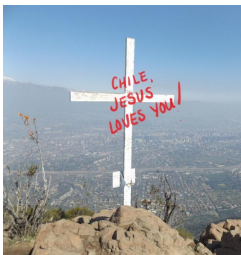


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To the Ends of the Earth: SPECIAL EDITION

Chile Mission News from Jim and Liisa Tino

October 2019

Dear James,

First of all, we are safe! Thank you to all who have inquired as to our well-being by phone, email, text message, and other ways. With this SPECIAL EDITION newsletter, we hope to bring you up to date on what is happening in Chile.

Violent Protests Rock Chile

Those who follow international news have likely received word of the social unrest in Chile. Protests started in Santiago during the evening of Friday October 18 and intensified throughout the weekend, soon spreading to major cities throughout the country. A



mandatory curfew (no one allowed on the streets) was in place on Saturday from 9:00 pm to 6:00 am, and Sunday from 7:00 pm to 6:00 am. As I write this on Monday evening, we are again under curfew from 8:00 pm to 6:00 am. Many protests have turned violent, blockading streets and major thoroughfares with bonfires. The most dramatic incidents have included the destruction of subway stations and trains, and the looting and burning of supermarkets, business, buses, and even private vehicles. You can [view a video here](#).

What is driving the protests?

First, this is not essentially a political protest. Chile is proud of its democracy, and there is no question about the legitimacy of current elected officials, up to and including the president. This is social unrest. Many Chileans feel that they have been repressed and/or exploited by those who hold the levers of power, variously identified as: the government; corrupt officials; multinational corporations; banks; the military; the church (particularly the Roman Catholic church); the "elites"; or any combination of those. A common refrain of those participating or sympathizing with the protesters is: "Chile is waking up" or "Chile has awoken". Thus, many of the targets of vandalism have included the chain of supermarkets known locally as "Lider", which is owned by Walmart; auto dealerships; and even in some cases private homes.

Fare Increase only the Trigger

The "trigger" event which set things off was an increase in the price of the Metro (subway). Santiago has an extensive subway system that moves millions of people each day and is used as primary transportation by the poor, the working class, the middle class, and students. Liisa and I rely on the Metro to travel about the city. It is very modern and

efficient, but it is not cheap - it costs about \$1.15 each time you enter the system. When the price was raised by about 5 cents, protesters initially targeted the Metro and destroyed over half of the stations (77 stations damaged or destroyed of 136), effectively closing down 90% of the system. Many people, rich and poor alike and including many of the protesters, have expressed their outrage at those who crippled the main transportation system of the city, pointing out that it will disproportionately affect the poor and working class.

Is there more to it?

Police, government officials, and the general public were initially taken by surprise by the severity of the protests and the extent of destruction in Santiago. However, as the protests spread throughout the country, it soon became evident that this was not about the fare increase. Innumerable "talking heads" on Chilean television and public media have been analyzing the underlying factors, and the general consensus is that it is being driven by the feeling of repression and exploitation mentioned earlier.

However, a theory that is gaining popularity is that the social unrest is being generated and coordinated by a more "sinister" force. People are asking, "How is it that the whole country is protesting? This seems to be far too coordinated." During one of his public discourses during this crisis, Chilean president Sebastián Piñera said "We are at war against a powerful enemy", apparently alluding to a rumored multinational cabal of leftist leaders in Latin America. It didn't help that socialist dictator Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela, when asked his opinion on the social protests in Chile, said "This is working better than we had hoped, and there's more to come." Some believe that leftist agents / agitators have infiltrated Chile, mixed in with the massive immigrant population who have fled Venezuela. This has made the Venezuelan immigrant population understandably nervous.

So what's it like for us in Santiago?

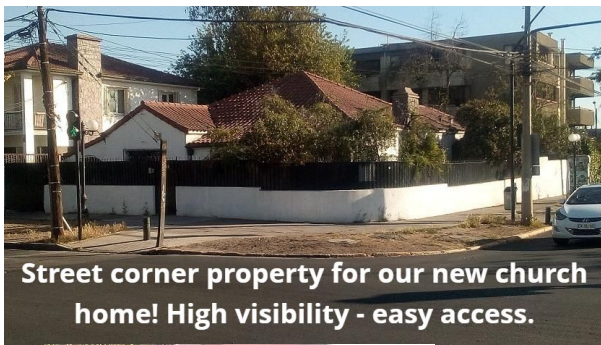
Liisa and I were in [Venezuela during two attempted coups](#), one in February 1992 and the second in November of that same year. During the November coup, fighter planes were dogfighting over our city. We learned that the basic game plan is: stock up, and hunker down. That's pretty much the plan now, as well. There's no telling how long this will last. There are specific "hot areas" of the city that are best to avoid, especially at night. Even so, protests can arise quickly and spontaneously in unpredictable places, so it is best to avoid any area where a crowd is gathering.

Life in Santiago has gotten exponentially more difficult. Without the subway system, traffic is an absolute nightmare. It is impossible to cross the city. So far, schools have been closed which lessens the traffic, so I can't imagine what it will be like when schools reopen. It is best just to go to places within walking distance. Fortunately, we live downtown so there is a lot within walking distance! Many businesses are closed, and there are long lines at any open business that sells food of any kind. Long lines at gas stations, as well.

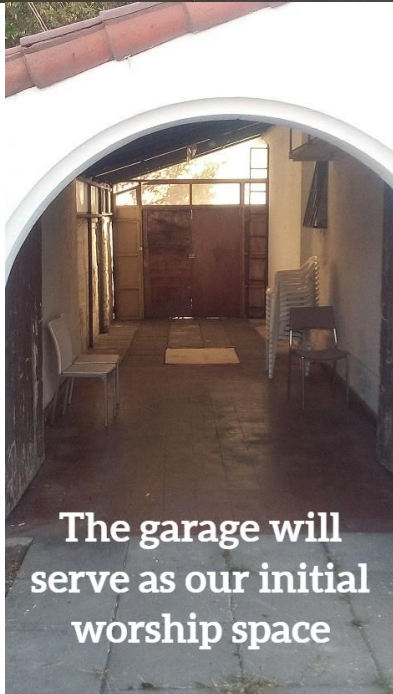
So far, public utilities have not been affected. Our church / mission house is located in a residential neighborhood away about a block from a major thoroughfare and 4 blocks from a Metro station, so while we can hear protesters, none so far have ventured into the neighborhood. Currently in our mission house, we are housing 6 Venezuelan immigrants plus us. We feel safe.

The Mission Continues

In the midst of all of this, we are trying to get our new Mission Property ready to use! Yes, God has answered our prayers and at the end of September, we signed a 2-year rental agreement for a new property. The plan is for our vicar Marcelo Rivas and his family to move in as soon as possible, hopefully this week. Then as we rehabilitate more areas of the property, we will be housing immigrants, holding worship services, and more! An idea that is gaining traction is to have a second-hand resell store to help immigrants and other with limited resources, while also generating income for the mission.



Street corner property for our new church home! High visibility - easy access.



The garage will serve as our initial worship space



This 2-story building is on the back of the property.



We hope to build a chapel in this yard area! It will double our current worship capacity!

PRAYERS AND PRAISE

* **Praise God for keeping us safe.** Ask Him to continue to protect us from harm and danger.

* **Praise God for our new mission property!** Pray that we would be able to get it into useable condition even in the midst of the crisis.

* **Praise God for airline miles!** Liisa was able to travel to Florida to be with daughter Soni and help with the coming baby.

* **Praise God for bringing new people to Him through our mission!** It is not uncommon now to have over 40 people in worship.

* **Pray for peace to be restored throughout Chile,** and especially in Santiago.

* **Ask God to continue to protect us** from harm and danger.

* **Pray that we would be able to get our new property** into usable condition even in the midst of the crisis.

* **Pray for Soni, due to give birth** any day now - maybe even tomorrow! **Pray that she, husband Tyler, and little Braxton** adjust well to the new addition to their family.

Support Corner

We praise the Lord especially for YOU, our mission partners who pray for us and support God's mission in Santiago! May the

Lord pour out unexpected blessings on you!

[To support our ministry online, click here.](#) One-time or automated contributions are available.

OR

Mail a check to:

Global Lutheran Outreach

6709 Ficus Dr.

Miramar, FL 33023

(Put "Tino - Chile" on the memo line of the check.)

Financial Support Level



We are always thankful to God for His provision for our ministry through you! Your gifts are blessing many Chileans and Venezuelans in Santiago.



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