

# MADA MATTERS

*Tsy veloma fa Mandrapihaona ... Not goodbye but see you soon...*

## What I do

I coordinate the YAGM (Young Adults in Global Mission) program of the ELCA in Madagascar. This means programmatic, logistical and pastoral support for 6 volunteers in all corners of this country. I travel a ton to see them and to support the accompaniment part of our church to church work. I am constantly being refined and renewed, learning things about the world and myself while challenging and cultivating my faith.

## Questions/ Communication

Pastor Kirsten Laderach -  
YAGM Country Coordinator -  
Madagascar

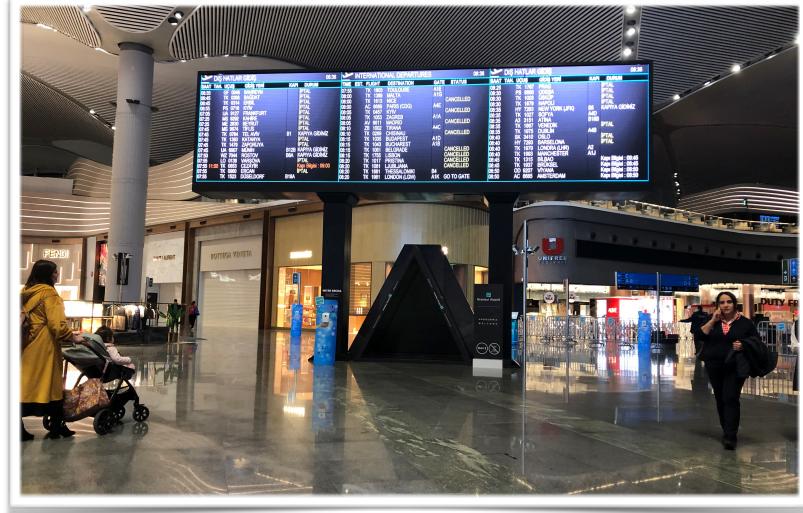
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Mada Matters Bi-Monthly



## The end came too soon...

Not unlike you, we knew Covid-19 was spreading throughout many parts of the world. We watched with a mix of thankfulness, question and hope, thankfulness for being in a place that had no cases of Covid-19, question about if/when that would no longer be the case and a dash of hope that maybe our island nation could somehow be spared... Mada is a tourist destination but not nearly the center of transit or traffic and we had cut off flights to and from China weeks ago...

At our second retreat we spoke about washing hands and basic hygiene, contingency travel plans and making the most of everyday that was placed before us. We never suspected that





## Ways to support me

As always I thank you for your thoughts, prayers and support. It takes a lot to sustain our work here in Madagascar and around the world. Ways you can help:

- Pray - for me, our work here and for Madagascar
- Communicate - through email and snail mail
- Sponsor - myself or Global ministries in Madagascar at: <https://community.elca.org/Madagascar>



### Prayer Requests -

Pray for Mada as they try contain Covid-19 within their borders.

Pray for the transitions of all the returned YAGM and their communities as their year of service was cut abruptly short.

about a week after the retreat ended we would be thankful for making the most of some of those last days. The decision for our evacuation came at about 10pm local time on Saturday night. The next day would be our last Sunday, the beginnings of goodbyes and for one, his very last day. We boarded planes on Thursday at 3pm and at 5pm. The Madagascar borders closed at 11:59pm.

### *(I hope this is not) An Unfitting End*

This fifth year and group of volunteers is to be my last. The hope is for me to return, be able to close down my life in Madagascar. An apartment, bank account and everything else necessary for one's own life and for the support of 6 - 10 young adults at a time takes more than 4 days especially when orchestrating an emergency evacuation of 7 volunteers from around the island. So for now, I sit in Michigan at my sister's house, and do what so many of you are doing, I'm staying at home. I'm waiting and watching to see what will unfold and when. So I hope that crazy departure which held no goodbyes for me will be a truly a mandrapihaona, not an end. While I am in Michigan, I've been talking with the evacuated volunteers and the new coordinators.

