



Letter from the
Executive Director

PAGE 2



21st Century
'Transcultural
Missionary' Training

PAGE 3



God is growing the
Gospel seeds planted
in Mongolia

PAGE 4



Prayer
resources

PAGE 7

LCMS WORLD MISSION

Harvest News

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A quarterly mission newsletter to inform and involve LCMS Christians in God's mission



Growing Gospel seeds in the emerging Lutheran Church in Mongolia



Cover Photo: A Finnish Lutheran missionary, Pentti Marttila, receives an award from a Mongolian government official for financially assisting herders in the region.



Cover Photo: Rev. Matt Heise, shown here in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia, serves as a theological educator throughout Eurasia.



LCMS WORLD MISSION
The Global Gospel Outreach of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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Director's LETTER

My Dear Partners in the Gospel

Imagine! LCMS related mission outreach in Mongolia! There was a time not so distant when such would have been impossible, for freedom to follow personal religious convictions was not on the radar in Mongolia until the 1990s! Today LCMS World Mission supports the emerging Mongolia Lutheran church. Read about this wonderful work in this issue!

Harvest News readers are generous supporters of LCMS World Mission! Because of you, LCMS World Mission is able to offer assistance to believers in Mongolia and throughout the world! Your gifts are evidence of hearts touched by the Mission of our Lord Jesus to go, teach, and baptize (Matt. 28) the nations. Thank you for your generosity and for this partnership in the Gospel!

And speaking of partners, here are some significant and representative groups:

- The Lutheran Women's Missionary League is a premier partner. At the 2009 LWML Convention, delegates determined to set aside over \$600,000 of future mite offerings for projects submitted by LCMS World Mission!
- "Jesus Is Lord" Mission Society recently voted to fund LCMS World Mission ministries in the amount of \$180,000 for the coming fiscal year! JILM operates out of Walburg, Texas, but its donors are world- wide! Since its inception in 2005, JILM has surpassed \$1,000,000 in total offerings for World Mission!
- Concordia Mission Society has given millions of dollars to LCMS World Mission and other LCMS agencies throughout the years. The founder of the Schwan Ice Cream enterprise, a faithful Lutheran Christian, saw to it that upon his journey to heaven, his earthly possessions would bless Gospel outreach in perpetuity. And so they do!
- Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, a mighty arm of support for LCMS ministries recently gave a church-wide grant that will fund LCMS ethnic ministry starts as well as transformational assistance to congregations! An incredible enterprise, Thrivent provided over \$300,000,000 in benefits to its members in the past fiscal year. Imagine! A Fortune 500 company that has Jesus' cross and resurrection at its core!

Not a few family foundations and many congregations join in giving regular support to LCMS World mission—for which we give thanks.

For the opportunity to be your partner as Executive Director, LCMS World Mission since November 2008, I give thanks. My service in this ministry ends July 31, 2010. This is according to the time schedule agreed upon with the Board for Mission Service when I accepted their Call to serve. With excellent leadership ready to step up in July, I have a sense of satisfaction for what we have accomplished and give thanks to God! I look forward to becoming a LCMS World Mission volunteer, thus joining ranks with many of you. With a tinge of sadness I leave, but I give thanks for this incredible journey and service opportunity! I especially thank my co-workers at LCMS World Mission. What a family!

Sayonara...

In Christ's love,

Thomas R. Zehnder

The Rev. Thomas R. Zehnder
Executive Director
Missionary to Japan, 1961-1970



In March 2009, Tom Zehnder, members of the Board for Mission Services, and staff met with partners in Panama, Argentina, and Brazil. This picture taken in Panama includes: (top row) Pastor Martino, Dave Birner, Virginia Von Seggern, Olga Groh, Roger Buck (bottom row) Demetrio, Pastor Patricio, Tom Zehnder, Milton Castillo, Linda Reiser, Anselma, Jorge Groh. (Not pictured: Phil and Judy Kuehnert).

21st century 'Transcultural Missionary' training

Global Lutheran missionary community gathering in Paraguay a resounding success

It may have seemed an impossible dream at first; a missionary training program done in partnership with partner/sister churches of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and with teachers and students from multiple cultures and areas of service. Yet, from May 17-28, in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, a group of approximately 45 adults and 20 children gathered to study together God's biblical plan for mission and missionary practice around the world.

Participants traveled from Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Panama, Peru, the United States, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Slovakia, Kenya, South Africa, and Germany—including some nationals from these nations or LCMS missionaries serving there.

The 'global mission school' would never have been possible if not for extended conversations and planning between LCMS World Mission staff and board leadership and LCMS partner/sister church mission leaders in Latin America, highlighting the incredible possibilities of working together in God's mission across cultural boundaries.

No one can deny the increasing globalization of the world today—particularly through the Internet, world travel capabilities, and changing economies. And in response, the Lutheran family recognizes that mission in the 21st century will require all of us working together to address global issues such as Islam, poverty, and education and to bring the Gospel to bear on life issues that people around the world are facing.

LCMS World Mission associate executive director of International Mission, Dr. David Birner said it was an incredible and



Dr. Jorge Groh and Dr. David Birner lead a morning teaching session.

ground-breaking event. "This is the first time that we've had missionaries from all around the world actually studying together about our heritage and what we do in mission around the world," shared Birner. "And, I think it's a wonderful way to start the 21st century; by defining once again who we are, as members of the body of Christ, and our specific role as Lutherans in the world today."

What is missiology?

Missiology is the area of practical theology that investigates the mandate, message, and work of the Christian missionary—which in essence is God's mission to seek and save the lost. It reflects on theology, anthropology, history, geography, communication, comparative religion, Christian apologetics, etc.

Argentinian course instructor and director of the Missionary Training School of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina, Dr. Sergio Schelske added, "This event has been really great—the opportunity to share experiences with people from all over—it's something that really enriches all of us."

Continued on page 6

Who attended from the LCMS?

LCMS missionary families participating in the transcultural training included:

- Anthony DiLiberto (Peru)
- Rev. Mark and Sandra Eisold and family (Peru)
- DCE David and Radka Fiala (Slovakia & Central Europe)
- Rev. David and Lois Mahsman (Germany & Eurasia)
- Christel and James Neuendorf (Panama & Latin America)
- Rev. Joel and Iantha Scheiwe and family (Hong Kong & Asia)
- Vicar Shauen and Krista Trump and family (Kenya)
- Bruce and Sarah Wall and family (Panama & Latin America)
- Matt and DeeDee Wasmund and family (Korea & East Asia)

Faculty and leaders from LCMS World Mission's international team included:

Dr. David Birner, associate executive director of international mission; Regional Directors Dr. Jorge Groh (Latin America), Rev. John Mehl (Asia), Dr. Mike Rodewald (Africa), Rev. Brent Smith (Eurasia); Director of International Operations and Planning Kama Bernabo; and Olga Groh, director, project management, Latin America



God is growing the Gospel seeds planted in Mongolia

Lutheran Church emerging in Mongolia after more than 60 years of communist rule

LCMS missionary Rev. Matt Heise says sometimes it's like driving across the moon. And sometimes it's like driving through a camel farm. Either way he describes it, the Gobi Desert in Mongolia is a fascinating place. During his most recent theological training visit to the country in May 2010, Matt traveled through the Gobi from the capital, Ulaanbaatar, to Light of the Gobi Lutheran Church in Mandal-Gov. There, at the invitation of Finnish Overseas Lutheran Mission missionaries, he taught the new church members about the book of Galatians.

"I can honestly say it has been some of the most enjoyable teaching I have ever done in my missionary service," shares Matt of his teaching experiences in Mongolia. "The Mongolian Lutherans are earnest in their faith and their desire to learn more about Christianity."

The Mongol Empire, just north of China and south of Russia, was founded by Genghis Khan in 1206. Khan, famous for his military campaigns and brutality, was surprisingly tolerant when it came to the religious

practices of the Mongol people. Historically, the Mongols adhered to Buddhism, but there is evidence of Christianity in the area reaching as far back as the seventh century.



A Finnish Lutheran missionary, Pentti Marttila, receives an award from a Mongolian government official for financially assisting herders in the region.

With the collapse of the empire in the 14th century, many in the area converted to Islam. Then, throughout the 60-plus years reign of communism in the 1900s, religious tolerance disappeared.

Protestant guests were not allowed into the region until 1990. That same year, the newly-formed Mongolian democracy counted only four Christians in the country. Today, the number stands closer to 60,000.

Matt first traveled to Mongolia on a fact-finding mission five years ago with fellow LCMS missionary Rev. Brent Smith. Since that initial trip, Matt has spent time among the emerging Lutheran church and

has gotten to know the members. One man he met, named Nerguisaikhon Myadagmaa "Sainaa," is an encouraging example of how God has worked in the region.

Sainaa first heard the Word of God in 1997 from his wife, who served as a caretaker for the children of Finnish missionaries. In January 2000, aided by the Finns, Sainaa and his wife started church services near their home in the capital of Ulaanbaatar. At the first Sunday service, only one person in attendance had been baptized. In the four months that followed, the first members of Sain Medee (Good News) Church were taught about the Word and baptized. A new Lutheran church was born.

Starting with six to eight members, Sain Medee gradually grew and attracted more members. Sainaa was chosen as the leader for this new church and began to study theology. First, he attended the LCMS partner church—the Ingrian Lutheran Church of Russia—seminary in Krasnoyarsk, Russia and then studied Lutheran theology in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Sain Medee (Good News) Church received its official registration in 2004, the same year that Sainaa was ordained to be pastor of the congregation. Today, Sainaa is a long-distance student of the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

During his May 2010 trip, Matt again spent time with Sainaa during his stay in Mongolia. The members of Sain Medee (Good News) held a training session on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar.

After the session, he travelled south with Finnish missionary Pentti Marttila in a jeep through the Gobi Desert to Light of the Gobi Lutheran in order to hold a three-night Bible seminar for three nights on Galatians. Driving through the Gobi requires a four-wheel drive vehicle and some creativity. "For 90 percent of the way, there was no paved road," Matt said. "You just stay between these tires that are placed at regular intervals so you know you're going in the right direction."

Along the way, they stopped at a traditional Mongolian "ger," or Mongolian tent. They were joined inside by the family's



Rev. Matt Heise travels through the Gobi Desert on a camel.



Sainnaa (left) serves communion during a worship service at Sain Medee Church.



Participants at Rev. Matt Heise's training session at a resort in Ulaanbaatar.

baby goats and chickens to stay safe from the cold weather. Matt was treated to camel's milk and traditional foods made by the family. Unfortunately, this past winter was very harsh on the Gobi region. The bitter cold reached -40 F and killed what little pasture was left, along with much of the livestock.

Despite the emerging status of the Mongolian Lutheran church, Matt reported about Light of the Gobi Lutheran, "I have rarely seen a congregation this alive. We

had up to 75 members on any of the three nights—ranging from senior citizens to high schoolers." During Matt's presentation about



Church in Ulaanbaatar

Galatians, most took copious notes and sang Mongolian hymns. A Lutheran theologian named Puje—one of the first Christians in the country after the fall of communism and a former music teacher—composed many of the hymns sung by the members. Today, Puje serves as the director of the nation's only Bible school and is an inspiration to many Mongolian Christians.

Promising reports of growth and fervent interest coming from the region are an

inspiration to Christians around the world. Despite a rocky history in the area, the Word of God has been scattered in fertile soil where it can take root and grow. Ongoing projects with both LCMS World Mission and other Lutheran mission organizations will help the members of these new churches to grow and learn more about God's saving love and grace.



A view from inside the ger.

How can I help?

- Pray that the Holy Spirit would sustain new believers' faith and bless them as they study His Word. Pray also for the growing Lutheran church's witness to the Buddhist and formerly communist culture.
- Give a gift to support theological education in Eurasia. Send a check with "Eurasia theological education, Acct. 84099601" in the memo line or call LCMS World Mission at 1-888-930-4438.



Mongolian tents, known as "gers," scatter the countryside.

21st century ‘Transcultural Missionary’ training

Continued from page 3

The group included a diverse mix of not only cultures, but levels of experience in the mission field. Seasoned missionaries shared their experiences with some just arriving or preparing to leave for missionary service, while all shared their own perspectives in cross-cultural missions.

Dr. Mike Rodewald, LCMS World Mission regional director for Africa commented, “The fellowship with our Latin American companions in mission was just really excellent. That was the indefinable joy here—learning and sharing from people serving in mission all over the world.”

Two courses of approximately a week each were taught during the training program with professors from Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and the United States. One course covered the theological and missiological concept of ‘Missio Dei’ (God’s Mission), and the other the issue of ‘Gospel Contextualization’ in cross-cultural situations.

A local woman during a worship service in Paraguay.



Ciudad del Este was chosen as the site of the event due to its incredible cross-cultural offerings—the city is located on a triple border shared among Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil and is home to a large Islamic population. During afternoon field training excursions, participants learned techniques for cultural observation and exploration in the city; as well as visiting a local mosque and several Paraguayan Lutheran mission projects.



The imam at a mosque in Ciudad Del Este.

Morning devotions led by Rev. Cristian Rautenberg, president of the Lutheran Church in Chile, and Rev. Digno Rosin, a high school chaplain in Argentina, helped the group to gain spiritual focus and perspective before each day of classes. A musical team of Argentinians and LCMS missionaries in Peru and Slovakia led daily worship.

The mornings were devoted to lecture and discussion on missiological concepts, while the afternoons were filled with field experiences and “debriefing” discussions.

Both of these times served to reinforce essential concepts, as Rev. Rautenberg commented, “It allowed us to finally dig deeper into certain concepts that we already knew, and to reinforce and clarify those basic elements that keep us on the right path [in mission].”

LCMS missionary, Vicar Shauen Trump from Kenya, who attended the training with his missionary family including wife, Krista, and their young son, Josiah, shared about a field-work excursion saying, “Through capable translators, our group of eight sought out Paraguayans willing to divulge their personal convictions about God, faith, and felt needs. In the street market, we descended upon several women minding their stall. ‘Who is God?’ we asked. ‘How does your faith take expression in your daily life?’ Although initially uncomfortable for us, these women happily engaged us in conversation about their own faith and circumstances.”

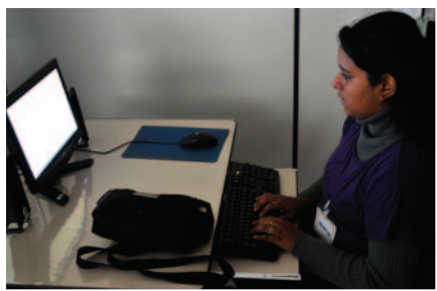
An integral part in the event’s planning, Rev. Alceu Figur, pastor in Paraguay and former national church president shared this reflection, “The event truly has been great because we have learned a lot about ways to act and ways to think so that we can be the most effective possible in sharing the Gospel.”

A highlight for many were the field excursions to visit mission projects of the Lutheran Church of Paraguay, including a computer lab where classes are taught to help young people develop valuable job skills. Here the Gospel is shared through

In today’s global world, what are some of the increasingly relevant Lutheran perspectives on mission?

- *Missio Dei (God’s Mission)*—It is our Triune God moving into the world, calling, gathering, and enlightening all people unto His free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ; and we then are His chosen instruments and privileged to participate in pointing others to Christ through the Gospel.
- *Role of Vocation*—Empowered by the Spirit, our life in witness to others is our vocation as Christians as we proclaim the love of God through good deeds done and in words of Gospel spoken.
- *Partnership/Relationship*—Together in the adventure of being partners in the Gospel and seeking mutual discovery, we walk in love with respect and sensitivity toward each other and those to whom we witness.
- *Engagement*—As the people of God move out of the congregation, they engage all aspects of the community—both among the underprivileged and opinion leaders and the private and public marketplace—trusting confidently that through such encounters, God accomplishes His will.

LCMS World Mission Prayer Resources



Attendees visit a computer lab ministry of a Korean Lutheran pastor and his family.

typing and discussing Scripture passages. Participants also visited a mission among the Guarani indigenous people and a soy milk manufacturing and distribution project for the poor run by the local congregation. Rev. Laercio Knaak works as a missionary in Ciudad del Este and hosted the event with his congregation. He shared, “We are really excited to take some of the extra perspectives we are learning here and apply them to our work in Ciudad del Este!”

Plans are currently being developed to continue and build upon the training for this same global group of missionaries in the summers of 2011 and 2012. A new global ‘cohort’ would begin the three-year training process in 2012.

How can I help?

- Give a gift to support the 21st century ‘Transcultural Missionary’ training. Send a check with “‘Transcultural Missionary’ training, Acct. 884-99601” in the memo line or call LCMS World Mission at 1-888-930-4438.

Erik Eisold, son of missionaries to Peru, Rev. Mark and Sandra Eisold, pours milk at a soy milk manufacturing plant, an outreach ministry of the local congregation.



July, August, & September Missionary Birthday List

July 4	Mark Krause, Latvia	Aug. 13	Mike Moreno, Norfolk, Neb.
July 7	Bob Roberts, Macau	Sept. 1	Jamie Endorf, Peru
July 8	Rudolph Blank, St. Louis, Mo.; David Hoeppner, India	Sept. 3	Heidi Norton, Guinea
July 13	Peter Pfaff, Japan	Sept. 5	Michelle Cagnin, Asia; Stephen Wiggins, Atlanta, Ga.
July 14	Jane Klammer, Asia	Sept. 9	Andrew Koenig, Poland
July 15	Jonathan Braun, Macau; Connie Larson, Asia	Sept. 13	Cherie Auger, Cayman Islands; Fred Reinhardt, Senegal
July 17	Megan Birney, Hong Kong; Michelle Gerlach, Asia; Stephen Oliver, Taiwan	Sept. 15	Kenety Gee, Chicago, Ill.
July 19	Jonathan Muhly, Russia	Sept. 16	Matthew Hass, Japan; Terry Umphenour, Asia
July 24	Monta Denow, Thailand; Joel Zielke, Asia	Sept. 18	Sharon Owens, Macau; Richard Schlak, El Paso, Texas
July 26	Kevin Foley, Taiwan; Bryn Welcenbach, Macau	Sept. 19	Jeffrey Ross, Kenya; Laurie Wahner, Hong Kong
July 27	Jenae Siebarth, Japan	Sept. 22	Lucas Gerlach, Asia; Eileen Roberts, Macau
July 31	James Koerschen, Asia	Sept. 23	Amy Winkelman, Southeast Asia
Aug. 1	Josh Lange, Asia; Stephanie Roegner, Taiwan	Sept. 24	Mary Kosberg, South Korea; William Leese, Hong Kong; Kim Sherwin, Japan
Aug. 6	Michael Kersten, Hong Kong	Sept. 25	Trixie Zielke, Asia
Aug. 8	Megan Ferrin, Hong Kong	Sept. 26	Justin Kumfer, Japan
Aug. 9	Joyce Erber, Nigeria	Sept. 29	Coral Rose, South Africa
Aug. 10	Susan Frerking, Asia	Sept. 20	Jennifer Reed, Asia
Aug. 11	Fungchatou Lo, Cambodia; Philip Schielke, Texas		

Military chaplains with birthdays in July:

Chaplain Matthew Boarts, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.; Chaplain Jon Conroe, Great Lakes, Ill.; Chaplain Kevin Cramm, Fort Sill, Okla.; Chaplain David Gunderson, Afghanistan; Chaplain Gregory Lucido, Fort Gillem, Ga.; Chaplain Kelly-Ray Meritt, Bronx VAMC, N.Y.; Chaplain David Reedy, Korea; Chaplain Patrick Riley, USS Ronald Reagan, Calif.; Chaplain Ryan Rupe, Milwaukee, Wis.; Chaplain James Watson, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Chaplain Edward Wright, Fort Bliss, Texas

Military chaplains with birthdays in August:

Chaplain Jeremy Gorline, Little Rock, Ark.; Chaplain Gregory Todd, Camp Lejeune, S.C.; Chaplain Oliver

Washington, Fort Hood, Texas; Chaplain Ralph Wetzel, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Chaplain Glenn Wurdeman, Fort Riley, Kan.

Military chaplains with birthdays in September:

Chaplain Graham Glover, Iraq; Chaplain David Jacob, Germany; Chaplain Gregory Jans, Italy; Chaplain James Puttler, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Chaplain William Sager, Mililani, Hawaii; Chaplain Lynn Stroud, Bryan, Texas

Download a copy in Word or PDF format at www.lcmsworldmission.org/prayforus or call to request a copy at 1-800-433-3954.



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Erik Eisold, son of missionaries to Peru, Rev. Mark and Sandra Eisold, at one of the ministries visited by the Transcultural Mission Program in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay.



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Tell your own faith-sharing story!
Visit www.lcms.org/ablaze

"...the conversation was very good and even touched on the deeper meaning of life. So, I shared the Gospel with them and introduced them to our congregation..."

"...I was very intentional about using that time to present the message of Jesus Christ and the hope that we have in Him. Nearly 50 individuals corresponded with me on my blog to ask questions of faith and to share their story of how God had used Layla's story to bring them back to faith."

"...then she told me of her son who was facing surgery for cancer soon. We prayed about it and I took her name and gave her mine to follow-up on."

Visit www.lcms.org/ablaze to read real faith-sharing stories from LCMS members and partners across the globe, who have shared their faith with family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers, as well as other people God brought into their paths.