

A mission of support and encouragement

A large part of the New Testament is a collection of Paul's letters to churches and his missionary colleagues. In them, we learn how Paul encouraged them and they him through letters, gifts and visits. His letter to the Philippians is a good example. We can take our cue from them and do the same thing today. Lutheran Church—Canada seeks to share the Gospel with others through home and foreign missions. Those new churches and missionary colleagues need our help and encouragement. Here are some suggestions for encouraging missionaries, churches and missions.

Communicate by letter, e-mail, or phone. Most missionaries minister in a place that is somewhat removed from the rest of the church body. Even a home mission, although it may be very close to congregations of other

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denominations, may be a long way from another LCC congregation. That tends to cause feelings of isolation. We lose the mutual encouragement and support for each other that is possible when pastors and



Funds from CLMS assisted mission workers in Nova Scotia as they conducted a Vacation Bible School this summer.

church members can easily visit each other. A letter or phone call can bridge that gap and encourage the missionary. What do you say in a letter to a person you may never have met? Almost anything, but if the missionary sends newsletters, a letter commenting on something in the newsletter is especially beneficial. Be positive; ask questions; offer suggestions and ideas not criticism! The missionary/mission then knows someone is reading and is interested.

Care packages. This pertains mostly to foreign missionaries. When living in a foreign country, there is often some special snack you cannot find or some television program you never see. A gift from home with

some treats or a video tape can be a real encouragement. In my case, when we were in Africa my family would record a few of our favourite comedy programs and send the tapes. On Friday evening we would watch an hour of comedy from back home. That was refreshing, for humour is very culture-bound. One small piece of advice: before sending care packages, check with the missionary about size, weight and government customs duty. More than once, we received a package of not very useful items for which we

had to pay dearly!

Don't forget national church workers and the lay leaders in a home mission congregation. Most of what precedes also applies to them. They, too, enjoy letters and care packages! It is a great encouragement to them when the people from the home church body take an

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a visit is worth a thousand letters.

interest in them, too. And when they're encouraged and happy, so is the missionary. Again, before sending things, check with the missionary for what is appropriate and possible. It may be best to send some money in a letter and have the mission buy something locally.

Participate in a support program like the East District's *Partner to Partner* program. Here the key word is 'participate.' It is encouraging for a mission when a

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congregation commits itself in some formal way to supporting it. However, financial support alone can easily become a simple entry on a report. Communication between the supporting congregation and the mission is essential. Make sure someone in the supporting congregation communicates regularly. If possible, find ways to physically participate in the

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work of the mission. For example, this summer, for the second time, a team of people from Ontario travelled to Nova Scotia to run a VBS. Without them it would not happen. And the best part? It is good not only for the mission, but for the support team too!

Visit. This is last, but perhaps the most important suggestion of all. In most of the world, relationships with other people are the most important thing. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a visit is worth a thousand letters. If you know of a home mission, a visit may be quite easy. Here in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, we enjoy the visits of several people each summer who are on vacation. Those

visits really encourage us! Visiting a foreign mission is not always easy or possible. However, it is often not as difficult or expensive as we think. Do a little research. Have your congregation send someone to see firsthand what is going on. The benefits are enormous on both sides. People who visited us in West Africa did more to promote mission work on their return home than we ever did through newsletters. That's encouraging! Once again, a word of advice. Don't just show up or decide on a project you want to do. Communicate and coordinate first; then you will support and encourage.

Rev. David Maffett



Thanks to all who visited our CLMS display at the various district conventions held across Canada this spring. We consider it a privilege and honour to tell you all that God has accomplished in and through the various projects undertaken by CLMS. We appreciate your comments and your support as together we are "Partners in Mission."

LCC missionaries overseas

Rev. Sandor and Digna Arguello
Apartado Postal #207
Chinandega, Nicaragua
adf@tec.com.ni

Rev. Roland and Anita Syens
Dimitrova Street 19
Dnepetrovsk 320054, Ukraine
postdp@mail.dnepr.net

Rev. Ted Krey
Soc Luterana Evang en Vezla
C-555
2111 N.W. 79th Avenue
Miami, Florida, 33122-1611 USA

Contact your district's mission department for the names and addresses of mission congregations in your district.

Mission project update

Support for CLMS projects as of mid-year is ahead of last year, although the total requirements for this year are also considerably higher than in 2002. The strong support this year was largely due to one substantial gift which fully covered the "Friends" project (Ukraine), as well as a major portion of the Ukraine Seminary and Mission Centre project.

Increasingly, donors are designating their gifts "wherever needed." This allows us to pay off priority projects even if they did not receive the required designated funds. We

again expect several vacation Bible schools to support projects which benefit children. The HIV/AIDS project in South Africa and the Aboriginal Literature project in Australia and the Edmonton Inner City ("The Rock") project would be particularly appropriate.

We continue to pray with confidence that our full project total will be met. Since most of our projects were chosen at the request of Lutheran Church—Canada, we look forward to supporting our synod's mission outreach in Ukraine, Nicaragua and Thailand.

Reports from two CLMS mission projects

Touching the inner city with God's love

Lisa* is an 11-year-old girl living in Edmonton's inner city. She doesn't know who her father is; her mother has had a lot of men friends who have stayed for longer or shorter periods of time. Her mother has a drinking problem and is often sick. Her older sister has been "working" the streets since she turned 14 a year ago. And since they have no one else to take care of them most of the time, Lisa tries to be a mother to her seven-year-old brother, John*. There is often no food in the refrigerator, no clean clothes, and the adults in the house often party late into the night. Welcome to the inner city!

Children like this are the special concern of the Rock Lutheran Inner City Society. To be sure, not all kids in the inner city live like Lisa and John. There are some loving, caring mothers and fathers who try to raise their children properly. But they are in the minority. And even they find it hard to do so because of the poverty, the

inadequate housing and the other social problems of the inner city which constantly challenge their efforts. Their low income often doesn't permit them to provide what many of us take for granted. And the food they buy often doesn't provide the nourishment growing children should have. And so, every Monday evening, children like Lisa and John come to St. Peter's Church hall where they receive a hot nourishing meal; where they feel safe; where they play with other kids like them; and where they are touched by God's love through people of faith like you and me.

We sometimes think we have to go abroad to do mission work. But socially deprived inner city children are also the object of the Saviour's love. As He said, "Let the little children come to me and forbid them not for theirs is the Kingdom of God."

(*not their real names)

*Rev. Dr. Norman J. Threinen
The Rock Lutheran Inner City Society*

Well-worn Bible evidence of faith

Attended any good funerals lately? It is hard to find much to call good at these occasions. Cancer recently claimed the life of a friend in his 74th year.

I met Ed years ago when I visited his home congregation as president of the ABC District LLL. We shared an enthusiasm for hunting, fishing and camping. A mutual friend invited me to go hunting near Ed's farm. As time passed I spent more and more my hunting time there, Ed often joining us and we spending the night at his farm. I always enjoyed swapping hunting and fishing stories with Ed. He was a

On his closed casket the family placed...a well-worn Bible.

master storyteller. But the real substance of our relationship was our mutual faith. Ed was a daily Bible reader who rarely missed weekly Bible study—a "compulsion" we shared. As the years passed we wound up being members of the same parish.

I really got to know the depth of Ed's faith when we travelled and roomed together to an evangelism conference in Abbotsford. Ed's was not a faith he kept to himself. Almost everyone who knew him knew he was a Christian through the testimony of his life, his actions, or the words of his mouth. He spent his whole life serving others, as a school trustee, on farm groups and through his congregational involvement.

On his closed casket the family placed three reminders of Ed's life: a recent portrait, his Stetson hat with the sides rolled up in his particular fashion, and his well-worn Bible. During the eulogy prior to the formal service, mention was made of Ed's life of service. For me a connection was made back to that well-worn Bible.

A well-worn Bible can allow us to go on the offensive in our lifelong struggle to overcome the works of the flesh and exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. When Paul writes about the armour of God in Ephesians 6 he lists five defensive pieces of armour and one weapon—the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Without a well-worn Bible our main weapon will be more like a dull penknife instead of a sword.

Ed's ability to share and defend his faith demonstrated such a sword. His response to the words read in his well-worn Bible produced spiritual fruit in his life that made a life spent serving others come naturally. It did not produce perfection or a life without problems, as he would be quick to confirm. But the testimony of these aspects of his life was such that all those at his funeral had full confidence that in Christ, Ed had won the race; he had won the prize, that same crown of righteousness to which Paul also looked forward. That's what made it a good funeral!

If a well-worn Bible is not a part of your daily life I hope you can see the importance of making it so. It is not a panacea that will solve all your problems, but the daily battle we all experience as Christians can become easier as we read, study His Word; as we mature in our faith.

With spiritual growth comes a life of service. CLMS is looking for people to join our work as congregational mission advocates—serving in their congregation as sources of mission information and helping CLMS achieve its objectives. If this interests you, or you need more information phone me at 780-523-3126 or Dave Schick (our Director of Development) at 604-274-9815 for a full job description.

Blessings, Terry Goerz

A mission experience in Ukraine

At the end of April, 2003 I headed to Ukraine, a land I had never dreamed of visiting; a land not far from where my ancestors had lived prior to going to South America. I was responding to Dr. Threinen's request to teach two theology courses to a group of 10 students who already were leaders in their respective congregations and were now attending the seminary.

The experience was wonderful for many reasons. Visiting and knowing how the people of God do His work in other parts of the world teaches us how the Lord works in many and various ways. His ways are beyond our knowing.

What a privilege to teach Lutheran Dogmatics to these

...they were dedicated to the Word of God and filled by the Spirit.

young men for five weeks! I should say, quite honestly, I was completely ignorant about how things would work out, what the student's level of discernment was, and how it would work having a person translating from English to Russian. All this became

secondary as students and professor became involved in knowing each other. Soon it became evident that these leaders were sent to the seminary because they were dedicated to the Word of God and filled by the Spirit. As we would say, "They know their Bible." The enthusiasm brought

...as they learned from me, I received much more from them.

into the discussion was underlined by the deep respect they had for each other when difference in opinions surfaced. The excitement in having someone coming to teach them was also shown as they went back to their home congregation during the weekends. Leading Bible studies and preaching was their opportunity to show the congregations what they were learning and how they were growing in their knowledge and discernment.

They said "thank you" as we said farewell, but I still say "thank you" to them because as they learned from me, I received much more from them.

*Rev. Dr. Jorge Groh,
St. Luke Lutheran, Ottawa*



Rev. Dr. Jorge Groh teaches seminarians at Concordia Seminary, Odessa.

Concordia Lutheran Mission Society (CLMS)

An Auxiliary of Lutheran Church-Canada

EXERCISE YOUR OPTIONS TO SEEK AND TO GO

“To God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia,” (1 Peter 1:1) Vancouver, Red Deer, Moose Jaw, Brandon, Thunder Bay, Montreal, Moncton, Dartmouth and throughout all of Canada. We are strangers in the world—we do not act, think or do as the world does; we are strangers because we take seriously Christ’s command, *“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God” (Matthew 6:33a)* and *“Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matthew 28:19)*

CLMS has undertaken projects around the world. Most of us will never go to an overseas mission field, but through prayer and financial support—as “Partners in Mission” we are there. Motivated by God’s love for us through His Son, Jesus Christ, we are exercising our option “to seek; to go.” Throughout this

year we will be travelling to Thailand—supporting two national women evangelists working among women and children; and funding a “Welcome Wagon” which provides transportation to church: to South Africa—offering preventive education, care and spiritual counsel to those at risk from the HIV/AIDS virus: to Ukraine—funding the construction of a modest facility for its seminary, church offices and humanitarian

centre near Odessa; and travel expenses of four instructors for the seminary: to Nicaragua—assisting in the building of a mission centre; meeting the travelling expenses for two instructors to assist with the pastoral training program; and assuming the responsibility for a year’s salary for the new mission start in Matagalpa: to Australia as we assist with Bible translation for the Aboriginal in the outback.

We will also stay close to

home assisting with the support for the inner city outreach of “The Rock” at St. Peter’s Lutheran in Edmonton; for expanded mission outreach among the blind in Montreal and with Lutheran Literature in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Two projects—one in Ukraine and the other in New Brunswick have all been paid in full.

We are grateful for your ongoing prayer and financial support—but we ask one more thing. What are you doing as a congregation or as an individual to further the mission cause around the world or at home?

The question is often asked, “I would like to do something practical for our missionaries but I don’t know how or what?”

Please let us know what you are doing so we can provide some answers to this question. Contact Anne Taylor, 4624 Cosmic Place, Ottawa, ON K1B 4R8 or by e-mail: ataylor001@sympatico.ca

How blessed we are as we “seek,” as we “go.”



Funding from CLMS helps these inner-city children learn about Jesus.

Response Form

We invite you to prayerfully consider your support for one of the following CLMS projects for 2003.

Please indicate how we may direct your donation and return your cheque along with this form to

Frances Freund, 236 Pine Bay, Winkler, Manitoba R6W 1G1

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thailand – national evangelists (\$890) | <input type="checkbox"/> South Africa – HIV/AIDS ministry (\$4,500) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ukraine – mission centre (\$10,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> Nicaragua – mission centre (\$10,000) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nicaragua – seminary professors’ travel (\$3,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> Ukraine – seminary professors’ travel (\$10,400) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edmonton – inner city ministry (\$3,500) | <input type="checkbox"/> Australia – aboriginal outreach (\$2,700) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nicaragua – new mission start in Matagalpa (\$5,750) | <input type="checkbox"/> Quebec – outreach in Montreal and Sherbrooke (\$1,500) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thailand – “Welcome Wagon” (\$2,500) | |

Mr., Mrs., Ms. Rev. _____ First name(s) _____ Last name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov. _____ Country _____ Postal Code _____

Home Congregation _____ Home Circuit _____ Phone _____

Work Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

(the last four spaces are optional)