

CONCORDIA *mission* ADVOCATE



a publication of Concordia Lutheran Mission Society (CLMS)

Fall 2008

Mission partners in youth ministry in Nicaragua

Earlier this spring, 25 Canadians set out to make history in Nicaragua. The group helped plan, organize and execute the first National Lutheran Youth Gathering in Nicaragua for the newly-established Iglesia Luterana Sinodo de Nicaragua. About a year and a half prior, missionary Pastor Sandor Arguello, had voiced the need for some type of ministry to youth in his country. There were many young people in the communities, but very few were attending the churches. He had seen how well youth ministry is done in Canada and had requested help from Melanie Kuhn of Mount Calvary in Red Deer, Alberta. Melanie soon put together a team of people she knew would be willing and excited to bring youth ministry to Nicaragua.

The planning process

was not easy. Bringing youth ministry “in a box” was not going to work in this situation because of the many differences in culture, not to mention language. The team decided that using the previous LCC National Youth Gathering theme of “I AM” was the best option.

Youth learned that they are fearfully and wonderfully made, that they are loved, and that they are children of God. The project began with plenty of planning in Canada, gathering materials, and lots of



Craft time at youth gathering.

prayer. The goal of the project was to train local leaders how to do youth ministry and not to do it for them, so they would be equipped to carry on the ministry after the Canadian team had departed. Upon arriving in Nicaragua, the team took a few days prior to the weekend gathering to train the Nicaraguan pastors and deaconesses. Training included Bible study leadership, drama, games, puppets, and active learning teaching methods.

The youth gathering itself was a great success. By God’s

awesome hand, His Word was proclaimed to more than 200 youth and their leaders. The excitement displayed by the pastors and deaconesses was incredible. They were passionate in sharing Jesus with the youth through the Bible studies, the dramas, and large sessions.

We thank God for the support of CLMS, LCC, LWMLC, and many other individual congregations in helping make this youth gathering a success. Before the weekend was done pastors, deaconesses, and youth alike were asking when the next gathering would be. It was heartwarming to see how Jesus had created a yearning for Him in them.

The Canadian team consisted of members from Trinity Lutheran, Quesnel, B.C.; Hope Lutheran, Port Coquitlam, B.C.; Walnut Grove Lutheran, Langley, B.C.; St. Paul’s Lutheran, Chilliwack, B.C.; Redeemer Lutheran, Creston, B.C.; and Mount Calvary Lutheran, Red Deer, Alta.

*Deacon Andrea Kolson
Director of Parish Services,
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church,
Chilliwack, B.C.*



LCC members of youth ministry support team at National Youth Gathering in Nicaragua.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

👁️ **2008 Mission Projects and available updates**

visit our web site at <http://www.concordiamissions.org/>

Broader Perspective



The price of fuel has been skyrocketing. Some believe market speculation is the reason, others blame global crude shortages resulting from heavily-populated nations becoming ever greater energy users. Whatever the cause, we feel the pinch and can't help but be concerned over rising costs and how we will cope. That being the case, let's focus for a moment on Luther's explanation of the First Article of the Apostle's Creed. **"I believe that God has made me and all things...and still takes care of them."** The shortages we experience are of our own making, they are not the Lord's doing. Rather than shift into panic mode when costs go up, may we affirm what Luther knew at a time of far less plenty than we experience, **"God richly and daily provides me with ALL that I need to support this body and life."**

Given our man-made problem of the energy crunch, we are challenged to make adjustments...to drive less, conserve more, find alternative methods of transportation, to purchase food grown close to home, etcetera. Another word for

the adjustment might be *improved stewardship*. When the cost of living escalates, we look for ways and places to cut to make up the shortfall. It may seem expedient to reduce offerings and hold back our support for charities. When those thoughts invade, it is especially important to recall and affirm Luther's words both from the First and Second Articles of the Creed.

Shortages may be real effective in helping us practice *improved stewardship*. Consider how you can continue to honour your charitable donations, especially the weekly offerings to your church, as well as the commitments you have made to partner in the work of the Concordia Lutheran Mission Society. ***The Son of God became poor*** (2 Corinthians 8:9) ***so that in Him we might be enriched in all things***. Our offerings, large or small, are gifts of gratitude to Him Who first gave Himself for us.

May we never fail to see that God has richly endowed us, not only with copious earthly gifts, but with the gift of salvation. By His grace we continue to respond generously that the Gospel of Jesus Christ may reach many more people heedless of the rise and fall of material goods. God bless each one as we act in faith.

Irwin Pudrycki

Vacation Bible School, Nicaragua

During the school holidays in January, children in Nicaragua have little to do to avoid boredom and trouble. The mission has offered a vacation Bible school experience in many villages in the countryside. The VBS gives children an opportunity to learn Bible stories and be educated by Christian deaconesses and teachers who share God's love through the message of the Gospel. For \$1.25, all materials can be provided for one child attending VBS in a remote village. This project offers a simple yet significant opportunity for children or those with limited resources to contribute to the spiritual welfare of children in Nicaragua. The goal is to cover the cost of VBS for 2,800 children in January 2009 at a total cost of \$3,500.

Church Roof, Krasnoperekopsk, Ukraine

The congregation in Krasnoperekopsk is the mother congregation in the Crimean Peninsula of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine. This is a very mission-minded congregation which has already begun daughter congregations in Armyansk to the north, and Pervomeisk to the south.

When the congregation outgrew its former rented facilities, it bought and is renovating a facility strategically located just north of the city market. Members have contributed time, energy and finances, but the costs of materials and equipment exceed what the congregation can cover. Assistance was given in 2007 for a heating system. This project will assist with providing a proper roof to the extent of \$10,000.

The above joint venture between CLMS and LWML-Canada is an example of one of the core values of CLMS with regard to other mission agencies working in Lutheran Church-Canada, namely: "we cooperate – we don't compete!"

Children's Christian Education, Nicaragua

It is a struggle for many families in Nicaragua to buy even the most essential food and clothing to survive. They have no money for uniforms, supplies or tuition for their children to attend public school. The result is that many children up to the age of 13 have no formal education. The mission carries on a program to give children an opportunity to attend school, be tutored to challenge grades and progress to their age level and receive a thorough education in Lutheran doctrine. This project provides

CLMS new web site



Have you visited our newly redesigned web site? Our aim was not only to make it more attractive, but above all to make it easy to access mission information and resources. Please let us know if we are achieving

our objective and how we can improve on our ultimate goal, namely, to stimulate your interest and encourage your partnership in mission. Visit us at: www.concordiamissions.org.



Pastor Gorst with members of his Krasnoperekopsk congregation with the mission bus which CLMS and LWMLC provided for the Crimea area in 2007. It is used to transport members to a community where a new group of believers will potentially be established.

funds for a uniform, tuition and tutoring by a Lutheran deaconess or teacher so a child can move through the grades he or she has missed. The goal is to provide these essentials for 50 children at a total cost of \$6,250.

(\$1,690 in designated gifts received; \$6,250 disbursed)

Children's Outreach, Thailand

Northeast of Bangkok, Satit Kantatiam, a young man enrolled in Luther Institute of Southeast Asia, reaches out with a wholesome daily meal, Bible stories and games to 50 neglected and malnourished children in two villages. In addition to the younger children, the program also reaches out to young girls to enable them to continue their education in Bangkok. Such girls are often forced into early marriage, their children are abandoned and they move to Bangkok and prostitution. Costs have been covered by the proceeds of a family-owned food packaging company, but Satit needs help to continue reaching out to other children in the area. This project provides funds to encourage further Gospel outreach to the extent of \$8,500. (\$2,145 designated gifts received; \$4,500 disbursed)

Female Evangelists, Thailand

To have more people assisting in mission outreach is a tremendous help, especially where they can go into places where a male missionary is not too welcome. In South Thailand, there are two female evangelists who are effective and well received who are able to assist the missionary in contacting families in the market places and especially in calling on single women who may be interested in the Christian faith. This project provides funds for transportation, food while these female evangelists are

away from home, and a small compensation for their work to the extent of \$2,000.

Theological Education, Southeast Asia

God has richly blessed Lutheran Church-Canada through the opportunities He has given to provide theological education in the various mission fields. Cambodia is a new mission field where we are again called upon to provide theological education to local workers who will reach out with the Gospel to their own people. Lutheranism was only recently introduced to a large group of untrained pastors and deaconesses in Cambodia through Lutheran Hour Ministries and Luther's *Small Catechism*. Through the volunteer efforts of Dr. Len Harms, and in partnership with interested people in the Missouri Synod, a three-year curriculum has been developed under Luther Institute of Southeast Asia (LISA) which calls for week-long theological courses to be taught in Thailand and Cambodia every two months. Current enrollment is 15 in Thailand and 47 in Cambodia. This project covers the cost of volunteer Canadian faculty who travel to Southeast Asia and teach to the extent of \$10,000.

Outreach to Women and Children, Cambodia

In the rural communities of Cambodia where congregations have grown up whose leaders are being trained by our volunteer Canadian faculty, deaconesses have many opportunities to reach out with the Gospel as they work with children, women and the elderly in their communities. Hom Sopha is one such deaconess working in Kompong Silar in Koh Kong province in southwestern Cambodia. She works with children's education, strengthening women's spirituality



Dr. Norman Threinen, top centre, with students in Bangkok and Carol Harms third on right.

and helping to improve the lot of widows in the church, while reaching out to elderly women generally in the community. This project will involve eight women and will target 133 women in the community. It will focus on training women in the Gospel, as well as upgrading their vocational skills in sewing and pig farming at a cost of \$13,300.

(\$1,754 in designated gifts received; \$4,300 disbursed)

Registration of Church Facilities, Savran, Ukraine

One of the needs of congregations of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran churches in Ukraine which are emerging in new locations is the registration of their church facilities with the government. Without such registration, they are often restricted in the use of their facilities with the result that they are hampered as they attempt to reach out with the message of the Gospel. The congregation in Savran, strategically located half way between Odessa and Kiev, finds itself in this position. Built largely with funds gathered from Canadian donors, it now required such a registration without the means to provide it. This project will provide the funds to register the facilities of this church. \$3,000.

Purchase of Facilities, Pervomeisk, Ukraine

One of the daughter missions of the Krasnoperekopsk congregation is located in Pervomeisk about an hour's

drive to the south. Zhenya Frank, a graduate of our seminary program in Odessa, lives there and is attempting to develop a congregation. To date, the struggling congregation has been worshipping in his home, an arrangement which is not very conducive to outreach since the general public views such a worshipping congregation negatively as a sect. The congregation has now purchased a house close to the centre of the city which will serve as a church, as well as provide space for carrying out other mission-related activities. This project has provided funds to purchase and renovate this facility to the extent of \$15,000. (\$765 in designated gifts received; \$15,000 disbursed.)

Deaconess Support, Nicaragua

Iglesia Luterana Sínodo de Nicaragua is a very poor

Continued next page



Two deaconesses signing the constitution at the founding convention of Iglesia Luterana Sínodo de Nicaragua.

church. While Lutheran Church–Canada assists the new synod by providing small stipends to the pastors and missionaries, it cannot offer similar grants to deaconesses. This creates an extremely difficult financial situation especially to those single deaconesses who are asked by the mission to move from their homes to serve in other church or mission locations. This project will provide funds to enable the Nicaragua mission to provide small stipends for deaconesses to cover transportation costs and costs of lodging and food where needed to the extent of \$4,500.

Summer Camp, Ukraine

For a number of years, young people from Canada have travelled to Ukraine at their own expense to conduct vacation Bible

funds to enable this to occur to the extent of \$8,000. (\$1,515 in designated gifts received; \$8,000 disbursed)

Youth Ministry Training, Nicaragua

The church in Nicaragua suffers, as we do in Canada, with a lack of youth in its congregations. Canadian youth leaders who have had contact with Nicaragua conducted a youth event for young people in Nicaragua to train youth leaders to do youth work among their own people. They provided for their own costs but they needed help to bring youth in Nicaragua to the event. Other granting agencies were also asked to assist so this is a joint venture. This project covered the cost of 100 youth from Nicaragua to come to the youth event at a

building. There is, however, a small piece of property between the church property and the newly-constructed divided highway. It is desirable that this piece of property be purchased so that an access road leading directly from the highway to the property could be constructed. This project will provide funds to purchase this additional land. \$9,000.

Congregational Facilities, Yalta, Ukraine

Over the past ten years, pastors and congregations of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine have discovered that the distribution of humanitarian aid from Germany has proven valuable in “making friends” with city officials who lack the funds to provide equipment for hospitals and school. In Yalta, Missionary Rudy Krause has been working for several years to build up a congregation under difficult circumstances. One of his handicaps has been a lack of an affordable facility to house humanitarian aid and conduct other outreach programs. He now has the opportunity to buy such a facility and this project will provide the funds to enable him to do so. \$3,000.



Yalta: providing humanitarian aid.



An example of young people from Canada who, at their own expense or with assistance from their local congregation, assist at this camp as well as conduct vacation Bible schools in various villages in southern Ukraine is the team consisting of five youth and four adults from Holy Cross, Kitchener.

2008 Holy Cross Mission Team Members: Front Row: Katie Priester, Caitlin Pritchard, Connie Priester, Anita Syens, Pastor Roland Syens. Back Row: Kim Nesbitt, John Robert Nesbitt, Craig Burek. (Missing from photo: Carla Syens)

schools and otherwise to work with Ukrainian youth in various outreach activities. An important aspect of the whole experience has been a summer camp which has helped solidify relationships and build faith. Most young people in Ukraine do not have the resources to attend such a summer camp. This project will provide

cost of \$4,000. *See lead article for details.* (\$115 received in designated gifts; \$4,000 disbursed)

Property Expansion, Khok Kloi, Thailand

Takuapa Sahatay Lutheran Church purchased land on which it has built a beautiful church

and ministry by bringing together workers involved (or wishing to be) in intercultural mission and ministry. These conferences provide an opportunity for sharing the vision, strategizing, networking, mutual encouragement and prayer.

“All of our more urban (and an increasing number of small city and even rural) areas are experiencing growing numbers of newcomers. Because ‘natural (biological) growth’ of established groups is stagnant or declining, in many places ‘native Canadians’ have or will become the visible minority. Communities are much less segregated than in past years. Newcomers (especially their children) are integrated very quickly. They are usually very open to new friendships with Canadians. They also have some special needs that churches can serve, such as ESL, homework clubs, computer classes, help with settlement and accessing services. The most important thing is to be willing to step out of our comfort zone in meeting and building relationships with those who are different than us—to offer friendship and hospitality. To embrace other cultures doesn’t mean abandoning our own. Rather intercultural relationships provide ‘added value’ and great blessing.”

This project will cover the cost of six workers who will be

first-time participants to this conference at a cost of \$3,000.

Rental of Facilities, Costa Rica

Rev. Pedro Adolfo Quintero was called three years ago to share the Gospel in the Heredia area south of the capital city of San Jose. Since that time, his ministry has reached out to the surrounding communities. In the community of San Miguel where there is a growing number of believers the mission has now rented a facility for worship and study. The project began in 2007 and this project will continue to support the rental of this facility to the extent of \$4,000.

(\$1,375 in designated gifts received; \$2,000 disbursed)

Pastor Pedro reports:

1. Worship is held each Sunday at 10 a.m. with Sunday school following. Three young women assist in teaching children. A regular visitation program has been initiated with Pastor Pedro in charge and a young man, Vinicio, serving as an assistant and possible candidate for theological training. In addition they have begun a Youth Club in the community to work with teenagers to prevent them from falling



Pastor Pedro Adolfo Quintero , his wife Fátima and their children.

“into the painful reality in which we live , being one of the most areas contaminated with juvenile delinquency, family dysfunction and addiction. Our specific and direct participation as ministers of God is biblical teaching.”

2. Missionary Pedro and Vicar Edmundo Retana are opening new work in Birricito, a community in the city of Carthage. It is their hope that they will soon form a group and start devotions and Bible studies.

3. In 2009, they hope to initiate an evangelism project in two new fields; in Alajuela, a village near the Panamerican highway – route to Nicaragua as well as in another sector in Carthage, on the road to Panama.

Property for new church, Granada, Nicaragua

Rev. Rufino Laines and his deaconess wife Marianna began an outreach ministry in Granada

in 2005. God has richly blessed this ministry, both within as well as in some of the villages outside the city. The mission has had a particular impact upon the Granada police department where at least seven families have come to know the Gospel. This project will assist in the purchase of property for the new church to the extent of \$6,000.

Interim mission executive, Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan reports:

“We are thankful to CLMS for the grant which permits us to pay off the loan taken out to purchase the land in Granada. Since that time a small building has been erected on the property with the assistance of volunteers. Having their own facility has encouraged both Missionary Rufino Laines and this small community of believers to reach out with the Gospel. The attached is a picture of baptisms taking place in their new facility.”

Ministry Van, Canada

Since 1988, CREW Ministries has been sharing the saving love of God with all people, especially youth across Canada, through music, humour, drama, and interactive relationships. As they share the Good News, they touch the hearts of thousands of children and their families across Canada. In 2007, CREW Ministries moved more consciously into helping congregations with after-school programs, retreats and servant events. In travelling to a ministry event in December 2007, the van in which the current touring team was traveling hit some black ice, rolled and had to be written off. This project will assist CREW Ministries to purchase a replacement van so that their

touring team can continue carrying out this important work among youth. \$3,000.

(\$570 received in designated gifts; \$3,000 disbursed)

CLMS Commitment to Mission Partners

CLMS distributes all designated gifts as specified by the donor and we encourage individuals to contribute to specific projects of their choosing. At the same time we also very much appreciate gifts designated “where needed.” Such gifts enable us to disburse funds to time-sensitive projects even before they have been fully subscribed by designated gifts.

We have no paid staff. The members of our Board of Directors along with a number of other volunteers carry out all administrative tasks. To date all administrative costs have been covered by members of the board or from gifts specifically designated for operations. Every dollar received from mission partners goes to the adopted mission projects or the donor initiated projects approved by CLMS.

As the name implies these are projects that were not adopted by CLMS but which represent valid ministry or mission needs with Lutheran Church–Canada mission partners. All such projects must first be submitted for approval by the CLMS director of Projects and Ministries before they will be accepted. CLMS, as a service to the church will, receive, receipt and disburse such gifts.



Granada, Nicaragua: Rev. Rufino Laines conducting baptismal service in new church building.

Concordia Lutheran Mission Society (CLMS), an auxiliary of Lutheran Church Canada, serves the church by promoting and supporting our church’s missions and keeping the members of our synod informed of mission work carried out both on a corporate and individual basis.

COMPLETE THE PICTURE

PIECES IN THE PUZZLE

Only when all the pieces of the puzzle are in place can the entire picture be seen. The picture is incomplete even if one piece is missing.

Missions are so broad that sometimes we fail to see how all the pieces fit together. Projects are pieces of the mission puzzle. Whether it be providing Bibles and hymn books; sending youth to a training conference; buying property; renting facilities; equipping buildings or whatever all are part of the mandate to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Mt. 28:19-20).

As partners in mission, we too are part of the entire picture. Each one of us is important to the mission of proclaiming the saving message of Jesus Christ to a world torn apart by sin. God has given to each of us, His children the pieces to complete the puzzle.

Your piece of the puzzle might be to very simply tell your neighbour that Jesus loves him; that in Jesus, his sins are forgiven. Your piece may be a financial gift to a specific project or to missions in general; the time and energy to participate in a short-term work project. You can be an encourager



to those on the mission fields via letters, e-mails; cards. Be informed about our church’s mission efforts around the world or here at home; talk about them

with other members of your congregation; adopt a mission project. Prayer is a vital piece in the puzzle—pray for missionaries and their families that God would keep them safe; that God would equip them for the tasks and circumstances they encounter; for ready adjustment to the mission field. Pray for those who are hearing the Word of God that they would readily hear it, believe it, live it and tell others about Jesus.

Puzzles come in all shapes and sizes. Some have many pieces; some have few pieces. May God grant you His grace to place the pieces He has given you to His glory, making the picture complete.

*Anne Taylor, Assistant Director,
Mission Education*

The nomination/election process for CLMS will again be by ballot, beginning in September with notices sent to supporters of the auxiliary.

TOLL FREE NUMBER

If you do not have access to the Internet and need to contact CLMS you may do so at our new toll free number:

1-866-799-2567

Response Form

We invite you to become a partner in mission. Kindly indicate how we may direct your donation by checking off your selected mission project and returning this form along with your cheque made out to “Concordia Lutheran Mission Society” and forwarded to **William Andrew, 180 South Alder Street, Campbell River, BC V9W 5H8.**

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0801 Vacation Bible School, Nicaragua
<input type="checkbox"/> 0802 Children’s Christian Education, Nicaragua
<input type="checkbox"/> 0803 Children’s Outreach, Thailand
<input type="checkbox"/> 0804 Female Evangelist, Thailand
<input type="checkbox"/> 0805 Church Roof, Krasnoperekopsk, Ukraine
<input type="checkbox"/> 0806 Theological Education, Southeast Asia
<input type="checkbox"/> 0807 Outreach to Women and Children, Thailand
<input type="checkbox"/> 0808 Deaconess Support, Nicaragua
<input type="checkbox"/> 0809 Summer Camp, Ukraine
<input type="checkbox"/> 0810 Purchase of Facilities, Pervomeisk, Ukraine
<input type="checkbox"/> 0811 Congregational Facilities, Yalta, Ukraine | <input type="checkbox"/> 0812 Rental of Facilities, Granada
<input type="checkbox"/> 0813 Property for New Church, Granada
<input type="checkbox"/> 0814 Registration of Church Facilities, Savran, Ukraine
<input type="checkbox"/> 0815 Youth Ministry Training, Nicaragua
<input type="checkbox"/> 0816 Property Expansion, Khok Kloï, Thailand
<input type="checkbox"/> 0817 Intercultural Church Workers’ Conference, Canada
<input type="checkbox"/> 0818 Ministry Van, Crew Ministries, Canada
<input type="checkbox"/> 0819 Operating Expenses |
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Each gift designated toward a board approved project will be used as specified, with the understanding that when any given project has been fully funded, designated gifts will be used where needed most.

Please provide the following information so that a charitable receipt might be forwarded to you and to keep you informed on current mission projects via our semi annual mailings. If you fill in the form as “Mr. & Mrs.” you will receive two ballots for mail-in elections. In this case both your first names are helpful.

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

Address _____

City _____ Prov. _____ Country _____ Postal Code _____

The following information is optional. The e-mail address can be very helpful to us in sharing mission news with you.

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____ Home Congregation _____

Recent legislation requires your authorization to collect this information. CLMS has a privacy policy in place to protect your personal information. Please sign below authorizing us to use this information in accordance with our privacy policy. Our privacy policy can be found on our website: www.concordiamissions.org.

Signature