

Asia Ablaze! Newsletter

Indonesia Ablaze!

Japan Lutheran Church Team Visits Indonesia!

Many Asian people think that Christianity won't fit with them, because it's a western religion. Some students and teachers in Banda Aceh had that assumption challenged when a team of volunteers from the Japan Lutheran Church (JLC) visited their school. This was the first time that some of the Acehese students had ever met Asian people who are Christians.

Hosted by LCMS representative Dennis Denow, the team taught Japanese at a vocational public high school and

basic Internet skills to English teachers. They were able to donate many items to the LCMS Center, including two new desktop computers.

The volunteers were scheduled to spend two hours in the Japanese language classes at the school on Friday and two hours on Saturday. After the first hour on Friday, the principal cancelled all the other classes on Saturday, so students could spend the whole day with the Japanese team. They also taught origami and did some games and activities so the Acehese students could



JLC team members

learn about Japanese culture and practice speaking Japanese language with native speakers. The highlight of the trip for many of the team members was this incredible enthusiasm of the high school students.

Throughout the two days the Japanese volunteers did an excellent job of sharing their joy and God's love with the

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Taiwan Ablaze!

CLS Records 22,000 Ablaze! Touches

China Lutheran Seminary (CLS) in Hsin Chu, Taiwan has passed the 22,000 mark in Gospel touches recorded on the LCMS World Mission *Ablaze!* website at www.lcms.org/ablaze. These opportunities to spread the Gospel with the uncommitted and unreached have taken place in the last three years since *Ablaze!* began. Most of the touches happened through the

outreach efforts of the approximately 360 graduates of the seminary. Other touches are from teachers and staff members who serve in many ways in churches throughout Taiwan. Some are from special activities such as preaching in a special prison for Mainlanders who sneak over to Taiwan to work. And others come from evangelistic camps for workers from Thailand and from other large meetings.

Many of these touches come from the short mission trips overseas and in Taiwan as students and staff work together to spread the Gospel. Pray for continued opportunities for CLS faculty, staff, students and alumni to be *Ablaze!*

(More Taiwan news on pg. 4)

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Korea Ablaze!

Ablaze! Partnerships Help Flood Victims in North Korea

In August, North Korea experienced extremely heavy rainfall which led to massive flooding. Approximately 600 people died or are missing, 600,000 people are refugees, and 200,000 homes suffered 50% destruction or were completely destroyed.

The Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) made an appeal to its members to raise funds to help the flood victims,

thereby demonstrating the love of Christ. They raised approximately US\$3,200. With the partnership of LCMS World Mission personnel, an emergency matching funds grant of \$3,250 was awarded to the LCK by LCMS World Relief and Human Care (LCMS WR&HC) to double the effort of the LCK. Darin Storkson, the LCMS WR&HC Area Director for Asia, said that he is happy that the LCK is thinking about these kinds of projects, and he is hopeful that the partnership

will continue as other projects in North Korea are explored.

The funds from the LCK and the matching grant were given to Good Mission Network (GMN) on Sept. 12 in a joint effort to send needed construction materials and supplies to North Korea. These materials were used to repair community buildings which sustained damage during the flooding, especially an orphanage which serves about



(L-R) Rev. Patrick O'Neal, LCMS World Mission; Rev. Dr. Hyun Sub Um, LCK President; Rev. Tae Jong Rim, GMN President; & Rev. Pyong Sang Youn, LCK Service Committee Chairman.

150 children under the age of three. President Um of the LCK visited this orphanage last May on a trip sponsored by LCMS World Mission. He is pleased that the LCK and the LCMS are able to help these children who are in need.

Ablaze! Summits

Asian Representatives Attend Recent ILC Summit in the U.S.A.

Twenty-three members of the International Lutheran Council (ILC) gathered in Houston, Texas on July 19 – 23 under the theme of *Facilitating the Global Lutheran Mission Movement*. Participants from Asia included Bishop David Piso from Papua New Guinea, President Hyun-Sup Um from Korea, President S. Rajagambeeram from India, President Kimio Takano and Rev. Masaki Shirai from Japan, and Rev. James Cerdeñola from the Philippines.

Topics included reaching out to immigrants and refugees, urban ministry, the use of Lutheran schools in mission expansion, and how seminaries can be directly involved in mission. Discussion on the latter of these four topics was initiated by a case study presented by Rev. S. Rajagambeeram of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC). Participants at the summit heard how the IELC requires graduates from Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil, India, to serve a three year probation period before ordination. A decision was made seven years ago to give these probationers the opportunity to do frontier ministry and church planting instead of going directly into established congregations. About 90% choose the frontier minis-

try option.

Rev. Rajagambeeram stated that "the probationers must be provided with basic tools for ministry, such as a white robe, bicycle, evangelism kit, resource books, etc." and then they are commissioned for service and sent out. Probationers are mentored by local pastors and the seminary sets up a schedule for regular feedback. After the three-year period, the candidates are available for ordination and calls to the congregations they have started or to already established congregations. These workers bring great zeal to their work and maintain it when finally ordained. It is clear that God is richly blessing this program and "raises up at least one new congregation through each graduate's probation period, usually about thirty every three years."

The discussion which followed Rev. Rajagambeeram's case study was lively as Lutheran church leaders from around the world considered how this could work in their settings. What could have been seen as a seminary recruitment nightmare has been a blessing as the kingdom of God is expanded. The program puts students into real-life situations and is somewhat uncontrolled, but it illustrates the power of the Spirit and how God can use untested

probationers as instruments in His hands to accomplish His mission of salvation.

LCMS World Mission Holds Ablaze! Missionary Summit

Missionaries from LCMS World Mission gathered in Houston, Texas, during the second week in July for an *Ablaze!* Missionary Summit. The group engaged in a variety of activities to help them be better equipped to do their work. The summit gave current Asia missionaries an opportunity to gather as a group for the first time with new missionaries coming to the region. There was opportunity to talk as a group about how to do God's mission better.

Part of the training included studies by urban missiologist, Dr. Ray Bakke. Dr. Bakke serves as the Regent's Chair and Academic Dean at Bakke Graduate University in Seattle, Washington. He has written a number of books on urban ministry including, *A Theology as Big as the City*, and *The Urban Christian: Effective Ministry in Today's Urban World*. Bakke encouraged the missionaries to rethink the way they look at cities. It is

easy to think of Christianity as rural, but God loves those in the cities as well. He noted that the word "city" is used more than 1,250 times in the Bible. Cities offer a unique opportunity for the Church to serve in Word and deed. Asia has more cities than any other part of the world, as well as some of the largest cities.

Dr. Philip Jenkins, Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies at Penn-



Carl Hanson, Michael Piescer, & J.P. Cima during an Asia team discussion at the recent Ablaze! Missionary Summit.

sylvania State University, also addressed the missionaries. The author of almost a dozen books, Jenkins presented material on how Christianity is moving to the southern hemisphere, including South America, Africa, and Asia. More on this subject can be read in Jenkins' book, *The Next Christendom: The Rise of Global Christianity*.

India & Sri Lanka Ablaze!

Joint India/Sri Lanka Refresher Course

On June 3-5, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) held its annual Refresher Course for 250 pastors and deaconesses. This year 12 pastors and seminarians from the Lanka Lutheran Church in Sri Lanka also participated. LCMS leadership was provided by

Rev. Dr. Robert Preece of Dallas, TX, and his wife Linda. Robert and Linda Preece taught and trained on Lutheran liturgy and preaching.

India Church Elections

On Aug. 31st, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) completed a six-week process of electing circuit, district, and church body officers. The newly

elected president of the IELC is Rev. J. Samuel, a senior pastor in a mission area of the church.

(L to R) Rev. Rajagambeeram, former IELC president, and Rev. Devadas, president of the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches of India, an 11-synod pan-Lutheran organization, with Rev. Dr. Robert Preece at the Refresher Course.



Comings & Goings

Meet the New Folks in Southeast Asia Ministry!

The Lord has blessed the work in a new and wonderful way in Southeast Asia by calling three new couples to serve LCMS World Mission. Meet the Hedtkes, Los and Cimas!



Rev. Bob & Diana Hedtke

Rev. Bob and Diana Hedtke are from Nebraska, bringing with them many years of experience in parish ministry and one year of volunteer service in Bangkok. In Bangkok, both were active in ESL teaching and project work, with Bob also serving in

theological education and pastoral mentoring capacities among Thai, Hmong and Burmese students. Bob has been called to serve as the Strategic Mission Developer for Thailand. As such, he will coordinate and facilitate all the present work there and find ways to serve in new ways as well.

Moving to Indonesia are Rev. Dr. Funghatou Lo, his wife Kalia and their daughter Gaozong. Funghatou served as a professor of social ministry at the University of Wisconsin and at St. John's University. Kalia has a Master's Degree in School & Community Health Education. Both Funghatou and Kalia were born in Laos, but were raised in Wisconsin. They are active in the Hmong Mission Society. They have a unique opportunity to return to Asia and work in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, which was severely damaged by the Tsunami in Dec. 2004.



Rev. Funghatou & Kalia Lo with their daughter Gaozong.

Funghatou will serve as the Strategic Mission Developer for LCMS World Mission in Indonesia, coordinating the work and cooperating with LCMS World Relief and Human Care in their many projects there.

Last but not least (though certainly the youngest!), Vicar JP Cima and his wife Aimee, along with their six-month-old daughter Celeste, have arrived in Vietnam. The Cimas are from Virginia, but coming most recently from Concordia

Seminary in St. Louis. Their primary focus for the first year will be to learn the Vietnamese language and visit the work there and in other Asian countries as part of an internship that aims to prepare them for a broad and varied ministry in many places throughout Asia. They bring many talents and much enthusiasm, so the prognosis for success is good.

All three of these families are excellent additions to the LCMS World Mission team.



Vicar JP & Aimee Cima with daughter Celeste

China Ablaze!

First Educational Technology Conference Held in Shanghai

The number of laptops at Concordia International School Shanghai (CISS) over the Sept. 14 – 16 weekend quite possibly exceeded the number of attendees at the three-day, cutting edge technology and education conference hosted on the campus. More than 480 attendees from around the world flocked to CISS in Jinqiao, Pudong, for *Learning 2.0*, designed to meet the needs of coordinators, classroom teachers and leaders in technology.

The first of its kind in Asia, *Learning 2.0* was a big success due to the collaborative efforts of three international school organizers: CISS, Shanghai American School (SAS), and Shanghai Community International School (SCIS).

"I've been attending these

types of conferences for over 30 years and this was by far the best!" was one of the numerous positive comments heard over the three-day weekend.

Planning for *Learning 2.0* started five years ago when Jon Zurfluh, Deputy Headmaster at SCIS, and Michael Weber, Director of Technology at CISS, shared a vision for the conference. Together with a team of veteran international school teachers, the organizers worked to ensure the support of ACAMIS (Association of China & Mongolia International Schools) and EARCOS (East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools), as well as numerous corporate sponsors such as Dell, Apple, Microsoft, Eptech, Brain Pop and Lanxum Technologies.

Keynote speakers included

such internationally recognized technology experts as Alan November, Will Richardson, Sheryl Nussbaum-Beach, Jamie McKenzie, Gary Stager, Wes Fryer, Chris Smith, Laurie Heikkila and David Elliott.

Concordia's modern, wireless campus allowed for attendees to take notes on their laptops during presentations and to post comments on the web (<http://learning2cn.ning.com>) as well as interact real-time with other conference attendees and organizers via the web tool Twitter (www.twitter.com/learn2cn).

Numerous high school students from the three organizing international schools also found the weekend to be a tremendous learning experi-



Jon Zurfluh (SCIS Deputy Headmaster), Linda Sills (EARCOS Associate Director), & Michael Weber (CISS Director of Technology)

ence through their participation in the "Geek Squad," a trained group of students assigned to help attendees during the conference.

With the momentum of the event still high, planning is already in the works for another conference next year. All sessions from the *Learning 2.0* conference are available on-line at the following site: www.learning2.net.cn.

Philippines Ablaze!

LCP Districts Intensifying Ablaze! Movements

Nearly one year after the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP) districts held their *Ablaze!* Summits, the North Luzon Lowland District (NLLD) and the South Luzon District (SLD) have strongly expressed their desire and intense passion for the lost in their respective communities. The NLLD held a conference with the theme "Igniting NLLD with Christ's Love." Pastors and delegates made strategic plans on how they could maximize their resources and efforts in reaching out to the lost. Rev.

Reynante Lagadon, NLLD President, called for the absolute support of conference delegates for an intense evangelization within the NLLD, to which they responded YES & AMEN!

The SLD held its "The Church and Her Workers" conference. Rev. Wilando Roa, LCP Chairman of the Board of Control, presented an inspirational Bible study, "The Congregation and Her Pastor." In his presentation, clergymen, lay workers and all others present were reminded of their calling—to go and preach the Word. In the same manner, congregations were also reminded of their responsibility to look after

church workers and of the need to partner with their pastors.

At both conferences, LCP President, Rev. James D. Cerdenola, spoke very strongly and clearly of the challenge that lies ahead: "So many souls are dying everyday... We have the cure, the answer, the antidote. Let us go and tell."

Rite of Blessing

On August 24 a Rite of Blessing was held for newly renovated offices for the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP) and Gloria Dei School in the ground floor of the Gloria Dei Church in Santa Mesa, Metro Ma-



One of the newly renovated rooms is blessed during the recent Rite of Blessing

nila. LCP President Rev. James Cerdenola and Gloria Dei Pastor, Rev. Chris Del Monte, blessed each room saying, "We set apart and dedicate this place to the glory and honor of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Taiwan Ablaze!

CLS Library Moves

On Aug. 30, library books were moved from the old basement library to China Lutheran Seminary's new library, which has a capacity for 100,000 books. President Thomas Yu's 3,000 personal books and the late Prof. George Robbert's 3,000 personal books are the most recent contributions to the new library. Rich in pastoral theology, Chinese culture, Reformation history and theology in general, these two per-

sonal libraries will be valuable additions. Please pray that the new library will be a tool in God's hand for the growing and spreading of His Word.

CLS Welcomes 18 New Students

China Lutheran Seminary (CLS) is preparing to start the new school year with eighteen new students. They have recently been participating in new student orientation. The new students are accepted into a number of different pro-

grams including ThM in Luther Studies, MDiv, MA in Counseling, and a Bachelor level curriculum in preparation for enrollment in a masters degree program. Please join in praising God for each student!

Concordia School System—Taiwan Welcome 13 New Teachers

13 long-term missionaries from the U.S.A. began the school year in service to the Lord as ESL and Bible teachers at



New CLS library

LCMS World Mission partner Concordia School System—Taiwan. In addition to regular teaching responsibilities, these new teachers will be sharing the Gospel with their time and talents with more than 2,300 students on a daily basis.

Cambodia Ablaze!

More than Sight

A fourteen-member M.O.S.T. (Ministry Opportunities Short Term) Ministry team led by Kevin Gambil from Colorado spent three busy days doing an eyeglass clinic in rural Battambang. Other team members were largely from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Norwood Park Township, IL.

The event was hosted by the local Trinity Lutheran Church of Battambang. The congregation formed teams to publicize the clinic in the commu-

nity. Local team members were also trained to usher people to the correct room and give a Gospel message to participants as they waited for their vision screening. Although there were rain showers throughout the clinic days, 750 patients were seen and 970 glasses were distributed (M.O.S.T. does simple corrections so distance and near-sighted corrections require two different pairs of glasses.)

While this was indeed a great service, the Gospel message that was shared by the Lu-

theran church members there was the greatest help to the spiritual vision of the clinic participants. While they came to correct physical sight they also had the opportunity to get rid of "spiritual blindness" through the Gospel message. All were invited to learn more about this good news at the church's Sunday services.

The M.O.S.T. Ministry team also spent part of their time building a basketball court. The goal was to make the Battambang church a convenient "hang out" for local youth. The

basketball court adds to the existing volleyball court to provide a great recreation area. The team also held a basketball camp and taught about 50 youth and children the elements of the game. The Gospel sharing at the camp gave opportunities to share the Gospel, prayers and experiences. The ultimate goal of this sports complex is the re-creation that comes when the Holy Spirit works in the hearts and lives of the youth as they meet and hear the Gospel message.

Macau Ablaze!

ESL Teaching in Macau

God is using ESL as a mighty outreach tool in Asia. Native English speakers with a heart for the Lord can serve as a long or short-term English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher or be a part of a short-term mission trip to Asia to help in one of the many English centers. In preparation for service, these centers provide basic ESL training for the volunteer

teachers to help them feel prepared for their work in helping students with their English language learning.

Concordia English Center in Macau is a perfect example of this. In January, the Macau team was down to just one career person, one part-time long-term volunteer and three



2007 Macau Orientation

short-term volunteers. Prayers went up by the hundreds to fill the urgent need for more ESL teachers. Above is a picture of the results of those prayers. God provided over twenty excited and *Ablaze!* long and short-term volunteers to serve this year in Macau and its

branch center. The picture shows the volunteers together with local staff and missionaries Sharon Owens and Carl & Chen-hsi Hanson during the one-week orientation held in the middle of August.

Praise God for the work of LCMS World Mission placement office and the hearts that answered "yes" to the call to serve in Macau and other centers. Please keep the new volunteers in your prayers as they adjust to a new culture, new responsibilities, and a new life in service to the Lord.

INTERESTED IN OPPORTUNITIES IN ASIA?

For more information and a list of current service opportunities, email mission.recruitment@lcms.org or visit www.lcms.org/ca/mission/service-ops/results_Asia.asp.

Thailand Ablaze!

Translation Projects

Ablaze!

Thailand is *Ablaze!* in its translation of children's books. There are currently ten books currently in various stages of translation, with priority given to Concordia Publishing House (CPH) books. *Very Merry Christmas* (CPH) has been completed and is set for its first printing of 2,000 copies. There are six other titles which have been translated and edited and are waiting to be sent to a creative artist; one title which has been translated and is awaiting editing; and, one title which is currently being translated.

Concordia Day Care Bangna Ablaze!

The Concordia Day Care at Bangna was originally opened as a place to care for children. At present the assistance it gives has expanded to help the Bangna slum in a wider range. It provides scholarships for underprivileged children who have completed their studies at the center so they can study at the primary level. Children who have dif-

ficulty in their studies are helped with their homework. The day care center now offers classes in computer, music, and art. A camp for the older children 7-15 years old was also organized. This past quarter, day care staff and the children's parents were also trained in basic first aid skills. The day care center, a project under the Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation—Thailand (CWEFT), has become a part of this community. Whenever there is a funeral, wedding, or other activity in the community, day care staff are always welcomed to join the event.

All of the staff is very dedicated in helping these underprivileged children, which has been very effective and is developing in an on-going manner. The staff are starting to take the younger children to participate in activities at a local Lutheran church under the Concordia Lutheran Church Association (CLCA). During school breaks, 12-18 school children at high risk for abuse or dropping out of school receive

special tutorial classes and have the opportunity to participate in many different educational and recreational activities.

Pray for the children and their families in the Bangna slum community, along with the day care staff who continue to reach out to the children at the day care as well as the greater slum community, despite limited resources. For more information about the Bangna Day Care and other CWEFT projects, please contact Ms. Oratai Thaweessin, CWEFT Executive Director, via email at seasia@inet.co.th.

Concordia Day Care Prachacheun Ablaze!

Concordia Day Care Prachacheun, which first opened its doors in January, continues to grow. Two of the children in the program come from Christian families who thank God for providing this type of much-needed Christian child care and programming in the greater Prachacheun community. The children's parents



Children at the Concordia Day Care Prachacheun

and families are thankful and happy to see their children loved and cared for. At the same time, the staff and the local Concordia Lutheran Church - Phong Phet are thankful and happy to be blessed with this project as it allows them to more effectively be a witness of God's love in the primarily Buddhist community. In addition to the positive feedback from parents, the local Office of Social Development & Human Security recently made its inspection of the day care facilities and officers were very impressed with the facilities and programming. As a result of the successful inspection, officials even requested that the day care serve as a model for child care in the community.

Indonesia Ablaze!



Toshi, JLC team member, teaching Japanese on a recent trip to Indonesia.

(Continued from page 1)

Acehnese students. God richly blessed their time together. The principal asked

if more teams could come from the Lutheran churches in Japan and if they could stay much longer.

This was the first time that JLC members have been involved in a short-term volunteer mission trip. In addition to the five members who actually volunteered in Indonesia, there were seven other members of the mission team who helped with organizing fund-raising events, prayer, and preparations. Now as word about the trip is spreading, many pastors and church members want to continue the relationship started in Indonesia by sending more teams in the future!

UPH Welcomes 6 Non-Christians to its Christian Religion Course

Five Buddhists and one Mus-

lim are attending a Christian religion course at the Universitas Pelita Harapan (UPH) that is a regular part of the curriculum for Christians (normally non-Christians are given a separate course that teaches about the merits of all religions). These students specifically asked to attend the Christian course, and it is more than a course "about" Christianity. The students are able to experience it first hand through the testimony of other students and guest speakers. One guest speaker, a Christian student, came to class and shared how he came to the university as a Buddhist with no friends because he was unable to trust people and he didn't believe real friendships were possible. These students are learning about Jesus, reflect-

ing on what they learn in papers, and have attended Christian worship services.

Banda Aceh Welcomes Yet Another Volunteer

Tess Pan, a member of Salvation Lutheran Church in ChiaYi, Taiwan, and former radio personality, embarked on a three week experience to teach Chinese to ethnically Chinese Indonesian children in a Christian school in Banda Aceh. Additionally, Tess was able to encourage fellow believers through her presence and participation in various activities within that unique community. She described her time there as greatly blessed by the Holy Spirit through the energy and peace that was granted to her.

Hong Kong Ablaze!

Celebrating 30 Years of Ministry!

On Sunday, Sept. 16, Church of All Nations (CAN), a member congregation of the LCMS Northwest district, gave thanks to God in celebration of Rev. Dale Koehneke's 30th year of ministry as an ordained pastor. Special guests of honor for the occasion were Rev. Warren Schumacher, President of the LCMS Northwest District, Rev. David Birner, LCMS World Mission

Associate Executive Director—International Mission Team, and Ms. Rachel Koehneke, Rev. Koehneke's daughter who is currently working in Yunnan, China.

Ephesians 4: 11-16 was the Epistle Lesson for the day, as it was 30 years ago. It was also the text for the sermon as thanks was given for Christ's gift of pastors to the Church. The service also recognized the "responsibility to equip God's people to do his work and build

up the church, the body of Christ."

The theme for the entire weekend was *Faithful Witness for 30 years – Equipping Global Christians for the Future. Ablaze!* with the Holy Spirit, Rev. Koehneke and CAN rejoiced in the recognition of God's plan for them in His work in Asia. This special occasion made their hearts



Children lay hands on Rev. Dale Koehneke during the service celebrating his 30 years of ministry.

burn further with the mission to build up the body of Christ! To God be all the Glory!

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