

# Asia Ablaze! Newsletter

## Christmas Greetings

The shepherds in the Christmas story are favorite characters for many, and with good reason. We can relate to them. They are minding their work, being watchful and careful. Then the angels came. I'm pretty sure that the angels' announcement and song weren't simply a minor distraction. Their presence and message changed everything. Though the sheep were most certainly illuminated by the glory of the angels, their

importance in that moment had faded to almost zero. The Savior of the world had come!

You and I have work that God has given us to do too and we want to do a good job, being watchful and careful. Thank God that the angels still come to us with their announcement and song. Our children always liked to sing with the angels "the song with all the Os and minus signs." *Glo-o-o-ria in excelsis Deo*. Their presence changes everything for us and all of our work fades in impor-

tance compared to the great gift of Jesus, our Lord. He comes to us again and again offering peace on earth through his sacrifice for sin.

When the shepherds had seen the baby, "they spread the word" about Jesus and returned to work, "glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen" (Luke 2). We too will go back to work after a Christmas break. Like the shepherds, we return "spreading the word" and "glorifying and praising God"



Rev. John Mehl

for all the things that we have heard and seen. May God richly bless the time this Christmas when all earthly work fades before the glory of our newborn Savior.

Rev. John Mehl  
LCMS World Mission  
Asia Regional Director

## Korea Ablaze!



Ground is broken on Nov. 11 for a new LTU building.

### Ground Breaking Held for New Worship Building at LTU

On Nov. 11, the ground breaking for a new building at Luther University/Seminary (LTU) was celebrated with a worship service. The new 5-story building, called "Gangeui-Dong" (Lecture Building) will have a total space of about 1,650 square meters. Among the 150 participants were Dr. Young-Il Ji, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Rev. Hyun-Sub Um, President of LCK, as well as Lutheran pastors and students. The new building will have lecture halls and seminar rooms, as well as professors' offices. In his

sermon, LTU President Il-Yong Park expressed his hope that through the construction of the new "Lecture Building", LTU will play an even more important role for Korean society as a delivery room that produces workers of the Gospel. The construction will be funded by the LCK, LTU, and the association of alumni and supporters of LTU.

(More from Korea on pg. 5)



A flood relief recipient in Vietnam heads home with her rice.

## Vietnam Ablaze!

### Flood Relief Efforts

From Aug. 9-11, intense rains caused the Red River in northern Vietnam to swell, causing flash flooding in many provinces. This disaster left hundreds dead or missing, thousands of homes destroyed, and acres of rice fields lost.

The district where LCMS World Mission has been working for 12 years, Cam Khe, was also affected by the floods. In Cam Khe alone, over 1,350 homes were flooded, 170 homes were destroyed, and nearly 500 hectares of crops were lost. Rice stored in homes, which is the main source of food for rural Vietnamese, was also destroyed.

The Vietnamese Government as well as many international organizations carried out immediate assistance programs. However, the flood continued to affect villagers in the months following since they did not have enough stored rice and their crop was destroyed.

Therefore, one month after the floods, LCMS World Mission Vietnam implemented a relief project, distributing 8 tons of rice to 793 families in two communes in Cam

Khe District - Phu Tho province, with each family receiving 10 kg. of rice. The average family size in these communes is about five people. Thus, approximately 4,000 people were helped by this project.

(More from Vietnam on pg. 3)

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## Hong Kong Ablaze!



(l-r) Dr. Robert Kolb with Hong Kong pastors Dr. Andrew Chiu, Rev. Daniel Lee and Dr. Stephen Ip

### Dr. Kolb Visits Asia

Luther scholar, Dr. Robert Kolb, made his way through East Asia (Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan) this fall. His itinerant ministry included preaching, counseling, advising, teaching, encouraging, admonishing, and, of course, lecturing. As one of four mission professors of Concordia Seminary - St. Louis, Dr. Kolb devotes a good amount of time each year to mission ministry overseas. While in Hong Kong he gave several lectures both at Concordia Theological Seminary, Kowloon Tong and at Lutheran Theological Seminary on Tao Fong Shan in Sha Tin. He also gave a day-long study with Hong Kong Lutherans as they explored the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives today.

### PLI International in Hong Kong

For the third consecutive year, Pastoral Leadership Institute International was in Hong Kong providing advanced pastoral training to a number of the Lu-

theran Church— Hong Kong Synod (LCHKS) pastors, evangelists and church workers. Held at a youth village in ShaTin, the third and second year training included missionaries from LCMS World Mission. The theme for the third year class was "Evangelism Team (Pastors and Believers)." This was a great opportunity for LCHKS pastors and evangelists together with missionaries from across Asia to explore



Attendees at the PLI International training in Hong Kong

with each other new ways on how to work together in missions. PLI also held a follow-up training for several pastors from Hong Kong and Korea, who will facilitate these leadership courses in Asia for new pastors and lay people in the future.

### Lutheran Church – Hong Kong Synod Highlights

- A Reformation Day service was held at the Assembly Hall of the Martha Boss Community Service Center on Oct. 31. More than 500 participants attended the ceremony. Pastors K.K. Fung, L.W. Yeung, K.L. Kwan and L.S. Yeung were also newly ordained on this special occasion.
- LCMS brothers and sisters from the Nehemiah Group of Project International Interface visited the Lui Cheung Kwong Lutheran Primary School on Oct. 29 to share the gospel message with staff and students there.

- A team of 12 official representatives from Baoan Civil Administration Department of Shenzhen, an Economic Special Region of China, visited Martha Boss Community Service Center of Hong Kong Lutheran Social Services to share about their experience in providing social services.

- To enhance the youth and volunteer exchange program, as well as better the understanding of Hong Kong social welfare, representatives from youth associations in Jianghai District, Jiangmen of Guangdong Province in China visited Hong Kong Lutheran Social Services on Nov. 6.

- Project Touch-the-Bug for children, run by Hong Kong Lutheran Social Services and the Media Connection, held a charity movie show on Nov. 6 to raise funds.

### HKIS Alum Wins Prestigious Scholarship

Hong Kong International School (HKIS) alum Andrew Yip has received a prestigious scholarship to the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia. He is just one of 60 students in North America to receive the scholarship. Andrew is also a former member of Church of All Nations (CAN) in Hong Kong where he also played the organ. To read more, please visit the Asia Ablaze! Extras at:

[www.asiab blaze.org/extra.html](http://www.asiab blaze.org/extra.html)

## Papua New Guinea Ablaze!

### Lutheran University of Papua New Guinea Set to Open in January 2010

The Lutheran University of Papua New Guinea (LUPNG) is committed to excellence to tertiary education and service to the church and is set to open

its doors in January 2010. LUPNG is instituting a four-year degree granting Lutheran university open to students of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds. The university has contracted Infracore Management Consultants to develop a master plan for new and reno-

vated buildings so as to provide an attractive, comfortable, and well-planned campus for students.

It is anticipated that by 2017, the university will be serving upwards of 4,000 students. The university is being de-

signed and planned in such a way that students will be exposed to the Good News of our Lord and Savior's salvation each day of its operation.

For more information, visit the official LUPNG website at [www.lupng.org](http://www.lupng.org).

## Vietnam Ablaze!

### LCMS Asia's Hanoi School Takes Important Step Toward Approval

The initial application for an international school was submitted to the Vietnam government on Nov. 19. This was a big step in getting closer to approval for a school which is now called Concordia International School Hanoi (CISH). All systems were pointed to getting the documents from Hong Kong, the U.S., & Hanoi and the writing of the entire Pre-school through Grade 12 Curriculum finished and handed in by Nov. 19.

Allan and Sandy Schmidt are leading the team preparing the school's materials that are required by the Vietnam government to be a legal entity in Vietnam. Once recognized by

the government the process continues, submitting the entire plan for establishing an international school.

The written documents were prepared by many team members. They included Hanoi attorneys, Asia colleagues, a U.S. curriculum writer, help from Hong Kong International School, Concordia International School Shanghai and the Schmidt's. All are encouraged that the Hanoi government agreed to receive them.

More documents are also being prepared relevant to other government departments and offices. Please pray that the applications are well received and that the next steps in initiating the school will move forward in finding a temporary building, land and a permanent Head of School.

### Short-term Team from Hong Kong Spends Thanksgiving in Vietnam

Over Thanksgiving weekend, eight representatives from Church of All Nations (CAN) and Hong Kong International School (HKIS) came to the small town of Phu Tho, Viet Nam to teach English at Hung Vuong University. Most of the weekend focused on helping Vietnamese teachers and upper-class students prepare for advanced English testing. This visit is the most recent chapter in a well established history of cooperation between Hong Kong and Vietnam. Michael Tan, a retired teacher from HKIS and CAN member, has spent the last two years working on growing this cooperation. Michael, along with Rev. Ted Engelbrecht, continues to

look for ways to help strengthen the ties between the LCMS, CAN, and the people of Vietnam. Whereas previous visits have been supportive of all the projects in place in Vietnam, this trip focused specifically on students and teachers who are developing their English skills. This is especially encouraging in light of the information from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam, which has issued the goal of Viet Nam being bi-lingual with English as its official second language by the year 2020.

Please pray for the continuation of teaching by Michael and other volunteers in Viet Nam, including James Rush, Melanie Dunn, and Carl Myrhe.

## Cambodia Ablaze!

### New Missionaries in Battambang

In early October, Seth and Shannon Hoepfner joined the LCMS World Mission team in Cambodia. The Hoepfners will be based out of Battambang, Cambodia, where they will work with Trinity Lutheran Church, the first official Lutheran congregation in Cambodia. The church has recently launched an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) school, where Shannon will serve as its first native English-speaking teacher. Seth will work with the church as a community development worker. The Hoepfners have previous LCMS mission field experience; Seth served as a long-term missionary in Kazakhstan, and Shannon served in Vietnam.

### Hong Kong Service Team in Cambodia

A team from Church of All Nations (CAN) in Hong Kong

traveled to Cambodia on Oct. 2-6 to support LCMS mission work there. The team of 17 adults and children assisted in the construction of a small building in the village of Oung, near the southern port city of Sihanoukville. The work in this village is a joint project between Concordia Welfare & Education Foundation (CWEF), LCMS World Mission, and the local Christian church in Sihanoukville. The building in Oung will be used as a school, community building, and church. The team enjoyed spending time not only constructing a building, but also actively building up the Body of Christ.

### Phnom Penh Sunday School Workshop

More than 50 Cambodian Christians from across the country gathered together on Oct. 7-8 at Open Gate Christian Fellowship in Phnom Penh to take part in a Sunday School workshop hosted by LCMS missionary Jeanette Groth. This group of young teachers gathered to receive training on the Apostles Creed

and how to effectively teach the creed's simple Gospel truths to their students. Each participant was given an illustrated Bible story book in their native language of Khmer, along with materials for producing simple paper cut-out characters to be used in teaching all the major Bible stories, from creation through to Jesus' death and resurrection. As many Cambodian Christians are young, new believers, it is important for them to meet with and be encouraged by fellow Christians.

### Preparing for Sharing

To prepare for the Christmas season and the sharing that comes with it, LCMS missionary Jeanette Groth planned a time to introduce Battambang ladies to the art of crafting Christian symbols as Christmas decorations with each symbol connected to a particular Bible verse.

The time together began with a prayer that God would use this craftwork to share the

message of the birth of the Savior. The group began by looking up the Bible verse that went with each symbol. As more and more women, teens, and even three men arrived and began helping to look up verses, it became obvious that readers were helping non-readers look up and understand their Bible verse. Altogether 22 people gathered to participate in the event.

Next the crafting began. The people split up into groups and sent a representative to get some of each beading decoration to work with. As they worked they talked about their symbols and their Bible verses. Jeanette left them with materials to complete the set. They were also encouraged to invite others to Trinity's Christmas celebration to see the ornaments they created and to learn more about the real meaning of Christmas.

## Macau Ablaze!

### Lunch Time Chat Corner

In September, the Macau English Center started a "Meet and Eat" lunchtime chat corner. On weekdays, students can bring a lunch and join teachers from 12 – 2 p.m. This is a simple

but great way for the teachers to spend quality time with students. The students were really excited about this opportunity as well. A few come regularly while others drop by when they have the time. As

students learn English, talk and laugh with their teachers about life in Macau together, the teachers also get opportunities to tell about their faith in God.

### Fun Olympics

In September, in the wake of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, Concordia English Center (CEC) sponsored its own "Fun Olympics." Among the events were the plastic straw javelin throw, the three legged race, and pillowcase volleyball. A lot of students of all ages came to the event, and everyone left wearing a lovingly handmade medal of some sort. Activities like the "Fun Olympics" and the lunch-time "Meet and Eat"

chat corner are designed to let the students see that their teachers can have fun too, build friendships with them, and also provide a non-threatening environment for long-time students to introduce new friends to the English center.

### CEC Welcomes New Short-Term Teachers

The Concordia English Center (CEC) in Macau was happy to welcome two new short-term teachers this quarter: Lois Case and Jane Moody. Lois helped create new curriculum for the English center, and Jane is teaching English and Bible classes.



Volunteer Mary Eddy lunches with students during a recent Meet & Eat—Lunch Time Chat Corner

## Taiwan Ablaze!

### CMS Fall Retreat

China Lutheran Seminary in Hsinchu, Taiwan was the site of the annual fall retreat for 15 long-term missionaries who currently serve at Concordia Middle School (CMS). The seminary's newest building, which was opened this last April, has built-in facilities to host local church retreats and activities. LCMS missionary Rev. Dr. Steve Oliver led the group in an English worship service. The theme of the retreat was "Rest for the Weary" and, despite the rainy weather, provided a welcome time of refreshment and fellowship.

### Christmas Activities at Concordia Middle School

Concordia Middle School (CMS) is once again preparing for another busy, evangelistic Christmas celebration. This Christ-centered school with a large student body (over 2,000 from grades K – 12) works together with 15 LCMS long-term missionaries to take advantage of many outreach events, both in and outside of

the school. School-wide Christmas celebrations and special events will share the Gospel with not only the students, faculty, and staff, but to members of the community, parents, and many others who are seeking a true understanding of Christmas.

### Special CLS Courses

"Celebrating The Church Year and Establishing Family Devotions" was the topic of a special China Lutheran Seminary (CLS) course jointly taught at Eternal Life Lutheran Church in Taipei on six consecutive Saturdays in October and November. CLS President Thomas Yu, LCMS Missionary Stephen Oliver and Norwegian Lutheran Mission's Anna Saether jointly taught the course to twelve students ranging in age from 22 to 55 years old. Although this was the first time the course was taught, it has immediately become popular and scheduling is already underway to bring the series to three other branch course churches throughout Taiwan in the next two years.

The next church to sponsor the course has already registered more than 30 students. Pastor Andrew Miao of Eternal Life Lutheran Church was especially important in helping to sponsor the course; he has been a faithful branch course teacher in Northern Taiwan for CLS, and is presently studying for a ThM in Luther Studies at China Lutheran Seminary.

### Law & Gospel Lecture

"Law & Gospel" was the topic of a lecture given by Professor Stephen Oliver to over 120 young adults on November 14 at Victory Lutheran Church in Hsinchu. An estimated 15 non-Christians were present for the presentation, which included a strong Gospel proclamation. Victory is the largest Lutheran church in Taiwan and its young adult fellowship is an Ablaze! partner. The fellowship is made up of a vibrant popu-

lation of Taiwan's up and coming leaders, many of whom are graduate students or work in Taiwan's high tech Silicon Valley. The fellowship has two entire cell groups committed to "seekers" and regularly reaches out to draw in a regular flow of non-Christians. Missionary Oliver was invited to teach for an hour and a half on this important topic to both build the knowledge and discernment of the Christians as well as to spread the Gospel to non-Christians.



Prof. Stephen Oliver speaks at the recent "Law & Gospel" lecture

## China Ablaze!

### CISS Students Participate in Yunnan Education Project Interim

Every fall, a group of Concordia International School Shanghai's high school students participates in the Yunnan Education Project (YEP) Interim, a weeklong off-campus learning experience designed to enrich them physically, mentally and spiritually. Since 2002, YEP has been working in conjunction with the Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation (CWEF), a Hong Kong-based service organization dedicated to improving the livelihoods of impoverished rural communities in China through education and public health.

This year, the Interim group was tasked with the construction and

installation of their fourth freshwater drinking system for Tuanshan village, a community in southwestern Yunnan. The team dug a kilometer-long trench from the community's water tank into the village itself and installed all of the necessary piping. To read more about the trip in an article written by one of the participants, please visit this month's Extras page at [www.asiaablaze.org/extra.html](http://www.asiaablaze.org/extra.html).

### CISS Appoints New High School Assistant Principal for Academic Life

A search process that began in the spring of 2008 resulted in the successful placement of Concordia International School Shanghai's (CISS) own

High School faculty, Nicholas Kent, to the position of High School Assistant Principal – Academic Life. The announcement was made on Dec. 3 by CISS's High School Principal, David Harris, who interviewed candidates together with CISS's Head of School, Dr. James Koerschen, before making the final decision. CISS congratulates Nicholas and is thrilled to



**Children in Tuanshan Village where CISS students spent a week helping to install a freshwater drinking system**

have such a strong candidate emerge from within its own ranks. Nicholas joined CISS's High School faculty as a Humanities teacher in 2006.

## Indonesia Ablaze!

### CUNE Student Teachers Make Positive Impact at SPH Schools in Indonesia

Orangutans, chickens, goats, geckos, rats and cats—just some of the wildlife three Concordia University Nebraska (CUNE) students, Lisa Gebauer, Marissa Marler and Johanna Miller, encountered during a two-month student teaching experience with the Pelita Harapan Foundation in Indonesia. But more importantly, these young women experienced daily life in the Jakarta area and what it means to be a Christian in the world's most populous Muslim nation while they gained valuable classroom experience.

Even though not all Sekolah Pelita Harapan (SPH) students are Christian, Johanna Miller always felt free to mention God in the classroom, at devotion time, or in chapel. "To be honest, I was amazed at how dedicated the SPH teachers are to Jesus and the Word. I can tell that God is doing some pretty amazing work through the education here."

Lisa Gebauer observed that her

student teaching experience at SPH schools has demonstrated to her what a powerful impact Christians schools can make. "There is so much more freedom to share the Gospel in these schools than I expected. I have never felt that much responsibility and privilege in my role as a teacher ever before."

"Immersing myself in the Indonesian culture and way of life has been an amazing and life-changing experience," shared Marissa Marler. "God has blessed me by providing this opportunity. I came here for an adventure, and God has surprised me with an entirely different experience than the escapade I had expected. The people here are warm, humorous, friendly, and in desperate need of knowing that their only true salvation can come from knowing Jesus Christ."

Would they recommend an overseas student teaching experience for other education majors? "There is GREAT value in teaching overseas," said Johanna Miller. "I have learned so many things in and out of the classroom." Lisa Ge-



**CUNE student teachers (l-r) Marissa Marler, Lisa Gebauer, & Johanna Miller**

bauer purchased a one-way ticket to Indonesia with the hope of continuing on after her December 2008 graduation. "God has given the opportunity for me to stay in Indonesia and teach at SPH! I am very thankful and excited to serve in this country!"

The Pelita Harapan Foundation would like to thank Concordia University Nebraska and Lisa, Marissa, and Johanna for their faithful service at Sekolah Pelita Harapan campuses in Karawaci and Cikarang.

## Korea Ablaze!

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lutheran Mission in Korea

On Oct. 26, the Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lutheran Mission in Korea. Over 1,700 Lutherans from all over the country as well as guests from Korea and abroad attended the jubilee held in Seoul. The commemorative worship service was attended by pioneer missionaries Rev. and Mrs. Paul Bartling, Rev. and Mrs. Maynard Dorow, Rev. and Mrs. Hilbert (George) Riemer, and Rev. and Mrs. David Susan. International guests included Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Nafzger, representing the LCMS, Rev. Yukata Kumei, President of Japan Lutheran Church, Dr. Robert Kolb from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Rev. Oh-Sung Kwon, Secretary General of the National Council of Churches in Korea, Rev. Hee-Beom Choi, General Secretary of the Christian Council of Korea, as well as current missionaries & ecumenical co-workers from the LCMS and Bavarian Lutheran Church.

The LCK announced its vision for the next 50 years leading up to its centennial: a total of 500 local congregations, the construction of the new Luther Building, overseas mission, mission to the North, and the establishment of a social welfare system for pastors.

As part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, the LCK hosted a “Reception for Lutheran Leaders and 2008 Lutheran Seminar” for about 200 guests on Oct 27. The reception was under the supervision of Luther Study Institute of Luther University/Seminary. Prof. Robert Kolb gave a presentation on “Luther’s Concept of Two Realms”.

### Foundation of Korea Luther Study Society

October 24 was a day of heightened interest to the Christian academic world in South Korea as it marked the founding of the Korea Luther Study Society. Some 130 Lutheran scholars, theologians, Lutheran church leaders, and students from Lutheran Graduate School of Theology seminary at LTU all participated in the foundation meeting at Central Lutheran Church in Seoul. The event consisted of an academic symposium with two presentations on Luther, followed by the founding assembly of the Society, at which Prof. Jin-



Lutheran leaders attend the 50th Anniversary of the Lutheran Mission in Korea celebration in Seoul this past October.

Seob Eom of Luther University/Seminary was elected first President.

The Korea Luther Study Society plans to translate and publish Luther’s writings, organize lectures and seminars, publish collections of scholarly papers on Luther, collect and sponsor materials and documents on Luther, and exchange research results and documents with related institutions within Korea and abroad. The society will meet monthly and is expected to play an important role in the broader church, as the board of directors consists of a wide spectrum of scholars from various universities and institutions. About 30 international Luther scholars (such as Prof. Robert Kolb from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Prof. Jeong-Ae Han-

Rhinow from Hyupsung University) agreed to cooperate as advisors to the Society.

### General Assembly of Lutheran Church in Korea

On October 9-10, the LCK’s 38<sup>th</sup> Annual General Assembly convened at Bethel Lutheran Church in Daejeon City, located in the center of South Korea. Some 100 ordained and lay members attended the assembly, commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lutheran Mission in Korea. In January 1958, LCMS-missionaries Rev. Paul Bartling, Maynard Dorow and Kurt E. Voss together with the Korean theologian Won Yong Ji arrived in Korea. Today, LCK has 42 congregations and 5,060 baptized church members, and proclaims the Gospel together with International Lutheran Church, Seoul and the German speaking Protestant Church in Seoul.

## Japan Ablaze!

### YYM Fall Retreat

Long-term missionaries of the YYM Japan program gathered at the end of October at the foot of Mt Fuji, Japan. This annual fall retreat brought together all 13 missionaries, including the four new members to the team, Matthew Haas, Kim Sherwin, Justin Kumfer, and Lauren

Davis. These special individuals joined the team in October and bring their own gifts and talents to the mission field of Japan and to a program with over 40 years of history. The retreat provided a time for all of the missionaries to rest, relax, share, and prepare spiritually and mentally for the busy holiday season.

### Discover Tokyo Day

Every year, long-term missionaries to Japan through the YYM program plan “Discover Tokyo Day.” There are two goals for the day with one being to welcome new missionaries recently arrived to Japan and to show them some local sites. The other goal is to invite local partner church

members and students from the churches’ English schools and connect them with the hope of presenting more Gospel sharing opportunities. The turnout this year was more than 20 and the Lord blessed the fellowship, creating connections of Japanese Christians with those who have not yet come to faith.

# Mission Partner Conference

## Asia Ablaze! in Palm Springs, CA

From November 19-21 the work of the Holy Spirit in Asia was stirring in Palm Springs, California as about 150 clergy and lay leaders from around the United States gathered for the LCMS World Missions' *Mission Partner Conference* with spreading the Gospel in Asia on the agenda for Thursday after-

noon. Representatives from Christ Lutheran Church (Costa Mesa, CA) and Church of All Nations (Hong Kong) led workshops for conference participants. These two congregations were chosen to present because of their strong focus on mission and outreach, their passion for equipping and sending disciples to share the Good News, and their active

engagement with LCMS World Mission in Asia. Their workshops were designed to help others catch fire with the urgency at hand to reach the unreached and the uncommitted. Church leaders were challenged with the questions "What are you going to do with Jesus?" and "When's it going to happen?" Both congregations

shared the transformational impact being *Ablaze!* in Christ's mission has had on their membership and their ministries. Moving people from "the pew to the pavement" to witness their faith to others was a central theme. Where does that pavement lead – to Jerusalem and Judea, to Samaria and the Ends of the Earth! And that certainly includes God's work in Asia!

## India & Sri Lanka Ablaze!

### New Seminary Faculty

The governing board of Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil, replaced four seminary professors with parish pastors in November. The newly appointed Principal is Rev. D.V. Bernard. The seminary has 50 students preparing for the ministry.

### India Summit

On Jan 15-17, 2009 in St. Louis, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) along with LCMS World Mission and LCMS World

Relief are holding an India Summit with organizations and individuals involved with the IELC in mission. The purpose is for the IELC leaders to share their vision, mission and ministry and for partners to network with each other. Individuals or agencies wishing to participate in the Summit should contact the LCMS Area Director for India and Sri Lanka, Rev. Herb Hofer at: [hhofer@cu-portland.edu](mailto:hhofer@cu-portland.edu)

### New Sites Purchased

Because of the mass conversions going on in certain parts of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC), there is a great need to purchase new sites for chapels. In response to this need, seven new sites have been purchased recently through help from individuals and the Jesus Is Lord mission society.

### New Officers

The Lanka Lutheran Church in Sri Lanka has a new set of officers. Rev. G. Nadaraja is the new President, and Rev. S. Devanesan is the new Treasurer. LCMS World Mission in partnership with the India Evangelical Lutheran Church also is providing a visiting administrative adviser to the LLC, a retired IELC pastor, Rev. Gifton Joshua.

## Philippines Ablaze!

### CCS Celebrate 25 Years

Concordia Children's Services (CCS) celebrated its 25 Year Anniversary on August 19 with a simple thanksgiving service. God in His goodness has continuously provided for all the needs of the children in the home as well as the work with poor, urban children.

CCS is a Christian non-profit organization which services

young children ages 0-2 years old who are abandoned, neglected and given up by their parents, as well as children ages 7-16 years old who need educational assistance through high school.

CCS's vision is that every child has a loving family where she or he is nurtured and given the opportunity to grow and develop into a mature, caring and responsible individual. Its mission is to respond in the name of Christ to the various needs of children and their families, that they may have hope for a better future by developing and enhancing their physical, mental,

emotional and spiritual well-being.

Staff at CCS are proud that their colleagues in the child care community have said the atmosphere at CCS is more like that of a home than an institution.

CCS has a seven member board of trustees made up of community professionals and ministers from the Lutheran Church in the Philippines.

For more information regarding CCS, please contact Ms. Beth Caces at:

[concordi@mozcom.com](mailto:concordi@mozcom.com).

### VBS held in Linamon

On May 5-10, Holy Trinity Lutheran Catholic Church (HTLCC) in Linamon Lanao del Norte held its VBS at four



Children pray at a recent VBS event held in Buru-un Iligan City.



Some of the younger children at CCS. 10-month-old Jose (far right) is thriving despite being abandoned in a trash bin as an infant.

locations, under the theme "Friendship Trek: Jesus, Our Forever Friend." At Buru-un, Iligan City, one of the sites, more than 30 children attended; 20 attended at the Lagpan site; and more than 35 children and toddlers attended in Tinago. The activities in Tinago were especially encouraging as this has been a mission site for HTLCC for two years and work is often canceled due to political unrest in the area.

## Thailand Ablaze!

### Volunteer Team from Hilton Head Island, SC

A team of four volunteers from Island Lutheran Church on Hilton Head Island, SC recently spent 10 days helping with different ministries in Thailand. The group started in the mountains of northern Thailand painting the church building in the Hmong village of Baan Khun Huay Krai. They then went on to the Hmong Student Center in Mae Rim (just outside of Chiang Mai, also in the north) where they gave the boys dormitory a much needed makeover. The group concluded their trip with a stop at the Concordia Day Care Center (CDCC) in the Bangna slum area of Bangkok where they shared, worked and played side by side with the children there.

### Concordia Lutheran Church—Phong Phet Be- gins Outreach in Korat Province

Despite having no pastor of their own, Concordia Lutheran Church—Phong Phet, along with LCMS World Mission and the Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation—Thailand (CWEFT), have begun an informal agreement with a body of believers in Korat province (about 1.5 hours east of Bangkok). The agreement allows for the pastor from Concordia to make periodic visits to the group of believers in Korat, making Korat a preaching station of sorts for the more established Concordia Lutheran Church—Phong Phet. Thus begins a more extensive outreach effort in Korat.

### Child Care Website and Update

In an effort to branch out beyond the surrounding Bangkok areas known as Chaengwattana, Laksi and Nonthaburi, Concordia Child Care Ministry (CCCM) launched its first website available in both Thai and English at [www.concordiakids.com](http://www.concordiakids.com). Since launching the site in September, CCCM has seen a marked spike in the number of interested parents contacting the center for more information. There are currently six children enrolled at CCCM full-time, and five of the six came to know about the center through the website—what an impact! The CCCM license allows for up to 15 children at the center, so please pray for the Lord to lead even more little ones to this growing ministry!



Guide is newly enrolled at the Concordia Child Care Ministry (CCCM). His parents first learned about CCCM from its new website

### CONTACT US

[www.asiaablaze.org](http://www.asiaablaze.org)

General inquiries and  
comments:  
[editor@asiaablaze.org](mailto:editor@asiaablaze.org)

Address change or to  
unsubscribe:  
[lcmspmso@icable.ph](mailto:lcmspmso@icable.ph)

Merry  
Christmas

### SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Ms. Adelina Balunsat (database administrator)

Ms. Beth Caces (Philippines)

Mr. Kwok Kuen Chan (Hong Kong)

Mr. J.P. Cima (Vietnam)

Ms. Michelle de Rozario (China)

Ms. Chawesa Fischer (Thailand)

Dr. Jeanette Groth (Cambodia)

Rev. Carl Hanson (East Asia)

Rev. Robert Hedtke (Thailand)

Rev. Dr. Herbert Hoefler (India & Sri Lanka)

Mr. Brent Kilback (Papua New Guinea)

Rev. Kyungman Hong (Korea)

Mr. Josh Lange (Hong Kong)

Mr. James Manning (Hong Kong)

Rev. Dr. Stephen Oliver (Taiwan)

Rev. Patrick O'Neal (Korea)

Rev. Malte Rhinow (Korea)

Mr. James Rush (Vietnam)

Dr. Allan Schmidt (East Asia)

Ms. Karin Semler (Indonesia)

Mr. Ed Strohschein (newsletter coordinator)

Ms. Heidi Tannarat (newsletter design)

Ms. Mary Eddy U (Macau)

Rev. Abel Villos (Philippines)

Mr. Matt Wasmund (Taiwan)

Mr. Doug Werth (Hong Kong)