

Asia Ablaze! Newsletter

Papua New Guinea Ablaze!

First Graduation for Hewa Students

The first graduation of the Wanakipa Lutheran Primary School for Hewa students in the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea was held on December 3, 2009. Twenty young men and one young woman graduated from Grade 6. This is a remarkable achievement because of its remote loca-



Mr. Paul Watia, founding teacher at the Wanakipa Lutheran Primary School in Papua New Guinea

tion and the absence of roads, stores, and local governance. The students themselves were instrumental in constructing their school building. Work on the project began in 2002 with project assistance from LCMS World Relief and Porgera Joint Venture, and coordination by LCMS World Mission staff. Many of these future graduates

worked alongside LCMS missionary Anton Lutz in using a sawmill to produce the lumber to build a double classroom school and housing for teachers, while also learning the needed carpentry skills from LCMS WM volunteer Harry Steffans as they helped to construct the buildings.

The school opened in 2004 with one class of nearly 50 students enrolled in Grade 1. Because the Hewa children had never had the opportunity to have a government recognized education, many of these first grade students were already teenagers and several had children themselves. Mr Paul Watia, a teacher in the Gutnius Lutheran Church school system for more than 20 years, was the founding teacher. For its second year of operation there was not a second teacher, so Watia moved between the two classrooms teaching new Grade 1 students in one and the advancing Grade 2 students in the other. By the third year, and still with only one teacher, the Wanakipa school board decided to move the students along to grades 2 and 3, and the following year to grades 3 and 4. There were no new enrollments of students in the earlier grades. Watia continued this pattern until today, 2009, when the initial stu-

dents were in grade six, ready to graduate as is the course in Papua New Guinea primary schools.

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Children find great joy in things that are upside-down, inside out, and backwards, while these same things can make adults feel uncomfortable. We want things put right, but what is "right?" God's "right side up" includes, "blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5) and "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last,

and the servant of all" (Matt. 9:35).

Christmas is a time when we celebrate one of the most amazing of God's "right side ups." The prophet Isaiah writes of Mary, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel— which means, 'God with us.'" (Matt. 1:23). Nothing ever looked so upside-down. A virgin is pregnant. God is being

born as a human baby to be "with us." And He was born in a stable with simple shepherds to welcome him.

It may look upside down to the world, but God sent Jesus "who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21). As our heavenly Father's children, we find great delight in His "right side up" and kneel with

the shepherds and sing, "Joy to the world, the Lord has come! Let earth receive her king!" Merry Christmas.



Rev. John Mehl

Rev. John Mehl
LCMS World Mission
Asia Regional Director

Hong Kong Ablaze!

LCHKS 60th Anniversary Celebration

The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod (LCHKS) celebrated Reformation Day in an extraordinary way this year, as they commemorated the church body's 60th anniversary at a special celebration worship service on October 31. The anniversary celebration included a number of addresses from former and present leaders in the LCHKS and a variety of musical choir performances from LCHKS churches and schools. LCMS World Mission Regional Director Rev. John Mehl delivered a congratulatory address to the gathering on behalf of LCMS.

In 1949, LCMS missionaries set up a mission in Hong Kong to serve the local people, many of whom were refugees from mainland China. God blessed this small mission and it has developed into the now thriving LCHKS, which consists of 37 congregations and 8,700 mem-

bers. New pastors are trained at the LCHKS's own Concordia Seminary in Hong Kong.

The church body has developed a strong outreach to the local community through its many kindergartens, primary and secondary schools. The LCHKS also reaches out to the community through its Hong Kong Lutheran Social Services, which provides many services, including counseling, substance abuse rehabilitation, elderly care, youth centers, foster care, day care, and family life education.

ALEA Revitalized

The Asia Lutheran Educators Association (ALEA) board met in Hong Kong on November 28. The board had previously met in May of this year to determine how to best move forward. At the May meeting, the board appointed Dr. Darrell Van Luchene to serve as temporary Executive Director, and through his efforts and that of others, a number of projects and other processes were begun that the board was happy to note and proceed on.

A primary goal of ALEA is to facilitate the process of networking with the scores of Lutheran and other interested schools in Asia for mutual support and cooperation. It also facilitates sharing resources, training, recruiting, and other projects which are requested and approved.



(left to right) Dr. William Liao, Dr. Stephen Ip, Mr. Edward Strohschein, Prof Lei Yutian, and Rev. Carl Hanson recently met to continue work on the Chinese Edition of Luther's Works.

The current board is seeking to increase its number, find a permanent Executive Director, and plan for an all-Asia conference sometime in the Fall of 2011 at Concordia International School Shanghai. Any suggestions or other notes of interest are welcome and can be sent to:

Dr. Darell Luchene
dvan1946@yahoo.com or
 Rev. Ted Engelbrecht
Ted.Engelbrecht@lcms.org

Luther Speaks Chinese

Prof. Lei Yutian (Director of World History Research Office & Director of China Luther Study Center at Guangzhou University) is one of the co-editors for the Chinese Edition of Luther's Works (CELW) project. He is working with two volume editors, Rev. Dr. William Liao (Prof. of Church History and Systematic Theology at China Evangelical Seminary, in Taipei, Taiwan) and Rev. Dr. Stephen Ip (Prof. of Systematic Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Hong Kong) on the project. When the three met recently, Prof. Lei encouraged them by stating that, "ten years on, Luther is closer to speaking Chinese today than ever be-

fore." On November 28, 2009 these three men met in Shenzhen with Edward Strohschein, Financial Officer for the project, and Rev. Carl Hanson to work on translation issues related to the project and to discuss timetables for the coming three volumes (3, 4, and 5) of CELW. Volumes 1 and 2 were published in 2005 after six years of intense work. Volumes 3, 4, and 5 are scheduled to be published by 2011. This work involves translators from both Chinese scholars in China as well as those who live outside of China.

As the project breaks into new territory and spans a new decade, the need for Luther to speak to scholars in Chinese grows. Prof. Lei noted that during the past four years there has been an ever growing interest in studying Luther among the academic world in China. Coupled with the rise of China and its influence in the world today, Luther's transformational thinking is poised to make a critical impact at yet another formational moment in history.

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Rev. John Mehl (LCMS World Mission Asia Regional Director) and Rev. Allan Yung (LCHKS President) at the recent celebrations for the 60th anniversary of the LCHKS.

China Ablaze!

CISS Interim Groups Impact China

Interim is a weeklong, annual academic course for all High School students at Concordia International School Shanghai (CISS) designed to develop communication and leadership skills, self-reliance and compassion. In 2009, four of the 14 Interim courses included Yunnan Education Project (YEP) sites. YEP, CISS's flagship service program, was started in 2002 to help children and families in impoverished areas of China. YEP works in conjunction with the Concordia Welfare & Education Foundation (CWEF), a nonprofit based in Hong Kong that strives to improve the livelihoods of impoverished rural communities in Asia.

In Lincang Prefecture, Yunnan province, hundreds of villages are in need of clean drinking water. Since 2002, YEP has financed 20 clean water projects in Shaungjiang, with six serving as water project Interim sites. When a YEP water project is begun, villagers pay a small sum into the cost of the infrastructure. As individuals work on the project, they are also paid for their work. CISS water project Interim courses provide additional physical

labor in digging trenches, laying pipe, and installing water meters.

One of the initial efforts of YEP was to provide elementary school scholarships to students in rural areas. Four years ago, the Chinese government began to provide elementary students—both boys and girls—tuition-free education through grade six. YEP has continued its scholarship program, shifting its focus to providing aid for middle and high school age students.

The desire to educate extends beyond scholarships to the classroom, and providing assistance in education remains a primary way that CISS students are able to serve through Interim. During the 2009 Interim, CISS students offered oral English practice and English-learning methodology to Grade 7-8 middle school students in Zhaotong City.

Over the years, YEP has expanded to provinces beyond Yunnan. This year, students encountered opportunities to serve in the earthquake-ravaged province of Sichuan, through teaching various subjects in English to the middle school students.

Texas Team Serves in China

At the end of October a group of 18 men from three congregations in Texas joined with 10 members of Church of All Nations (CAN) in Hong Kong to serve together in southern China with the Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation. The group funded a drinking water project for a village area with two schools whose old water system left them dry for several months every year. The group shared

their joy in service as redeemed children of God by digging extensive trenches and laying piping for the water system. In addition, they taught hygiene lessons at the local primary and middle schools. CAN members had visited the area previously and donated some bright new school uniforms for primary school children in other schools in the county.



Team members from Texas and Church of All Nations in Hong Kong dug trenches and laid piping for a water system on a recent service trip in China

Papua New Guinea Ablaze!

World AIDS Day Commemorated

In Wapenamanda District of Enga Province, Gutnius Lutheran Church (GLC) members played key roles in activities commemorating World AIDS Day on December 1. Mrs. Daphne Kapau, Mr. Rea Saikalali, Mr. Win Kenobi and Mr. Pinamai Rakapani (all active GLC members), along with LCMS missionary Liz Neuf, each headed a team to coordinate activities for the day in different areas of the district.

The international goal for World AIDS Day 2009 was to promote prevention, treatment, and care for those infected by HIV and AIDS. The Wapenamanda District AIDS Committee focused on calling each person to responsibility in the AIDS complex. The activities of the teams varied, with most including marches, informational speeches, and dramas. Pictured is the enthusiastic 2-mile march from Immanuel Lutheran Hospital to Wapenamanda.



World AIDS Day march in Papua New Guinea

Korea Ablaze!

39th Regular General Assembly of Lutheran Church in Korea

After the first Protestant missionary venture on Korean soil by German Lutheran missionary Rev. Karl Guetzlaff in 1832, the Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) began with the commission of three missionaries by the LCMS in 1958. In 2009, LCK looks back on 51 years of mission. From October 8-9 of this year, LCK held its 39th Regular General Assembly.

At this year's General Assembly, Church President Hyun-Sub Um and Church Vice President Rev. Hyun-Gil Lang were both re-elected. In addition, the new board of directors and the executive committee, along with auditors, were elected as well.

Celebrating the 51st year of mission, this year the LCK makes the first step towards the centennial of Lutheran mission in Korea. The main issues at LCK's General Assembly were the reports about the construction of the new Luther Building (5 underground floors, 24 above ground floors), the commemorative event on occasion of the 50th anniversary of Lutheran Mission in Korea in October 2008, the ILC Convention in August 2009, and mission cooperation with Lutheran Churches in the U.S., Japan, and Germany.

The main projects planned for 2010 include a thanksgiving worship service for the 40th anniversary of the foundation of LCK, a ceremony for the completion of the new Luther building expected in July 2010, the continued foundation of new congregations, the reorganization of the General Assembly office, and the planned extension of overseas mission cooperation.

Affiliated organizations also reported on their activities. The Lutheran Hour reported on the celebration of the 50th anniversary

of its radio mission; Bethel Series reported the concentration of its efforts in the development of its Children's Education Seminar, the propagation of its Faith Development Seminar, and its e-learning Worship Seminar course; and Concordia Publishing House stressed its plan to increase website services through its internet bookstore.

Visitors to the Lutheran Church in Korea's Office

On September 16, 2009, a delegation consisted of 12 members from the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, led by Presiding Bishop Dr. Wolfgang Huber, visited the LCK Church Office. LCK President Um introduced the LCK's history and mission to the guests. During the exchange, also attended by other guests like German pastor Norbert Schmitz and missionary Malte Rhinow and the press, issues such as relations between North and South Korea and possible contributions of the LCK for a reform of Protestantism in South Korea were discussed. In the evening, the LCK hosted a dinner for the guests.

On September 28, Rev. Carl Hanson, LCMS World Mission Area Facilitator for East Asia, visited the LCK for talks with LCK President Um regarding future development of mission work. Rev. Patrick O'Neal,

LCMS World Mission Strategic Mission Developer for North Asia also participated in the meeting.

Korea Luther Study Society Holds 2009 Reformation Day Lecture

With the financial support from Luther University (LTU) and the Lutheran Church in Korea, the Korea Luther Study Society held its 2009 Reformation Day Martin Luther Lecture. On October 29 and 30, Prof. Dr. Timothy J. Wengert of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia gave three different lectures—one for Lutheran pastors about "Luther on the Lord's Prayer in the Large Catechism", one for students of the graduate school of theology at LTU on "A Third Use of the Law: The First and the Second Uses Applied to Believers", and the main Luther Lecture of Korea Luther Society on "Philipp Melancthon: Theologian at the Center between Martin Luther and John Calvin."

LCK Holds Annual Thanksgiving Worship

On November 25, Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) President Um, missionaries, and employees of the LCK headquarters held their annual thanksgiving worship service. The majority of Korean

churches hold their thanksgiving worship service during November, usually on the third Sunday in November.

Worship Service Marks Construction Milestone

On November 27, 2009, the Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) held a worship service marking the completion of the first phase of construction on the new Luther Building located in Jamsil, southeastern Seoul. Some 150 pastors and lay members of the LCK attended the worship service, including LCK President Hyun-Sub Um and newly elected President of Luther University, Dr. Hae-Chul Kim. During the ceremony, a metal plaque with the words of the Aaronic benediction, which will be attached to the top steel beam, was consecrated; the construction company gave a report about the construction; and words of greetings and congratulatory speeches were given. At the time of the worship service about 60% of the total construction work was completed, and the building is expected to be finished by July 2010. It is the tallest building ever built by a Korean church, and at its entrance, for the first time in Korean history, a statue of Martin Luther will be erected.

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Participants at the recent 39th Regular General Assembly of the Lutheran Church in Korea

Hong Kong Ablaze!

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Martha Boss Book Released

On December 8, The Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service of the Lutheran Church-Hong Kong Synod (LCHKS) presented the newly-published book commemorating Deaconess Martha Boss (1913-1973). Martha Boss was a nurse, deaconess, and missionary to China and Hong Kong starting in 1946. Over 40 authors contributed articles in Chinese and English sharing the impact Martha Boss made on their life individually and on Hong Kong as a whole. Rev. Tony Lau, Chairman of the LCHKS Social Service Committee, writes that "Martha sacrificed her life for God's mission. She never asked for compliments. Whenever there was opportunity to help, she never hesitated." All the authors hope that this commemorative book will inspire Christians in Hong Kong, China, the U.S. and around the world toward faithful social service and evangelical proclamation of the Gospel.

To request a copy of the Deaconess Martha Boss Commemorative Book, please con-

tact Deaconess Carol Halter at carolh@netfront.net.

Teaching and Service with the Love of God

Hong Kong International School's (HKIS) longest serving high school teacher, Zella Talbot, has made a difference in the lives of countless students over the years. She joined HKIS in 1983. "I was adamant that this would only be for a year at the time," she says. Yet twenty-six years on, Zella is still at HKIS!

Over the past 13 years, she has also been involved with many service projects, in addition to starting the Service on Saturday program at HKIS in 1996, which today has grown to 21 groups and over 350 students who participate in service projects throughout Hong Kong.

Zella, with her husband, fellow HKIS teacher Dr. Marty Schmidt, developed the Humanities in Action course, which transformed the service ethos at the school by guiding students to be better people through teaching them the joy of helping others through service.

About 20 years ago, Zella started the first-ever service



Zella Talbot

club at the high school called Interact. Today, Interact is still going strong. Its flagship event, the HKIS Fashion Show, has raised millions of Hong Kong dollars for different charitable endeavors and will celebrate its 11th Anniversary this school year.

American Fun Fair

On November 13 the "American Fun Fair" was hosted at Ma Chan Duen Hey Memorial College (MCDH), one of the secondary schools operated by the Lutheran Church-Hong Kong Synod (LCHKS). The event was a part of the International Interface program at MCDH which brings short-term teams from America to work with stu-

dents.

To make the fair more authentically American, 20 Americans helped with the event. The Americans included a short-term team from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, members from the Church of All Nations in Hong Kong and LCMS World Mission missionaries. The fair included 13 themed booths designed to help demonstrate that MCDH is a "quality Christian school with excellence in English education." The booth themes included American states, American football, English conversation, the Fruits of the Spirit, Gospel crafts and a booth with a variety of traditional American foods.

The event organizers, including leaders in the LCHKS and teachers and students from MCDH, estimated an attendance of 400 people. Visitors included students from five area schools as well as members from the local neighborhood around MCDH.

Macau Ablaze!

Celebrating 10 Years

On December 13, Concordia English Center celebrated 10 years as a registered educational institution in Macau. Over 50 current and former students and staff attended an afternoon of reminiscing, fellowship and thanking God for what He has done through the English center. In these 10 years, the missionaries and staff at the center have changed several times, but each time the baton is handed to the next group and the ministry of sharing God's love with the people of Macau and China

goes on. Praise God for his faithfulness!

LWML Waldon Team

In October, Macau was visited by a team of four women from Texas. They worked with the Concordia English Center (CEC) and St. Paul's Lutheran church to lead a free English Bible camp for eight evenings, teach students to make American crafts, and connect with local Chinese people. Six Macanese people who did not know about the English Center joined the English Bible camp, and several are still attending free classes.



Macau team members in November 2009

CEC Thanks its Volunteers

Thank you to short-term volunteers Carsten Bjornstad and Laura Davis, who served at the Macau Concordia English

Center (CEC) during September and October. New team member and volunteer Elaine Mills has also since joined the team.

Indonesia Ablaze!

New TABLE Ministry

After much prayer & thought, Tom and Debi Going have begun a new outreach to mothers of Sekola Pelita Harapan (SPH, or "School of Light and Hope") in Cikarang, an hour from Jakarta. TABLE (Talk About the Bible, Learn English) is being offered in the Going's home for the many mothers whose chil-

dren attend SPH but do not understand what their children learn at school in chapel and religion class.

They attend their children's assemblies and programs and hear about God, but lack the basic framework on which to hang what they hear. Their children ask them questions about social or moral lessons

they learned at school, about religious holidays, and even about the basics of Christianity, yet they do not know how to answer. At TABLE, these mothers have an opportunity to hear the specific Bible stories before their children hear them at school and are free to ask questions and learn the basic ideas of Christianity in a comfortable envi-

ronment.

Those attending the morning TABLE class have been varied and interesting. There are ladies from India, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, and Vietnam that have joined so far. For more information, please contact Tom and Debi Going at going-forth@hotmail.com.

Japan Ablaze!

LTU Celebrates 100 Years

It was with great joy and prayers for God's continued guidance that Japan Lutheran College/ Japan Lutheran Theological Seminary marked its 100th anniversary this past September. Though the festivities have been going on over the course of this entire year, the anniversary culminated in a public ceremony at the Mitaka City Civic Hall and worship service at Japan Lutheran College Chapel on September 23rd, followed by a second worship service of thanksgiving that featured a combined vocal and hand bell concert performance by Urawa Lutheran School, Holy Hope School, and the Japan Lutheran College (affiliated schools of the Japan Lutheran Church) on October 3rd. An estimated 700 people, including students, faculty, local Lutheran church members, and overseas guests, attended the worship service on the 23rd, and over 600, including parents of Urawa and Holy Hope School children, attended the service of thanksgiving on October 3rd.

Fall Business Meeting & Retreat

LCMS World Mission missionaries serving in Japan met in Tokyo for the annual fall business meeting and retreat. Currently, nine LCMS missionaries are serving with the Volunteer Youth Ministry (VYM) program, a joint ministry between the

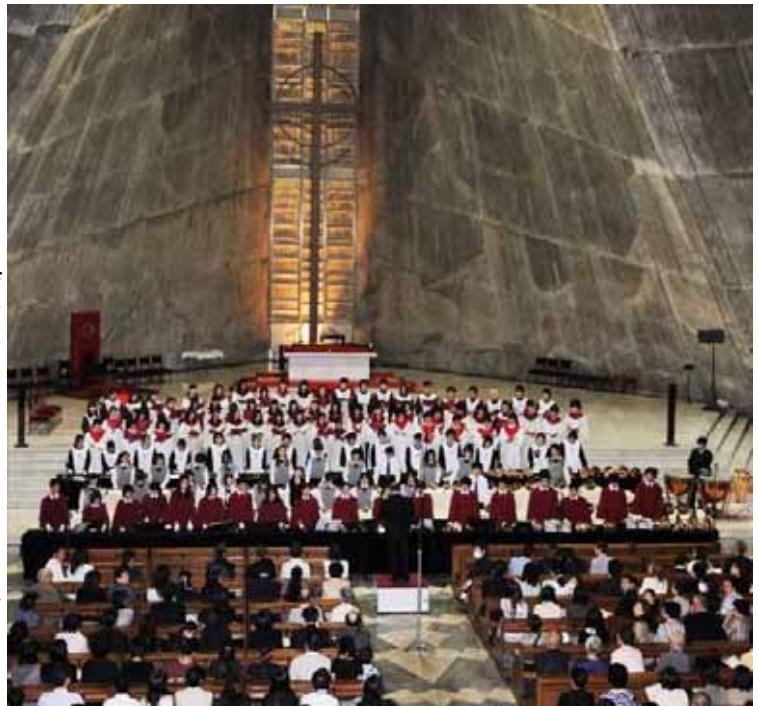
Japan Lutheran Church and LCMS. Following the time to share joys and challenges of serving at different sites across Tokyo and Niigata (north Japan), the missionaries were able to travel to the lake region at the foot of Mt Fuji. It was a time for spiritual refreshment and physical relaxation, welcome reprieves from the busyness of life in Japan.

VYM Welcomes New Missionaries

The Volunteer Youth Ministry (VYM) program, a joint ministry between the Japan Lutheran Church and LCMS, recently was blessed with the arrival of two new missionaries: Peter Pfaff of Texas and James Rush II of Michigan. Peter is a recent graduate of Concordia University - Texas and is in the middle of a five month orientation for language and culture adaptation. James is a graduate of Concordia University - Wisconsin and responded to a short-term ministry position in Japan after just having returned to the U.S. after two years in Taiwan and two years in Vietnam with LCMS.

Thanksgiving in Japan

Thanksgiving for the Tokyo area English schools was held



Worship service commemorating LTU's 100 Year Anniversary

at Sugunami Seishin (Holy Truth) Lutheran Church. 43 students and friends came from all over the Tokyo area to celebrate. After dinner, the adults played a Thanksgiving version of Jeopardy while the kids read a Thanksgiving book, made Indian feather head bands, and enjoyed a turkey hunt. God truly blessed the event as old relationships were nurtured and new relationships were begun.

Nozomi (Hope) Lutheran Church and English School also held a Thanksgiving

potluck to intentionally welcome students and friends to a family-style traditional dinner on November 21. As a result of prayer and planning, more than 40 people—aged from toddlers to grandparents—came for fun, fellowship, and food.

The evening started with a skit where church president Ichida Kuniji and short term English teacher James Rush acted out the first Thanksgiving. Prayers were said, dinner was served and "Thanksgiving testimonies" were shared.

Thailand Ablaze!

Urban Outreach Camp

Every year LCMS World Mission in Thailand hosts an urban youth camp for children living in the Bang Na slum area of Bangkok. For these children, this camp is one of the most significant events of their year. For two days and one night they stay at a retreat center in the countryside that provides a safe zone for them to have fun and play with their friends. During this time they have a clean place to sleep, plenty of food to eat, and several adult leaders who are ready to provide them with a smile or hug whenever they need it. Most important of all, they come to learn about Christ and His love for them.

The two days this year were filled with songs, games, bible studies, devotions, skits, and crafts— all pointing to Christ and our relationship with Him. The 30 children in attendance learned about Zaccheus and how Jesus sought a relationship with Him. They also learned how God sees His children and loves them. The team of adults included missionaries from LCMS World Mission,

staff from Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation—Thailand, a pastor from the Thailand Concordia Lutheran Church and volunteers and staff from the Concordia Day-care and Community Center in Bang Na.

New Church Dedication

A new church was recently dedicated in the Akha Village of Doi Sa Ngo in Chiang Rai province, northern Thailand. The village is located on top of a hill in the Golden Triangle which offers spectacular views of the neighboring countries of Burma and Laos. People came from as far as the United States to be a part of this celebration. The event brought together Lutheran partners from all over Thailand, including members from Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation—Thailand, Hmong International Mission, Thailand Concordia Lutheran Church, LCMS World Mission, and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Seven pastors participated in the dedication of the newly built church building and set it



Pastor Chomwee (center) is consecrated to serve as Deacon of the new church in northern Thailand.

apart as a place of worship for the people of Doi Sa Ngo. The service also included the consecration of Pastor Chomwee as Deacon of the congregation pending his completion of a Lutheran colloquy and anticipated ordination into the Lutheran church.

Over 75 men, women and children attended this special event. Every seat was occupied and all the standing room was filled leaving some to look in windows or even stand out-

side. In the service they were all able to hear of the hope that Christ gives to them and their families. From now on, this new church will be their spiritual home, where they can be fed God's Word and share in fellowship with one another. Pray for this new ministry as it grows and asks for prayers of thanksgiving as the Lord continues to bring light to Thailand!

India Ablaze!

Lutheran Liturgy Training

Dr. Linda Borecki from Medford, Oregon, was sent to India at the request of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church to give training in Lutheran liturgy. Dr. Borecki spent three weeks at Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil, especially focusing on the 27 last-year students, who will soon be going on their 3-year probation period in church planting. Dr. Borecki did the same for the previous set of students who are now ordained and serving in congregations. She provides them information on the theology of the Lutheran liturgy, as well as

practical training in conducting and chanting the order of service.

Dr. Timothy Quill and Dr. Detlev Schulz from Concordia Seminary, Ft. Wayne, also provided such training for these students in May during their summer break. Dr. Quill and Dr. Schulz will be returning in January to continue the training.

Bible Curriculum in India

Beth and Dave Hoepfner, retired teachers from Hong Kong International School, have volunteered to serve as Education Consultants in India for the next three years. They have taken as



Dr. Linda Borecki with students in Nagercoil, India

their major focus developing a coordinated curriculum of Bible instruction for the 82 schools of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC), including training in teaching methodologies. The Thousands of students in the

IELC schools and their families and communities are a major focus in IELC's commitment to reach 25 million as a partner in LCMS World Missions' *Ablaze!* movement.

Vietnam Ablaze!

Approval Process Moves Forward for Concordia – Hanoi

Work continues with the Vietnamese government to receive approval for Concordia International School in Hanoi to open for the 2010-2011 school year. Many positive steps have been accomplished and there are a few more needed to reach final approval. Concordia – Hanoi is planning to open preschool through fifth grade in the first year of operation.

Concordia – Hanoi is searching for members to serve on the founding faculty and staff. If you are interested in serving at Concordia International School please contact

Steve Winkelman at Steve.Winkelman@lcms.org.

“Shaping” Relationships in Vietnam

During a recent trip to renew their visas, LCMS long-term volunteers Betsy Karkan and Sarah Longmire from Thailand visited fellow volunteer, Amanda Runey, in Vietnam. As part of their visit, Amanda planned a trip to Bat Trang, a local ceramic village, with her first year students at Hanoi University of Technology. Native English speakers drew a crowd of nearly forty students eager to practice English as well as buy gifts for friends and family. For students who grew up in the villages, this was their first

time riding the public buses in addition to traveling outside the city center.

The trip began with a hectic and lengthy bus trip, opening up opportunities for the three girls to foster relationships with their travel companions. The generosity of the Vietnamese people shone brightly as students who struggle to pay for tuition insisted on paying the bus fare and buying small gifts for the visitors. Upon arriving in Bat Trang, students and LCMS volunteers gathered around pottery wheels, forming bowls, laughing, chatting, and making a huge mess!

Like many Asian countries, there is high importance placed on relationships in Vietnam. During this trip, Betsy, Sarah, and Amanda were able to establish a foundation for a relationship with the students. As a result, the students felt confident asking deeper, more personal questions, such as why Sarah, Amanda, and Betsy are working with LCMS in their respective countries. The volunteers were able to share their personal stories along with the reason for the Hope they have. Ideally, these relationships, conversations, and encounters will spark interest and curiosity that will encourage these students to explore this Hope they have heard about.

Philippines Ablaze!

LCP Holds National Pastors Conference

The Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP) held its first national Pastors Conference from December 7-12 at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Matina, Davao City, Mindanao. Twenty-four ordained ministers participated and guest speakers included Rev. Dr. Jose Fuliga and Rev. Dr. Bob McAmis. Reports from pastors and district presidents were encouraging as there has

been an increase in the number of baptisms and confirmations. There are also 40 new *Ablaze!* mission stations, which leaders hope will become official congregations in 2-3 years. At these new mission stations, much of the work is being accomplished through the participation and work of lay people. As such, one district has decided that each congregation train a minimum of two laymen every year to meet the growing needs of the church.

La Trinidad Lutheran Church is Ablaze!

The La Trinidad Lutheran Church is located at the heart of the Municipality of La Trinidad, about six kilometers from Baguio City. The pastor, Rev. Denver Dagano, has been serving this church for the past 11 months. The laymen of the congregation are very active and involved in proclaiming the Gospel. They have four mission stations. A Reformation service was held

on October 25 at which Rev. James Cerdenola, president of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines spoke. It was at this service that 31 people were confirmed and 15 children were baptized. There were about 300 people who attended the Reformation service. The church was so full that some had to remain outside the church and look in the windows to participate.

Taiwan Ablaze!

CMS Teachers Perform “The Rag Man”

This fall, American teachers at Concordia Middle School (CMS) in Min Hsiung, Taiwan performed “The Rag Man,” a non-verbal skit about Jesus, on two different occasions. The first performance was at Glory Lutheran Church and saw over 100 people in attendance. The event was put together for people who lost

their homes or had severe damage from the typhoon that hit Taiwan this past August. It is part of on-going outreach by Glory Church to the people in the community.

The second performance of “The Rag Man” was at the CMS Senior High Chapel Service. Every Friday at CMS, students from 8-12th grade can voluntarily attend chapel in the morning. American

teachers lead the High Schoolers in songs, Bible reading, and skits. It was a wonderful opportunity to share the message with the students at the school.

CMS Students Raise Disaster Relief Funds

September and October were both months where typhoons, earthquakes, and tsunamis caused devastation throughout parts of South-

east Asia. Concordia Middle School (CMS) and Concordia English Language Academy were able to give back to local communities. Teachers at both schools started a fundraiser for LCMS Human Care and World Relief. Students and teachers donated to the cause and, for every \$100 NT (US\$3) given, the donor received a raffle ticket for a baked good. All in all, over US\$1,100 was raised!

Korea Ablaze!

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492nd Reformation Anniversary Worship

The Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) held a joint Reformation Worship Service at Luther University on October 25 commemorating the 492nd Anniversary of the Reformation with approximately 400 people attending. In his sermon, LCK President Um stated that the three mottoes of the Reformation “Sola fide,” “Sola gratia,” and “Sola scriptura” can be captured in

the single catchphrase “solus Christus” or “only through Christ.” He stressed that we can receive God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ and free of charge. President Um also emphasized that the Reformation means believers living in this world, with its worldly values and its serious problems of secularization, have to follow the values of Jesus Christ and work according to God’s will. An offering was collected for Luther University.

Former LTU President Receives Award

Retired LCMS missionaries to Korea, George and Joan Riemer were honored for their missionary service with the Aeterna Moliri (Builders for Eternity) Award of Concordia University at Saint Paul, MN. President Robert Holst stated, “The faculty of Concordia University, St. Paul, has chosen to honor George and Joan Riemer with the Aeterna Moliri Award for their work as pioneer missionaries in South

Korea, spending decades planting the Gospel, mentoring and nurturing new Christians, and helping to build a dynamic church in Korea.” The award was conferred during a worship service in the Graebner Memorial Chapel of Concordia University on October 30, 2009. Since their retirement, the Riemers continue to support Luther University (LTU) and the Lutheran Church in Korea.

NIN Founder Prof. Tu Giay Passes Away

On November 13, the LCMS World Mission Vietnam team was saddened by the news that Prof. Tu Giay had died. Professor Giay, founder of the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), was instrumental in the early stages of LCMS WM engagement in Vietnam. In the early 1990s he invited LCMS WM to work with the NIN to implement nutrition projects in rural villages of Vietnam. Through this partnership, LCMS WM and NIN have implemented scores of projects in Vietnam, and the partnership continues to this day. In fact, Prof. Giay’s son, Dr. Tu Ngu, is the current project manager for all joint LCMS WM and NIN projects. Prof. Giay will be greatly missed, a fact attested to by the 1,500 people who attended his funeral. LCMS WM thanks God for this man whose legacy will continue through the partnership of LCMS WM and NIN. Please pray for Prof. Giay’s family in this difficult time.



Professor Tu Giay

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