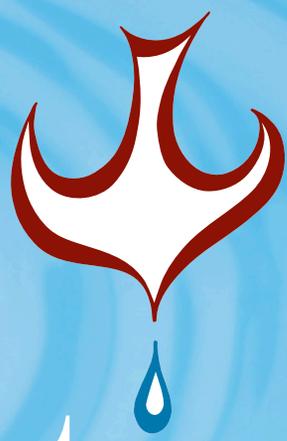




Lutherans

ENGAGE the WORLD

May – June 2013, Vol. 1, Issue 5



Baptized *for this* Moment

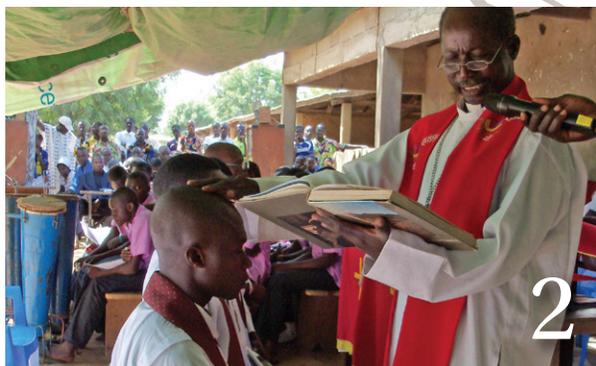
SPECIAL EDITION

Lutherans

ENGAGE the WORLD

May – June 2013 † vol. 1 no. 5

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Engaging the Church in the work of witness and mercy across the globe in our life together.

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engage

Special Edition + an App!

This is a special edition of *Lutherans Engage the World*. The theme, “Baptized for This Moment,” corresponds to the theme of the 65th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, which is meeting in St. Louis, July 20–25, 2013.

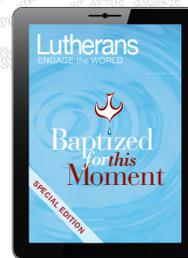
Welcome, new readers and convention delegates! *Lutherans Engage the World* is for people like you, people who invest their lives and dollars to enable LCMS work in the world. Take a peek; it’s an amazing thing to see how God is blessing our efforts to proclaim the saving message of Jesus Christ across the globe!

For this special issue, we’ve added eight pages and changed the mix of articles. The editorial team has worked to assemble a one-page story on each ministry area of the LCMS, providing an overview of our *Witness, Mercy, Life Together* work. There’s a lot to read and learn about within these pages — 23 ministry areas in all. We are truly baptized for this moment!

And ... we have some big news! Thanks to the good folks at Concordia Publishing House, *Lutherans Engage the World* now has a FREE app in the App Store! The details are below and on our webpage at www.lcms.org/lutheransengage.

We thank God for your prayers and financial support of the Global Mission work of the LCMS. Through you, God is blessing our *Witness, Mercy, Life Together* across the globe!

Pamela J. Nielsen
 Associate Executive Director,
 Communications Services



Want to get the full story of your gifts in action on the go? Go to www.lcms.org/lutheransengage or download our app from the App Store.

Credit: ISTOCK

Seeds Fall on Rich Soil in Sub-Saharan Africa

by Laura J. Seaman

Church planting and evangelism was at the heart of early LCMS mission work in Africa, which began in Nigeria in 1936. Individual missionaries traveled great distances, crossing cultural barriers to spread the Gospel throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

Gospel seeds planted for nearly a century by both European and American Lutheran church bodies and mission societies, have blossomed into a rich church culture with more than 20 million souls hungry to learn about their identities in light of God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions.

Since the 1960s, Africa has been a hot bed of political strife. The resulting poverty, corruption and disease have, in many cases, caused the indigenous people to flee their homes and tribal regions in search of peace, security and a means to make a living. When it is safe to return home, many do.

“Refugees who fled their countries during conflict,” said Dr. Mike Rodewald, regional director of Africa, “came into contact with Lutherans elsewhere, then they return with the Gospel and plant new churches.” Because of this, African-initiated Lutheran

churches are emerging in many locations, creating the opportunity for partnerships in theological education that will strengthen

received by companies for exporting petroleum), enabling the construction of Muslim mosques in many places, said Rodewald.

“Many of these now independent African Lutheran churches have little idea what it means to be Lutheran.”

the biblical and confessional foundation of the pastors who serve these churches.

“Many of these now independent African Lutheran churches have little idea what it means to be Lutheran,” said the Rev. Tim Heiney, who has served as a missionary in West Africa for 25 years. “They are anxious to learn the real basis of the Lutheran faith.”

Despite the significant growth of Lutheranism in the past 80 years, Islam is one of the greatest challenges to mission efforts in Africa today. Active efforts to convert people to Islam are fueled by petrodollars (money

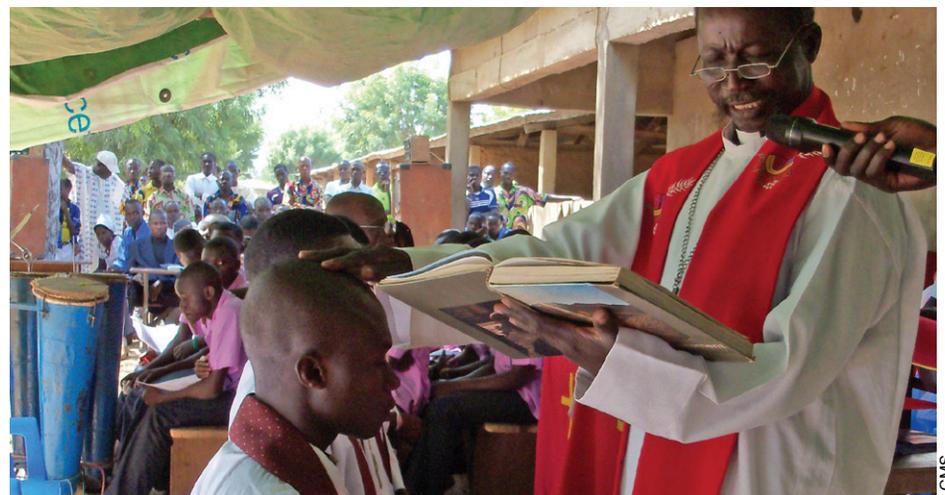
The growing presence of Islam in the region amplifies the need for more LCMS pastors, deaconesses and church workers to serve in Africa.

LCMS donor money to Africa helps sustain planted churches and makes it possible for them to accomplish more than they could on their own.

“The people of the LCMS are tremendously generous in their giving for mission,” said Rodewald. “Our task is to use the funding both humbly and appropriately so that others might see us pointing to Christ through the use of the gifts God has given us.”

LCMS work in Africa

- 24 countries
- 5 partner churches, 2 pending
- 20 LCMS missionaries
- 6 seminaries/theological education centers



Jean-Lare Daribosa, a recent graduate of the Lutheran Center for Theological Studies in Dapaong, Togo, kneels next to four other graduates during their ordination.

Office of International Mission



Africa



Annual Investment: \$2,253,111



Education Opens Asian Doors for the Gospel

by Megan K. Mertz

Since Concordia English Center opened in Macau in 1999, thousands of residents have learned English or studied the Bible with LCMS missionaries. One Chinese man, called Teddy, began attending catechism classes at the center after retiring from his job.

“Teddy says he discovered new meaning [for his life] when he read the explanation to the Third Article of the Creed,” said the Rev. Joel Scheiwe, an LCMS missionary to the Asia Pacific region. “He is one of the people who’s been reached and who is becoming active in the mission of the church in Macau through Concordia English Center and the partnership with the local congregation.” Teddy hopes to be baptized later this year.

Education is extremely important in the Asia Pacific region. During the last 60 years, the LCMS has helped start schools in Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea. Today, the LCMS and its partner churches operate some 80 Lutheran schools in the region.

Education is extremely important in the Asia Pacific region.

LCMS missionaries, teachers and short-term teams visit schools to teach English and build relationships. In Hong Kong, native English speakers from the LCMS make the schools of the



Alissa Asmus and Hannah Kiefer, Globally Engaged in Outreach (GEO) missionaries, teach an English lesson about the Bible to students at the Concordia English Center in Macau.

Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod more desirable for parents in the community. The Hong Kong Synod’s schools have about 18,000 students, but only a small number are Christian. LCMS missionaries in these schools have opportunities both during and after class to share God’s love with students.

“English as a Second Language gives the church the opportunity to touch people with the Gospel,” said the Rev. John Mehl, regional director for the Asia Pacific region. “English Bible studies are a way for people to improve their English and at the same time learn about Christ.”

In addition, new career missionary the Rev. Jeffrey Horn is one of several LCMS pastors sent to teach in partner church seminaries. Horn has been called to serve in Papua New Guinea, renewing active work with our partner, the Gutnius Lutheran Church (GLC). His work there will be to train and support

GLC pastors, teach at Timothy Seminary and travel to villages to provide continuing theological education.

But teaching isn’t all that the LCMS does in the region. The LCMS responds when disasters strike, offers health education in remote villages in Thailand and continues to build airstrips in the bush of Papua New Guinea to provide isolated clans with access to health care and education. In these ways and many others, LCMS work in the Asia Pacific region touches lives through witness and mercy.

LCMS work in Asia Pacific

- 11 countries
- 6 partner churches
- 25 career missionaries
- 30 Globally Engaged in Outreach (GEO) missionaries
- 35 rostered teachers in Lutheran schools

Office of International Mission

Asia Pacific

Annual Investment: \$4,334,696



Sharing the Gospel in Eurasia

by Melanie Ave

The 41 LCMS missionaries and their families serving in Eurasia are part of a great Christian heritage.

They are sharing the Gospel in the places where the Apostle Paul once journeyed on a tireless trek to share the message of Christ with the Gentiles. They are living near the birthplace of the Reformation. They are working among lands with a history of 1,000 years of Orthodox Christianity.

LCMS work in Eurasia

- 22 countries
- 11 partner churches
- 19 career missionaries
- 6 contracted missionaries
- 4 alliance missionaries (clergy from partner churches)
- 12 GEO missionaries serving one to two years

A century ago, 66 percent of the world's Christians lived in Europe. Today that number is less than 26 percent. Eurasia today is a vast mission field that needs to hear the Gospel.

Our LCMS missionaries in Eurasia live in 15 countries and work in 22 countries that have a total population exceeding 1 billion people, about 40 percent of whom are Muslim. Much of their work is done in concert with partner Lutheran church bodies.

"We know who's directing the mission," said the Rev. Dr. Brent Smith, LCMS regional director for Eurasia. "It's God's mission."

Smith said missionaries are regularly connecting the people of Eurasia to the resources of the LCMS so they might hear the saving Word of God. Their work is focused on those who have never heard of Christ and those who have heard, but do not yet believe in Christ as their Savior.

Missionaries are involved with church planting, theological education, music instruction, agriculture, human-care efforts and prison ministry.

At the Lutheran Bible School in Darkhan, Mongolia, students from Buddhist and Communist backgrounds gather regularly to read the Bible under the direction of Lutheran pastors in a building that once housed soldiers in the days of the Soviet Union.

Globally Engaged in Outreach (GEO) missionaries serve in nine locations and interact with about 3,000 students on a regular basis. Theological educators recently trained 250 students in collaboration with seven seminaries.

The LCMS partnered with a mobile medical van, which treated 36,000 women and children and distributed 7,500 eyeglasses. Thousands of bushels of grain have been harvested through a community partnership. Through these acts of mercy, the love of God in Christ is made tangible, providing an open door to sharing the Gospel.

The Rev. Jon Muhly, an LCMS missionary in Eurasia, tells the story of a woman named Irina in Kyrgyzstan who was raised Muslim, but came to faith in Christ



Pastor Ivan Laptev of St. George's Lutheran Church in Koltushi, Russia, baptized Alexander, a native Buryat from the Siberian region by Lake Baikal, in January.

after participating in daily Bible studies overseen by LCMS teams. Her husband, a Muslim, gave her a seven-day deadline to give up Christ or give up her family. The night of her deadline, Muhly said, the woman did the only thing she knew to do — pray.

A century ago, 66 percent of the world's Christians lived in Europe. Today that number is less than 26 percent.

"Her husband saw her praying in tears and relented, saying he wanted to stay married no matter what," he said. "God strengthened Irina's faith and witness through this trial. Her story is typical of how God often works quite personally among Muslims and the intense community pressure they face as the price of faith."

Office of International Mission



Eurasia



Annual Investment: \$3,648,328



Fostering a Culture of Mercy in Latin America

by Jeni Miller

“It’s a huge responsibility to have the only Lutheran Spanish-speaking confessional seminary in the world,” said the Rev. Carlos Nagel, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina (IELA). “We are a partner church of the LCMS; we continue walking hand in hand and deeply appreciate all of the investments of time, support and people that the LCMS has given us.”

The LCMS supports 10 of the 60 students in residence from 12 countries at Concordia Seminary, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and has provided computers and technical assistance to make the seminary’s four-year online program a reality.

The Dominican Lutheran Seminary, “The Reformer,” is both diaconal and pastoral. The deacon and deaconess students are trained on an Acts 6 model. The students receive 10 theological courses and 10 modules on caring for people with disabilities.

By training pastors and deaconesses across the region who are well versed in both theology and the practical aspects of institutional mercy and disaster response work, a culture of mercy is permeating the church. Additionally, conferences and articles, in Spanish and Portuguese, help to ensure that

“I learned that this Gospel of forgiveness is to be delivered by Word and Sacraments, to the church.”

all pastors and deaconesses in the region are of one heart and mind with regard to caring for people in body and soul.

Pablo D. Gonzalez, a student at Concordia Seminary in Buenos Aires, relates, “What does it mean to me to be a Lutheran seminary student? Well, I fall on my knees

in front of my Lord every day to be sure that I have forgiveness of my sins all by faith in the Crucified. And also, I learned that this Gospel of forgiveness is to be delivered by Word and Sacraments, to the church.”

“Wherever we do not have a church, we want to be able to establish a house of worship, with Word and Sacrament ministry where Jesus is present and His gifts are given, with a mercy house alongside,” explains the Rev. Ted Krey, regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Work in the region draws from the experience and assets of the Lutheran churches in Brazil and Argentina, both of which have long-standing roots in theological education, church planting and human care. The seminaries in those countries, along with seminaries in Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic and assistance from the LCMS, provide opportunities to reach the goal of preparing, sending and nurturing pastors and deaconesses who tirelessly share the Gospel and bear mercy throughout all of Latin America and the Caribbean.



Worshippers process following the dedication of a new church sanctuary in the Dominican Republic.

LCMS work in Latin America and the Caribbean

- 7 countries
- 11 partner churches
- 7 career missionaries
- 4 alliance missionaries
- 4 GEO missionaries

Office of International Mission

Latin America and the Caribbean

Annual Investment: \$1,532,702



The Harvest Is Plentiful Across Southern Asia

by Megan K. Mertz

More than half of the world's 7 billion people live in Asia, and a majority of these have never heard the Gospel message. To better meet these opportunities to live out the Great Commission, the LCMS divided mission work in Asia into two regions in 2012 — forming the new region of Southern Asia and Oceania.

This new LCMS region is headquartered in the small country of Singapore, the area's economic and logistical hub. From here, LCMS staff work with well-established Lutheran churches and ones that are just starting to emerge.

Southern Asia and Oceania includes some of the LCMS' first mission fields, such as India, where missionaries began working in 1895, and Sri Lanka, where work began in 1927. Although both countries have developed into established LCMS partner churches, they continue to seek guidance from the LCMS. Since 2007, the LCMS has provided about \$200,000 to build or repair 54 churches of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church, with more projects slated for the future.

Opportunities exist in countries where the LCMS has started working more recently, such as Indonesia and Malaysia. In



The India Evangelical Lutheran Church, a partner church of the LCMS, has some 400 congregations and more than 55,000 baptized members.

Malaysia, the LCMS helped start the first Lutheran pregnancy resource center in Asia. There also are plans to reach out in countries where the LCMS does not currently work, such as Bangladesh and East Timor.

part of the world.

"Regardless of their size, our Lutheran partners and potential partners in this region are well positioned to have a major impact on the way the broader Christian

A critical priority for future work in this region is the recruitment and sending of missionaries who will work alongside indigenous pastors and church leaders.

A critical priority for future work in this region is the recruitment and sending of missionaries who will work alongside indigenous pastors and church leaders. New career missionary the Rev. Roger James of Marshall, Mich., is presently preparing and fundraising for service in Sri Lanka. Darin Storkson, regional director of Southern Asia and Oceania, is looking for many more pastors, deaconesses and other church workers who, like James, are willing to serve in this

community understands and communicates the Gospel in the region," Storkson said. "It is the blessed burden of the LCMS to be their preferred partner in the teaching and furthering of good Lutheran theology and practice, which, in turn, informs and supports their witness to their countries and the world."

Please pray that God would bless the efforts of the LCMS in the countries of Southern Asia and Oceania and that He would raise up willing servants to do His work.

LCMS work in Southern Asia and Oceania

- 10 countries
- 2 partner churches
- 3 LCMS missionaries

Office of International Mission

Southern Asia and Oceania

Annual Investment: \$1,556,339



Standing Ready with the Gospel

by Pamela J. Nielsen

In bunkers and fighter jets, on battleships and bases, in field hospitals and training camps, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces stand at the ready in service to our country.

With them are the 160 active and Reserve LCMS Armed Forces Chaplains stationed around the world. These pastors proclaim the Word of life, in environments often shrouded in death. Their flocks frequently come and go, providing scant opportunity for long-term ministry. Their work takes place in some of the most difficult situations any pastor could ever face, where lives can be unraveled in an instant.

Upholding these faithful servants is the Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF), the LCMS effort to care for and support military chaplains and, through them, our LCMS members and their families in uniform.

Retired U.S. Navy Chaplain Rev. Dr. Mark J. Schreiber, CAPT, CHC,



Chaplain Mike Sneath conducts a service in Afghanistan.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Get Involved!

- Order MAF bulletin inserts
- Attend an Operation Barnabas District Workshop

opportunity for Lutheran worship, fellowship and study with LCMS seminary professors. Conversation is focused on the unique challenges of military chaplaincy.

Operation Barnabas

Operation Barnabas, an extension of MAF, provides a network of care through trained congregations that want to reach out to members of the military, their families and the veterans in their congregations and communities.

When a parish pastor is called to active duty in a Reserve unit, Operation Barnabas supports the mobilized pastor, his family and his congregation, working through counselors they have trained and the pastor's district president.

America's sons and daughters are in harm's way in faraway lands, and our chaplains go with them. Their families wait in our communities, where the people of God support and care for them in our life together.

USN (Ret.), MAF director, explains that the MAF exists to recruit, prepare, endorse and support LCMS chaplains in their service to God and country.

Authorized by the Synod and registered with the Department of Defense, Chaplain Schreiber is the endorsing agent for LCMS military chaplains. Noting the "lifelong marriage" between his office and our chaplains, he describes the ongoing contact he has, including an annual visit with each chaplain. Through these visits and regular reports by phone and email, MAF helps the chaplains to stay connected with their church.

Each year, MAF gathers the chaplains at one of three pastoral conferences, providing a rich



A young soldier is baptized into Christ by Chaplain Jim Watson.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of International Mission

Ministry to the Armed Forces

Annual Investment: \$600,288



Culture Shifts in the U.S., God’s Word Stands Firm

by Laura J. Seaman

Black Ministry in the LCMS began in 1877, only 30 years after the Synod was formed. Though the way this ministry operates has changed over the years, the need for it has not. Our early efforts were focused on Lutheran education with the establishment of all-black Lutheran day schools in the south. Concordia College Alabama, Selma, Ala., founded in 1922, holds the distinction as the nation’s only historically black Lutheran college or university.

Central to our Black Ministry efforts today is a focus on sharing the Gospel through acts of mercy by providing assistance, advocacy and networking opportunities for LCMS districts, congregations, schools and organizations seeking to reach out to predominantly black populations. The aim is to touch lives with the Gospel through mercy care. Each year, the Black Ministry Family Convocation provides those involved in Black Ministry with an opportunity to gather, learn and worship together.

“With the cultural movement to the north,” said the Rev. Dr. Frazier Odom, interim director of LCMS Black Ministry, speaking about the growing ethnic diversity in urban centers, “it is incumbent upon us to establish [black] ministries in more cities.”

In the past, the black population in the LCMS has been largely concentrated in the Southern and Southeastern districts, a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade that forced African migration to the U.S.



LCMS

LCMS Black Clergy Caucus sponsors events for black ministry leaders in the LCMS.

With the growth of ethnic diversity in the U.S., comes an urgency to recruit and train the next generation of black church workers.

prior to the 19th century. Cultural shifts show that many are moving north for school, jobs and other opportunities.

Odom said that as this shift occurs, the LCMS loses members to other church bodies because it is harder to find a church with a black population.

“One of the objectives of Black Ministry,” said Odom, “is to establish working relationships with African immigrants.” Voluntary African migration was minimal until the 1980s. This present wave of African

immigration to the U.S. also greatly impacts the need for Black Ministry, Odom said.

With the growth of ethnic diversity in the U.S., comes an urgency to recruit and train the next generation of black church workers. Many predominantly black day schools in the LCMS have closed, schools that once were feeders for our church work training programs.

Individual Lutherans and congregations can support Black Ministry locally and across the Synod. Here’s how: Pray that God would provide men and women to serve in Black Ministry. Reach out in witness and mercy to your black neighbors, friends and co-workers. White suburban congregations can partner with black congregations in urban centers to strengthen each other in their life together. Your gifts to the Global Mission Fund will provide financial support for Black Ministry efforts across the Synod.

Black Ministry Stats

- 65 black pastors
- 300 congregations
- 1 historically black college

2009 US African Immigrant Stats

- 1.5 million total
- 2/3 from western Africa
- 1/3 reside in New York, California, Texas and Maryland

Office of National Mission

Black Ministry

Annual Investment: \$295,687



Changing Demographics Present Opportunities

by Megan K. Mertz

The 2010 U.S. Census reported that 15.5 percent of the U.S. population was Hispanic/Latino. By 2050, that number is expected to jump to 29 percent, according to a Pew Research Center report. These changing demographics are a reality for the country, individual communities and an increasing number of LCMS congregations surrounded by growing Latino populations.

“Many LCMS congregations are located in neighborhoods that are now 40, 50 or even 60 percent Hispanic/Latino, even in places you wouldn’t imagine like Lexington, Neb., or Storm Lake, Iowa. But how does a congregation reach its Latino neighbors with the Gospel? We start with caring expressed in ministries of mercy,” said the Rev. Dr. Carlos Hernandez, director of LCMS Church and Community Engagement, which includes the strategic development of Hispanic Ministry.

The Rev. Martin Zarate, associate pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Melrose Park, Ill., also advocates offering mercy to meet community needs and developing relationships that open opportunities to share a Gospel witness. “When we connect with [human-care] organizations in a partnership to meet the Latino community’s critical human needs, the Holy Spirit opens doors for us to also serve with spiritual needs like Baptisms, confirmations, first communions and adult instruction classes,” he said. In response to the



A young woman celebrates her 15th birthday, or quinceañera, at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Melrose Park, Ill.

care offered, Zarate now conducts Spanish-language worship services at St. Paul. Sunday school and confirmation are taught bilingually.

Zarate is part of a group of more than 10 Chicago-area Latino pastors that have joined together

expand Hispanic Ministry in the LCMS, according to Hernandez. “By creating regional networks or ‘round tables,’ Latino pastors not only break their isolation but share ideas about what’s working for them in their ministries. They pray for and encourage one another.

“How does a congregation reach its Latino neighbors with the Gospel? We start with caring expressed in ministries of mercy.”

to form *Castillo Fuerte* — “Mighty Fortress” in Spanish — to support each other and their work in Hispanic ministry.

Regional support networks like *Castillo Fuerte* are an important part of the plan to strengthen and

This kind of networking is the only way we will be able to meet the challenge of the explosive growth of the Hispanic/Latino demographic,” Hernandez said. “That’s the life together piece of our Synod’s work.”

Office of
National Mission

Hispanic Ministry

Annual
Investment:
\$243,442



Strengthening Ministry in Rural America

by Megan K. Mertz

A majority of seminary students come from the suburbs, yet 75 percent of 2012 graduates received their first call from a rural or small-town church — placing these new pastors into a unique culture with many unexpected challenges and opportunities.

In February 2013, LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission (RSTM) took a few of these seminary students out into the country for a crash course in rural ministry. This first-ever “Rural Immersion” event included insights from experienced pastors and lay leaders, trips to rural nursing homes and Lutheran schools, and even the chance to milk a cow.

Seminarian Mark Huston said the event gave him a “practical example of going out as pastors

to the people.” Seminarian Aaron Spratt said, “This time will not only make better rural pastors but better pastors as a whole.”

The “Rural Immersion” event is just one of the many ways that RSTM seeks to help parishes and districts address the unique challenges facing rural and small-town congregations, which make up more than 50 percent of all LCMS churches. Although each congregation is different, many face similar problems such as shrinking populations, changing demographics and aging congregations.

Located in the small community of Concordia, Mo., RSTM provides guidance and support for rural church planting and revitalization efforts. The ministry also offers

leadership training through events held around the country. In 2012 it began sharing ministry “best practices” through webinars that address specific topics, such as outreach to older adults or Latinos. These webinars provide helpful training while saving pastors and lay leaders the time and expense of traveling to an event.

Rural and small-town congregations make up more than 50 percent of all LCMS churches.

RSTM’s goal is to train church leaders to understand their role in rural culture, to make their outreach more productive and, most importantly, to lead dynamic change by being in God’s Word. To reach this goal, RSTM emphasizes the importance of working in partnership with districts and other congregations.

In April, the Rev. Todd Kollbaum became director of RSTM. “Rural and small-town congregations are positioned wonderfully by our Lord to be His hands and feet to an increasingly troubled world. I give thanks to God that through the Office of National Mission, the LCMS is focusing on strengthening and revitalizing this most important part of our church body. It is my humble joy to work alongside district and congregational leaders as we share the love of Christ where God has planted us,” he said.



Seminarian Aaron Spratt gets a hands-on introduction to rural ministry during an event organized by Rural and Small Town Mission.

Office of
National Mission

Rural and Small
Town Mission

Annual
Investment:
\$296,356



U.S. Cities: America's International Mission Field

by Laura J. Seaman

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 80 percent of Americans live in urban areas. LCMS congregations in these areas have the task of taking the Gospel to people across a spectrum of ethnic, status and religious diversity.

The Rev. Arthur Boone serves as pastor at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Northeast Philadelphia, an ethnically rich community that faces challenges similar to many other urban or inner-city neighborhoods. "Insecurity, poverty ... the situation is difficult everywhere, especially in the inner city," said Boone.

In the nation's fifth largest city, Boone knows what it means to be a part of urban ministry. Though Nazareth is a mostly Hispanic congregation, it reaches out to a number of ethnic groups with God's gifts in Christ.

"A lot of immigrants don't know anything about Christianity," said Boone. "Through ESL [English-as-

Second-language] class, we have seen about every nation on earth and religious sect come through. We had two Chinese teenagers who had never heard of Jesus before." For some, acts of mercy provide the first exposure to Christ's saving message of hope for the future.

"Insecurity, poverty ... the situation is difficult everywhere, especially in the inner city."

Urban and Inner-City Mission (UICM) is a specialized ministry within the Office of National Mission that provides expertise and resources to revitalize congregations, schools and special service ministries.

"Lutherans engaged in urban ministry," said the Rev. Quentin Poulson, director of UICM, "need

look no further than within their local church doors and near neighbors to find ... urgent need for mercy care." Poulson added that urban churches often must "keep pace with growing social concerns as they build capacity in expanding God's kingdom."

Many people who move to the U.S. migrate toward big cities, where there are pre-existing ethnic enclaves, social services, lower-cost housing and low-wage jobs. These immigrants seek the unique support of churches, faith-based institutions and parochial schools.

LCMS congregations are witnesses to Christ's Gospel and provide a spiritual home for people who are searching for hope and healing. UICM assists congregations in urban areas to bring God's Word into sharp focus for people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds.

Summing up his experience as a pastor in a highly diverse urban setting, Boone said, "I've seen it change lives."



A homeless community gathers in a city park of Philadelphia, Pa., another aspect of the urban mission field.

Office of National Mission **Urban and Inner-City Mission** Annual Investment: **\$220,614**

Individuals and Congregations Sharing the Faith

by Melanie Ave

When most people hear “mission field,” their minds typically go to far-flung places with exotic cultures and foreign tongues.

But the mission field is often in the neighborhood, sometimes right down the street, said the Rev. Al Tormoehlen, director of The 72 — Partners on the Road, one element of the growing LCMS Witness and Outreach Ministry.

The United States has the third-largest unchurched population, behind China and India. That means every LCMS congregation, Tormoehlen said, has an amazing opportunity to reach others with the Gospel.

“It’s vitally important today that we get churches in our country excited about the mission field all around them,” he said.

LCMS Witness and Outreach Ministry partners with LCMS districts throughout the country and provides resources to help congregations reach others with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The 72 uses field representatives from LCMS districts that contact interested congregations or those recommended by district presidents or mission executives.

Teams of The 72, made up of two to four people, help train members of congregations to reach out to people in their communities and to involve them in the life of the church. The training helps congregations establish effective outreach ministry goals; organize publicity and promotional



Volunteers with The 72 mark Bibles for distribution.

events; welcome and include guests into the worship and life of the congregation; organize a telephone-based ministry; develop a framework for small-group ministry; and establish a strategy to connect with inactive members.

“It’s vitally important today that we get churches in our country excited about the mission field all around them.”

As a field representative for the LCMS Pacific Southwest District, Al Axelson and his wife have traveled more than 33,000 miles to offer workshops that help congregations “realize that every member is already in outreach,” Axelson said.

When people go out to lunch after church and talk about the

sermon, they’re witnessing to the people who can hear them, he said. When visitors come to church, every member is a potential contact for the guests.

The 72, formerly known as “Harvesters for Christ,” began in 1996. The ministry’s name comes from Luke 10:1-2, where Jesus appoints “seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go,” and telling them, “the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.”

To date, The 72 has partnership agreements with 21 of the 35 districts and has provided training to more than 200 congregations. Tormoehlen said his goal is to increase the number of agreements to 30 districts within the next year.

“A lot of churches have signs at their exits that say, ‘You are now entering the mission field,’” Tormoehlen said. “That’s what we need to do, help our congregations move into the mission fields and reach people for Christ.”

Office of National Mission > Witness and Outreach Ministry > Annual Investment: \$304,460

Our Worldwide Partners

It is a blessing to walk and work together in witness and mercy with the 35 districts of the LCMS and our 34 partner church bodies around the world. The work we do is accomplished through working together with these districts and partner churches, extending the reach of the Gospel to the four corners of the globe. Coming together as a synod, by sharing resources and people, we by God's grace help to change lives now and for eternity.

LCMS Districts

Atlantic
California-Nevada-Hawaii
Central Illinois
Eastern
English
Florida-Georgia
Indiana
Iowa East
Iowa West
Kansas
Michigan
Mid-South
Minnesota North
Minnesota South
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
New England
New Jersey
North Dakota
North Wisconsin
Northern Illinois
Northwest
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pacific Southwest
Rocky Mountain
SELC
South Dakota
South Wisconsin
Southeastern
Southern
Southern Illinois
Texas
Wyoming

Africa

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana (ELCG)
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK)
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia (ELCL)
The Lutheran Church of Nigeria (LCN)
Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA)
Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA)

Asia

China Evangelical Lutheran Church (CELC) (Taiwan ROC)
The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod (LCHK)
India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC)
Japan Lutheran Church (JLC)
Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK)
Gutnius Lutheran Church (GLC) (Papua New Guinea)
The Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP)
Lanka Lutheran Church (LLC) (Sri Lanka)

Europe

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Belgium (ELKB)
Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Denmark (ELFD)
The Evangelical Lutheran Church of England (ELCE)
Evangelical Lutheran Church—Synod of France (EEL-SF)
Independent Evangelical - Lutheran Church (SELK-Germany)
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL)
The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania (ELCL)
Portuguese Evangelical Lutheran Church (PELC)
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR)
Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC)

Latin America

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina (IELA)
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (IELB)
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Republic of Chile (IELCHI)
Lutheran Church in Guatemala (ILG)
Lutheran Synod of Mexico (SLM)
The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Paraguay (IELP)
Lutheran Church of Venezuela (ILV)

North America

Lutheran Church – Canada (LCC)
The American Association of Lutheran Churches (TAALC)
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti (ELCH)

Global Mission Work

of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Office of National Mission

Black Ministry
 Hispanic Ministry
 Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs)
 Rural and Small Town Mission
 School Ministry

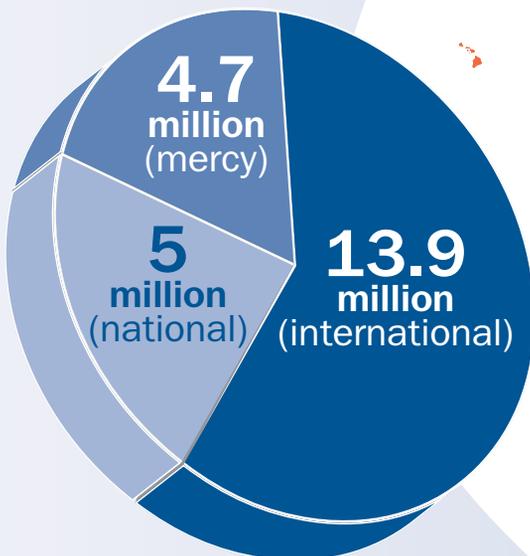
Stewardship Ministry
 Urban and Inner-City Mission
 Witness and Outreach Ministry
 Worship Ministry
 Youth Ministry

Office of International Mission

Ministry to the Armed Forces

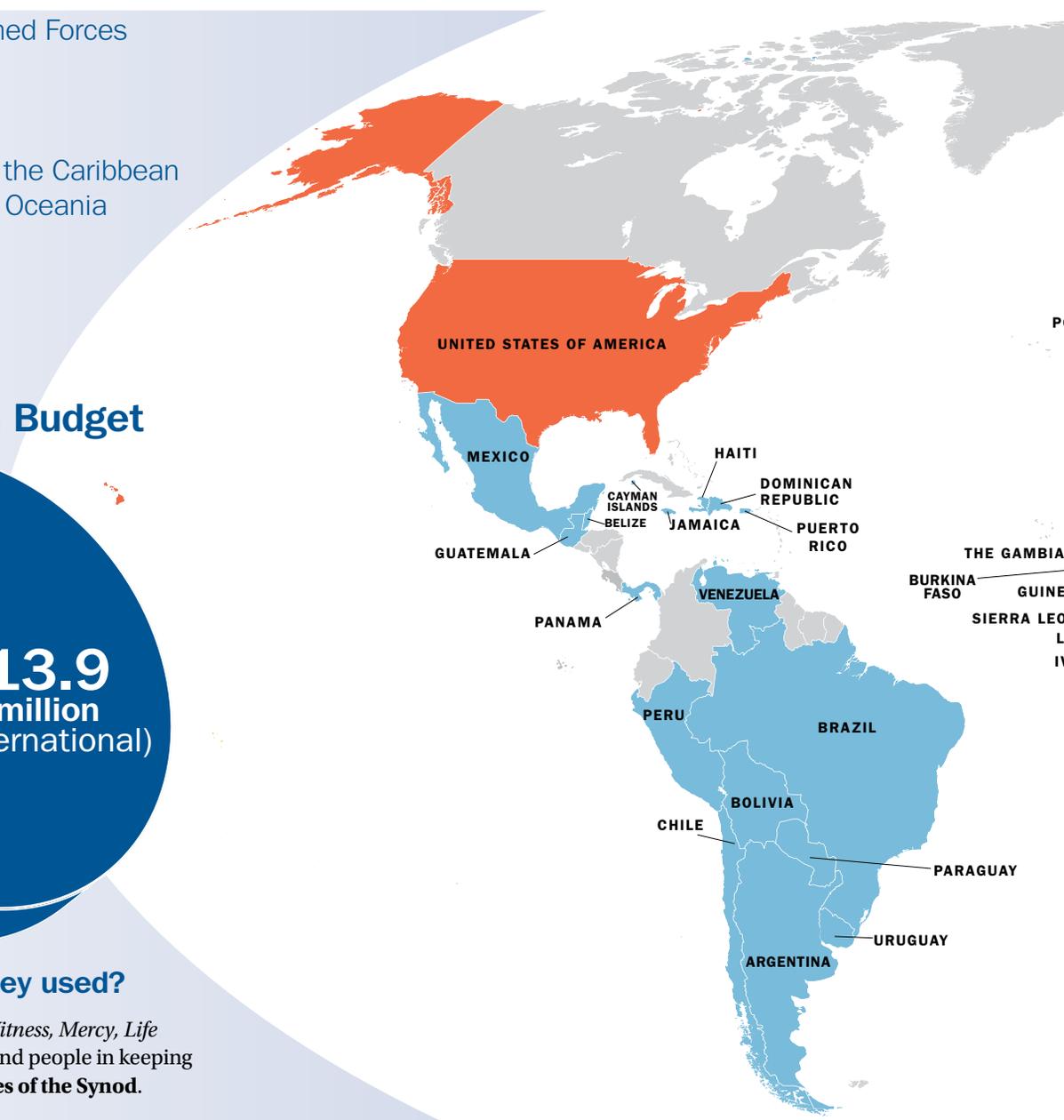
- Africa
- Asia Pacific
- Eurasia
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Southern Asia and Oceania

2012–2013 Global Mission Budget



How is budget money used?

Budget dollars are used for *Witness, Mercy, Life Together* projects, programs and people in keeping with the **Six Mission Priorities of the Synod**.



Mercy Care for All

by Laura J. Seaman

When Sandra Rhein forfeited her plans to pursue a master’s degree in church music to enter the deaconess program, she had no idea how God would work through her.

God used Rhein’s theological training and passion for music to spread the Gospel throughout Kenya. At the request of the Rev. Dr. Walter Obare, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya, Rhein and a team of scholars and theologians helped bring about a “Lutheran hymnal with a Kenyan [African] touch.”

“Music combined with God’s Word,” said Rhein, “has the power to carry His Word deep into our souls, and bring comfort, strength and encouragement.”

Rhein is one of nearly 200 deaconesses in the LCMS today. They serve in mission fields, parishes, schools, mercy institutions and ministries. They bear witness and mercy to the young, the aged, prisoners, women, new mothers, families, the sick and many others.

These theologically trained women share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through acts of mercy, spiritual care and by teaching the Christian faith. Like the women of old, they continue to work hard, laboring in the Lord’s harvest fields.

“We stand by Scripture and our Confessions,” said Deaconess Grace Rao, director of LCMS Deaconess Ministry. “Deaconess Ministry is centered on serving the church



Deaconess Gayle Truesdell provides mercy care at a Lutheran Senior Services community

through education and mercy, and we point to the pastor for Word and Sacrament.”

Rao carries that message as she works to assist, advise, facilitate and coordinate deaconess training with LCMS partner churches around the world. Lutheran women in Kenya, Sudan, South Africa, India, Latin America, Russia and many other places receive theological and practical deaconess

training through the efforts of our Deaconess Ministry office.

Following the example of Peter’s mother-in-law, who rose to serve immediately after Jesus had healed her (Matt. 8:15), deaconesses serve out of gratitude for the mercy they have received through Christ’s saving work.

“Deaconess Ministry is centered on serving the church through education and mercy, and we point to the pastor for Word and Sacrament.”

A deaconess is a servant of Christ and the Church. In whatever capacity is needed, a deaconess exemplifies the heart of mercy, caring for people in need and reaching out to them with God’s Word of life.

A History of Deaconess Ministry in the LCMS

- 1919** First LCMS deaconesses
- 1979** First LCMS deaconess training program established at what is today Concordia University Chicago
- 1989** Synod in convention adds Synod-trained deaconesses to roster of church workers
- 2001** Synod in convention approves deaconess training at LCMS seminaries
- 2002** Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, launches deaconess program
- 2003** Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, launches deaconess program

Mercy Operations



Deaconess Ministry



Annual Investment: **\$166,570**



Gospel Proclamation in the Wake of Disaster

by Laura J. Seaman

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Laurelton, N.Y., recently celebrated the Baptism of an entire family affected by Superstorm Sandy. The family was looking for spiritual care and a church home in the wake of the disaster, and God placed the LCMS disaster response team in their lives.

“Even if we only affected one family like this for eternal purposes,” said Tom Cusanelli, Sandy recovery coordinator for the LCMS Atlantic District, “then we have done what the Lord wanted us to do.”

LCMS Disaster Response is a ministry of presence, a presence rich with God’s mercy and Word of life. It serves the thousands of individuals and families all over the world who are suffering from loss in the wake of disasters like hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, fires and tornadoes. But it also provides an opportunity for the church to be visibly active in reaching out in mercy to serve the hurting and homeless with physical and spiritual care.

“In times of tragedy,” said the Rev. Glenn Merritt, director of LCMS Disaster Response, “there is nothing more important than spiritual care.”

Disaster preparedness is a priority of Disaster Response, which offers two major training programs. Mercy in Action is a program designed to help train congregations to respond when tragedy strikes while Lutheran

Early Response Team (LERT) training equips individual volunteers. To date, LERT has trained more than 12,500 Lutheran volunteers in disaster relief and response.

“LCMS Disaster Response Ministry is a ministry of presence, a presence rich with God’s mercy and Word of life.”

Recovering from any natural disaster is an ongoing task. Money and people resources go a long way for recovery efforts even years after a tragedy occurs, like in Minot, N.D.,

after the floods hit in 2011.

“Providing mercy care,” said the Rev. Paul Krueger of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Minot, “opens up the door to Gospel proclamation.” Krueger said without LCMS volunteers and donors, there would be no flood relief efforts in Minot.

“Donor dollars allow us to respond as quickly as we do,” said Merritt. “But there is no sense in going if we don’t have people to help.”

Through LCMS Disaster Response, the church is able to provide Gospel-centered care for both body and soul in times of tragedy.

“It is an opportunity to spread the Gospel,” said Cusanelli, “an opportunity to wash feet.”



Students and staff from Martin Luther School in Maspeth, N.Y., off-load a donation truck for Superstorm Sandy relief.

MARTIN LUTHER SCHOOL: KELLI WESTFAL

Mercy Operations



Disaster Response



Annual Investment: **\$1,897,651**



Revitalizing Churches Through Human Care

by Megan K. Mertz

Around the corner or across the street from every church in the U.S. is a family who needs to hear the Gospel. These families also may be looking for day care, job training, English-language classes, help preparing for citizenship and so on.

The “Planting Gospel Seeds While Serving Human Needs” process trains congregations to identify the most critical community challenges so that they can join hands with their neighbors and respond in tangible ways. In the process, closer relationships develop with neighbors, ultimately making new disciples for Christ.

Approximate number of Gospel Seeds consultations held each year: 10

Through a four-day training led by the Rev. Dr. Carlos Hernandez, director of LCMS Church and Community Engagement, congregation members are trained to conduct interviews with neighbors and local agencies to get to the heart of area problems. Over the years, Hernandez has discovered that one out of 10 of these residential “cold calls” will yield a prospective family that desires a follow-up call from the church.

When Hernandez came to Peace Lutheran Church, Decatur, Ga., only three teams went out into the neighborhood to visit with residents, yet these visits produced



The Gospel Seeds program equips congregation members to go out into the community to connect with neighbors.

much fruit. Residents were eager to talk about ways to improve their community, and some of them were interested in discussing spiritual issues as well.

“Last year, [we gained] 12 new households and baptized nine,”

The “Planting Gospel Seeds While Serving Human Needs” process trains congregations to identify the most critical community challenges so that they can join hands with their neighbors and respond in tangible ways.

said the Rev. Dr. Victor Belton, pastor of Peace, during a Gospel Seeds training. “We’ve grown exponentially, and Gospel Seeds is the reason.”

Peace has become a regional training center in the Atlanta area for the Gospel Seeds program, training other local congregations to successfully reach out to neighbors. Hernandez is working to establish these types of regional centers in other areas of the U.S. to revitalize LCMS churches and reverse trends in declining membership. By offering needed human-care ministries, churches can find ways to bring the saving message of Jesus Christ to the lost in their communities.

“We want our LCMS folks to get out of the church building and into the streets where the mission field is,” Hernandez explains.

Mercy Operations



Gospel Seeds



Annual Investment: \$20,500



Providing Grants to Support Hands-on Ministries

by Melanie Ave

When a fire caused the Hope Halfway House in Novosibirsk, Russia, to burn down in February 2013, LCMS grant funds were available to help local church leaders provide for the basic human needs of the former prisoners who were living there.

When Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Clair, Mo., needed money to expand a “weekend food backpack” program to send food home from school with needy children each weekend, an LCMS grant was there to help.

When Holy Cross Community Garden in Colorado Springs, Colo., sought help putting a fence around a new community garden that would provide fresh produce to a local food pantry, an LCMS grant was there too.

“The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has a long history of working with local congregations, districts, Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) and international church partners, helping them to respond with mercy to a wide variety of needs that exist in their respective communities,” said the Rev. John Fale, associate executive director of LCMS Mercy Operations. “Our faithful donors give generously, moved by the compassion and love of God in Jesus and love for their neighbor.”

The LCMS, through the Offices of National and International Mission, offers two types of grants — development and disaster grants to domestic and international organizations. The grants are

awarded to eligible applicants who address at least one of six mission priorities of the Synod.

Grants are given to congregations, districts, partner church bodies and LCMS-related ministries.

In fiscal year 2012, the LCMS awarded \$4,248,171 for 173 development and disaster grants to domestic and international organizations. So far this fiscal year, \$2,466,926 has been awarded for 88 grants.

Historically, the bulk of the LCMS grants have been awarded for mercy work.

In the last nine years, the LCMS has awarded more than \$31.7 million through 698 domestic and international grants for emergency

response and disaster relief.

The LCMS has awarded grants to help with the recovery of the Asian tsunami; Hurricane Katrina; the earthquakes in Japan, Haiti and Chile; and Hurricane Sandy, which tore across the U.S. Eastern Seaboard in 2012. To date for Sandy, the LCMS has provided \$1,116,373 in grants.

For domestic grants, which range from \$1,000 to \$20,000, applicants can receive one grant during any 12-month funding cycle. Grants are awarded by a review team in two cycles annually. Applications are due March 1 and Nov. 1.

LCMS international grants are coordinated through the regional directors of each LCMS world region.



St. Clair, Mo., firefighters and members of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Clair show off the groceries that have been purchased to feed local children in need on the weekends. An LCMS grant helped the “weekend food backpack” program.

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, ST. CLAIR, MO.

Mercy
Operations



Grants



Annual
Investment:
\$1,393,697



Healing the Whole Person

by Megan K. Mertz

“Any time you have a crisis, whether a health issue or something else, the potential is there to cement your relationship with Christ or have it erode,” said Parish Nurse Kim Meyer, who leads a Christian support group for people struggling with cancer.

In fall 2012, Meyer introduced the faith-based program Cancer Companions to her congregation, Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Springfield, Ill. The program helps cancer patients and their loved ones address spiritual issues as they undergo treatment.

“Some people think [a cancer diagnosis] is some kind of punishment from God. But God doesn’t punish us. God forgives us,” Meyer said. “Those feelings can be a huge part of the cancer journey for the Christian.”

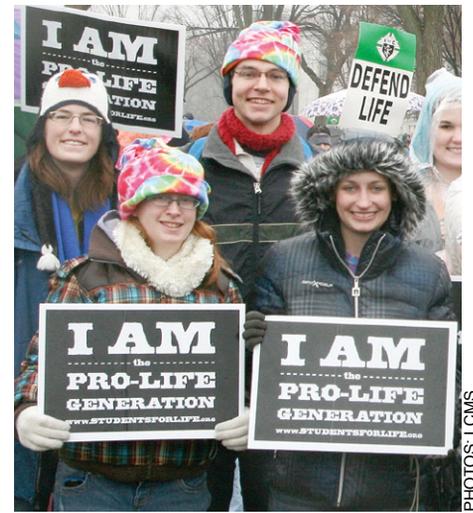
Meyer’s work with these support groups addresses the whole person, blending professional nursing and spiritual caregiving in her position as parish nurse. Around the Synod,

more than 1,000 parish nurses serve in similar roles under the coordination of LCMS Life and Health Ministries. The ministry also encourages the vocation of parish nursing around the globe, recently training 17 indigenous parish nurses in our partner church, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church.

In addition to parish nursing, Life and Health Ministries upholds the

“Everything we do supports the sanctity of life and encourages care for health and wholeness of the whole person, both spiritual and physical.”

sanctity of life by supporting pro-life programs and organizing health and nutrition projects for some



PHOTOS: LCMS

Enthusiastic pro-life Lutheran college students, led by LCMS Life and Health Ministries, join the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

of the world’s most marginalized people. The Lutheran Malaria Initiative, which is working to help end malaria deaths in Africa, is a significant example of the coordination of efforts that takes place. The ongoing sending of Mercy Medical Teams to provide medical care and health education around the world is another example. Thanks to the generosity of donors, Mercy Medical Teams have been able to supply more than \$1 million in prescriptions and over-the-counter medications to people without access to basic medical care.

“Mercy work is essential to our life together and our witness as the body of Christ,” said Maggie Karner, director of Life and Health Ministries. “Everything we do supports the sanctity of life and encourages care for health and wholeness of the whole person, both spiritual and physical.”



Mercy Medical Team volunteer Carl Jurgens, M.D., diagnoses a patient at a rural field clinic sponsored by LCMS Life and Health Ministries in Madagascar.

Mercy Operations



Life and Health Ministries



Annual Investment: \$339,248



Serving the Servants

by Megan K. Mertz

Church workers care for the people of God. But who takes care of them during the tough times? Years ago, the LCMS began two programs — Soldiers and Veterans of the Cross — to help provide support for these faithful servants.

When an LCMS pastor was unable to find transitional, secular employment to support his large family while awaiting a call, Soldiers of the Cross, in partnership with his district, provided a financial grant to cover several months of basic living expenses.

“Thank you so much!” wrote the pastor. “Your assistance arrived in the ‘nick of time,’ but more important, it’s a source of immense encouragement for our family knowing that our church has demonstrated the love and mercy of

Christ to us in our time of need. We have not been abandoned.”

“Our church has demonstrated the love and mercy of Christ to us in our time of need. We have not been abandoned.”

Soldiers of the Cross

Since 2004, Soldiers of the Cross has provided emergency support and pastoral care for LCMS church workers based on financial need. This program has benefitted church workers affected by natural disasters, in situations where a congregation cannot afford to pay a church worker’s full salary or

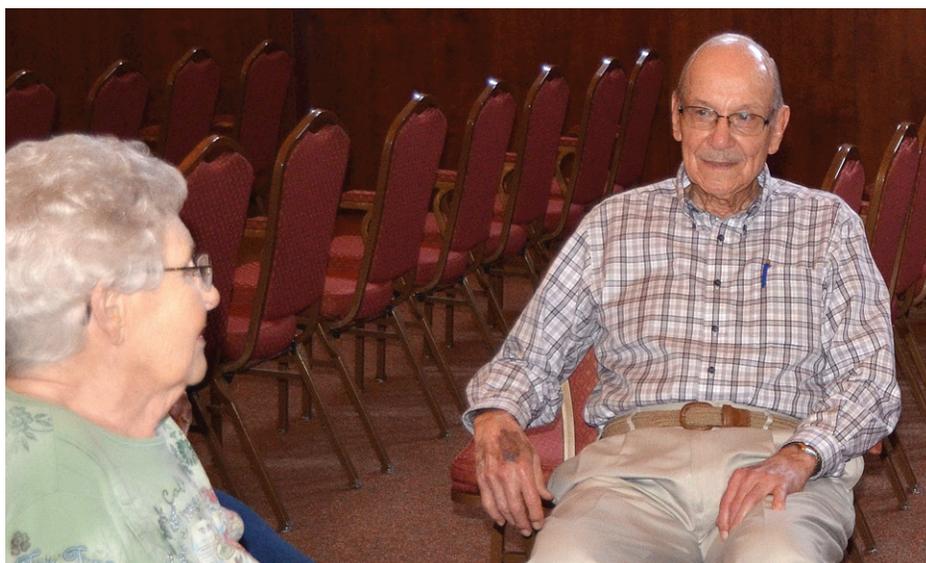
when a worker is in danger of losing health insurance coverage.

“Districts and district presidents have stepped up to the plate to partner with us,” said the Rev. Dr. Carlos Hernandez. “We match their assistance, which is helpful in extending the reach of our funds to struggling church workers. Our assistance helps to uphold Moses’ hands.”

Veterans of the Cross

Veterans of the Cross was created to support retired church workers who gave their lives in service to God. Many of these pastors, teachers and their spouses have staggering medical expenses and difficulties meeting even basic needs, especially if they retired prior to 1965 under the old pension plan. Faithful donors provide the funds to the LCMS. Concordia Plan Services administers the benefits as a supplement to low, inadequate pensions. The supplementary pension assistance makes it possible for retirees and widows to afford the cost of necessities like medication, food and electricity.

Through these two programs, the LCMS cares for the spiritual and physical well-being of the servants of the church. Without our preachers, teachers and other church workers, how could we hear the precious, saving Gospel? So we care faithfully and joyfully for those who proclaim the Word to us.



Veterans of the Cross supports retired pastors, church secretaries, Lutheran teachers and other church workers during times of need.

LCMS

<p>Mercy Operations</p>	>	<p>Soldiers and Veterans of the Cross</p>	>	<p>Annual Investment: Soldiers of the Cross \$150,000 Veterans of the Cross \$453,000</p>	
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Instruments of God's Mercy

by Laura J. Seaman

The word *chaplain* often invokes images of battlefields and military personnel, front lines and deployments. But through LCMS Specialized Pastoral Ministry (SPM), chaplains are trained, endorsed and certified for work right here at home. Acknowledging human need, just as Christ did among those for whom He cared, chaplains come alongside those who are hurting in both body and soul, declaring Christ's love.

Through SPM programs, more than 400 men and women have been molded and shaped for this unique kind of work, serving as chaplains, counselors and clinical educators.

Bearing Christ's mercy to those who are suffering, specialized pastoral ministers offer His comfort and peace to people with special needs in congregations or institutions like hospitals, prisons, hospices, counseling centers, retirement homes and homes for those who have physical or mental disabilities.

These ordained, commissioned or consecrated church workers speak with more unchurched people in a given week than most parish pastors, due to their specialized settings.

"We trust that the Holy Spirit is in the midst of our service," said the Rev. Joel Hempel, coordinator for SPM. "We are privileged instruments for God's work."

For Deaconess Lorinda Schwarz, who serves as a chaplain for the Oregon Department of Corrections, being a chaplain often means "you



Rev. Keith Weise gives the Lord's Supper to residents at a Lutheran Senior Services community, where he serves as chaplain.

move as quietly as possible into a rippling pond of crisis and try to be of spiritual and emotional support."

Schwarz spends time with those who are incarcerated and in the midst of some of the greatest crises they will experience in their lives. "As chaplains, we move in and out of lives that are in crisis, pain or sometimes quiet suffering,"

theology in crisis situations and to counsel using pastoral-care skills as they point to Christ Jesus. Once endorsed, SPM chaplains receive ongoing guidance and support through conferences, gatherings and the newsletter, *A Pastoral Touch*. Seminarians and clergy who are interested and qualified may apply for a SPM scholarship

"As chaplains, we move in and out of lives that are in crisis, pain or sometimes quiet suffering We simply trust God to use us to meet the needs of others."

said Schwarz. "Though we rarely encounter the individuals again, we simply trust God to use us to meet the needs of others."

The Synod's SPM program provides ecclesiastical endorsement for all LCMS non-military chaplains, ensuring that they are well equipped to apply Lutheran

for training and endorsement in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education.

By God's mercy, SPM chaplains bear witness to Christ in the midst of weakness, show mercy to those who are suffering and invite those hurting to a robust and cross-centered life together in Him.

Mercy
Operations



Specialized
Pastoral Ministry



Annual
Investment:
\$289,403



Reaching Out Through a Network of Ministry

by Melanie Ave

The Lutheran Mission Society is there for people who fall through life's cracks.

It's there for people who have been wounded by job loss, personal or relational tragedies, loss of hope and direction, according to the Rev. Dr. David R. Maack, executive director of the Baltimore-based Lutheran Mission Society. It provides for both the physical and spiritual needs of people.

Said one 41-year-old woman, who had lived on the streets since childhood and came to the Lutheran Mission Society for food: "I was hardened with hatred. I wanted to change my life so bad, but I didn't know how. The Lutheran Mission Society showed me how. They taught me to believe — in myself and in Jesus."

The LCMS works with 171 independent Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs), like the Lutheran Mission Society. RSOs extend the church's reach by providing faith-based social and mercy ministry and outreach. The current roster of RSOs includes 116 social ministry organizations, 27 mission agencies, 13 camps, three campus ministries, two communications organizations and 10 other nonprofits devoted to specialized outreach.

RSOs are able to address human, social, economic, educational and spiritual needs that would otherwise be beyond the resources of one organization alone, said Deaconess Dorothy Krans, director of LCMS RSOs.



LUTHERAN MISSION SOCIETY

The Lutheran Mission Society, one of the LCMS' RSOs, provides for the physical and spiritual needs of people in the Baltimore area.

"RSOs are showing the love and compassion of Christ as they help the needy, the suffering, the lonely, the aging, the families, the youth and others," she said.

“RSOs are showing the love and compassion of Christ as they help the needy, the suffering, the lonely, the aging, the families, the youth and others.”

The LCMS began recognizing service organizations in 1979. The LCMS Board of Directors approved

a new RSO application and review process in 2008 ensuring that RSO programs are in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the LCMS. RSOs can reapply every five years.

Once an organization has been granted RSO status, it can issue calls for ordained and commissioned ministers on the LCMS roster, use the LCMS logo, apply for loans through the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, seek LCMS grants, and participate in the Concordia Health Plan and the LCMS Group Purchasing Agreement.

"RSOs value their Lutheran identity and relationship to the church," Krans said. "It says who they are and why they show mercy and compassion. They serve those in need and share the Good News of the Gospel."

Office of National Mission > Recognized Service Organizations > Annual Investment: \$232,537

Promoting Christ-centered Education

by Melanie Ave

National Lutheran Schools Week, with the theme “Baptized for This Moment,” was well under way in January when a student at Leesburg Open Arms Christian Childhood Development Center in Leesburg, Va., asked a question about her teacher: “When will Miss Courtney become a baby?”

The student was familiar with babies being baptized, but on this day, Miss Courtney, a teacher at the school, was being baptized. More than 200 children under the age of 5 and Miss Courtney’s family and friends gathered to watch the Baptism and hear the pastor describe what it means to be washed in the waters of Holy Baptism and to be brought into the family of God.

The teacher was one of about 200 people who were baptized during this year’s National Lutheran Schools Week celebration.

Last school year, 2,480 Baptisms were recorded at LCMS schools.



Children at Leesburg Open Arms Christian Childhood Development Center in Leesburg, Va.

“We want our schools to make sure their No. 1 purpose is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” said William Cochran, executive director of LCMS School Ministry. “Otherwise, we don’t need to exist.”

“We want our schools to make sure their No. 1 purpose is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, ... Otherwise, we don’t need to exist.”

Without LCMS schools, he said, “more than 230,000 students would not be hearing the saving Gospel message on a daily basis.”

LCMS School Ministry serves as a national voice for Lutheran schools, upholding the standards of Christ-centered schools that are academically strong and respectfully operated. Nationwide, there are 2,335 LCMS schools, which include 1,376 early childhood centers, 871 elementary schools and 88 high schools.

About 17 percent of the students do not have a church home or have little to no church background.

LCMS School Ministry assists, equips and uplifts educators, district staff, education executives and congregational leaders so that through them, children at LCMS schools may be equipped as disciples of Jesus Christ. It advocates for professional



PHOTOS: LEESBURG OPEN ARMS CHRISTIAN CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Miss Courtney, a teacher at Leesburg Open Arms Christian Childhood Development Center in Leesburg, Va., is baptized during National Lutheran Schools Week in January.

excellence, provides relevant resources and services, and builds collaborative systems of service and support.

LCMS School Ministry also oversees the National Lutheran School Accreditation process, which encourages and recognizes Lutheran schools that provide quality Christian education and engage in continuous improvement. It helps Lutheran schools evaluate their academic quality and the spiritual dimension.

About 700 of the 2,335 LCMS schools are accredited.

“We want our schools to be the school of choice in their neighborhood,” Cochran said.

Office of National Mission



School Ministry



Annual Investment: \$1,573,740



Giving to Others What God Gives Us



Laborers for Christ volunteer Terry Marks uses his talents to repair a medical clinic structure during a trip to Haiti in 2010.

by **Laura J. Seaman**

Carol Zeile, Peace Lutheran Church in Alma, Mich., is an active volunteer. For more than 12 years, even while working full-time as a librarian, Zeile served on church committees and the church council, as Sunday school teacher and head of altar guild, as editor of the monthly newsletter and as treasurer. “It’s hard for me to talk about my faith,” says Zeile. “But I have found that talking about what I do for my church, and how I serve, makes it easier.”

The word *stewardship* is often associated with monetary gifts, but Zeile is proof that it means more than that to those within the church. As the free and joyous activity of the baptized, stewardship involves managing the gifts God gives us: time, talents and treasure.

Stewardship Ministry, a division of the LCMS Office of National Mission, exists to assist congregations in cultivating and growing their understanding of stewardship and provides a variety of resources for individuals and congregations.

Faith Aflame, a process designed to improve the stewardship culture of a congregation, equips pastors and lay leaders to teach and discuss how the Gospel invites cheerful and thankful giving.

The ministry’s free, downloadable Stewardship Primers

stewardship resource, which will be released in summer 2013.

“[God] only asks you to give of your abundance, of that which you can spare without harm,” wrote Dr. Martin Luther. LCMS Stewardship Ministry offers a variety of resources, based on Scripture, to

Stewardship Ministry exists to assist congregations in cultivating and growing their understanding of stewardship.

explain the foundation for Christian stewardship, the identity of a Christian as it relates to giving, how to set intentional stewardship plans both for families and congregations, and much more.

StewardCAST, a free e-news publication, provides a monthly update regarding the joy that comes from responding to Christ’s free gifts. It contains timely information and updates on stewardship and how it moves beyond mere financial support to living a whole life in service to God and one another. Stewardship Ministry also is reviewing a comprehensive

help Lutherans give of their time, talents and treasure, to manage God’s gifts for His purposes and to His glory.

RESOURCES

www.lcms.org/stewardship

- Biblical Stewardship Principles
- StewardCAST
- Newsletter articles
- Bulletin sentences

faithaflame.lcms.org

- Stewardship Primers
- Information on stewardship theology
- Guidelines for Christian stewards

Office of
National Mission



Stewardship
Ministry



Annual
Investment:
\$715,332



Holding High the Gifts of God

by Melanie Ave

For three days in January, 30 LCMS Lutherans immersed themselves in hymnwriting. They studied. They wrote. They prayed. They sang.

And they critiqued one another during the first LCMS-sponsored hymnwriting conference. Held in Columbia, Ill., the event gave published and would-be hymnwriters a place to develop poetically sound and evangelically rich hymns for use in LCMS congregations.

One participant, the Rev. Alan Kornacki, later wrote how one highlight of the conference was the opportunity for prayer. He recalled one night when everyone sang.

“The church’s song is a living thing.”

“The singing was glorious, often done in four-part harmony without the aid of the organ,” he wrote. “It was a foretaste of eternity, when we will join in the hymns of ‘angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.”

The conference is one of the most recent accomplishments by LCMS Worship Ministry, which aims to nurture a culture of confessional faithfulness, artistic excellence and integrity in the presentation, distribution and reception of God’s life-giving gifts in Word and Sacraments.

“The best of the hymns submitted at the conference will be used for future projects to serve the church,”



Hannah Kiefer, left, and Amanda Groshek sing a hymn during a new-missionary sending service at the LCMS International Center Chapel.

said the Rev. Will Weedon, director of LCMS Worship Ministry and International Center chaplain.

“The church’s song is a living thing,” he said. “We’re all part of one great choir. We go off the rails in worship when we try to silence the past and sing only the song of today or when we try to silence God’s people now and sing only the songs of the past.”

LCMS Worship Ministry seeks to develop and deepen an understanding and love for the Lutheran heritage in Christian worship, and

it promotes the *Lutheran Service Book* as the core worship resource for the LCMS while also identifying and encouraging the many musical treasures and gifts that the Holy Spirit continues to pour upon the church.

In 2014, LCMS Worship Ministry will sponsor an Institute on Liturgy, Preaching and Church Music, a triennial conference for church leaders, musicians and all involved in worship. The event will be held July 28-31 at Concordia University, Nebraska, Seward, Neb.

Top LCMS Worship Ministry Resources

- Let Us Pray weekly prayers (three-year and one-year lectionaries)
- Lectionary Summaries for Sunday readings (three-year and one-year lectionaries)
- Church year calendars
- Bible studies
- Children and youth resources
- Liturgy audio files
- Organ instructional videos
- Radio interviews on worship topics, including a series on the historic liturgy and numerous hymn studies (check out: <http://issuesetc.org/guest/will-weedon>)
- An electronic publication devoted to topics of worship called *Unwrapping the Gifts*

Office of
National Mission

Worship Ministry

Annual
Investment:
\$227,399



Helping Young People Grow in Their Faith

by Melanie Ave

“Being fully immersed in God’s love.”

That’s how one teenager who attended the Council of Lutheran Youth Fellowship Representatives’ annual meeting in March said he felt. Bolstered by what he learned at the meeting, the teen said he was able to share the message of God’s unending love and mercy with a friend.

“The challenge is to help them understand that Jesus is real.”

Sponsored by LCMS Youth Ministry, 60 youth and adults from 17 LCMS districts attended the council’s annual meeting, where they learned how to reach other young people for Christ.

That is the No. 1 goal of LCMS Youth Ministry – helping young people grow in their faith in Jesus Christ, said the Rev. Dr. Terry Dittmer, the ministry’s director.

“The challenge is to help them understand that Jesus is real, that He suffered and died for them, forgives their sins and they share in all God’s promises, guaranteed in the resurrection of Christ from the grave,” he said. “In today’s world, that is no small task.”

LCMS Youth Ministry aims to faithfully lead, serve and provide resources and networks for youth and adults within districts and in congregational settings with a



LCMS/NATHAN B. HARRMANN

National Youth Gathering youth participated in about 100 Servant Events as part of the 2010 event in New Orleans.

vision of hope and celebration in the name of Jesus Christ.

In addition to the Council of Lutheran Youth Fellowship Representatives, the ministry also oversees the National Youth Gathering, Servant Events and LCMS Campus Ministry.

Dittmer said the ministry wants to create a context where people are talking, thinking and acting positively with regard to ministry with youth.

Youth are a vital part of the church, Dittmer said. Without them, the LCMS would be a “poorer, sadder place,” he said.

Other recent highlights of LCMS Youth Ministry include:

- In January, about 425 participants from more than 90 college campuses took part in the Synod’s first campus-ministry conference in a decade.
- The Synod’s new website to support campus ministry, “LCMS U,” was launched.
- Nearly 3,000 youth and adults participated in more than 70 Servant Events around the Synod in the summer of 2012.

This summer, there are about 4,000 opportunities to serve.

- About 22,000 people have registered for this summer’s National Youth Gathering (NYG). This year’s NYG, with the theme “Live Love(d),” based on I John 4:9, will be held July 1-5 in San Antonio.

Looking to the future, LCMS Youth Ministry hopes to expand intergenerational ministry; to reach and support young adults in their faith walk; to support renewed efforts to rebuild campus ministry within the Synod; to provide solid, practical Lutheran resources to support congregational youth ministry; and to provide leadership training for teenagers, lay volunteers and professional church workers.



LCMS

In January, about 425 gathered at *Unwrapped*, the Synod’s campus-ministry conference where they studied God’s Word, worshipped and participated in various activities.

Office of National Mission



Youth Ministry



Annual Investment: \$937,514



Promise Statement

Mission Advancement will professionally assist the people of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to vigorously make known the love of Christ at home and abroad through sacrificial, charitable gifts by offering appropriate, prioritized (strategic) charitable opportunities.

Mission Advancement also will deliver unquestionable transparency and accountability to donors for the gifts they have offered up to the Lord for His work, while striving to maximize the amount of every dollar passed on to the field.

Ways You Can Support Our Mission and Ministries

Online



Go to www.lcms.org and click on **Make a Gift**. Search our giving catalog to discover the many mission and ministry opportunities you can support.

Mail



Make checks payable to **The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod** and send to:
The LCMS
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-9810

Phone



Please call **888-930-4438** from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. to speak with one of our Donor Care representatives today.

Questions?



Contact a Mission Advancement representative by calling 888-930-4438 or mission.advancement@lcms.org.

Mission Advancement

Before July 1, 2012, when you made a gift to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), it might have been designated specifically to LCMS World Relief and Human Care or LCMS World Mission. Now, as the result of the 2010 vote by the Synod in convention to restructure how the LCMS does work, your gifts instead support the Synod's international and national mission efforts under the banner of *Witness, Mercy, Life Together*, our way of describing how the church lives and works together to proclaim the Gospel and to provide for our neighbor.

Gifts continue to build capacity to respond most effectively to *Witness, Mercy, Life Together* opportunities, wherever they may be. Giving opportunities may be designated for a specific program/area, or “where need most” gifts are undesignated

Global Mission

The effect of the work of LCMS World Relief and Human Care and LCMS World Mission is felt worldwide, and it *continues*. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod sends and supports missionaries, responds to disasters, plants churches, feeds the hungry and much more. Organized through national and international mission initiatives, your gift to Global Mission ensures support to the area of greatest need at home or worldwide.

Your gift to Global Mission expands the LCMS' outreach around the world to carry out the Lord's work.

International Mission

You may designate your gift to support the international work of the LCMS. Your gift would be used exclusively to carry out witness and mercy efforts outside the United States wherever the need is greatest. Overseas ministry encompasses recruiting, sending and supporting missionaries, human care workers, educators and military chaplains; coordinating human-care and disaster-relief efforts; and supporting special collaborative work with LCMS partner churches to further theological education and plant churches.

to be used for areas with the greatest need.

What are the benefits of giving an undesignated gift?

“Where needed most” gifts are an opportunity to exercise faith in God and in our brothers and sisters who work on our behalf globally. Properly audited and spent under solid fiscal management, such gifts cost the Synod less to disburse and monitor. Fewer hands touch the gift between the time it is received and the time it is disbursed. This means more of each gift goes on to do actual witness, mercy or life together work. Make no mistake: the spending of these gifts is carefully monitored, and their use adheres to the budget plan. However, it takes less time to audit and account for an undesignated gift than a designated one.

National Mission

You may designate your gift to support the national work of the LCMS. Your gift would be used entirely within the borders of the United States to carry out witness and mercy efforts wherever the need is greatest. Domestic ministry focuses on rural, urban and suburban areas to implement Christ-centered worship, evangelism and outreach; strengthen youth and families; provide Lutheran education; revitalize congregations; equip families for godly stewardship; and support human-care and disaster-relief efforts.

Thank you for your gift that will touch lives through the work of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.



Baptized for this Moment

“Baptized for This Moment!” And we are! This issue of *Lutherans Engage the World* points us toward the LCMS convention coming this July. In these pages, you will encounter a wide range of the work — *Witness, Mercy, Life Together* — that your church body is doing domestically and internationally in the name of Jesus.

We in the LCMS have our challenges, to be sure. The culture is in flux. Christianity in the Northern Hemisphere is in decline. One in three Americans under the age of 30 has no religious affiliation. Contrast that with one in 16 for the World War II generation! And I dare say this means that nearly one in three people baptized into the LCMS is likely now “unaffiliated” too. “The love of many will grow cold,” Jesus prophesied of the end times (Matt. 24:12). As I’ve continued to study the growth/decline of the Missouri Synod, district by district, I’m convinced that the single most significant factor is that the people of the LCMS have followed the broader Anglo culture in marrying much later (or not at all) and in having far fewer children. The second most significant factor is that outreach (conversion) has not been sufficient to stem the decline.

The church in every age has its deep challenges. Things are not going to get easier for us or for traditional Christians overall. But the Lord has placed us here and now. He knows what He’s doing. And did not the Lord Himself say, “Pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Matt. 9:38)? “The fields are white for harvest” (John 4:35). St. Paul declared: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16). What are we to do, then? Repent of our sluggishness, our shabby treatment of pastor and people alike, our lethargy in sharing the Gospel with those right around us. And we are to pray. Pray that the Lord of the harvest sends workers. The

most certain prayers are those that the Lord Himself commands! We cling to our Baptism because that is where Christ comes to us and clings to us! We are not in this alone. Christ is with us. Have courage! And then go.

Even as we in the north suffer religious decline, there are myriad opportunities. Think of it! One in three American young people is religiously *tabula rasa!* A recent Pew Forum study tells us that fully 25 percent of the religiously unaffiliated have conservative cultural views and basically positive views about the service the church renders society. “The fields are white for harvest”!

In the global south, the story is still rather different, although strong signs of secularization are beginning to take hold in major urban centers in South America. We have a burgeoning number of friends and fellow confessors in Africa, Asia, India and South America. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, arguably the largest and fastest-growing Lutheran church in the world with more than six million members, has broken fellowship with the ELCA and the Church of Sweden over homosexuality. They have formally asked us to assist them with seminary education — and they have some six Lutheran seminaries.

We’re baptized, forgiven, empowered. Time for us to get back to basics: the Bible, the catechism and *Witness, Mercy, Life Together*. And it’s still time to “go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19).



Pastor Matthew C. Harrison

Help Build a Mountain of Hope

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's disaster response ministry, working with local parishes, districts and partner churches around the world, gives hope by providing encouragement, counseling, long-term planning and physical assistance to families affected by catastrophes. Together through your support of the **Ready Now: Disaster Response Fund**, we can share the hope of Christ in word and action.

-  \$5 can provide a drink of fresh, cool water
-  \$10 can provide a nutritious meal
-  \$50 can provide a survival kit (food and water for 3 days, a flashlight and a Bible)
-  \$100 can provide a shelter kit (tent, blankets, sleeping mats, flashlight, food and water for 7 days, a Bible and activity books)

Help give hope so God's people are ready now to respond with mercy forever.

The **Ready Now: Disaster Response Fund** is the official mission project of the CPH *Tell It on the Mountain* VBS program for 2013 to raise funds for families and children devastated by disasters around the world.

To learn more, go to vbs.cph.org to watch videos, download resources and learn more about the **Ready Now: Disaster Response Fund** project. Or visit www.lcms.org/readynow.

