

RESPONSE FORM

You’re invited to join in God’s mission in the world by supporting the LCA’s Board for Mission work through our partner churches.

Please tick the people and projects you would like to support and write the amount of your gifts in the spaces provided.

☐ Singapore International Seafarers’ Mission

☐ Thai Good News Centre, Singapore

☐ Singapore Giraffe course

☐ Mission work carried out by Simon and Oiy Mackenzie in Thailand

☐ Mission work carried out by Greg Schiller in Papua New Guinea (PNG)

☐ Publication of tracts and other Christian literature for PNG

☐ Scholarships (for church partners in Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, PNG, Sabah and Thailand)

☐ Youth work programs in Sabah and PNG

☐ Mission outreach to Kubu tribal people in Indonesia

☐ Orphanages in Indonesia

☐ LLL/LCA projects in Indonesia

☐ Bible translation (LBTA)

☐ Mission outreach to indigenous people (Orang Asli) in Malaysia

☐ Scholarships for children of pastors in PNG

☐ Training of evangelists and church leaders in China (partnership program with BCCM, Sabah)

☐ Seminaries in Sabah, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and PNG

☐ Medical mission work in PNG

☐ Bethany Home for disabled young people in Malaysia

☐ School for blind students in Indonesia

☐ Homes for neglected and abused children in Malaysia

☐ Books for the seminary libraries of our overseas partner churches

☐ Trailer for Kellyville (see Border Crossings article, “Church with no walls” Oct 2007)

If you would like to sponsor one or more of the above mission projects, you can do it in one of the following ways: online at www.lca.org.au/bfm (credit card) OR fill out the form below (credit card or cheque) OR by Electronic Funds Transfer – please contact BfM on 08 8276 7334.

☐ Enclosed is my cheque for \$ _____ (cheques payable to Board for Mission)

Please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card no.

Expiry ____ / ____ Amount \$ _____

Name _____ Signature _____

Address _____

P/C _____ Phone _____

☐ Please tick if you require a receipt

Please send form to BfM, 197 Archer St, North Adelaide SA 5006

Coming events...

‘Living the kingdom’
TEAR SA Gathering

August 1–3, 2008
For more info phone: (08) 8291 8160

Voices for Justice

October 11–14, 2008
For more info go to:
www.micahchallenge.org.au

Singapore Giraffe course

December 4–21, 2008



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES...

Have you considered volunteering in mission with one of our overseas partner churches? The opportunities and places are many...

Malaysia

- Rumah Chrestus (home for abused children)
- Rumah Love and Care (home for aged people)
- Bethany Home (teachers with special education qualifications, pastors or people able to provide spiritual care and encouragement for the staff and children)

Thailand

- Practical service and teaching English at Home of Grace for unwed mothers and Home of Praise for children in the slums of Bangkok
- Teachers of English at Laksi Lutheran Church

Indonesia

- Teaching English (in the schools)
- Lecturers / Teachers of English (Nommensen University)
- Lecturers of mathematics (Nommensen University)
- Teachers of English (in the seminaries)
- Practical service at the Blind School in Medan
- Teachers of English for the pastors’ and leaders’ courses
- Teaching English and practical help in various orphanages

Sabah

- Practical service at Jireh Foster Home for neglected, underprivileged and abused children
- Work in agriculture and water projects with indigenous people in the interior of Sabah

Papua New Guinea

- Librarian to catalogue donated books in the seminary libraries
- Pharmacist to organize medicines in pharmacy at Gaubin Hospital on Karkar Island and Braun Hospital, Finschhafen
- Midwife to serve for 2 years – teaching and clinical supervision at Lutheran School of Nursing in Madang

How about encouraging your congregation, school, youth group or fellowship group to become personally involved in a mission partnership?

Malaysia

- Youth partnership
- Congregation to congregation
- Supporting a scholarship holder

Singapore

- Partnership with Lutheran Church Singapore working in teams in Cambodia
- Supporting a scholarship holder

Thailand

- Congregations willing to support and partner with Pastor Simon Mackenzie and his wife Oiy as they begin their ministry in Chiang Rai and the Nan province

Indonesia

- Partnership with Lutheran schools
- Regional partnership

Sabah

- Youth group participation in youth camp ministry

Papua New Guinea

- Congregation to congregation partnership
- Youth group exchange and youth music/ ministry teams
- Maintenance teams in various locations
- Teachers for youth ministry leaders’ and pastors’ courses
- Partnership with schools
- Habitat for Humanity teams building in Lutheran villages

If you would like to know how you can be a Volunteer In Mission Overseas (VIMO) or if you would like to begin to understand how your congregation, school, youth group or fellowship group can partner in mission, please contact the Board for Mission office; Email: bfm@lca.org.au or Phone: (08) 8267 7334.

A BRIGHT LITTLE RED DOT

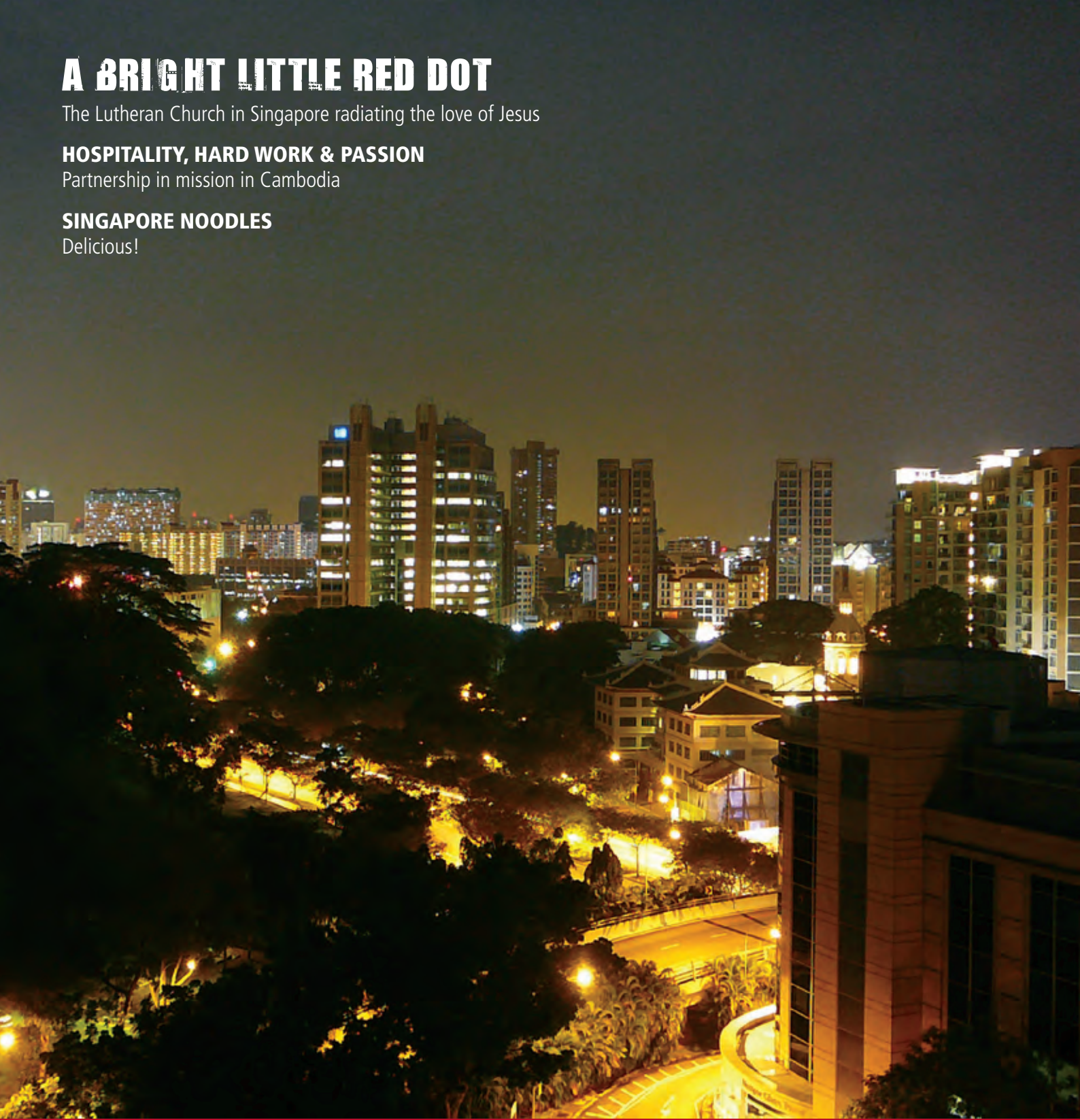
The Lutheran Church in Singapore radiating the love of Jesus

HOSPITALITY, HARD WORK & PASSION

Partnership in mission in Cambodia

SINGAPORE NOODLES

Delicious!



BORDER

CROSSINGS

ISSUE 02 // JULY 2008

Cover photo:
Singapore by night

Border Crossings

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PASS IT ON...

The tiny woman shuffled to the microphone in front of the large congregation gathered to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Queenstown Lutheran Church in Singapore in 2006. In a somewhat unclear way she began to sing the words of that familiar song... *It only takes a spark to get a fire going* – joyfully rounding off each verse with the chorus... *That's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it, you spread his love to everyone, you want to pass it on.*

Struggling to pronounce the words of the song because of the effects of mouth cancer, this woman still couldn't contain her joy in knowing Jesus.

Speaking with others after the service that day, some of this frail woman's inspiring story emerged. I learnt that when the church was first built she was employed as the cleaner. Over time as she saw and experienced the love of Jesus lived out by the staff and members of the congregation, and as they shared the Gospel message with her, she left behind her Buddhist way of life to follow the living Jesus Christ.

The one thing that strikes me most as I visit and talk with fellow-followers of Jesus in our partner churches in South East Asia, is their deep love of Jesus Christ and their passion and urgency for others to know him. When I've asked "how did you come to know Jesus?" so many have responded with "a friend told me," "a friend invited me to the youth group," "a friend brought me to this church." These similar answers are echoed over and over again, together with the words, "now I am praying for my family or my friends to come to know Jesus."

I want that kind of passion for knowing Jesus and making him known to others! Will you join me in praying the words... "Lord renew your Church, begin with me"?

Glenice Hartwich
Project Officer
Board for Mission
Lutheran Church of Australia

A BRIGHT LITTLE RED DOT

BY REV TERRY KEE

The last words of Jesus to his disciples before his ascension were "you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." They were called to witness both at home and abroad. Not here or there but both here and there.

It is with this understanding that the Lutheran Church in Singapore, a young and small church of about three thousand members seeks to make Singapore (often referred to as a little red dot) a bright little red dot that faithfully shines for Jesus. We seek to maintain a balance between home and foreign missions. We also try to maintain a healthy balance between the church's missionary programs and the programs of the congregations.

"EVERY CHRISTIAN IS COMMISSIONED, FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A MISSIONARY. IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE GOSPEL IS NOT MERELY SOMETHING TO COME TO CHURCH TO HEAR BUT SOMETHING TO GO FROM CHURCH TO TELL."

DR VANCE HAVNER (1901–1986)



THE SOUL OF THE PORT



Thailand missions...

At the church level, our mission engagement commenced with our becoming a member of the Lutheran Missions in Thailand (LMT) in 1988, and in cooperation with partners of this mission we started the Thai Good News Centre in Singapore in 1989.

This centre has since provided language and computer courses, counselling, outings, worship services and gospel camps to Thais living in Singapore.

In 1994, we had the joy of sending our first missionaries, the Rev Rickson Leong and his family, to Thailand. The Rev Terry Kee and his wife Sally followed in 1996 and Ms Rosanna Hutagalung in 2004.

In partnership with LMT, we have planted congregations, trained workers and participated in the lives and ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thailand.

International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission...

The Bavaria Lutheran Church contacted us in 1990 about a possible cooperation to bring the gospel to international seafarers coming through the port in Singapore. We entered into an agreement, and in 1991 the Rev Werner Strauss arrived with his wife Liesel to head the newly formed International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission in Singapore. Under his leadership, and later with new local staff added, this ministry has faithfully served the seafarers to this day.

They have provided reading materials, counselling, practical help and Bible studies to seafarers who have needed them. They have also been instrumental in bringing to Jesus many seafarers from mainland China. Many of these new believers were ferried from the port to Jurong Christian (Lutheran) Church for worship, and some were even baptised at the church.

Mongolian missions...

In 1998, the Lutheran Church in Singapore was contacted to provide support for a Lutheran theological student from Mongolia for his studies in Singapore Bible College (SBC) in Singapore.

The student had his field education with the Lutheran Church of our Redeemer during his studies with SBC. A relationship was established, and when he graduated in 2002, the congregation continued to support his ministry in Mongolia. As his ministry in Mongolia expanded, the Lutheran Church of our Redeemer then applied to have the work adopted at the church level. This was approved, and the Lutheran Church in Singapore is now supporting the church in Mongolia, with members of the Redeemer congregation as the core supporters.

We now send at least two teams of mission travellers a year, who participate in medical and dental mission work, children's outreach and youth training. The Rev Terry Kee is conducting lay training during their Summer Camp as well as a Leaders Retreat on an annual basis.

Cambodian missions...

Challenged by the LWF-Mekong Missions Forum, the Lutheran Church in Singapore accepted the challenge to enter Cambodia with the gospel. Under the leadership of Rev Dr William Chang, the Love Cambodia Mission was established in 2006. Since then, more than a hundred mission travellers from Singapore have participated in the work there, and in January 2008 we even had 17 people from the Lutheran Church in Australia joining the teams.

By the provision of the Lord, we were able to purchase a piece of land for our proposed Social Centre, which we also intend to use as a place of worship on Sunday. We are awaiting approval from the relevant authorities and hope to build the centre by the end of this year.

China teaching missions...

Through a theological student from Zhenzhou, Henan, the Chinese-speaking pastors of our church had the opportunity to be involved in the teaching ministry at the Xuchang Bible Seminary in Zhenzhou. Then, in 2003, through an unexpected turn of events, we were put in contact with Pastor Ma, of the Zhoukou Bible Training Institute. Since then we have been sending two teams of Chinese-speaking pastors to teach there on an annual basis.

Other congregational initiatives...

In addition to the various church-endorsed ministries already mentioned, several congregations have other missions which they support and participate in. For example, the Lutheran Church of our Redeemer actively supports the Christian orphanage in Nias, Indonesia. They also support one of their members serving with the OMF in Cambodia and send teams to Myanmar and Mongolia on a regular basis. The Queenstown Lutheran Church has provided support for one of their members who reaches out to students in Japan and another member serving in a Christian orphanage in Cambodia, as well as for a church planting project in Nepal.

"Reverse" missions...

As more and more foreign friends started coming to Singapore to study or work, God began to show us the great opportunity we have to reach out to them with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Bedok Lutheran Church established a Christian Fellowship for Filipinas. Jurong Christian (Lutheran) Church is actively involved in outreach to Chinese seafarers who come to the port of Singapore. Queenstown Lutheran Church is reaching out to nursing students from China and is making plans to reach out to nursing students from Myanmar. The Lutheran Church of our Redeemer has the opportunity to intentionally reach out to foreign students residing in the International Students' Hostel across the street from their church.

We are thankful to God for giving us the opportunity to participate in what he is doing in reaching the lost both in Singapore and also in other parts of the world.

BY REV W STRAUSS, PORT CHAPLAIN

Mr Wilson Wong with seaman in Singapore

The International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission (ILSM) has been an outreach program of the Lutheran Church in Singapore since 1991. The church took up the challenge and the call of our Lord when he said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field." Yes, indeed, the harvest is ripe (Joel 3:13) and the vision God has entrusted to us to achieve the objective is "Think global, act local." When we talk about seafarers' mission, we think global, because each day thousands of seafarers from over 90 countries and different cultures and religions come to the ports of Singapore. When we work with them, we act local. The ports are a great mission field, but in the local context.

A journalist once wrote an article about our ministry with seafarers in Singapore and gave it the title: "Soul of the Port." The title is a good way to describe what seafarers' mission is about. The port, as a work place, is full of machines, symbolising a cold, dangerous, unforgiving, impersonal and busy atmosphere. Through our visits, we offer people a place where they can dock to find peace in Christ and comfort and can get away from all the stress of daily life on board ship.

Our visits are not just a matter of saying "Hello" or "Good day" in different languages – "Ni hao" (China), "Tere" (Estonia), "Jambo" (Swahili) or "Selamat pagi" (Indonesia) – they are about bringing God's love on board the ship, meeting people who have been away from home for many months and are happy if they can talk to someone they can trust.

One seafarer wrote: "We are getting ready to sail but before we go I wanted to say thank you. I am so glad we had the opportunity to meet and talk. Indeed I feel as though I was led to you last night, and once again God smiled on me."

Through our ministry, seafarers hear the message of Christ. Many get encouraged through our visit, and opportunities arise to share our common faith in Christ, while others hear for the first time that God loves them. The ministry offers many occasions for deep personal involvement, where we can pray together and can talk about the life on board ship and how faith can help in such a situation or what Christian faith is all about. During our visits we hand out Bibles, devotional books, Christmas cassettes, Jesus videos, Christian calendars, watch words, reading material and Bible correspondence courses.

The most important emphasis of our ministry is still the "ministering seafarer" (MS) project, where we train seafarers to serve as volunteer chaplains on board. They can reach out to the heart of seafarers with the gospel better than we can, because they travel with them and are very close to them. We support the ministering seafarers with our prayers and with material.

Through the practical (social) aspect of our ministry, we build up trust, relationships and friendship. It is a bridge-building activity to enable Christ and the gospel to come into the relationship. Examples of what we do include helping seafarers when they cannot leave the ship, taking their watch to be repaired, arranging flowers for a seafarer's fiancée who works on another ship, helping them transfer money home or call their family.

We all have a different call to be a witness for Christ. But we should all remember that what is important is not what I have achieved but what God has accomplished through me, and to remember that, wherever I go, Christ is already there.



HOSPITALITY, HARD WORK AND PASSION: PARTNERSHIP IN MISSION IN CAMBODIA

BY REV MATTHIAS PRENZLER, FREELING SA

I AM A FIRM BELIEVER THAT THE BEST, MOST ENDURING TRAVEL MEMORIES ARE FORMED LARGELY BY THE PEOPLE YOU MEET ALONG THE WAY. THE BEST WAY TO EXPERIENCE ANOTHER COUNTRY AND ITS CULTURE IS TO MEET PEOPLE IN THEIR DAILY LIVES, TO SEE THE WORLD FROM THEIR PERSPECTIVE AND TO WALK IN THEIR SHOES FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

This was certainly the case for the 17 members of a team, predominantly from the Freeling Parish in South Australia, who participated in a joint mission trip to Cambodia in January 2008. We were warmly invited to take an active part in the existing mission work of the Lutheran Church in Singapore (LCS), in the Kampong Chhnang province of Cambodia. It was a very rich and encouraging experience, and the memories we have of our Singaporean brothers and sisters we got to know will not be easily forgotten. I would like to share with you three characteristics of the LCS which we couldn't help but notice in our work together: hospitality, hard work, and inextinguishable passion.

The first thing we will always remember of the LCS is their warmth and hospitality. The first stop on our mission trip was a two-day orientation in Singapore. To put it bluntly, we were thoroughly spoilt. From the time we were met at the airport to the time we flew out again our every need was attended to – and we certainly didn't starve. Team members were billeted with various members of the LCS, and all our hosts did their utmost to give us a truly Singaporean experience. After a short orientation session on Saturday morning, where we joined with our Singaporean colleagues for the first time to run through the practicalities of the trip and to discuss the actual work we would be doing in Cambodia, we were shouted to a guided tour of Singapore on the famous MRT train system. The conclusion to this was a Singaporean-style BBQ, provided by one of the host families, while the younger members of the team were taken on a night tour of the Singapore zoo. Our final experience of Singaporean hospitality was a warm reception at worship on Sunday morning, before we departed for Cambodia that afternoon. With such an overwhelmingly hospitable experience to begin our journey, it was no surprise that our families at home were beginning to question our motives for going.

They had nothing to worry about. After we were joined by the LCS team in Cambodia a few days later, we were soon introduced to another of their trade-mark characteristics: hard work. Life in Singapore is not simply a matter of eating and shopping, as first impressions might suggest. In their mission work, the LCS is driven by an unbelievable work ethic. Every aspect of the trip was immaculately planned, carefully thought through, and meticulously executed. In fact, in our two weeks together, we barely encountered a single hiccup. On the ground, Dr Chang and his team were always on the go, from early in the morning to late at night, whether making arrangements, viewing sites, investigating possibilities for future work or meeting with government officials. It is little surprise that in a relatively short space of time they have managed to establish such an extensive network of contacts and projects within Cambodia. When preparing for a trip to another country, it is certainly a comfort to know that everything has been well prepared and all the necessary arrangements have been made.

The third characteristic of the LCS we were privileged to see while working with them in Cambodia was their undeniable passion for Christ and his church. The simple fact that

a relatively small church like the LCS, with little more than 3500 members, has taken the initiative to establish mission work in Cambodia and many other places around the world, as well as within their own community, is a clear witness to this passion. Their desire to see the hope and love of Christ being spread throughout the world is heartwarming and contagious, and their willingness to give freely of their time and resources is inspirational. I can't imagine that any of our team returned to Australia in January without being touched by the depth of this passion and commitment to see the gospel proclaimed to the countless Cambodian ears that haven't heard it! For the people of the Lutheran Church in Singapore, the gospel is indeed more precious than any other gift we have to give, far too precious to keep it for ourselves.

It will not be easy to forget our new friends from Singapore, and we are grateful for this chance we have had to share in their mission to the people of Cambodia. We are also thankful that the LCS has inspired us with their generosity, hard work and passion. We hope that this experience has opened up the door to join with many other brothers and sisters in Christ from around the world in sharing the work, on a global scale, that God has called his church to do.



BIG THINGS IN HENAN

BY REV WAYNE ZWECK
DIRECTOR, BOARD
FOR MISSION

IT'S AN AMAZING THOUGHT: A COUNTRY WITH FEWER PEOPLE THAN SYDNEY AND A LUTHERAN CHURCH SMALLER THAN THE NSW DISTRICT HEARING GOD'S MISSION CALL TO CHINA.

Mind you, if it comes from Singapore you expect it to be well thought through and well executed – and it is. The LCS decided to focus on Henan province. With 93 million people it's the most heavily populated province in China. Why Henan? Because in the years between the World Wars Lutheran missionaries from the United States and Scandinavia were active there.

When the missionaries left with the coming of the communists, there were 70,000 Christians in Henan. Now there are 3 million registered with the Three Self Church and most likely an equal number who are unregistered (ie members of house churches).

Things happen in a big way in Henan province. The churches are big. The welcome is big. The commitment of the members is big. The sacrifices people make are big. The thirst for the word of God is big.

And that's where the LCS plays its part. Every year two teams travel to the province to teach people who will become leaders in the church. In October 2007 LCS Bishop John Tan taught a class of 160 students at Zhou Kou Church Bible Training Centre about the theory and practice of preaching the law and the gospel. His wife Jean led classes on music and worship.

The students were from the September enrolment, and they were joined by another 260 in the November enrolment! That means crowded classrooms, unbelievably crowded dormitory accommodation with double bunk upon double bunk, meagre food, and Bible study upon Bible study.

Other courses taught by LCS pastors have focused on books of the New Testament, Christian education, counselling, church history and biblical interpretation. The thirst for learning is amazing and the willingness to sacrifice unbelievable – like that of the student who sold her hair for ¥80 to help pay her fees.

The teaching ministry is a great gift that the LCS brings to the people of the Henan province, and the LCA is grateful that through its Board for Missions it can work with such a partner church in its outreach.

COUNTRY PROFILE: SINGAPORE

Singapore is made up of the main island (42 km long by 23 km wide) and 63 other smaller islands.

Capital: Singapore

Size: 1000 sq km

Population: 4,680,600 (est in 2007)

- approximately 800,000 foreigners
- three major ethnic groups – Chinese (77 %), Malay (14 %) and Indians (8 %)

Official languages: Malay, Chinese (Mandarin), Tamil and English (the language of administration – widely spoken).

Government: Parliamentary Republic

- President: Mr HE Sellapan Rama Nathan
- Prime Minister: HE Mr Lee Hsien Loong

Economy: The Singapore Government has pursued an outward-looking, export-oriented economic policy that encourages two-way flows of trade and investment.

Religion: Singapore is a multi faith country, with more than half of the population practicing Buddhism or Taoism, 15% Christianity, 14% Muslim. Smaller minorities practice Sikhism, Hinduism and Bahia Faith and 15% declared no religion according to the 2000 census.

Transportation: Singapore is a major Asian transportation hub. The port of Singapore is one of the busiest in the world. Singapore is also a major aviation hub for South East Asia. Changi Airport connects Singapore to 185 cities in 58 countries through a network of 81 airlines.



Singapore noodles (delicious!)

- 2 tbs cooking oil
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbs finely slivered ginger
- Saucepan of boiling water
- Pinch salt
- 4-6 vermicelli nests
- 2 cups of cooked chicken, beef, pork or prawns (diced)
- 1 cup of sliced spring onions
- 1/2 red pepper diced
- 1 tsp of minced chilli (if preferred)
- 2 tbs oyster sauce
- 2 tbs curry powder
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 cups boiling water

Heat 2 tbs cooking oil in wok or frying pan. Add garlic and ginger. Cook until tender.

Boil water in saucepan (with pinch of salt) and add nests of vermicelli to the uncovered pot. Make sure nests are covered with the water. Turn off heat and let stand.

Add meat, shallots, red pepper and chilli to wok. Stir fry until hot.

Add oyster sauce, curry powder and soy sauce. Stir and toss well to mix thoroughly.

Drain noodles and place evenly in serving bowls. Add the cooked veggies and meat.

Pour cup of boiling water into each bowl and serve.

This recipe makes 2 large serves.



CROSSING CULTURAL BORDERS

BY SCOTT LITCHFIELD
DIRECTOR,
INTERSERVE SA

AS WE CONSIDER CROSSING CULTURAL BOUNDARIES, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS OUR ATTITUDE AND APPROACH TO OTHERS. WE MAY HAVE THE RIGHT VISA IN OUR PASSPORT, A FEW WORDS OF THE LOCAL LANGUAGE MEMORISED, OR EVEN A TASK OR ROLE TO PERFORM. BUT IT IS ULTIMATELY OUR ATTITUDES THAT WILL SHAPE OUR ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE ACROSS CULTURES.

In mission we often cross cultures with the idea of serving others, and sometimes we have a preconceived idea of what that service will look like because of our rationally analysed understanding of what we think the others need. We get this from reading, the Internet, and the broader stereotypes we pick up along the way. How can we effectively serve people across cultures?

In his most recent book, Cross Cultural Servanthood, Duane Elmer writes from a life of crossing cultures and suggests the first step in serving others across cultures is openness. He defines openness as "the ability to welcome people into your presence and make them feel safe". This is an "ability", which means it can be learned. It is about welcoming others into your "presence" or, as I prefer, your life. For me "presence" is a little too much like having an audience with someone royal. I think welcoming others into your life is the key. The second part of the definition reminds us that openness is about making others feel "safe" when they are with us. This requires us to be able to put ourselves into their shoes and try and understand how they might be thinking and feeling.

Back in the early 1990s I was part of an international church in Thailand. It had a huge mix of people from around the world – Europeans, North Americans, Asians, a few Africans and Aussies – and some of the local Thai community. The worship leader got to the part in the service where we were to take some time to greet each other. He suggested we do this with a kiss and a hug because he came from a "kissy-huggy church in the US". This led many of us to feel very awkward, not knowing quite what to do – how do we do "kissy-huggy" across cultures? We should never have been put in that situation, and it led to much embarrassment. What is a warm welcome to some is an overly intimate intrusion into the personal space of others.

The most significant biblical perspective on this topic is summed up in the word "hospitality". We are called throughout the Old and New Testaments to be hospitable to others, to outsiders, and to those we meet along the way. Elmer describes this as "being gracious to all people, welcoming them into your presence and making them feel valued". Hospitality is more than having someone over for a meal. We have even made an industry of hospitality, which is more about giving people good service for the money they pay than being hospitable in the biblical sense.

Elmer suggests four skills, which we can practise in our home context, which will help us as we cross cultures:

Suspending judgement

Judging others from within our worldview creates negative thoughts about them and develops obstacles in relationships. We need to be slow to make judgments, ensuring we get more information and cultural perspective before going further.

Tolerance for ambiguity

We Aussies tend to like order and clarity in relationships, and we tend to ask "why" a lot. I can remember asking "why" many times in my early years in Thailand, and it puzzled my Thai friends, because things just were, and they had never had to consider why they were like that. When we cross cultures, ambiguity and difference come at us from all angles, and we must just get used to it.

Thinking grey

We need to move away from seeing everything as good or bad, true or false, friend or enemy, etc. "Thinking grey" means learning not to think in absolute terms, at least initially, as we relate to people. Of course, there are absolutes in the world and in faith, but "thinking grey" is more about an attitude and approach to people than relating to ideas and concepts.

Positive attribution

Elmer identifies the need to see the best in people rather than succumbing to the more natural tendency to form negative ideas about others when we first meet them. Once a negative impression is formed, it can shape our relationships and can even stereotype a whole group of people. Sadly, it is not uncommon to hear struggling cross-cultural workers saying, "You can't trust [a whole people group]" – when clearly most people in the community are trustworthy.

Crossing cultural borders takes practice, and being open to others is a great place to start on this wonderful journey of life together across our world.

BY REV ALLAN HEPPNER

go, make disciples, baptise and teach



And Jesus came and said to them, “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.”
Matthew 28:18–20

Fulfilling the command

This command is precisely what the ministry plan of the Moorabbin/Dandenong Ministry Team in South East Melbourne is designed to fulfil. The only exception is that rather than having to go elsewhere to fulfil the command, disciples are being made of people who have come from Africa to the Dandenong region.

Since Pastoral Assistant Michael Jang was installed in September last year, 27 baptisms have taken place and 15 adults have been instructed and received into membership of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Dandenong. The Moorabbin/Dandenong pastor, Pastor Anthony Fox, has conducted the baptisms and confirmations and provided appropriate instruction with Michael’s assistance and translation. A further 20 children aged 12–15 years have been identified for catechesis studies this year.

Instruction goes on in other groups as well. Over 50 children gather for Sunday school at Sudanese services on Sunday afternoons. Sudanese women meet each Friday evening at Dandenong for study and fellowship, and several Sudanese women and their children attend the Moorabbin Crafty Chat Group

for social interaction and study. A leadership group meets each Saturday. Staff meet each Wednesday.

Committed ministry leadership

In his letter accepting the call to be Pastoral Ministry Assistant in the parish, Michael Jang wrote:

First of all, I will accept this call – not a human call, but God called me. A lot of this work I cannot do without God. I have been doing this work on a voluntary basis because I believe this work – the work of God does a lot of things. The need to pray to God is very important.

During my voluntary work I never dreamed this would become a paid position. I can now dedicate my time fully to the role which is very important to my people. It is my view that this calling will uplift the mission and the people working in this mission. People need to hear the Word of God and put this together with society. We believe it is though God that the Sudanese people are in this country today. We have a problem in our home (country) but God has brought us to this country.

Expanding benefits

As well as bringing great benefit to the Sudanese people of the region, this ministry also benefits other members of the parish. Many serve as sponsors for children and adults who have been baptised. Others are learning to teach conversational English to Sudanese people. Many help with transport,

shopping, driving lessons, welfare assistance and other practical aid. They too are growing in discipleship.

And the Sudanese communities are growing. Another Sudanese community has developed east of Melbourne in the Latrobe Valley, where over 50 Sudanese attend fortnightly Sudanese services in the Lutheran Church in Traralgon. Each Sunday morning, Sudanese elements are included in the regular worship service – the reading of the Gospel in Sudanese and a hymn or two in Sudanese. Making disciples, baptising and teaching are going on there too, with ten baptisms conducted this year.

Further substantial Sudanese communities are developing at Ballarat, east of Melbourne, and at Shepparton, north of Melbourne. A Liberian community makes up a substantial proportion of worshippers at the Launceston Lutheran Church in northern Tasmania.

Church renewal

In a number of congregations in the Victoria/Tasmania District, the African numbers have outgrown the Caucasian. Some of these congregations were declining in numbers to the point that their members were beginning to question their future viability. Now they are outgrowing their premises and wondering how they will cater for the numbers of people God is bringing to them. Perhaps the LCA will follow the experience of Christian churches in Europe, where African migrants and refugees are bringing renewal to the churches.

giraffe in singapore

BY REV SAMUEL WANG



The LCA had previously invited the Lutheran Church in Singapore (LCS) to join Giraffe. So far we have sent five people over the last ten years. The last group that went was in 2006, when three young people attended Giraffe International. When they came back, they approached me about starting a Giraffe in Singapore. So why have Giraffe in Singapore?

Firstly, young adults (18–30 years old) are very busy in Singapore. They are ambitious, keen to try new things – just hungry for new experiences and challenges. Some of them will be in the universities, others may have started working, and many of the men will be serving their two years National Service in the army. These are interim periods, crossroads that young adults face in their lives when they are being prepared for something more. This is a critical time in their lives, and something should be done to bring this group together for the church to minister to them.

Secondly, the nature of Giraffe is so different from the hectic always-on-the-go lifestyle of Singapore. Singaporeans coast along from one thing to another, often because everything is planned out for them. Giraffe will enable them to reflect on their life, where they are heading and how they are living.

Thirdly, there is also the emphasis in Giraffe of forming Christian community, being together, helping each other grow in our faith journey. There is a need and hunger for Christian community among young people, and they want to experience genuine friendship. Giraffe offers Singaporeans a time of reflection, learning and living in Christian community to become true Christian friends.

I hope Giraffe will become something that young adults can look forward to every year. The LCS is committed to having Giraffe in Singapore, and we are thankful for the partnership of the LCA.

PRAYER POINTS... for you to engage in God’s mission in the world

- Rosemary Winderlich as serving in Indonesia and Rumah Chretus in Malaysia
- Kevin and Marlene Schilling VIMO’s serving at Laksi Lutheran Church in Thailand
- The mission team from Palmerston North, NZ as they travel to Indonesia to the International Youth Gathering of the HKBP
- Greg Schiller, our missionary stationed in Papua New Guinea as he takes his Rest and Refreshment (R&R) Leave
- Simon and Oiy Mackenzie in Thailand as they adjust to life with their new baby Nopakorn Paul Mackenzie, and to service in Chiang Rai and the Nan province
- The Lutheran Church in Singapore (LCS), it’s Bishop, Rev John Tan, leaders and members as they seek to share the gospel in many ways
- Missionaries from Singapore who take the gospel into China, Thailand, Cambodia and Mongolia
- Protection and open doors for the missionaries, - Wilson Wong and Werner Strauss who share Jesus’ love with the seafarers as they dock in the Singapore harbors
- Pastor Samuel Wang and the people preparing to lead and attend the Giraffe course in Singapore
- Ray and Janine Winterfield and their son Jonathan as they commence volunteer service at Nommensen University, Siantar campus in North Sumatra, Indonesia
- Mostyn and Maxine Roocke as they serve as Volunteers in Mission Overseas (VIMO), teaching English in the schools of the Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungan (GKPS) – one of our Lutheran partner churches in Indonesia
- Pastoral assistant Michael Jang and the Sudanese people who gather together in Christian community in Moorabbin and Dandenong
- International scholarship holders, Jess Vun (Sabah) and Erick Punde (PNG) studying at Australian Lutheran College
- The extension of God’s kingdom in Australia through the mission and ministry of the Sudanese congregations in Australia
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Ringwood as they develop a partnership of prayer and support with the orphans and staff at Margarita orphanage in North Sumatra
- For the team from Melbourne Lutheran Students Fellowship (LSF) serving as VIMO together with the youth department of the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia (BCCM) during their semester break
- Congregations engaged in, or preparing to engage in partnership with our overseas partner churches
- For Scott Litchfield and other leaders in Interserve as they seek to equip and support people serving in mission
- Thanks to God for faithful followers who have, who and continue to share their passion for sharing the Gospel with many others
- For God to open our eyes to see the “fields that are ripe for the harvest” (John 4:35)
- For workers for the harvest that is all around us – in our homes, in Australia and overseas (Matthew 9:38)
- For the love of Jesus to grow in each one of us and a willingness for us to go and join him wherever he opens our eyes to the work that he is already doing in the lives of others
- “Lord, renew your church, begin with me”

COULD YOU HELP PLEASE?

We would like to update and develop a database for the distribution of Border Crossings. Please complete the form below and return it to the BfM office. In this way you will be helping the Board for Mission to share exciting mission stories with as many people as possible.

Please tick appropriate boxes, complete the details, tear off and post to: Board for Mission office, 197 Archer Street, North Adelaide, SA 5006

- ☐ I would like to receive a personal copy of Border Crossings
- ☐ In future I would like to receive an electronic copy of Border Crossings
- ☐ I am willing to be a contact person in my congregation for the Board for Mission to help in sharing the mission stories of the LCA and our overseas partner churches

Name _____

Address _____

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Email _____

Phone (daytime) _____

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Congregation name _____

Congregation address _____

_____ P/C _____



Bible students in Henan Province



Rev Chu (L) from the Henan Christian Council and Bishop John Tan (R) of Lutheran Church in Singapore