

# border crossings

issue  
05

Stories from the Board for Mission of the Lutheran Church of Australia

## Welcome to the Jungle

A volunteering  
experience with  
a difference

Something to  
**pray**  
about

Make your own  
**Massaman  
Curry**



**Indonesia**  
Meet Reverend Rein Justin  
and a cow called "LCA"

April 2009



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## welcome

### Stories, stories and more stories...

Jesus was "never without a story". As Eugene Peterson outlines in a contemporary translation of Mark 4:26-34: "With many stories like these, he presented the message to them, fitting the stories to their experience and maturity. He was never without a story when he spoke." (v 33 MESSAGE)




Stories can stir a range of responses in us. You can probably remember times when someone's story evoked an action or emotion in you. I have been inspired, challenged and compelled to follow Jesus in different ways through people's stories of God's activity in and through their lives. This week I was lent a set of

missionary stories - "The Challenge" (mission magazines of the New Guinea Missions) - that I had read as a young person. Just the very sight of the magazines' covers stirred the feelings I had had as a young person, to want to serve in Papua New Guinea.

As disciples of Jesus we are called to be storytellers - "witnesses" - sharing the stories of all we have seen and heard of God and his activity in our lives, and the lives of others.

This edition of Border Crossings comes to you as a collection of stories of God's activities in and through the lives of people serving in Australia and overseas.

I pray that through these stories God will inspire, challenge and compel us to a deeper life of following Jesus as we hear his call to us. "Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Matthew 11:29 - 30 (MESSAGE) 

### Glenice Hartwich

Project Officer

Board for Mission

Lutheran Church of Australia

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## Meeting a cow called 'LCA'.

### The Pengmas Projects, **Indonesia**

**A**mid rice fields and villages, along the furrowed tracks and potholed roads of the Tapanuli region in rural North Sumatra, Indonesia, more than 85 per cent of people are farmers. Many are caught in the enslaving trap of debt to landowners who demand high rent for the use of land, which they need to grow their rice crops. In order to produce quick rice harvests, many farmers purchase chemical fertilisers at high costs, which increases their debt and further imprisons them within the debt cycle. The global financial crisis has also deeply affected the lives of these people, dramatically lowering the price of their cash crops, such as rice, coffee, cocoa and rubber. At the same time, the costs of all the commodities needed just to live have escalated.

In such a harsh, challenging environment, I heard and witnessed amazing stories of hope as I spent a long and winding day visiting this eye-opening region. As when I had previously travelled with Pastor Rein Justin Gultom, this would be a journey to remember forever.

Male and female farmers, together with their pastors, were assembled expectantly in houses or church buildings throughout the day. They waited patiently in the various locations for the arrival of our increasingly late group (which also included Sam, Ramses and Timbul). These people were gathered to share their stories with us and ask questions of Rein Justin – about rice harvests, pigs, organic fertilisers, community radio stations, communal credit unions and even a cow called “LCA”.

An increasing number of squealing pigs and piglets poked their snouts over the walls of their odorless, organic, “Korean” method pig pens, while we inspected the piles of organic fertiliser produced and used to sow coffee tree seedlings. With smiles of hope on their faces, farmers shared stories of the increasing productivity in their rice harvest, achieved by using the System Rice Intensification (Organic) method for planting their rice paddies.

Others were able to give examples of how the Credit Union they had established in their community enabled them to borrow funds at 1 per cent or 2 per cent interest for ten months, ensuring that they could buy seed, food, as well as extend their agricultural land. Happily, this assisted them with generating the necessary funds to send their children to school.

Even if a person is not a member of the church, they can be a part of



*Pastor Rein Justin Gultom*







## Facts and figures

### Pig Farmers

- 120 pigs have already been given to farmers through the Revolving Pig Program.
- Many of these pigs have already produced litters of 10 to 14 piglets each time.
- Up to the time of giving birth to offspring, one pig can produce 1000kg of organic fertiliser.
- Pengmas teach two methods of pig farming – the organic “Korean system”, and “cement floor construction” for pig pens.
- The organic “Korean system” is made by filling a one-metre-deep hole with sawdust, charcoal, salt, fermented juice of fruit (banana and pawpaw) and an introduced micro-organism.
- With this method, there is no smell, and the pig has a clean and healthy skin.
- It allows for many piglets in one pen, controlling their exercise and enabling them to grow bigger quicker.
- The growth is five to six kilograms per week (growth can reach 20-30kg per month).

### Rice Farmers

- Using the System Rice Intensification (SRI) method, one rice paddy (22x22metres) will produce 400kg - compared to normal rice farming methods which produce 200kg from the same amount of land.
- Farmers are taught how to develop micro-organisms which can be introduced into compost which is then used in the rice paddies as a low-cost method of fertilisation.
- This type of fertilisation promotes healthy soil and saves the farmers large amounts of money that would normally be needed to purchase the chemical fertilisers.

### Farmers' School

- Pengmas has established a Farmers' School in Siantar where farmers can “live-in” (for one week to one year) to learn these farming practices.
- Since August, 2008, 60 people (men and women) have graduated from the Farmers' School in Siantar.

### Support

- The only support the HKBP Pengmas program receives comes from the LCA (apart from the HKBP's input, which pays for the salaries of the few staff).

the credit union. Within some Christian communities, even Muslims have become part of their credit union!

Like the farmers who waited expectantly for Rein Justin to answer their questions, I too listened intently as he talked about the four community radio stations set up to share information with farmers.

The inspiring organisation behind these radio stations, and many other community projects, is Pengmas. An abbreviation of the Indonesian words “Pengabbidan Masyarakat”, which translates as “Community Development”, Pengmas departments exist within many Indonesian churches. This Pengmas group assisting in Tapanuli belongs to the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) church.



An additional program has been added in the area – the “Revolving Cow” project. With funds provided by the LCA from the LLL, the Board for Mission and Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS), four cows have been purchased and given to members of four of the Credit Unions. The members choose who will look after the cow (at no cost to the farmers) until it has calved. They do need to pay up to 1,000,000IDR (approx \$130) for artificial insemination but, after calving, the farmer keeps the calf and the cow is then given to another farmer in the credit union to look after until the next calf is born.

My introduction to “LCA”, the cow in the village of Sionggang, was wonderful and encouraging. Already pregnant, “LCA” is sheltered under an imposing Batak house and fed on a strict diet of three specific types of grass which can increase the weight by up to a kilo per week.

Throughout the region of Tapanuli, many of the LCA's partner churches are offering hope through their Pengmas' livelihood and social justice programs, which are integral to their ministry. In the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP), the Pengmas program is a truly remarkable story of multiplication – God's multiplication – taking the small gifts offered and giving a harvest beyond expectations.

Under the leadership of Rev Rein Justin – a graduate of the Asian Rural Institute (ARI) in Japan - the Pengmas team demonstrates (in the most basic and practical ways) the love, compassion and justice of Jesus Christ to the poor and underprivileged farmers and their families in this rural region of Indonesia.

Commenting on the Pengmas projects, Rein Justin said: “This is not a give-away program – charity does not teach”.

And it's not just about pigs and cows and organic methods, either! The Pengmas programs have a significant component for teaching about matters of faith

and life, advocacy, gender issues and on HIV/AIDS. As Rein Justin stated, they tailor the programs to the needs of the people, bringing in church leaders, lecturers from the seminary and faculty from the Centre for Community Development of Nommensen University (another exciting project which the LCA has the privilege of being a part of).

The Pengmas program is an amazing story of multiplication. God has taken our seemingly small gift and multiplied it over and over again as he did the loaves and the fishes.

What's even more remarkable is the fact you and I are part of this program in Indonesia, through our giving in several ways!

Through the generous support of the LLL, together with the LCA Board for Mission (your weekly offerings), Australian Lutheran World Service and Lutheran Education Australia, you and I have been able to give added support and encouragement to the churches in Indonesia as they seek to be “the hands and feet” of Jesus, to struggling farmers through the Pengmas program.

Pray for these workers in the harvest - always working long days without a break and in circumstances that are difficult and at times discouraging.

### Glenice Hartwich

Project Officer  
Board for Mission  
Lutheran Church of Australia

“This is not  
a give-away  
program –  
charity does  
not teach”.

# Riding God's rollercoaster – with a

# giraffe

Singapore's first **Giraffe course** was held in December, 2008.

Five young people from Singapore, five from Malaysia and four from Australia participated, with presenters also coming from each of the aforementioned countries.

Faith Inkubators Australia's Peter Eckermann was part of the Giraffe leadership team, an experience he will never forget.



The late, veteran youth worker Wayne Rice once described youth ministry as an unbelievable rollercoaster ride. As we respond to God's call to 'cross borders' in mission with - and for - young people, we won't always know where God is going to take us: east, west, right, left, up, down and, sometimes, upside down.

Giraffe Singapore was one such wild rollercoaster ride!

For years, the Board for Mission, Board for Youth and Family Ministry, and Stamps for Missions have worked together to enable many young adults from partner churches throughout South East Asia to attend Giraffe.

Pastor Sam Wang noticed "something different and special" about Angeline, Mervyn and Sam, three young people

sent by the Lutheran Church of Singapore to the first International Giraffe course, held in Darwin (July, 2006). Within Giraffe's environment of grace, justice, freedom, mercy and love, the trio had

noticeably grown in the two years since the Darwin conference.

Within this group, a strong sense of direction and purpose to create a Giraffe course in Singapore was born. This became a memorable reality last December.

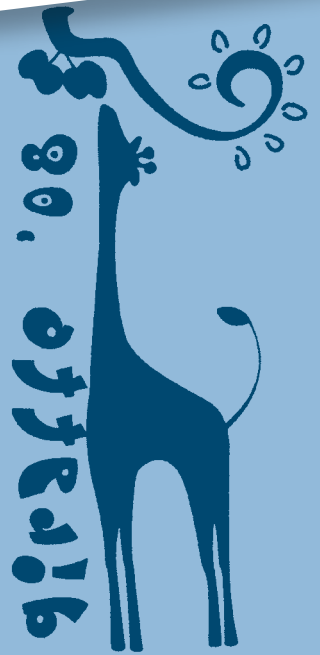
I was honoured to be invited to be part of the leadership team for Singapore Giraffe. You might say I was offered a front seat on the rollercoaster! Through teaching and experience, the Giraffe participants were equipped. Through pain and tears, laughter and release, God brought healing and life.

I feel a reflection made by Daniel Teh (Bangsar Lutheran Church) captures some of the ride: "The 'safe place' that was created in the first few days allowed us to remove our walls and masks, so that we could truly share with one another our lives, hopes, and dreams, plus our pain, disappointment and assumptions toward each other. From hearing each others stories and lives, we know we were 'chosen' to be here and it's not by chance, nor choice... I have personally grown in my faith, hope and especially love towards the people around me and to Jesus my Lord and Saviour and Friend."

"I am changed."

**Peter Eckermann**

For more information about **Singapore Giraffe courses**, please call Sharon on (08) 8367 7334.



## The Giraffe Principle

Giraffe is based on the principle that good leaders are people who have engaged with their own faith and personal journeys, asked themselves hard questions and are committed to seeking and deepening their relationship with God.

In a Giraffe community, participants learn more about themselves, living and understanding other people. They also learn more about who God is and what it means to follow him.





# Welcome to the Jungle

Head hunters, jungle treks and “Selamat Datang” — Senior Resident Houseparent at St Peters Lutheran College, Indooroopilly, Queensland, **Michael Hauser**, discovered the **Malaysian province of Sabah can be an open-armed wilderness in need of the basic supplies of life which we take for granted**. Along with Dominic Rainsford, a teacher from Crossways Lutheran School, Ceduna, Michael worked as a volunteer for the LCA, Board for Mission on a fact-finding visit to prepare a report for the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia (BCCM), for their “Water Project” in the jungles of Borneo.



With some embarrassment, I must confess I'm not entirely certain whether I have read an issue of Border Crossings. There are also a number of other reasons why it is strange that I find myself now writing an article for its pages.

Travelling the world has never been high on my priority list. I'm a sit-at-the-beach-and-go-fishing kinda guy, not the touristy-take-photos type. However, during the past year, I have had the opportunity to go overseas twice - to Papua New Guinea on the Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS) Teacher Study tour in June/July; and, more recently, to Sabah, Malaysia (The Land Below the Wind). Isn't it funny where the Lord blows you?

I guess the reasons for my taking these opportunities have been quite simple. Behind the travelling lies a purpose, a Christian mission, a desire to help others in need. This purpose was enough for me to immediately say “yes” to a request made by my travelling companion, Dominic (Dom, a teacher from South Australia) to go along as support to help out with the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia's (BCCM) water project.

I had no idea about Malaysia, let alone Sabah, a province on the island of Borneo. I had still fewer idea's about the local indigenous population and their culture. The learning curve proved to be as steep as the slopes

of Mt Kinabalu, the tallest mountain in South East Asia, standing at more than 4000m (Dom and I were able to scale its peak).

My first impressions of Sabah can be summed up in two Malay words. “Selamat Datang” (welcome) seems to be the catch phrase of the land. Those two words stand out on nearly every entrance and sign post in Sabah. The local people are extremely friendly and accommodating and bend over backwards to make sure you are comfortable and your needs are met.

For a few days, Kota Kinabalu (KK) was our base, before we headed into the wilds of the “interior”, as the locals called it. Dom and I visited remote villages in the “interior”, set along winding, fast flowing rivers which looked like “Hot Chocolate” being poured through high, sloping, dense jungle valleys. We were told the river systems had been like that for 100 years, since logging of the jungle began.

More recently, land clearing for Palm Oil production has become another visible factor behind the muddy river system. With the massive amounts of water which fall in a tropical-monsoon climate, together with Sabah's soft clay soil, it doesn't take long for erosion to take place in a big way. Landslides are a common sight when taking a boat trip along the windy, sometimes treacherous rivers.

Added to this erosion is the pollution from the ever-increasing populations of the villages set along the rivers. Villages have simple toilet structures whose waste run off eventually flows into the river. Combined, all of these elements mean the river is not a viable source of quality water without the expensive filtration systems which remain out of reach for a still developing country.

Water, quality water, is currently obtained from common streams/waterfalls, which run into the rivers via a simple poly pipe system commonly used in agricultural irrigation. The water is piped directly to village housing, providing the people with drinkable/potable water. However, a number of issues affect this water supply, often making it unreliable and unusable.

# GETTING INVOLVED Volunteer opportunities

Have you considered volunteering in mission with one of our overseas partner churches?

The opportunities and places are many...

## Indonesia

- Teaching English in schools.
- Teaching English (in the seminaries).
- Practical service at Yapentra, School for Blind Students in Medan.
- Teaching English in pastors' and leaders' courses.
- Teaching English and practical help in various orphanages.
- Agriculture/livelihood programs in "revolving" pig and cow projects.

## 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; young adults needed for practical service.

## 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.

## Sabah

- Practical service at Jireh Foster Home for neglected, underprivileged and abused children.
- Teachers of English, music and computing at the Grace Centre (school for the "undocumented" children in Sabah).

## Papua New Guinea

- Librarian to catalogue donated books in the seminary libraries.
- Pharmacist to organise medicines in pharmacies at Gaubin Hospital on Karkar Island, and Braun Hospital, Finschhafen.
- Construction Manager to oversee the reconstruction of Gaubin Hospital, Karkar Island.



Michael Hauser and Dominic Rainsford

It was fantastic to visit these indigenous communities and experience their culture firsthand. Personally, this was perhaps the most rewarding thing for me, having had experience with Australia's own indigenous peoples, and being able to relate issues to what happens back at home.

We met many villagers and, despite not being able to communicate properly, it was surprising the things we could deduce, even in broken English. It was interesting to learn that the Murut tribe were head hunters but, even more interesting, was the Gospel's role in the renouncing of their "animalistic ways" (as one villager put it).

During our Sabah stay, we slept on some pretty hard floors, ate some meals which you would rather not think about, and travelled on some hairy roads and rivers. We hacked our way up slippery jungle trails to beautiful waterfalls, went fishing with bamboo rods - and actually caught something - and then relaxed and took in the slow pace of village life. It was quite a trip and I couldn't help but feel blessed in all of our experiences, even with the mild case of food poisoning (which left me quite green for a few days).

We were asked to share and speak at fellowship services on several occasions and, just before the first, I came across Psalm 133 which basically sums up our entire experience in Sabah. When we come together as brothers in Christ, working together, God blesses us.

I wonder where the Lord might blow me in the next 12 months? I don't know exactly, but I do know he will ask me, and continue to give me opportunities, to step outside of myself and help others. I also know that when I am obedient, even if it calls for self sacrifices (like not being able to hang at the beach and go fishing), the Lord will pour out his blessings. That is something to look forward to.

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

## Indonesia

- Partnership with Lutheran schools.
- Regional partnership or with an orphanage.

## Malaysia

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

## Sabah

- Youth group participation in youth camp ministry.
- Supporting students studying for pastoral and lay ministry.
- Supporting lecturers at the seminary (Sabah Theological Seminary).

## Singapore

- Partnership with Lutheran Church Singapore, working in teams in Cambodia.

## Thailand

- Congregations willing to pray for, support and partner with Pastor Simon Mackenzie and his wife Oiy, as they serve in Chiang Rai and the Nan province.

## Papua New Guinea

- Congregations willing to pray for, support and partner with Pastor Greg Schiller as he serves at Martin Luther Seminary in Lae.
- Youth group exchange and youth music/ministry teams.
- Maintenance teams in various locations.
- Teachers for youth ministry leaders' and pastors' courses.
- Partnership with schools.

If you would like to know how you can volunteer in mission overseas, 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.

Email bfm@lca.org.au or phone (08) 8267 7334.





# kicking goals with God

Violence, drug and alcohol abuse, hold-ups, murders, lack of education, unemployment, and a loss of hope have been part of the culture for many of the young people living in the settlements in and around the city of Lae, Papua New Guinea. However, in the Hunter Settlement, signs of hopefulness and change have emerged.



Alzaria Hombunaka

The Lutheran Church of Australia has had a long relationship with the people in Papua New Guinea, through its partner church, the ELC-PNG. Since the arrival of the first missionaries in 1886, the LCA has sent more than 600 mission workers to serve in PNG. In 2009, the LCA has one full-time missionary, Pastor Greg Schiller, serving as a lecturer at Martin Luther Seminary in Lae.



The Hunter United Soccer Club

After graduating in 2007 from the University of PNG's law school in Pt Moresby, **Alzaria Hombunaka**, got a job as a criminal defence lawyer with the Public Solicitors Office in Lae. Giving up her privacy and the opportunity to live a more secure life, Alzaria (with her mum and grandmother) chose to help make a difference by living among the people in the Hunter settlement.

"We can show them God's love and his ways for living, through the relationships we have with them in the soccer club".

Under Alzaria's management, the Hunter United Soccer Club (HUSC) kicked off in February 2008, with four teams playing in two different associations in the Lae area. More than one hundred young men and women have, literally, came out of the bushes and onto the oval at Martin Luther Seminary for training three nights each week. The head coach is Lothar, an expatriate from Germany working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (ELC-PNG) in Lae.

When asked what has changed for them since they started playing soccer for HUSC, many of the former "rascals" said "now we are part of the team, we no longer do drugs or cause trouble".

Alzaria organised a "gun surrender", attended by members of the government, police, law society and churches, where two young men who had been on the run from authorities for some years handed their weapons to police. Following the surrender, the two men immediately went to the settlement's Bethlehem House of Prayer for counselling.

Asked why she was doing all of these things, Alzaria quickly replied: "I love Jesus and depend on him. Being a follower of Jesus, we can't tell these young people to go to church - because they won't go - but we can show them God's love and his ways for living, through the relationships we have with them in the soccer club."

Alzaria has great hope for these young people and made plans to provide them with practical vocational training. It has not been an easy task, but Alzaria said: "I can't do anything without God - everything has to be done his way. We even pray together before and after the games". Because of this, the Hunter United Soccer Club is not just an ordinary soccer club!



## Eight more indigenous Pastors for Central Australia

FRM Promotions Office **Irwin Traeger**

For more information...  
**Finke River Mission**  
197 Archer St,  
North Adelaide 5006  
Phone (08) 8267 7332

**Aboriginal Ministry SA**  
Contact the LCA-SA District office  
137 Archer St, North Adelaide 5006  
Phone (08) 8267 5211



# Supporting Indigenous Australians in their community

**Jonny Hedt**, Christian Pastoral Support Worker and Community Worker

I had had little contact with indigenous Australians while growing up in Victoria. Curiosity and a strong calling led me to Yalata, 200km west of Ceduna, South Australia.

Working as a Christian Pastoral Support Worker (CPSW) and Community Worker since mid 2007, I've had many of my pre-conceptions about indigenous people challenged.

It's wonderful to see a student happily give away their sandwich or half-eaten apple to a classmate who missed out, or watch families share everything from cars to clothes to spare change, often without a word of complaint.

The people are also very spiritual and talk freely about the church, Bible stories, seeing angels or devils in the bush, or signs from God. Everyone holds church leaders (who they see me as) in very high regard.

The school's Governing Council wanted children to hear more Bible stories, so I started an optional Religious Education class with a story and sing-a-long time before school begins. The kids have responded really well.

I've enjoyed helping out with Spinifex Sports Week, when the whole school packs up and travels north for a day or two to compete against other indigenous community schools in athletics and team sports.

Besides day-to-day support of students, I am

also able to help teachers with little jobs such as feeding dogs or watering their gardens during school holidays.

But it's not all work – there's great salmon and mullet fishing, quondongs to gather, bush to explore and amazing stories to hear.

I'd encourage anyone who gets a chance to work in an indigenous community to take it. It's been an eye-opening privilege to be a CPSW in Yalata - although some days I feel like I've only scratched the surface.

Christian Pastoral Support Workers (CPSW) were formerly known as school chaplains. The Schools Ministry Group (SMG) is responsible for co-ordinating the placement of CPSWs in public primary schools and high schools in South Australia. Working in schools throughout SA are 317 CPSWs.

Commenting on the role of CPSWs, SMG Executive Director Haydn Lush says: "We have an amazing opportunity to provide young people, from all social and cultural backgrounds, with care, support, skill development, purpose and hope."



- In addition to its work of supporting Aboriginal congregations, FRM ministers to about 1,000 Lutherans in and around Alice Springs. Many reside there while others visit from remote communities.
- Through equipping and supporting Aboriginal leaders, the ministry is multiplied, and pastoral care can be undertaken in the language of the people. Another benefit is indigenous leaders have a full understanding of cultural factors.
- Pray for faithful leaders in ministry in the 18 town camps in and around Alice Springs.

**In 1964**, the first two Aboriginal Lutheran pastors in central Australia began their Word and sacrament ministry in and around Hermannsburg, 125km west of Alice Springs. Instructed and prepared by Finke River Mission staff, Arramta men Conrad Rabaraba and Peter Bulla were ordained in the local Bethlehem Lutheran Church. They were the first of many.

In the past 44 years, God has raised up many more pastors and the Word has crossed borders into remote communities in five different language areas.

In 2007 and 2008, LCA President Dr Mike Semmler ordained eight pastors in Alice Springs, Areyonga, Docker River, Kintore and Maryvale. Currently, 23 indigenous pastors serve in some of the most remote Aboriginal communities in Australia. They proclaim the Word and administer the sacraments in five languages - Arramta, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Alyawarr and Anmatyerr. The pastors' parishes are spread across an area larger than the state of Victoria.

"The staff of Finke River Mission have done an outstanding job of training and preparing men for Word and sacrament ministry in remote congregations," said Dr Semmler. "We should all be grateful that FRM's gifted and trained staff are willing to do

this difficult task for us, especially with the added complexities of remoteness and language."

As is the case for all indigenous pastors in central Australia, these new pastors are graduates of the Australian Lutheran College (ALC), the Lutheran Church's seminary. Instructed by FRM staff, mostly in their own languages, their studies are based on an ALC curriculum. All indigenous student pastors are examined by ALC faculty before being approved by the College of Presidents.

Still, more pastors are needed. Some remote congregations are served only infrequently. Pastors who retire or die must be replaced. It is a matter of thanks and praise that God has provided eight new ordained church leaders in recent months.

Let us all pray he will raise up more to serve our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, not only in central Australia, but also in South Australia and Queensland:

# INTEGRITY - no matter the cost

Living for Christ “24/7” is how a married Lutheran missionary couple approach their crucial Gospel work in Central Asia. The passion of Jane and Ben\* to share God’s word a long way from the comforts of Australia, boils down to one challenging command for Christians everywhere: **maintain integrity.**

Jane and Ben are supported in their service in Central Asia through Interserve. The LCA Board for Mission has established a Memorandum of Understanding with Interserve as we work together to further the Kingdom of God.

When I am asked, ‘What is it like living in Central Asia?’, I’m sometimes lost for words. It’s almost as if I’m expected to give a story about aliens from another planet. The truth is: people are people wherever you go. From another planet? No. Live in a different place? Yes. Speak another language? Yes. Have different culture and values? Yes and No.

Crossing a border can mean a lot of different things to different people but, to us, it is simply living with other human beings. If you travel interstate or overseas, the principle is the same, even though the lifestyles may be different.

To live successfully in another culture doesn’t mean losing our own. In fact, when we retain who we are and let another culture be as it is - allowing God to bridge the gaps - we learn to live as God’s people, wherever we are.

Integrity is a fundamental part of being a child of God. Integrity is not always a matter of knowing the correct answer or getting it right all the time. It is how we respond

in a godly way to whatever we find ourselves doing, thinking or saying – sin, warts and all.

Given our human weakness, integrity is one of the hardest values to model, maintain and discern. Having a reason for a problem doesn’t mean having an excuse for lack of integrity. But seeking God’s way out of our mistakes always brings the best outcome. We are always his and he always looks after us.

In Central Asia, I trained a group of students wanting to start a micro-processor business. Like all the others in the group, Timbek\*, saw the possibilities of the business to provide work and income for local people. All members of the group studied and worked hard at passing. Towards the end of the course, though, it became obvious Timbek’s own

selfish motives of personal profit and gain were driving his participation. He was with us all the way, did the same things, and appeared to be just like us, until the end came and he didn’t pass.

It was disappointing and stressed us all, but it was for the best that he didn’t pass. Integrity was maintained. This made me reflect upon what it must have been like for Jesus with Judas who, at the last, revealed his true motives. I also further understood Scripture which said, ‘Not all who call me Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven’.

In religious terms, Timbek was an accepted member but not a true believer, as I believe may be the case among some church members in Australia.

Integrity is an issue in modelling. The focus of my wife and I is to help people be more Christlike, not necessarily more “Western-like” or “denomination-like”. Our values include: “We do not change culture; we facilitate culture change as God’s word infects it”.

This may not necessarily be towards a Lutheran, Baptist or other Christian denominational model, though. When people in Corinth were divided and saying, “I follow Paul, I follow Apollos”, Paul said: “Who is Paul, who is Apollos?”. I usually add, ‘Follow Jesus, read the Bible’.

The challenge is to help locals see that godly men (such as Calvin and Luther) can give us advice, but they are no substitute for knowing Jesus and reading the Bible. In my mind, making local people “Baptist”, “Lutheran” or whatever, can lead to misunderstanding and confusion about whether a person is their denomination, or is a Christian. I tell locals that I am a Christian who is happy being in a Christian Protestant denomination. Being a Christian always comes first.

At times it is so much easier to stay within our own comfort zones, whether within Australia or overseas. However, when we don’t or can’t go to people from different

cultures and countries, God is now bringing them to us.

Not having our identity in Jesus means we tend to find other ideas (idols) that suit others and help us feel acceptable. This should not be our response as God’s people. We are called to be God’s people irrespective of what others – even our friends – expect. Living overseas has brought this challenge into our lives. It has challenged us to our very cores, where we have learned that everything begins with our ‘me-to-God’ personal and spiritual life with him. Thoughts affect attitudes, (and vice-versa), attitude affects words, words affect actions and actions have consequences!

The challenge for us living in another culture and place is: “Are we willing to live as God’s children in thought, word and actions?” It has led us to see that as we live personally and communally as children of God, we are witnesses and Christians wherever we are in the world. Borders don’t stop this or make one place more important than the other. Living as Christians wherever we are, 24/7, without regard to importance of location, worldly achievement, status or person, leads to our witness, our opportunities and a godly life.

I rang a local person one day to thank him for the wonderful help he had been to us. His response left me speechless for about five seconds. He said, “Thank you”. I asked for what, and he said, “You led me to the Lord Jesus Christ”. Truthfully, I had no idea I had done that!

Our lives are formed by our vision: “we love, honour and serve everyone whom God brings into our lives”. I will add, “no matter how difficult it may be!”

As my wife and I live 24/7 as Christians in close relationship to God and his word, we not only find peace in ourselves, but we also find deeply fulfilling the people and work that God puts in our way - even when it seems impossible.

God be with you.

**Pray for our Missionaries and other Christians serving in Central Asia. Pray they will continue to live their lives with integrity among neighbours and friends, sharing the love of Jesus Christ though all that they are and have.**

\* Names have been changed to remain anonymous.



## Get involved in God's mission Through Prayer

### Pray for...

- The new Director of the Board for Mission/Secretary of the Church, Rev Neville Otto.
- Pastor Greg Schiller, our missionary lecturing at Martin Luther Seminary, Lae, Papua New Guinea.
- Pastor Simon, Oiy and Nopakorn Mackenzie, our missionary family serving in Chiang Rai and the Nan Province, Thailand.
- Nick Schwarz, who is preparing for two years volunteer service as a researcher at the Melanesian Institute, Goroka, PNG.
- Bishop, Dr Solomon Rajah, as he leads the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malaysia, following the death of Bishop Julius Paul.
- Jane and Ben\* as they serve in Central Asia.
- Jonny and Trish Hedt and their young son, as they live and serve in Yalata.
- Christian Pastoral Support Workers in Australian schools, as they live out the love of Jesus Christ in the presence of hundreds of thousands of young people who do not yet know Jesus.
- The Finke River Mission workers who serve Aboriginal people in Central Australia.
- Congregations developing mission partnerships with overseas partner churches.
- Australian Lutheran World Service, as it seeks to be the "hands and feet of Jesus" while building the capacity of people groups and churches to respond to the needs of people in their region.
- Lutheran Education Australia, as it seeks to support and build the capacity of Lutheran schools in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea to deliver quality, Christ-centered education to the young people in their care.
- The Lutheran Laypeople's League, as it joins with the Board for Mission in various programs to support the mission and ministry of our overseas partner churches.
- For God to open our eyes to see the "fields that are ripe for the harvest" (John 4:35).
- For workers for the harvest all around us – in our homes, in Australia and overseas (Matthew 9:38).
- LCA Scholarship recipients
  - Jess Vun, Sabah (Australian Lutheran College, Adelaide).
  - Rev John Hasiholon Pakpahan, Indonesia (ALC, Adelaide).
  - Rev Albert Purba, Indonesia.
  - Rev Jan Hotner, Saragih, Indonesia.
  - Rev Sikpan Sihombing, Indonesia.
  - Linda Hugalung (training in education for blind students), Indonesia.
  - Kristiani Sipahutar, (training in education for blind students), Indonesia.
  - Various students from Mentawi Islands, Indonesia.
  - Javentus Pasaribu, Indonesia.
  - Jufri Simorangkir, Indonesia.
  - Bishop Philip Lok, Malaysia (Distance Education through ALC, Adelaide).
  - Rev Augustine Muthusami, Malaysia.
  - Various students at Lutheran Institute of Theological Education, Thailand.
- For the love, justice and compassion of Jesus Christ to grow in each one of us and a willingness in us to join him wherever he opens our eyes to see the work that he is already doing in the lives of others.
- "Lord, renew your church, begin with me".



## Massaman Lamb Curry

- 1kg lamb, cut into bite-size pieces
- 500ml chicken stock
- 4 cloves
- 1tsp cardamom pods
- 4 star anise
- 1tbsp grated palm sugar (or brown sugar)
- 2tbsp Thai fish sauce
- 2tbsp tamarind paste
- 600ml coconut milk
- 2tbsp Thai red curry paste
- 2 lemon grass stalks
- 500-600gm butternut pumpkin, peeled and cut to bite-size pieces
- 15 shallots (French shallots) peeled
- salt and pepper
- spring onions, finely chopped for garnish

Serves  
4-6

Heat large, heavy-based saucepan. Add lamb, stock, cloves, cardamom, star anise, palm sugar, fish sauce, half tamarind paste and half coconut milk.

Bring to boil, reduce heat, simmer for two hours, stirring occasionally.

Strain lamb, reserving liquid. Remove seed pods and cloves. Cover lamb and keep warm. Place saucepan on medium heat and add curry paste and remaining coconut milk. Bring to boil and add remaining tamarind paste.

Stir in lamb, lemon grass stalks (bruised), shallots, butternut and 250-300ml (1- 1½ cups) reserved stock. Simmer uncovered for 20 -30 minutes. Remove from heat, season to taste and sprinkle with spring onions before serving.

Serve with rice.

Recipe can be varied by replacing lamb with beef and/or butternut pumpkin with potato.



# Mission 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)

## I would like to support the following Projects

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bethany Home for disabled young people in Malaysia  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School for blind students in Indonesia  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homes for neglected and abused children in Malaysia   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Singapore International Seafarers' Mission  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Singapore Thai Good News Centre   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Singapore Giraffe course  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mission work carried out by Simon and Oiy Mackenzie in Thailand                               | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mission work carried out by Greg Schiller in Papua New Guinea (PNG)                           | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publication of tracts and other Christian literature for PNG                                  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships (for church partners in Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, PNG, Sabah and Thailand) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth work programs in Sabah and PNG  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mission outreach to Kubu tribal people in Indonesia   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orphanages in Indonesia   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LCA/LLL projects in Indonesia   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible translation (LBTA)  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mission outreach to indigenous people (Orang Asli) in Malaysia                                | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships for children of pastors in PNG   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training of evangelists and church leaders in China (partnership program with BCCM, Sabah)    | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seminaries in Sabah, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and PNG                                    | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical mission work in PNG   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books for the seminary libraries of our overseas partner churches                             | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abdi Sabda Prison Ministry team in Indonesia  | \$ _____ |

## Payment Options

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](http://www.lca.org.au/bfm) (using your credit card)
- **Electronic Funds Transfer** (please contact BfM on 08 8276 7334 for more details)
- **Credit card or cheque** (please fill out the form below)

## Your Payment

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

Please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card no. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Please send me a receipt

## Your details

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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

# Take Note

## Grow



## Come Holy Spirit Conference

**10-12 July 2009**

A conference that will challenge, inspire, and equip you to walk in step with the Holy Spirit and answer Christ's call to be His witness in the world!

**To be held from July 10 - 12, 2009 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Horsham, Victoria.**

For more information on the acclaimed speakers, activities, and registration details contact Pastor David Wear on (03) 5382 1325 or email [david.wear@lca.org.au](mailto:david.wear@lca.org.au)

## Mission Festival Weekend

**25-26 July 2009**

You're invited to attend the **Mission Festival Weekend** at Buderim Immanuel Lutheran Church, Forest Drive, Buderim Queensland.

For more information phone (07) 5445 6894.

## Celebrate



**2011**

**Celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the first missionary visiting Siassi Island, PNG.**

The people of the Church on Siassi invite all former mission workers, their children and grandchildren to join them on Siassi for this special celebration. *Details will be confirmed at a later date.*

## Volunteer

## Mission Support Tour

**3-15 July 2009**

**Come with us to Cambodia?**

- See much more than the tourists and make a real difference.
- Join us in service, witness, and mission.
- Assist in the development of the Plas Prai Christian Centre and Girls Hostel in Northern Cambodia
- Pay your own way, in return for the experience of a lifetime
- Basic costs - around \$2,500 per person
- Age and experience are no barrier but you need to be reasonably fit, healthy and ready to participate actively in the Christian focus of the tour.

All enquiries, contact **Pastor Roger Whittall** on (08) 8332 4407 or email [roger.whittall@lca.org.au](mailto:roger.whittall@lca.org.au)