

# BORDER CROSSINGS



*global partners · local church*



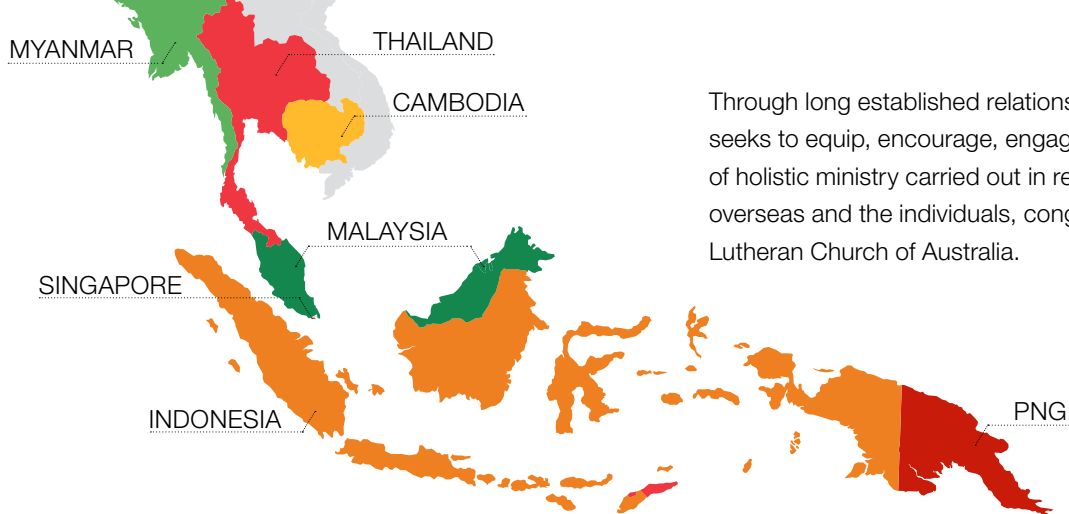
**LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**  
OF AUSTRALIA

**INTERNATIONAL  
MISSION**

*global partners · local church*

ISSUE  
APRIL 2020

**30**



Through long established relationships, LCA International Mission seeks to equip, encourage, engage in and support the growth of holistic ministry carried out in relationship with our partners overseas and the individuals, congregations and districts of the Lutheran Church of Australia.



### Pastor Matt Anker

Assistant to the Bishop  
– International Mission  
Lutheran Church  
of Australia

# AMAZING GIFT A LESSON IN LOVE

*'And Jesus called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on"' (Mark 12:43–44).*

One of the greatest dangers we face as we engage with partner churches in South-East Asia is the assumption that we always have more to give than to receive. While the LCA/NZ might not be wealthy, the poorest among us are rich beyond measure compared with most of the communities we partner with. With this financial imbalance, the temptation is to think of ourselves as the 'great western benefactor'! But this is far from the truth.

I was reminded of this in January while bushfires were ravaging Australia. Despite the prevalence of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and civil unrest across the regions we work in, I was inundated by emails from our partner churches expressing concern for us, promising solidarity in prayer and lamenting the suffering they were witnessing on television. It was a wonderful reminder of the reciprocal nature of our partnerships and the fact that gifts are not always tied to money.

Recently I received another email, this time from a small, struggling church in Myanmar with whom we have a close relationship. The author expressed his church's concern for all Australians and concluded by saying, 'In order to express our love and concern, our church council has decided to donate three weeks of collections AUD\$500 to the LCA for the relief works. It may not be much but with this small donation, we continue to commit ourselves to pray for all our brothers and sisters in Australia'.

Far from being a small amount, like the widow in Mark 12, our brothers and sisters have given not out of abundance, but out of their relative poverty. And they do so having been transformed by the gospel which has set them free from sin and death and made them rich in the Heavenly Father's kingdom. The gospel has opened them up to the needs of others, despite their limited resources. Knowing that Jesus has paid for their sins, not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death, has given them a hope that goes beyond material things.

What a remarkable gift and what a remarkable lesson they offer to us in the affluent west!



## PARTNERING WITH THE • GOSPEL •



# 'GOD HAD OTHER PLANS'

**'We are witnesses of God's great work being done through you to us here at the Heldsbach Kindergarten Schools Project.'**  
– Project Coordinator Taningnao.

Heldsbach, near Finschhafen on Papua New Guinea's (PNG) Huon Peninsula east of Lae, is a special place for people of the St Paul's Hahndorf/Redeemer Nairne Lutheran parish in the Adelaide Hills.

One member, Tony Gallasch, worked there in the 1960s. In 2008, he returned with his wife Coral and learned of the needs of a school where 'headmen' are trained to be spiritual leaders in an area with more than 60,000 Lutherans. Coral, an early childhood teacher, was asked to start a kindergarten.

The seed was planted and, with the Holy Spirit, it flourished. Back home in South Australia, the parish set to work fundraising for educational and maintenance materials.

In 2009, a parish team travelled to Heldsbach to do maintenance work at the school. At the same time, Coral

offered kindergarten-teaching workshops for village women. She thought one kindergarten would start but God had other plans. The women were so enthusiastic they wanted workshops at night, as well as during the day. The workshops resulted in nine kindergartens starting up in surrounding villages!

In 2011, Coral and Tony returned for the next maintenance project. PNG people made decisions about the work, as well as working on the dormitory, ablution block, eating mess and cook houses. This contributed to Heldsbach preparations for the 2016 Evangelical Lutheran Church of PNG Synod.

Meanwhile, Coral gave more teacher-training workshops for women, many of whom walked for several days, carrying babies in billums. There were 36 women from 19 villages who took

part and the new kindergartens have flourished. One kindergarten in a village bush house began with 40 enrolments! As kindergartens opened, each village teacher received a starter pack with educational materials. Coral continues to encourage, advise and assist the teachers.

In 2019, in-service training held at Heldsbach was attended by 53 kindergarten teachers – there are now 33 centres in village communities. Participants expressed thanks for the ongoing support, 'We thank you, believers, for your prayers throughout the in-service and at all times'.

The St Paul's Hahndorf community continues to fundraise for this project. Funds are earmarked for the Heldsbach Kindergarten Project, via the PNG Project Office, LCA International Mission.

## How are we joining with God partnering in the gospel?

*LCA International Mission encourages congregations to consider partnering with overseas churches who have already established a relationship with the LCA, and then supports these communities as they enrich one another.*

## How can you support this work?

*If you would like to learn more about a congregational partnership with a community in Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Singapore or Thailand, please contact us.*

# PROCLAIMING THE ◦ GOSPEL ◦



How are we joining with God as he proclaims the gospel?

**LCA International Mission has committed \$7000 to fund the publication of the Bible in Kuvi to complete the work Pastor Ian Kleinig began many years ago.**

How can you support this work?

**If you would like to donate to the publication of the Kuvi Bible, please refer to the donation form on the back of this edition.**

## ‘IF NOT US, THEN WHO?’

As a nine-year-old, Ian Kleinig watched a slideshow of children being baptised under trees and he dreamt of being a missionary.

It was God’s will that he served as a missionary in Papua New Guinea (PNG) years later and that, in 1966, Pastor Ian arrived in Madras (now Chennai) in India with his wife Enid and their five children, to start a new life in Orissa (now Odisha) state.

The midnight streetscape of blaring car horns and thousands of people that met them was a far cry from the highlands of PNG.

There was a pressing need for mission work to Kuvi-speaking people in Orissa but there were challenges. Few missionaries spoke Kuvi nor was it written. In addition, the people were ‘untouchables’ and outside the caste system. Still, the Kleinigs asked, ‘if we did not go, who else could, or would go?’ And Ian said, ‘give the gospel a chance; it will take care of itself’.

God opened doors. A young man, Binondo, helped with language learning. Binondo had a severe disability as a result of childhood polio but he took on an all-encompassing role in the mission work.

Ian and Enid together observed, listened to and noted words as the locals went about daily life. Little of the language described spiritual concepts as the people were animists.

But the people were hungry for the gospel. When they met with the missionaries, they exclaimed, ‘That’s the message we’ve been waiting for’. Whole villages, including local leaders, were baptised.

By the end of 1973, translation of Kuvi was becoming established. The Kleinigs had to return to Australia but the work continued and, in 1977, Luke’s gospel became the first book of the Bible translated into Kuvi. A year later, translations of liturgy, the catechisms and a hymnal followed.

Enid and Ian returned to India, eight times between 1976 and 1990. After moving into a retirement village, they made six visits, following up translation work and training leaders to read Kuvi.

In 2019, translations of the Old Testament and the revised New Testament were completed. They are ready to be published by the Bible Society of India and LCA International Mission is looking to raise \$7000 to help with publication costs. This would complete a wonderful story of a family who has committed six decades to serving our Lord and the Kuvi community in India.





**TRANSFORMED**  
BY THE  
**GOSPEL**

# Terima kasih FOR THE JOY OF TEACHING

by Dr Greg Lockwood

The first Bahasa word I learned during my visit to Borneo was 'awas' meaning 'watch out'. I saw it again and again on signs along the highway of the island's north coast, warning of impending dangers. My name, Greg[ory], has the same meaning in Greek. In the story of Gethsemane where Jesus urges us to 'watch and pray', that similar meaning helped the students of Protestant Church Sabah – Luther Seminary to remember my name.

Our LCA International Mission team works with the church in Malaysia towards a deeper appreciation of Lutheran heritage. In 2017, impressed by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the seminary in Sabah added 'Luther Seminary' to its name. This year, I was invited to do some teaching on Luther's catechisms to the diploma class and spent a week as a guest of the seminary.

Tucked away in a side street of a community in northern Borneo, the seminary resembles a village, including homes for staff, dormitories for single students and families and guest houses for visitors. The community is a three-hour drive north of Kota Kinabalu.

Classes concentrated on the catechisms and their Biblical basis. Each of the 15 students had a Bahasa Bible and a Small Catechism which provided a good basis for teaching. We devoted

Monday to the Commandments – which my Australian Lutheran College colleague, Pastor Bob Kempe, describes as 'guardians of God's gifts'. On Tuesday we focussed on the creed, on Wednesday the Lord's Prayer, while Thursday was divided between baptism and communion.

My hosts were keen to show me the beauty of their island and so encouraged me to finish classes on Thursday, leaving Friday and Saturday free to visit the former capital Kudat, and the northern tip of Borneo which overlooks the South China Sea and the Sulu Sea. Such wonderful hospitality!

I was invited to preach on Sunday and, bearing in mind the words of one of our Lutheran forefathers that 'the Christian religion is, in a word, a religion of gratitude', I chose the Bahasa words for 'thankyou' (*terima kasih*) to reflect on God's gifts as they are set out in the catechisms.

When Malaysians express gratitude, they say *terima kasih*, meaning literally, '(I) accept (your) love!' That was just how I felt too, for the privilege of this teaching experience. These people have been transformed by the gospel!

*Rev Dr Greg Lockwood is an Emeritus Lecturer at Australian Lutheran College and former missionary to Papua New Guinea.*

How are we joining with God as he transforms people through the gospel?

**LCA International Mission provides lecturers to teach and learn from our partner churches and seminaries.**

How can you support this work?

**If you would like to support guest lecturers as they explore what it means to be a Lutheran, please refer to the donation form on the back of this edition.**



# DWELLING IN THE • GOSPEL •

## OUR FUTURE IS ASSURED IN HIM

by Pastor Matt Anker

I don't remember a time in the church when we weren't talking about the doom and gloom of the future. Shrinking congregations. Tighter finances. Scandals impacting the place of the church in society. The latest 'discoveries' regarding sexuality pushing the church to the margins. And the apparent supremacy of science and human reason over the faith handed down to us (**Jude 1:3**).

Perhaps it's predictable that we tend to be pessimistic about the future of the church, just as we are about life in general. But what does Jesus have to say about this?

 **Read Matthew 16:13–19.**

Who does Jesus say builds the church? With what does he build the church? What does Jesus say about threats to the church? You might like to explore what 'the gates of hell' represent in this context. Most consider it a figure of speech that refers to whatever causes a person to enter hell.

 **See Psalm 9:13 and 107:18.**

Jesus' language here is deliberately strong. If the gates of hell have no power to destroy the church, what threat do changing socio-economic and political factors pose to us?

Even though we have Jesus' assurance, dwindling attendances demand our attention and action and, before you know it, mission becomes a survival strategy. 'If only we can get a few more members who will share the load.' 'If only we can have a few more backsides on seats, we will meet our budget.'

But is that the purpose of mission? To fill seats and ensure the financial viability of the church?

Not according to God's word! Mission is about proclaiming the gospel in order that people may come to faith and be saved.

 **Read 1 Corinthians 15:1–11.**

Where is the focus – on the survival of the church or the salvation of the lost?

I know what it's like to be part of a small congregation with an uncertain future. But our worry about the future often reveals that we are trusting the wrong things. Instead of trusting in the Lord, who promises the church will endure forever, and having faith in the gospel which is the power of God to save, we too easily trust in our own endeavours to save the church.

Does that sound familiar? Has your heart been weighed down by such misplaced trust? Well, let me tell you some good news. You are forgiven in the name of Christ. Jesus has suffered and died that your sins of misplaced trust and doubt and despair might have no power over you and you are freed to live as one deeply loved by your Heavenly Father. Your lack of trust in the future of the church has been crucified with Jesus and you are free to face the future with confidence in his promise (**Matthew 16:18**).

The church of tomorrow may not look exactly like it does today and our place in society is not guaranteed. But our future is guaranteed – not because of 'our' mission work, but because the Lord of the Church will continue building on the foundation of forgiveness and life he won for us on the cross (**Matthew 24:14; Colossians 1:5,6**).

**TRAINING  
IN THE**

**• GOSPEL •**

# Support needed for discipleship resource

**by Wolfgang Grieninger**

*Seasons* is a Lutheran discipleship resource published in English by the Lutheran Church in Malaysia (LCM) in 2017 as a contribution to the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

A year later, a Chinese translation followed. Both versions have been well received by members and congregations of the four Lutheran church bodies in Malaysia and those in other parts of South-East Asia.

The next goal is to publish a translation in the Malay language (Bahasa Malaysia) and to launch it in October 2020, at the meeting of the Federation of Evangelical-Lutheran Churches in Malaysia and Singapore (FELCMS). Your support is needed for the translation of this essential resource. *(See back page.)*

*Seasons* was written by three LCM pastors as an initiative of Bishop Aaron Yap. The title refers to the journey of Christians growing in faith and experiencing times of joy and sadness through the seasons of life, from young to old age. Going beyond the basics of the Christian faith, the book considers the context of South-East Asia and distinctive features of Lutheran beliefs and practices.

The book contains both spiritual and informative messages to inspire an active life devoted to Christ, be it in personal, professional

or congregational contexts. It is suitable for individuals to use for personal devotion or for use in small groups.

*Seasons* offers the reader a way of developing greater maturity in faith as it draws together Lutheran and Asian perspectives. There has been a lack of such crucial contextual resources, especially for young Christians in South-East Asia.

Now the publication of the resource in Bahasa Malaysia – which is spoken by indigenous people in both West and East Malaysia and also in Indonesia – is underway. Translating *Seasons* into this national language is essential for reaching out to and equipping indigenous Christians in Malaysia.

It's an awesome thing to learn more about the word of God by reading it in your own heart language. It not only personalises the relationship you have with God but symbolises how God loves us all, irrespective of our race, cultural background and social class. It makes Jesus real in a language that can be understood, felt and shared by a community.

*Wolfgang Grieninger is a theological consultant from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria, which partners with LCA International Mission through its Mission One World organisation.*



## How can you support this training in the gospel?

*If you would like to support the translation of the book **Seasons**, please refer to the donation form on the back of this edition.*

## How are we training in the gospel?

*LCA International Mission partners with Mission One World, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria, to enable these publications to be provided for people living in Malaysia.*





## I'M JOINING IN GOD'S MISSION BY *praying for*

Prayer is so important because many of our partner churches are working in new territory for the kingdom of God, and spiritual attack is their everyday reality.

- the translation of *Seasons* and all who have the opportunity to deepen their relationship with their Heavenly Father through the translation of this resource
- Pastor Ian Kleinig, who has overseen the Bible translation project in India; the translators who have worked long hours in sometimes difficult and even dangerous circumstances, and for each individual involved in the checking, printing and distribution process. Praise God for the many translation projects that are happening around the world
- the growth of the kindergarten project at Heldsbach Finschafen in Papua New Guinea and the gift this partnership has been to the community of St Paul's Hahndorf and Redeemer Nairne in South Australia
- the pastors, lecturers and teachers who serve our overseas partners through their teaching
- the generosity of those who have little and the example this is for us to give all we have been given for God's purpose and to serve others

To download monthly prayer points, go to [www.lca.org.au/international-mission/join-gods-mission/pray/](http://www.lca.org.au/international-mission/join-gods-mission/pray/)

They can also be accessed via the LCA International Mission eNews – to sign up, go to [www.lca.org.au/enews](http://www.lca.org.au/enews)

*'Lord, renew your church, begin with me!'*



## I'M JOINING IN GOD'S MISSION BY *volunteering*

You can experience firsthand how God's love is coming to life through the word-and-action gospel work of our partner churches.

### AUSTRALIA

LCA International Mission hosts guests from overseas in a unit in North Adelaide. Up to six times a year, we would appreciate assistance in cleaning the unit between guests. Cleaning products are supplied.

### MALAYSIA

BCCM Agape Centre is seeking teachers with Special Education, Speech Therapy and Physical Therapy qualifications. The centre currently has an enrolment of 20 students and four teaching staff. Their main goal is to educate and train children with intellectual disabilities in functional skills toward being socially independent and, if possible, economically independent.

### INDONESIA

The ONKP church on Nias Island would like teachers of English for a small, relatively isolated community. You will need to be available for four weeks in July and August for four-six hours of teaching per day. The students are leaders of the ONKP church.

### THAILAND

Native English-speaking teachers (or program planners) are needed to teach or plan as part of an Intensive English Workshop in October 2020 for 15 days at the Lutheran Seminary of Thailand in Bangkok.

### What to do next ...

If you would like to know more about volunteering in mission overseas, go to [www.lca.org.au/international-mission](http://www.lca.org.au/international-mission) or contact Nevin Nitschke at [nevin.nitschke@lca.org.au](mailto:nevin.nitschke@lca.org.au) or [lcaim@lca.org.au](mailto:lcaim@lca.org.au) or phone 08 8267 7300.



## I'M JOINING IN GOD'S MISSION BY *giving to...*

We take great care of your financial gifts.

You can be confident that they will assist our partner Lutheran churches to bring the good news of Jesus to their communities.

... LCA International Mission's work with our partner churches.

(Please indicate the ministries and programs you would like to support and write the amount of your gift/s in the spaces provided.)

- ☐ The publication of the Bible in the Kuvi language to be used in **India** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ The update of the Christian Studies curriculum in **Papua New Guinea** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ The publication of *Seasons* in the Bahasa Malay language to be used in **Malaysia** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ LCA lecturers teaching on Lutheran distinctives in **Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia** and **Papua New Guinea** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I would like to leave a bequest for LCA International Mission in my will (please send me information.)

**Please send this completed form to  
LCA International Mission  
197 Archer Street, North Adelaide SA 5006**

You can support one or more of the above ministries in any of the following ways:

- ☐ online at [www.lca.org.au/international-mission/act-now/donate/](http://www.lca.org.au/international-mission/act-now/donate/) (credit card)
- ☐ OR Electronic Funds Transfer; please contact LCA International Mission on 08 8267 7300 for more details
- ☐ OR fill out the form below (credit card or cheque)

☐ Enclosed is my cheque for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(cheques payable to LCA International Mission)

☐ Please debit my Visa MasterCard

Card no

Expiry   /   CCV

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ P/C \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please send me a receipt

If the ministry you have nominated is oversubscribed, LCA International Mission will redirect your gift to support a similar ministry.