

A NEW ERA

Exciting projects taking place in Indonesia

UNKNOWN TERRITORY

Crossing borders of more than just the physical kind

AYAM BUMBU RUJAK

A recipe for mixed spicy chicken!



BORDER CROSSINGS

ISSUE 01 // OCTOBER 2007

the call TO EACH OF US



We've talked a lot about the title for this new magazine which is coming to you from the Board for Mission office of the Lutheran Church of Australia. So why call it "Border Crossings"?

We cross borders every day in our lives... sometimes as we travel from one suburb to another, from one farm to another, from one state to another, from our house to our neighbour's house... or as we go from the school yard into our classroom. Most of the borders we cross we do so without much thought...and sometimes without much effort.

Jesus sends us...his disciples out to be his witnesses across borders, from "Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" Acts 1:8. I personally take that to mean Jesus sends me out to share his love and witness to others in what I do and in

what I say - in my own home, neighbourhood, city, country and in further widening circles around the world.

As followers of Jesus Christ in the Lutheran Church of Australia this is our call...every one of us. It's not just for the pastors or paid lay workers, not just for the spiritually mature or older people, but for you and me...children, young people and the not so young. It's not always easy and many of the borders that we need to cross to witness as disciples of Jesus seem huge...fear (read Psalm 91), what other people might say or think about us (John 12:1-8), or a supposed lack of money and resources (Philippians 4:19).

What's stopping you? What's stopping us?

We have the promise of Jesus...I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:20).

You're invited to share in the stories of border crossings that others have made. I pray that you are challenged, disturbed and compelled by the love of Jesus Christ to go and cross borders in his name and by his power and authority.

Glenice Hartwich
Project Officer
Board for Mission
Lutheran Church of Australia



Border Crossings

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A NEW ERA

Mention the word 'Indonesia' and many people would not associate it with the word 'Christian'.

However, it is estimated that there are over 21 million Christians in Indonesia (and growing), making up over 10% of the population. This includes nearly 4 million people belonging to twelve different Lutheran church groups in Indonesia, mostly located in Northern Sumatra.

Over the past 30 years the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) through the Board for Mission and more recently also through Lutheran Education Australia (LEA), has developed significant partnerships with six of these church groups. The partnerships have included a variety of aspects such as visitations to both countries, provision of lecturers in seminaries, scholarships, financial and practical support for orphanages, books for seminary libraries, school partnerships, relief in times of disaster, and volunteers serving in a range of ministry areas.

Over the past year a new and exciting phase of mission partnership between Lutheran churches in Indonesia and the LCA has begun. This new era of mission will build on the relationships already established between the churches in both countries.

In a great spirit of cooperation, a coordinating group of people representing the Board for Mission, LEA, Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS), Australian Lutheran College (ALC) and the LCA Queensland District have been meeting to implement the project 'Strengthening Churches for Service in Indonesia Program', which has been made possible by a generous gift from the Lutheran Laypeople's League (LLL).

The long-term goal of the project is to assist the Lutheran churches in Indonesia to 'strengthen their capacity to live out the gospel in a predominately Muslim society through

effective programs of service to the wider community'.

Building on past LCA relationships with the six Lutheran partner churches in Indonesia, the project will use 70% of the funds given by the LLL to enhance and strengthen institutional capacity, particularly of the diaconal departments (including the welfare, humanitarian, development and education sectors) in these churches, specifically in Sumatra. The other 30% of the funding will be used in specific and selected projects which have been identified by the Indonesian churches as areas of need. The LCA's offer of assistance in these projects will also involve a capacity-building component to help ensure longer-term sustainability.

The program also seeks to support the Indonesian churches in their efforts to improve the governance, financial administration and general management practices of their departments, with the intent of providing strategic direction and greater transparency in all areas. Underlying this partnership is the principle that the partnership is one in which the dignity of the Indonesian churches continues to be built up and maintained.

Cover photo: children who were
present at the laying of the
foundation stone at Pematang Raya



Students at Nommensen University

The primary focus of the program is the establishment of a Centre for Community Development Studies and a Disaster Response Management Unit at Nommensen University, Medan. (Nommensen is a Lutheran university with over 6500 students.) It is anticipated that this initiative will, through a mix of practical and theoretical course work, improve the skills of church staff involved in diaconal work.

The funding to date has helped to upgrade facilities at a 23-hectare farm owned by Nommensen University in Medan, where the centre will be based. At the same time there has been a great deal of support given to the centre management team in thinking through how it will function, what courses will be run and how best to ensure maximum participation by the Lutheran Indonesian churches.

In a recent visit to Indonesia with Linda Macqueen (editor of The Lutheran) I had the opportunity to visit the Centre for Community Development Studies at the farm at Simalingkar on the outskirts of Medan. Excerpts from my journal entry for that day give some idea of my impressions...

It was inspiring to see what had taken place at the site since the earlier reports of Gary Simpson and Ken Semmler. Five hectares of the farm are already thick with lush corn crops. Healthy cattle imported from Australia are housed in a renovated shed; soy-bean crops are growing, and dry rice farming plots give splashes of vivid green to the already green landscape. Evidence of the vision taking shape is also seen in the healthy pink pigs which are now housed in the clean and repaired stalls. The farm looks good! The tired buildings are sturdy and, although in need of maintenance, there is evidence of good construction of these buildings in a previous time. The potential for income generation and most importantly for the opportunity to offer vital training to people who will in turn offer new and improved ways to cultivate the land and improve its production, and protect the fragile environment and land structure is huge.

Photo on previous page: children at the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) school in Taratung, Northern Sumatra

Wednesday, 13 June

A very special day today, shared with the people of the Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungan (GKPS). It started early with breakfast at 6.00 am. About a 45-minute trip into the country - rough, winding road to Sibarou to lay the foundation stone for the construction of new classrooms made possible by the LLL/LCA funds. Various people from different sections of the community and GKPS, and Linda and I got into the trench and laid a stone with cement and prayed in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. After this we were invited into the church for corn on the cob, fried bananas, thick black sweet coffee and speeches. These people live and speak out their faith. I had a great sense of God's presence. Something very special is evident in the GKPS.



Children at the GKPS school in Sibarou

And the day continued on...

After this ceremony we travelled for about an hour further into the country to Pematang Raya to lay the foundation stone for the second school building made possible from the LLL/LCA funds. SMP (Junior High School) started in 1954. Before 1980 they had 21 classrooms but now only four, into which 150 students (12-15 year olds) are crammed. Nine thousand students have graduated from the school.

We were enthusiastically greeted by women in traditional custom, who placed garlands of purple orchids around our necks. Girls in traditional dresses of pink and red danced the traditional Simalungan dances in front of us. The ceremony included lots of foundation-stone laying, warmth, laughter, God's spirit, worship, prayers, thanks, hospitality, encouragement, speeches, Simalungan dancing (both Linda and I were invited to dance!!!), students, singing, traditional food, roasted chicken's head on my plate, hope, and "Horas" (the traditional spoken greeting).

One school classroom cost 35 million IDR. Workers and students from the vocational school (at Siantar, which we had visited earlier in the day) will help to build the classrooms to keep the costs down. There will be additional savings through the tables and chairs provided by the vocational school students. In 2008 the capital of Simalungan will move from Pematang Siantar to Pematang Raya, with the expectation that the school will grow through the influx of people moving into the region.



Preparing the ground for the soccer field at Margharetha Orphanage

And the day's experiences continued...

Margharetha Orphanage stands out in the landscape on 6.8 hectares of land. It is a beautiful picture: large white buildings surrounded by rice paddies and fields of corn. We received an enthusiastic welcome from volunteer Leonie Purba (wife of the Secretary General of the GKPS, Rev Ramanja Purba), the 30 children (mostly from Nias, from where they came after the earthquake of 2004), some of the seven salaried staff and volunteers. Ten girls and twenty boys make up this special community. Volunteers are very welcome. Preparation of ground for the play equipment, soccer field and basketball court is underway as a result of the LLL/LCA funding.

Thursday, 14 June

We met with the faculty of the Nommensen campus at Siantar. Presently 2000 students are enrolled and it is planned to have 3000 students. There is a vision and desire to improve the quality of graduates and upgrade facilities, particularly computers, as well as connecting departments to the internet. The English Department has 1000 students and five lecturers. They stressed a need for lecturers and volunteers from Australia, both for teaching and for conversational English classes. As in the previous visit of Adrienne Jericho to the Siantar campus, they reiterated their need for journals and material on the methodology and techniques of teaching English. Staff also expressed their need for a teacher of Mathematics - this can have the dual benefits to students of studying mathematics and learning English at the same time.

And the day continued on...

The Language Laboratory at the Nommensen uni, Siantar campus is in very poor condition and under-resourced. There are 20 booths but 40 are needed, and much of the equipment is broken or outdated. In a country where many of the people are desperate to learn English, the campus is well-placed to respond to this need and in so doing has a significant influence on the lives of many young people. Young Muslims are part of this growing student body and share in the daily Christian devotions of some of the lecturers and students. One teacher told me it so exciting that, as he has devotion each day with his students, the seeds of Jesus Christ are planted in their lives.

The 300 students in the Maths, Physics and Accountancy courses have no access to the internet (only the Dean has internet access) and the computers which are over seven years old show the wear and tear of over-use. The staff expressed a real keenness to partner with the LCA.

This campus is the beneficiary of funds from the LLL/LCA project money for the language laboratory.

Some of the other projects presently undertaken through LCA support and the LLL gift are in-country theological training for pastors, theological training for lay workers, support for the training of Sunday school teachers, and education and mission to the indigenous children of the Kubu people group in a remote area of Indonesia.

It is exciting also to see evidence of the long-term ministry support from the LCA and the contribution that we as LCA have made to the life of these partner churches in Indonesia through the provision of scholarships, particularly at ALC. The people who have studied in Australia at ALC stand out in the crowd and through them we continue to make a significant contribution to the life of these churches.

The Christians in Indonesia have much to teach us in this new global village that we live in. The churches in Indonesia have a great sense of being practical in their love and witness to people. They (together with our other South-East Asian partner churches) will provide us with the opportunities to serve the poor, the needy, the broken and hurting people with the love of Jesus in new ways. Their gift of hospitality is overwhelming, the way in which they live out their faith, particularly in a Muslim society, is enlightening and inspiring. What they have to offer the LCA through teaching, exchanges, practical engagement in the missions they have already established and personal interaction is what I believe will help us (the LCA) as part of the body of Christ begin to come alive again and become the hands and feet of Jesus Christ.

I look forward to taking others to this land where one of the twelve different Lutheran Churches alone has close to 43 times as many members as the LCA.

The coordinating group, together with the LLL Board, would like to see this generous gift as a catalyst for a greater and more participatory mission involvement of individuals, churches, schools and districts of the LCA with our very close neighbours in Indonesia.

Glenice Hartwich
Project Officer, The Board for Mission

COUNTRY PROFILE: INDONESIA

Leader: President Megawati Sukarnoputri

Economy: gross national income (GNI) per capita \$680 (Malaysia \$3,640, Australia \$19,770).

Monetary unit: rupiah

Main exports: petroleum, textiles, gas, wood, electrical appliances.

Indonesia has been accorded a kind of 'Little Tiger' status as it pursues the East Asian model of export-led growth. It was hit hard by the regional financial crisis in 1997 and the aftershocks did much to seal Suharto's fate. Domestic and foreign investment are still very low.

People: 214.8 million. Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous country after China, India and the US. Population density varies enormously from Java with 640 per sq km to Kalimantan with just 10.

Health: Infant mortality 33 per 1,000 live births (Malaysia 8, Australia 6). Access to safe drinking water: 90% of urban people and 69% of rural.

Environment: Indonesia is made up of around 13,000 islands. It has dense rainforest, particularly in the north. The burning of huge areas of forest in 1997 caused a smog which covered the whole of Southeast Asia. Illegal logging depletes the forests at a rate of 56.6 million cubic metres a year, much of it conducted or protected by the military.

Culture: The range of ethnic groups is vast but the principal ones are: Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Balinese, Ambon.

Language: Bahasa Indonesia is the official language, very similar to Malay and written in Roman script. There are hundreds of local languages, including at least 200 in West Papua.

Religion: Muslim (86%), Christian (10%), Hindu (2%, mainly in Bali).

Income distribution: poorest 10% have 4% of income, richest 10% have 26.7% (US 1.8%:30.5%).

Self-reliance: rich in natural resources but also increasingly exporting manufactured goods such as consumer electronics. Debt is still high, though, at \$133 billion in 2001.

Position of women: the law recognizes equal pay but women generally have lower-paid jobs. The authorities pay little attention to maltreatment of women forced to go abroad for work. Domestic violence and rape are rarely prosecuted.

Literacy: 87%. The financial crisis pushed millions more below the poverty line, with damaging consequences for the number of children in school.

Freedom: a marked improvement in the post-Suharto era.

Life expectancy: 67 years (Malaysia 73, Australia 79).

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Ayam Bumbu RUJAK (Mixed Spicy Chicken)

- 1 1/2 Kg of chicken Pieces
- 4 shallots (peeled and sliced)
- 3 cloves of garlic (peeled and sliced)
- 1 medium red chilli (seeded)
- handful of cashew nuts or 5 candlenut, crushed
- 1/8 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 1 tbs. vegetable oil
- 2 cm fresh ginger (sliced)
- 1 stalk lemon grass

Blend the shallots, garlic, chilli, cashew nuts, salt, sugar, turmeric and 1/4 cup coconut milk into a paste.

Heat the oil in a wok and sauté the paste for one or two minutes until you can smell the aroma.

Place the chicken, ginger and lemon grass into the wok and stir fry for 5 minutes or more over a medium heat. Then add the rest of the coconut milk, cook for 30 minutes, stirring the chicken frequently.

Serve when the sauce is thickened and the chicken is tender.

Garnish with extra cashew nuts, sliced red chili and coriander. Serve with steamed rice.

Serves 4-6



Myriad thoughts and emotions are evoked by the new title of our mission magazine. There are elements of apprehension, uncertainty and even fear as we approach the unknown, but there are also elements of anticipation, expectation and excitement.

CROSSING borders



That's how it was for us as we planned for and made our own border crossing.

For many years, ever since our return from Papua New Guinea 35 years ago, we had always thought that one day we may like to have the opportunity to serve overseas again. However, time and circumstances kept saying to us, 'No, not yet'. Then quite suddenly, earlier in the year, a time and particular set of circumstances seemed to be giving us the opportunity to go to Thailand. Well, we thought God's planning was seriously amiss. Here we were, Neil almost 70 and Colleen not far behind, and God was suggesting we go to Thailand to teach English. Neil hadn't done any teaching since our PNG days and Colleen hates humid weather. However, those circumstances and the timing kept saying, 'Go'. So we said, 'Okay, we'll go!'

We arrived in Bangkok, a city with a population of nearly 9 million people, at midnight and were taken to Laksi Lutheran Church Centre in the north-eastern part of the city. This was to be our home for the next couple of months.

What is Laksi all about?

Laksi is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thailand. It is located some 20 kilometres north-east of central Bangkok. The congregation has been a functioning church in this area for over 30 years. In the last six months the members have completed a wonderful new complex in the suburb of Bangkhen. It is built over four floors and comprises a worship centre, communal areas, offices, counselling centre, library, classrooms for the English centre, audio room, music rooms, apartment for volunteers and the pastor's apartment. The congregation's outreach activities revolve mainly around counselling, English teaching and friendship evangelism.

There are two co-workers here. Wandee is the pastor who leads the congregation. She is also responsible for the counselling centre and lectures in this area at both the seminary and another university. Preda, a talented musician, is the evangelist. He takes services and Bible studies as well as undertaking myriad other tasks associated with running a church. Please pray for Preda's three-year-old daughter, Diana. She is on a course of chemotherapy, having been diagnosed with cancer behind an eye, but the cancer has now spread to her bones. What a test of faith this is for Preda and his family. We have truly been privileged to work with and share a small part of our lives with these people.

What does our work entail?

In two words: teaching English. The English program is in the very early stages of development, an initiative of the part-time Norwegian missionary at Laksi. Our task is to take her classes while she was on leave in Norway, so we feel quite the pioneers. We teach two classes of English every day at Laksi, except on Fridays, when we have a very busy day doubling classes for that day. We make a 20-kilometre journey south of here to the seminary to teach a total of four classes, two to students and two conversation classes to staff members. However, we also see our work as being 'just friends' to the people here and joining in the life and activity of the church. That offer of friendship has been reciprocated a hundred-fold.

What's it like to live at Laksi?

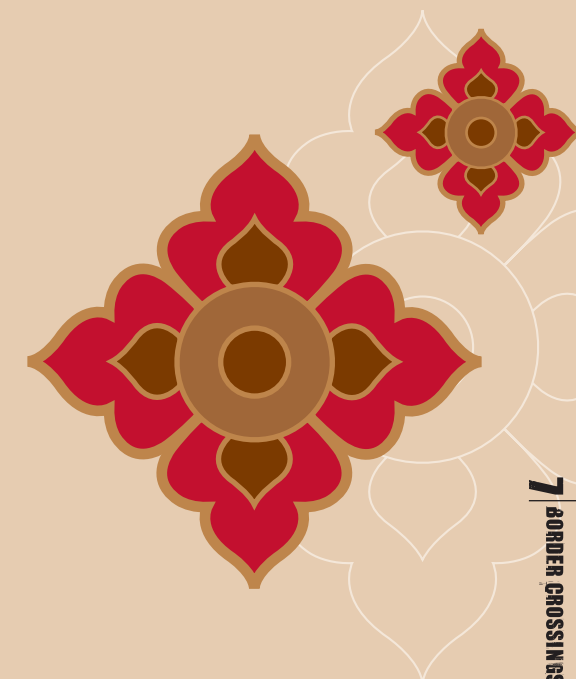
Our living quarters on the second floor are comfortable, modern and air-conditioned. In common with most Thai houses we have no hot-water system, so the showers are cold – something to be endured. We have a basic kitchen but we go out to eat for all meals except breakfast. We eat tantalising meals

in little restaurants on our street or from the street carts selling food. Our favourite restaurant is about five doors away, where we eat for the princely sum of about \$5 for the two of us. The food sold from street carts is even cheaper and very good.

So, what was in it for us?

Heaps! As with all things like this, we came to contribute and have found we received so much more in return. Sometimes there seemed to be obstacles at the border as we struggled with our few Thai words and the people here struggled with their many more English words and we all had to concentrate very hard to communicate. We have different ways of doing things and different lifestyles. However, as Christians we are not two different peoples but truly members of one family. We crossed a border but found no barrier. It didn't exist.

Neil and Colleen Bradtke



unknown TERRITORY

Crossing borders always brings a mix of emotions. On the one hand, the prospect of crossing a border stirs feelings of excitement and anticipation within me. I love travelling, I love exploring, I love discovering new things and growing through these discoveries...

On the other hand, it also brings a certain fear of the unknown. What lies beyond the horizon, and how will it affect me? How will I be challenged? How will I grow? Crossing any border is like charting new and unknown territory.

For a few months I had been carrying a dream: to take a team of young people and adults from the Freeling parish to an overseas mission field. I shared my dream with Glenice Hartwich and by the end of the week she had put me in touch with Dr William Chang from the Lutheran Church in Singapore. Several months later, a week after Easter, I found myself sitting on a plane to Cambodia.

It's been something of a whirlwind journey. But still the dream continues to grow. We are now in the process of preparing a team of 17 people to travel in January, and we will be joined by a team from Singapore. We will have a team of doctors and nurses with us with the aim of providing free medical clinics to villagers. We also hope to assist local Christians in a building project and by sharing the gospel through games, songs and Bible stories. It's especially exciting to have a team of our young people joining us. As we come to terms with Cambodia's tragic past, our prayer is that we will all grow through the experience.

Along the way there have been many borders to cross and there will be many more to come. There will be cultural borders, with strange foods, accents, words and customs. Waking up to the smell of fish balls or

seafood congee may take some getting used to, when plain old cornflakes sounds far more appetising. For many of the people travelling, the cost of going to Cambodia will present a significant border in itself and many of them will need to make genuine sacrifices to scrape the funds together. Poverty, disease, heat, humidity, sights, smells and being completely out of our comfort zone – each of these and so many other things represent yet more borders to cross.

Crossing borders is hard work! It's certainly easier to stay at home where things are safe and familiar. So why do we do it? To learn and grow. Sometimes we have to see what other people don't have in order to understand how much we do. Sometimes we have to strain to understand other people and their culture in order to better understand ourselves and our own. Sometimes we have to see the world through different eyes in order to help our own eyes focus properly, to show us what the world is really like. Sometimes we need to see the faith through hungry eyes, to remind us what a precious gift we have in our suffering Saviour Jesus Christ and how spiritually malnourished we can become in this land of plenty. Yes, the scariest border to cross is the border of humility: realising how much the people we are preparing to help will end up helping us and we may end up coming home as changed people.

And so, with some four months to go before we take off, it's a daunting thing to look

ahead and see border after border in our way. But our God isn't a stranger to crossing borders, is he? I can't help thinking of that ultimate border, death, which he quite literally cross-ed on a hill outside Jerusalem and which we crossed with him through our baptism. As Christians, we have nothing to fear when it comes to crossing borders. God has already flung open much more significant doors for the sake of the gospel and these little borders and barriers waiting for us are only matchsticks in comparison.

Please support our project and other short-term mission teams like ours by remembering us in your prayers. And be encouraged! If God presents you with an opportunity to share in this kind of mission work, don't let the borders get in the way. Beyond them wait many wonderful blessings, both for you and for the people he sends you to.

Pastor Matthias Prenzler
Freeling/Rosedale, South Australia



A village farmyard

NO WALLS

For some years the members of St Mark's Lutheran Church at Epping in Sydney had been talking about mission. Six years ago we began serious discussion and action to plant a church in the north-western suburbs of Sydney, approximately 40 kilometres from the CBD, along the growth corridor. In 2005 it became a reality when Friends in the Park Lutheran Community Church began.

So, how did it start? The geographic and demographic size of Sydney plays a major part in church attendance, so anyone within a half-hour's drive of a Lutheran church is deemed to be fairly close. With our time-poor society, we wanted to eliminate the travel time involved for people coming to church, so we wound back the clock and looked at an earlier model of 'church' – one that began about 2000 years ago.

God of course works things his way and in his time. One day some of the core members were out walking and came across a playgroup in the local park. The group running this playgroup goes to new communities, gets a group established and then looks for a local group to continue it. We became that local group!

Every Thursday morning during the school term, we meet with between 15-25 mums, dads and nannies and between 25-35 children to enjoy fun, fellowship and activities in the park in Kellyville. Community events we have run include Clean Up Australia Day, National Tree Planting Day, Carols in the Park and a 'KDzone' Day, which was aimed at dads and their children. Forthcoming events include a garage sale, a multi-cultural food day and jazz in the park.

We worship twice a month. On the first Sunday of the month we worship in the park. We put up with extreme weather, wind, noise, strange looks and footballs. In the two and half years of worshipping in the park, we have only had to move indoors three times due to inclement weather. There have been six baptisms in the park, with more to come.

Some people have work or commitments on Sunday mornings, so a second worship opportunity is offered on the second Saturday of the month at 5.30 pm. We finish by 6.30 pm. This worship time is based around a meal and finishes with the

Lord's Supper, so both physical and spiritual needs are met. We have dubbed this worship 'Placemat Church', as everything required is on the placemat on the table.

We are currently funded by a grant from the Board for Mission and our commissioned layworker is partially supported by the Board for Lay Ministry as well as by regular offerings and support from our mother congregation at Epping.

Our vision is 'Open hearts, open lives, open doors: Connecting people with Jesus that they may live a full life'. We hope to connect with people where they are, and we try to follow these four P's of mission:

- **Proximity** (Go to the people)
- **Presence** (Don't be afraid to be seen among the people)
- **Powerlessness** (Be humble servants)
- **Proclamation** (Whenever the opportunity arises, share the gospel).

Our focus is on the general community, not lapsed Lutherans.

We often get the question, 'When are you building a church?' Our answer is always 'We're not. The people are the church, so we already have one.'

Another question is, 'How many people come to church?' For the work we are doing, this question is irrelevant. A better question is, 'How many people do we connect with?', and the answer to that is well over 300.

We believe we are only the gardeners. We sow the seed and God looks after the growing. So the focus of our mission is literally to those in our backyards, those we meet at the shops or those we play sport with. We worship on Sundays, but we 'do' church at playgroup on Thursday mornings or at soccer practice or over a meal.

There are some needs, of course. Not having a building does have its limitations. Setting



up playgroup or worship takes a small team of helpers – and three cars! We would dearly love to have a large trailer in which all equipment is stored in one place.

It would also enable us to become mobile, which was one of our initial goals. A trailer that can do this job might cost between \$4000-\$6000. However, we know God will provide in his own time.

Please keep us in your prayers. Pray that Friends in the Park Lutheran Community Church can continue to build relationships in our community and find opportunities for sharing the good news.

And if you are ever in Sydney, come and visit us.

Mark Simpfendorfer
Layworker, Kellyville



re-establishing CONTACT

What an amazing privilege to be part of the first tour of Australian Lutheran teachers to Papua New Guinea!

When I first heard about the visit to PNG I jumped at the chance. I had never experienced a country such as this and had heard so many stories that I had to see it for myself. The tour was a result of the work over a number of years of Executive Director of Lutheran Education Australia, Dr Adrienne Jericho. In the past, Lutheran schools in Australia and PNG have been very closely connected, both geographically and through ties between the churches. We need to re-establish this connection in order to let the people of PNG know they have not been forgotten.

PNG is a very beautiful country. After leaving our 'flat' country, it was amazing to see the mountainous land as we were flying in, and then the forests of palm trees and such lush green land. I had no idea what the next ten days would hold and was overwhelmed with mixed feelings of excitement and a sense of wariness. We travelled to Madang, Lae, Goroka and Port Moresby. Everywhere we went the scenery was breathtaking. Not only this, but in the first couple of days I began to experience the beauty of the people who lived here, and to spend time with them at first hand was incredible.

PNG people are wonderful, welcoming people. They opened their arms to us in so

many ways. We were blessed beyond belief to meet with them, understand their hurts and needs and to learn from them. I am still amazed at how warmly we were received everywhere we went and at how giving they are. They are people who love God. They live their faith openly and genuinely. Everyone on tour was moved and inspired just by who they were.

One of the most personally rewarding and challenging moments of the trip was when I spent a day in a school, teaching the children, talking to staff and learning not only about their education system but also about their passion for teaching and living. During the lunch-time break I sat at a child's desk with just a handful of teachers in the room. We began to talk, and the topic changed to what it had been like for me to visit a country where I am very obviously in the minority. One of their teachers responded in a way that took me by surprise. The opinion that she has had of white people is that we think we are more superior and better off than they are. She said, 'Here you are, sitting at a child's dirty desk in a classroom with a broken concrete floor, with no lunch [they couldn't provide it] talking to us like we are your old friends'. She had changed her opinion of white people. What a privilege!

We visited many schools, colleges and offices, and met teachers and principals as we explored ways to make new

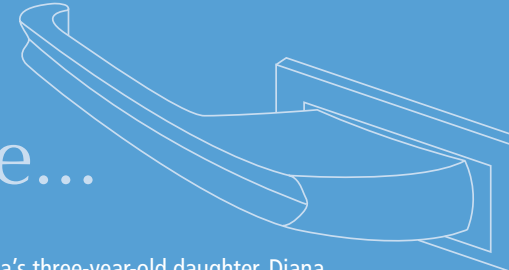
connections. It was inspirational to see such clever, resourceful teachers in under-resourced schools. They provide worthwhile and exciting education with very, very little. For example, they make classroom decorations from empty aluminium cans. Forty-five students study from one book. In classes where there is no paper, the children do all their written work on a shared blackboard. The junior primary children have no desks and sit on dirt or coral floors.

They are passionate, dynamic people who are crying out for culturally-appropriate resources. One school had an entire shipping container in their front yard. It is full of gift books from 'us' – and it has been there for 2 years! They have been unable to unpack it because they have no storage space in the school. Many schools have no windows and are not secure from weather or burglary. Sometimes our best intentions don't meet the people's needs.

I'll never forget walking into that first school – seeing classrooms with dirt floors, broken desks (or no desks), and no books! That was the moment I yearned to be part of this ongoing-partnership. I believe that God is leading us on an exciting journey as we re-establish contact with our neighbours. We have so much to share with them, and just as much to learn from them!

Vicki Gollasch
St John's Lutheran Primary School,
Portland, Victoria

PRAYER POINTS for the fridge...



Pastor Greg Schiller (Papua New Guinea)

- Greg's safety while traveling, especially at night within Lae city to night fellowships with students
- Greg and friends as they minister to people from the Highlands in Lae

other prayer points shared by Greg...

- the new principal at Martin Luther Seminary (MLS) in Lae PNG
- spiritual growth of MLS students and deepening of their sense of call to ministry
- a new prayer group beginning next term at MLS

- preparations for graduation in Dec (6 graduates)

Pastor Simon Mackenzie and his wife Oiy (Thailand)

- Simon as he continues to learn the Thai language
- Simon and Oiy as they prepare to come home on leave in December
- God's direction as they prepare to move into the Chiang Rai region and Nan Province in Thailand

Other prayer points...

- Joshua and Kim Pfeiffer and David and Ruth Craig serving as volunteers in Indonesia

- Preda's three-year-old daughter, Diana (see Crossing Borders article)

- Freeling team going to Cambodia in Jan
- Friends in the park, Kellyville

- thanks to God for Pam Copeland and for her 20+ years of faithful service through the LCA's Board for Mission, and for God's continued wisdom and guidance for Pam as she serves in her new role at Tea Tree Gully Lutheran Church, SA

- rulers and their governments in all countries – may they rule well so that followers of Jesus can live out their faith

- followers of Jesus to carry out their mission mandate each and every day

JOIN IN God's mission in the world...

by supporting the LCA's Board for Mission work through our partner churches.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • School for blind children in Indonesia | • Bethany Home for disabled young people in Malaysia | • Scholarships for the children of pastors in PNG |
| • Orphanages in Indonesia | • Homes for neglected and abused children (Malaysia and Sabah) | • Sponsor a missionary in PNG and Thailand |
| • Mission outreach to tribal people in Indonesia | • Mission outreach to indigenous people (Orang Asli) in Malaysia | • Training of evangelists and church leaders in China (partnership program with Sabah) |
| • Bible translation in Australia (LBTA) and Indonesia | • Mission outreach in Cambodia and Thailand | • Scholarships (Indonesia, Malaysia, PNG, Sabah, Singapore, Thailand) |
| • Disaster response in Indonesia | • Christian Youth projects (Sabah and PNG) | • Seminaries in Sabah, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and PNG |
| • LLL/LCA projects in Indonesia | • Medical mission in PNG | • Trailer for Kellyville (church with no walls) |

RESPONSE form

If you would like to support one or more of the above 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 Electronic Funds Transfer – please contact BfM on 08 8267 7300.

Please tell us which projects (from the list above) you wish to support and how much you want to give to each.

Project _____	Amount \$ _____
Project _____	Amount \$ _____
Project _____	Amount \$ _____
Project _____	Amount \$ _____
Project _____	Amount \$ _____
Project _____	Amount \$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____	

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

Please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card no.

Expiry ____ / ____ Amount \$ _____

Name _____ Signature _____

Address _____

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

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 (especially 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 and orphanages)
- Lecturers / Teachers of English (Nommensen University)
- Practical service at the Blind School in Medan
- Practical service in orphanages
- Teachers of English for the pastors' and leaders' courses

Sabah

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

Papua New Guinea

- Pharmacist to organize medicines in pharmacy at Gaubin Hospital on Karkar Island
- Site manager of the building project at Gaubin Hospital (maybe a retired builder)

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 in 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

Indonesia

- Work teams from Australia to help with the repair and maintenance of the buildings at the Simalingkar Farm – part of the LLL/LCA projects (possibly team/s of farmers or university students)
- Youth conference in 2008 – team from Australia to join the conference in Indonesia
- Partnership with Lutheran schools
- Supporting a scholarship holder

Sabah

- Youth group participation in youth camp ministry

Papua New Guinea

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

If you would like to know how you can be a volunteer in mission or how your congregation, school, youth group or fellowship group can partner in mission, please contact the Board for Mission: Phone (08) 8267 7300 or Email: bfm@lca.org.au



Coming events...

Stand Up

Join millions of people around the world to STAND UP and SPEAK OUT against poverty and injustice.
October 17, 2007

For more info go to:
www.makepovertyhistory.com.au

Katherine Lehman School international reunion

July 11–14, 2008
Luther Heights, Coolool, Old.
Contact Adelle Radke for more info,
email: r.radke@bigpond.com or
phone: (07) 3824 5291