

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.

☐ Bethany Home for disabled young people in Malaysia\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ School for blind students in Indonesia\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Homes for neglected and abused children in Malaysia\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Singapore International Seafarers’ Mission\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Singapore Thai Good News Centre\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Singapore Giraffe course\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

☐ Publication of tracts and other Christian literature for PNG\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

☐ Youth work programs in Sabah and PNG\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Mission outreach to Kubu tribal people in Indonesia\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Orphanages in Indonesia\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ LLL/LCA projects in Indonesia\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Bible translation (LBTA)\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

☐ Scholarships for children of pastors in PNG\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

☐ Seminaries in Sabah, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and PNG\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Medical mission work in PNG\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Books for the seminary libraries of our overseas partner churches\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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) (credit card) OR fill out the form below (credit card or cheque) OR by Electronic Funds Transfer – please contact BfM on 08 8267 7334.

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

Please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card no.

Expiry \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

☐ Please tick if you require a receipt

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...

Indonesia

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

Malaysia

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

Thailand

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

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)
- Work in agriculture and water projects with indigenous people in the interior of Sabah

Papua New Guinea

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

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

Indonesia

- Partnership with Lutheran schools
- Regional partnership

Malaysia

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

Thailand

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

Sabah

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

Papua New Guinea

- Congregation willing to pray for, support and partner with Pastor Greg Schiller as he serves at Martin Luther Seminary in Lae
- Congregation to congregation partnership
- Youth group exchange and youth music/ ministry teams
- Maintenance teams in various locations
- Teachers for youth ministry leaders’ and pastors’ courses
- Partnership with schools
- Habitat for Humanity teams building in Lutheran villages

Singapore

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

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

TAKE NOTE...

2011

100 year celebration for the coming of the first missionary to Siassi Island, PNG.

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

Help with writing a history of the women of Siassi.

If you have lived and worked on Siassi, the women of Siassi invite you to contribute your stories for the publication “Histori bilong ol mama.”

Stories can be emailed to Glenice Hartwich: [glenice.hartwich@lca.org.au](mailto:glenice.hartwich@lca.org.au) or sent to the BfM office, 197 Archer St North Adelaide, SA 5006



Come with us to Cambodia...

volunteers needed!

16 – 31 January 2009 or 27 June – 11 July 2009

See much more than tourists and make a real difference. Join us in service, witness and mission.

Pay-your-own-way in return for the experience of a lifetime. Basic cost around \$2,200 + spending money.

Faint-hearts need not apply!

Contact Pastor Roger Whittall: 8562 1057 or [rogerwhittall@lca.org.au](mailto:rogerwhittall@lca.org.au)



ONE SHIRT BETWEEN TWO  
Working with local partners rather than giving handouts

I HATED THE WORD  
A personal encounter in mission

VIETNAMESE COLD ROLLS  
Quick and easy!

BORDER

CROSSINGS

ISSUE 03 // OCTOBER 2008



## Border Crossings

Official publication of the  
Board for Mission of the LCA

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Designed by Heidi Rurade

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## Board for Mission

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# I HATED THE WORD



Growing up as a pastor's kid had its advantages. When church dignitaries from the USA visited Australia, we got to meet them. When Nestlé introduced and sponsored instant coffee and Ideal Milk at the 1956 convention of Synod, we got to try it. When two Papua New Guineans came down with Missionary Keith Nagel, they came to our place for lunch. When there was harvest thanksgiving, we got a good share of the fruit and vegies that were laid on the altar steps (no doubt compensating for the low salaries in those days!).

On the other hand, we had to go to church – and not just to normal services. I mean church which lasted for hours. I mean church where there was more than one sermon. Thirty-five minutes from one pastor, a hymn, and then twenty-five minutes from the next. Even the lunch tables laden with cream cakes couldn't make up for that – and the interminable slide-shows in the afternoon.

Yes, we're talking about mission festivals. How we hated that word mission! Mission was long. Mission was boring – except for the New Guineans, that is. Meeting them – and I can still remember that their names were Yasaking and Sidi – was all that was exciting and ultimately out of this world for a family who'd lived their whole life in Adelaide.

Well, they say it's a small world, but I'll never forget the day many years later when I was talking to Leah Haro, secretary to the late bishop of the Evangelical Church in Papua New Guinea, Dr Wesley Kigasung. As we chatted, it gradually came out: Leah was a pastor's kid too. What's more, her father had been a significant leader of the church,

a district president no less. Once he'd even visited Australia with Keith Nagel. His name was Yasaking!

That Leah and I ever met up, that Australians and Papua New Guineans share such a strong bond, has to do with the word I once hated and now love – MISSION, because it's all about God sending, God turning around people's lives, God linking up his family members around the world.

It's been a special blessing for me these last years to see the fruit of God's mission at first hand, to meet so many people who have been impacted by the Lutheran Church of Australia and are so grateful to it. You can visit PNG or Sumatra or Singapore or Malaysia or Thailand, and again and again you'll hear the story from so many: 'The LCA is special in my life. It befriended me, it walked with me, it taught me, it helped me to understand more fully the great news that our God is a sending God. He sent Jesus. He sends us.'

**Pastor Wayne Zweck**  
**Secretary of the Lutheran Church of Australia**  
**Director of the Board for Mission**

*Pastor Wayne Zweck retires at the end of October 2008 as Secretary of the LCA and Director of the Board for Mission after 7 years in these vital roles. We thank God for all that Wayne has done in Australia and overseas to point people to Jesus and encourage the mission of God among the followers of Jesus.*

Some four years ago Pastor Rob Erickson was involved in assisting the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) Seminary in Pematang Siantar, Sumatra, with English education. Pastor Rob was then the pastor of Living Faith congregation, Murrumba Downs in Queensland. Following discussions with Dr Willem Simamarta, from the HKBP, about standards of English in Sumatra, a strategy involving Grace College was devised to offer a place at the Rothwell campus for a guest student to study for a year. Living Faith would supply host parents.

Currently we are hosting our third student at Living Faith. Ria Limbong is now studying in Year 11 at Grace.

There are many blessings that are flowing from this program. More importantly,

probably, is that we have established rapport with people in Sumatra and we gain insight into their education system, with their accompanying hopes and aspirations. Although our communication is getting better, we still have some way to go for these exchanges to be totally effective.

One major blessing we are finding is that with each student returning to Sumatra, we gain a top quality line of communication. This will be most important for future interaction with our brothers and sisters there.

Educators in Sumatra believe that the learning of English is critical for the future development of the country. Excellence in the standard of English within the HKBP education system would ensure that more

young Christian men and women can gain employment within their government departments.

English is known as a poetic language for good reason. There are so many ways of saying the same thing. Consequently, English is a very difficult language to learn. We are now looking at ways to improve the standard of spoken English.

It is important that we listen to requests from our northern neighbour, rather than falling into the trap of us deciding what may be a good program. Effective communication is the key. Praise God for placing this challenge before us.



## LIVING THE FAITH

BY GRAHAM DONGES

## AUSTRALIA... WOW!

BY RIA LIMBONG



Ria Limbong and Graham Donges

RIA LIMBONG RECEIVED A SCHOLARSHIP FROM LIVING FAITH LUTHERAN CONGREGATION TO STUDY IN AUSTRALIA AT GRACE COLLEGE. READ HER PERSONAL STORY AND SEE WHAT GREAT PROGRESS SHE HAS MADE IN HER ENGLISH.

Australia... WOW! That was the first thing that stuck in my head when I knew I would come to Australia. I never thought that I would come over here. That was just a dream for me to go overseas. A little poor person was impossible to go to Australia. God can do everything and make impossible things become possible.

I was really interested when my mum gave me chance to join an English course out of my school. I was more interested when I heard that Australia Lutheran Church (Living Faith

Congregation) and Indonesia HKBP church have a program about sending students to Australia without paying anything. I thought that was the first, the last and the biggest thing that I ever had. I tried my best to reach that chance. Once I heard that I would come to Australia, I was really excited. I prayed to God and said thanks to him for giving me a chance to me to go to Australia and making my dream come true.

The scariest thing about coming to Australia was the school and the people. I thought I would have different culture, different friends, different teachers and even different ways of studying. I thought I would not be fine. I thought I would not be able to follow the lessons as well as my friends and as well as when I was in Indonesia. But, in the bottom of my heart I knew that God will be with me and I knew that everyone in Australia will look after me.

Now I can follow my friends and I feel comfortable with everyone. I have family and friends who look after me and take care of me. I am glad I came because I can make my dreams come true. I can improve my English, know more people around me, adding friends and family and the important thing is I can have better English now.

Now I can make all my family and my friends in Indonesia proud of me and make students in Indonesia realise that everything is possible.

Thanks to Living Faith and Grace Lutheran college for giving me chance to come to Australia and improve my English. Thanks for every single person in Australia who takes care of me and looks after me. Praise God for giving me and us lives and every single chance that he gives us.





# WANTOK BILONG MI

BY CORAL GALLASCH

TONY GALLASCH SERVED AS A MECHANIC WITH THE AUSTRALIAN LUTHERAN MISSION IN NEW GUINEA IN THE 60'S. HIS WIFE CORAL RECOUNTS THE STORY OF THEIR MOVING VISIT TO THE COUNTRY AND PEOPLE THAT ARE PART OF OUR FAMILY OF FAITH.

The tropical rain poured down, turning the village tracks to mud and shrouding the Heldsbach community in mist. We peered out of the window from where we had taken shelter in the Finschhafen District guesthouse.

Then we heard a voice calling out above the downpour: 'Tony, Tony, here is someone to see you.' It was the voice of the Finschhafen district president, who lives with his family across the road.

As Tony went out onto the verandah, a large umbrella sheltering three figures emerged out of the rain. Suddenly, a small figure elbowed the district president to one side. He dashed up the steps and threw his arms around Tony, hugging him as if he would never let go. Tears streamed down his face, which radiated a mixture of love, wonder and joy.

This was the emotional reunion of Tony Gallasch and his former 'work boy' Sabade, as they met again after forty-one years. 'The strength and length of that hug would have frightened me if I had not recognised Sabade at the last moment,' Tony commented later. 'I have never in my whole life been hugged like that. What a reception, what a welcome back!'

Together with his eleven-year-old granddaughter, Sabade had walked a two-and-a-half-hour journey down to the coast from his village Pindiu, high up above the Sattelberg mountain. He had come in response to a message from the district president, who had sent a messenger telling him that there was a visitor at Heldsbach wanting to see him.

Heldsbach Station at Finschhafen in Papua New Guinea (PNG) had been home to Tony for two years from 1965-1967, when he

worked in the Lutheran Mission workshop as a mechanic. During that time Tony trained Subade and other 'work boys' as apprentice mechanics. Tony also worked in other PNG Lutheran Mission workshops in Madang and Goroka, until he returned home to Verdun, South Australia, in 1970.

Now forty years on, Tony was moved to return to PNG, taking me with him. We were hesitant at first. Stories of the rascals and the rising crime rate made us question whether this was a good time for my first visit to PNG. Tony was afraid that too much would have changed, and that precious memories would be destroyed. Then, after speaking with former mission workers, we realised that the New Guineans need to know that former mission workers have not forgotten them – that they are still 'wantok bilong mi.'

When the tears had dried and the emotion had subsided, Tony and Sabade talked for five hours before Sabade started on his three-hour return walk up the mountain. After all, they had forty years of catching up to do! 'It's amazing how my Pidgin (the common language of many Papua New Guineans) returned after all these years,' said Tony.

Tony was able to introduce me to Sabade and show him photos of our family. Sabade told us that he was married and had eight children and fourteen grandchildren. Throughout his working life, Sabade had continued to work in mechanics. The Heldsbach Lutheran Mission workshop business was later sold to Boroka Motors and shifted to Gagidu and is still in use today. Sabade followed the Lutheran workshop to Gagidu and worked there until his retirement.

Although some would say that Tony was 'only a mechanic' and not a 'real missionary,' God uses all situations and all believers as vessels to spread his word. Tony was humbled as Sabade related how God had used and blessed Tony's efforts as a young twenty-one-year-old.

Throughout Sabade's working life, God had provided the opportunities for him to train other New Guineans to become mechanics and to contribute to their country's growing independence from white dominance. 'You were my best teacher,' Sabade told Tony. 'You taught me everything I know about engines. You explained about two-stroke and four-stroke, and about how engines work. You taught me very well, and I was able to teach others too. Yu Papa bilong mi (you are my father).'

In his retirement Sabade is a subsistence farmer, growing coffee, taro, and many fruits and vegetables. God is also using Sabade to minister to the Finschhafen district during his retirement. Sabade told us that he is now a spiritual headman of his village. To prepare him for this challenge, Sabade has taken part in the village headman classes run by German missionary Pastor Tobias Jaeger at Heldsbach. These classes run for several weeks at different times throughout the year. The men study the Bible and learn how to be lay ministers to their villagers. After their course is completed, rather than leaving the area to minister in other districts, these men return to their homes to become spiritual leaders in their own communities.

We praise God that the roots of the gospel planted in those years still remain firmly in place. The faith of the people remains strong. We are still all part of God's family. Every year the Finschhafen people remember

the date that Missionary Flierl first landed at Simbung village well over a hundred years ago. They give thanks to God through commemorative services and celebrations. They also remember that it was not until thirteen years later that the first converts to Christianity were baptised.

We were privileged to attend the Heldsbach commemorative service on 12 July. This special evening service was held by lamplight. Carrying torches and lamps, hundreds of people crowded into one of the village classrooms. Most, including the elderly, sat cross-legged on the floor. Those who could not fit inside gathered at the open side-walls. The evening began with a single voice singing a melody. This was gradually followed by other voices, until it seemed that the whole room was filled with the sounds of spine-tingling free harmony, all singing praises to God, accompanied by the haunting beat of three kundu drums.

Later in the evening, Pastor Tobias started up his generator and showed an excellent DVD about the life of Missionary Flierl, complete with Pidgin narration. We were amazed that while we were in Finschhafen PNG, we were watching footage of the Louise Flierl Missionary Museum at our home congregation in Hahndorf!

During our time at Finschhafen we became aware of the need for maintenance in many areas. This commemorative service was held in lamplight not by choice but by necessity! There is a hydro-electric scheme at Heldsbach, but two years ago this broke down due to lack of maintenance. Two years later this fault still has not been fixed. There is still no electricity in the community, and there are only a couple of small personal working generators on the station. Most people have to make do by using lamplight or candles, and by cooking with gas or on open fires outdoors.

Pastor Tobias is especially concerned about the state of the classroom used for the village headman courses. He told us that this school is a vitally important part of the ministry to these Finschhafen communities. White ants have invaded the wooden posts and beams of the classroom, the roof is rusting and leaking and the wooden walls are rotting.

Is God calling us to return to Finschhafen with a maintenance team? We wait for God's guidance, as we pray about this and grapple with the question of what to do. Since this country's independence, we are very aware that Papua New Guinea belongs to the New Guineans. It is now time for the New Guineans to make the decisions. It is not our place to say 'Do this' or 'Do that.'

We hope and pray that Tony's recent efforts with silicone on the leaking classroom roof

will challenge some of the younger men at Heldsbach to get up and have a go.

There is one thing that we are sure of: throughout our trip through Finschhafen, Lae, Madang and Goroka, God was with us, protecting us all the way. As we stepped out in faith, God sent his PNG guardian angels to protect and guide us in many potentially dangerous situations...

Like the time we met a group of a dozen men, armed with machetes and bush knives returning from clearing the bush. Another local villager just happened to be casually walking with us...

Like Suzie at Madang guesthouse, who took us under her wing and helped with our travel arrangements, which we had found so frustrating and difficult to organise from Australia...

Like Ola at Lae who insisted on accompanying us to the market bus depot. She personally chose our PMV (people moving vehicle) and haggled a good price for our trip to Goroka...

Like the stranger at Lae wharf who kindly offered us a lift to the Lutheran guesthouse when our arranged pick-up was late. He said it was too dangerous for us to wait there alone...

Like the stranger at Goroka market who helped us find the right bus to Asaroka. Unlike our buses in Australia, PNG buses do not have a destination displayed or even a marked bus stop...

Or when total strangers would casually walk along with us, chatting like old friends as we walked through the towns. Later we learnt that the rascals leave you alone if you are with a local because they know that locals may be able to identify them...

Even when travelling on the PMV mini buses for many hours from Madang to Lae, and later from Lae to Goroka – in buses that were hot, cramped and overloaded with people and cargo – we were always treated with helpful friendliness, courtesy and respect. We made many new friends from all walks of life.

We thank God for this amazing trip and for our New Guinean brothers and sisters. Along with Sabade, we can say this with love and humility: 'Wantok bilong mi' (you are one of my people – you speak my language).





# ONE SHIRT BETWEEN TWO...

BY LOIS WHITTALL

When my husband Roger and I were in Preah Vihear, Northern Cambodia, some time ago a woman came to the World Vision office seeking help. Her two young grandsons lived with her because their mother had died. They only had one shirt between them, so they took it in turns to go to school because you need to wear a uniform to go to school. A shirt costs \$7. We didn't ask, but they probably share the trousers too.

There are many 'one shirt between two' stories in Cambodia. It's a poor country – the average daily wage is around US\$1.50. But education is important; evidence shows that it has the biggest single impact on individual and community development.

We first went to Cambodia in 2005. At that time for us it was a holiday with a bit of a difference: we were going to meet the locals. Reinhard Tietze from Gympie in Queensland worked for World Vision (WV) in a remote northern province called Preah Vihear. We were part of an initiative of Asia Focus which raised \$30,000 to buy a community centre.

While we were there we met Vireak, who was to become our Cambodian 'son.' He told us how when he was three his father was taken by the Khmer Rouge and was not seen again; how his mother was forced to marry a Khmer Rouge soldier; how he was put into a child

labour camp. He also told us about the hunger of the next six years and about the atrocities etched deep in his memory. He told us about his fear even after the Khmer Rouge was overthrown but also about his determination to get an education. He walked 300 kilometres to Phnom Penh, found a distant relative, slept under her house, did odd jobs to get money, went to school, and learnt English by listening at the window of an English school. He graduated from high school, got a scholarship to go to Vietnam to learn accounting, worked for the government for a while and then found himself working at World Vision.

Vireak is a remarkable young man. He's determined to work with his people, and when they are sceptical he tells his story. He says that knowing the love of Jesus gets him through inevitable nightmares. His emphatic message to the people he works with is the importance of education. He encourages everyone to take the opportunities that are becoming more available, especially people in rural villages who are in danger of missing out on the economic development which is coming to the country.

So when on my second visit to Preah Vihear in 2005 Vireak suggested that the community centre wasn't being utilised and that a great use for it would be to provide accommodation for students who could not finish high school, I was hooked. He explained that in many villages bright young people had to give up their education after Year 9 because of a shortage of teachers. (There are bricks and mortar in many places in rural Cambodia

but not enough teachers.) From those conversations Plas Prai was born. Plas Prai means 'Transformation' in Khmer.

Today the Plas Prai Centre buzzes with the sounds of young women going about their daily lives. We raised the money to build a Khmer-style dormitory which houses 21 students aged between 17 and 22. They are in Years 11 and 12 from October 2008, and we will recruit another 12 girls who are starting Year 10. Our houseparent, her husband and new baby girl live in a separate dwelling, and we are currently raising the money to build a second dormitory which will be the final development on the site. We will accommodate students from Years 9 to 12, but also those who want and are able to go on to further education (we currently have one student doing teacher training). We choose girls because they are often disadvantaged compared with boys in Cambodian society.

Students are each supported by a sponsor, who not only provides financial support but also commits to writing regularly and praying for the student and her family. Each student receives US\$1 a day and with that buys everything she needs, including clothes and food. She receives a bike, schoolbooks and two school uniforms a year. We organise extra lessons in subjects where we find a number of students are weak (science and maths generally) and English lessons, as well as opportunities for Bible study. Sponsors contribute \$600 a year and this is enough for the material needs of a student in Preah Vihear. (Compare that with how much we

spend on our children's toys and games.) A typical student day is long. Our Year 11 girls are up with the roosters at around 5.30am, off to school at around 7 (lessons are staggered – not everyone goes at the same time), back around 11 to prepare lunch and rest a little in the heat of the day, back to school from 2 to 4, maths and science from 5 to 7 and English from 7 to 8. They have Saturday school as well, so Sunday provides some respite.

We are very privileged to be part of this community. My job as a university lecturer takes me to Singapore every 6-8 weeks, so I'm able to visit Plas Prai often and also to do voluntary work with WV and Lutheran World Service. I've had the pleasure of watching 'our girls' grow and develop over the last couple of years. We speak a little more in English each time and share hopes and dreams, which are not so different to those of my children at home. Twice a year in January and July Roger and I take groups from the LCA to visit Plas Prai and to share worship and Bible study with the local Christian community there.

We hear about many wonderful mission initiatives through Border Crossings, The Lutheran, Asia Focus and other publications, and it is very encouraging that so many people are getting directly involved in mission. God is truly working through his people. A few notes of caution, though. We need to be:

- good stewards, spending wisely and accountable both to those who donate and those who receive funds;

- ready to commit over the medium and longer term. This means having a plan for sustainable development;
- focused on those we serve rather than on ourselves. The 'feel good' factor is often responsible for 'bits and pieces' giving, by which the most articulate (English speakers) receive more. This can be divisive in Christian communities;
- partners working with local people, rather than superiors dispensing handouts.

So Plas Prai has been set up as an NGO (Non-Government Organisation – a charity) in Cambodia with Khmer Christians taking responsibility for its running. Funds raised in Australia are spent entirely in Cambodia. No travel or accommodation costs for non-Cambodians are paid by the project. We are starting a business which will eventually support the centre and enable us to move on to another project. To start a Christian high school with class sizes below the local average of 65 is one dream. Isn't it good that God has given us the capacity to dream!

*Lois Whittall is a member of the LCA Board for Mission who together with her husband, Pastor Roger Whittall engages in the lives of the people in Plas Prai, Northern Cambodia in very practical and personal ways. They invite you to join one of the teams they will lead to Cambodia in January and July 2009.*

## Vietnamese cold rolls

- 50g Vermicelli noodles (broken)
- 1 tbs cooking oil
- 2 chicken breast fillets (350g) or ½ BBQ chicken
- Small red capsicum, thinly sliced
- 1 cup bean sprouts
- 2 tbs chopped mint
- 2 tbs chopped coriander
- 1 tbs plum sauce
- 2 tbs fish sauce
- 2 tbs sweet chilli sauce
- Juice of ½ lime or lemon
- 12 cooked prawns (optional), halved lengthways
- 16 round rice paper sheets

Heat oil in small frying pan & cook chicken until brown & cooked through. Let cool for 10 minutes & slice. Or thinly slice cooked BBQ chicken.

Place noodles in bowl & cover with boiling water. Allow to stand 5 minutes or until tender. Drain noodles & transfer to large bowl.

Add chicken, capsicum, bean sprouts, mint, coriander, sauces & lime juice.

Place one sheet of rice paper on dish/plate of warm water & soak until just softened. Lift carefully & place on board; pat dry with paper towel.

Place ½ prawn (colour side down) in middle top half of rice sheet. Top with heaped tablespoon of filling. Fold bottom half of rice sheet over filling. Roll rice sheet from side to side to form a parcel. Repeat with remaining rice sheets & filling.

Cover & refrigerate until required.

Serve cold rolls with dipping sauce made by combining sweet chilli sauce &/or Ketjap Manis (available in the Asian section of the supermarket)







# DALAM YESUS KITA BERSAUDARA

## [IN JESUS CHRIST WE ARE ALL FAMILY]

ON 29 JULY, FIVE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM MELBOURNE LUTHERAN STUDENT FELLOWSHIP (LSF) HEADED OFF TO SABAH, EAST MALAYSIA, FOR A THREE WEEK MISSION TRIP. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME REFLECTIONS ON A NUMBER OF ASPECTS OF THIS VERY CHALLENGING AND REWARDING TRIP.

What were our experiences in meeting young people and observing youth ministry in Sabah? We were challenged to learn new skills and build on established ones. We spent time with both the youth and their coordinators, sharing, through our translators, the similarities and differences between youth programs in Sabah and those in Victoria (eg Christian Life Week [CLW], Kids Camp, etc). It's difficult to sum these up in such a small space; our general impressions, though, were that their youth programs are much more intensive and frequent. In one community we visited, a group of about thirty to forty youth (aged maybe 13-17) would spend the better part of every Sunday together in fellowship, and CLW-style camps would be run in the greater district every few weeks. They told us that they were aiming for 1000 attendees (!) at an up-and-coming mega youth camp.

Our fellowship activities with the different youth groups were varied. At times we led singing or performed for them (eg Bible stories, Australian folk songs) at evening gatherings, at other times (where there were words to read off) we did our best to join in sing-a-longs in Malay, we participated in Bible studies, and helped lead at youth camps/gatherings. Overall, we were really inspired by what we saw in the youth communities and how they were coordinated. Apart from the impressive scale on which youth ministry is run in Sabah, the youth themselves have a vibrant faith. It was a real blessing to spend time with them.

Wherever we went in Sabah, the locals always welcomed us as special guests and were generous in their hospitality towards us. At a community meal we'd always be asked to serve ourselves first, before the locals. In churches, whether it was for a Sunday service or a mid-week fellowship night, we were always asked to sit together in one of the front pews, even if it was the custom for men and women to sit on separate sides of the aisle.

Upon arriving at someone's house, we were usually served hot, sweet coffee and/or Milo, often with small packets of plain sweet biscuits. At one longhouse we visited, women representing seven families each brought out a tray with a jug of coffee or Milo, two cups and a bowl of biscuits. Graciously accepting such a welcome meant – as our guides explained – drinking and eating as much as we could, making sure we kept the consumption fairly even between each tray so as not to offend any families. Since there were five of us Aussies, plus our two guides, we had the equivalent of a jug and bowl each to try to finish! This one example is indicative of the wonderful hospitality we received.

Wherever we went there would be worship in some capacity, whether a Sunday service or an evening fellowship time with the locals. For the most part, the elements were familiar: songs sung together, prayers, a sermon, and an offering. Music ministry is a huge focus of the BCCM, with young people assisted to learn musical instruments as a way of encouraging the next generation to play an active part in leading worship. Musicians ranged from a lone guitarist to a full band with multiple vocalists. A sermon, based on a Bible text, could always be counted on, but sermons never seemed so long to us as they did when in Malaysian! Prayers in worship were a highlight; a worship leader would lead prayer, and people would begin saying their own prayers aloud all at once, until the church was full of the sound

of people praying, including our own voices added to the mix!

We had anticipated that worship would be different in some ways, and that we probably wouldn't understand most of it as it would be in Bahasa Malaysia. However, we hadn't realised the full implications of this for us. Essentially, we had three weeks of regular and frequent worship without being able to understand any of it, except for a few times when parts of the worship were translated for us. We didn't know what we were singing; we (usually) didn't know what Bible passage was being preached on; we prayed alongside others without knowing what they were praying. Also, some elements of the Lutheran liturgy as we know them, were absent. The effect was that in spite of participating in worship so regularly, and even having our own daily team devotions and prayers, we felt as though we missed church!

However, worship was also a time to see the depth of faith of those around us, the warmth of the communities we visited, and the passion for Christ and for ministry that our guides had.

A major practical challenge was the Malay-English language barrier, although, as we soon found out, there was plenty we could share and come to know about each other in spite of this. We did learn some basic Malay, and many of the locals could speak some English, some even spoke it very well, but in most cases our multi-lingual guides (different Sabahan tribes usually speak different dialects) – Pastor Francis and/or Pastor Jonius and/or (youth worker) Tony – did a great job translating for our group as required.

One of the ways we were able to overcome the language barrier was through the presentation of dramas and Australian songs with actions, during 'cultural nights' and church services. Through these presentations

BY ANNE COLLYER, JOEL CRAMER,  
ESTHER KLEINIG, MICHAEL LANG  
AND ARIEL PFITZNER

and other fellowship activities, we really felt God working through us in a way that we didn't expect and, indeed, find difficult to articulate. In fact, the range of activities we participated in without the need for a great level of verbal communication was surprising. Whether we were playing games with the children in the villages, or showing photos of our family, friends and country from photo albums and books about Australia, or giving the aforementioned presentations, or sharing in/receiving these from our hosts, there was a deep sense of fellowship, joy and identification between us.

The mission trip on the whole, then, was an incredibly rewarding one. We intend this to be but the beginning of an ongoing relationship between the tertiary youth of Victoria and the BCCM. We will be encouraging and will ultimately assist a group/s from our own community in the preparation for possible visits in the future, so that this relationship will continue to grow. Through the generous support of people from around Australia, and particularly from the Victorian community, we were assisted in covering a part of our own financial costs, and have been able to donate a substantial amount of money to contribute towards a building project for an interior (jungle) neighborhood that we visited, and a van to assist specifically in youth ministry. We feel that this relationship has been, and will continue to be, a blessing for both of our communities. Reaching out and sharing Christ's love with his universal family is something that every congregation has the capacity to do in one way or another. The lyrics of the greeting (hand-shaking) song we came to learn well – being sung by nearly every congregation we communed with in Sabah – rings true: 'Dalam Yesus kita bersaudara' (In Jesus Christ we are all family), and indeed, it is a call to action.

## BUT I'VE RETIRED FROM TEACHING!

BY JULIAN PFITZNER

THIS WAS ONE OF THE THOUGHTS THAT FIRST CAME TO MIND WHEN JULIAN PFITZNER WAS ASKED TO TEACH A THREE WEEK ENGLISH COURSE FOR STUDENTS AT A SEMINARY IN INDONESIA. JULIAN TAKES UP THE STORY...

On 12 July Glenice Hartwich from the Board for Mission asked me, if I and someone else, would be interested in taking a three-week course at HKBP (Huria Kristen Batak Protestan) Seminary in Pematang Siantar, teaching English as a second language to first-year seminary and postgraduate Master of Divinity students. My response was: '1. Where is Pematang Siantar? 2. But I've retired from teaching! 3. How do you teach English?' Having accepted the invitation to go to Pematang Siantar, my next thought was 'Who could I teach with?' On 16 July I asked Mark and Marion Schubert if they would like to join me. Their first response was 'No, we are retired, we have no passports, and we have no experience in teaching English'. (Julian and Mark are ex-Concordia, and ex-physics teachers!) However, the Bible study group Mark led the next day was supportive of the idea and the Joshua text they were studying emphasised acting with courage and faith.

So together we decided to visit previous teachers and received help and encouragement. Gradually we were all persuaded that we could pick up enough skills and techniques to make a useful contribution. The day before we flew out, Marion's passport arrived!

The first-year students were mainly high school graduates, 60 men and 17 women from all over Indonesia, who had recently studied English, but the 27 Master of Divinity mature-age students had had little recent exposure to English. All were meeting for the first time to be motivated and inspired by us in English. Our main qualification was that we could speak (reasonably) good English!

At 7.30am we joined the students in the chapel for morning devotion in English, including beautiful, strong singing, often in four-part harmony. In the classes, which began at about 8.15am, we would sometimes examine the meaning and pronunciation of words from hymns we had sung (eg Why shouldn't 'you' and 'thou' rhyme, or Lord and worship?).

There were three classes, rotating through three one-hour lessons each weekday morning. Reina Sipahutar from Nommensen University, took English structure.

My lessons, in conversational English, were based on a theme for the day and used rhymes, tongue-twisters, limericks, action songs, games, dialogues, chants, vocabulary (words and pictures) and a Bible text. Mark's lessons in English comprehension were based on a printed, simplified New Testament story (eg Jesus feeding the 5,000), which students read together, followed by a discussion of difficult words, and then written questions where students often helped each other with the answers. They then went through the answers together, often finishing with a song and a Bible verse. All lessons started and ended with prayer, usually taken by a student. Marion helped with typing and sometimes in lessons.

Lunch was with the students in the mensa/ dining hall. In the afternoons we rested, sent emails to family and friends, prepared lessons, did some shopping or went sightseeing. Dinner was prepared for us at the guest house, and at 8.30pm we attended choir practice and evening devotion (more beautiful, powerful, enthusiastic singing!). The evening shower was dippers full of cold or slightly warm water liberally poured over oneself, which was not too much of a hardship as the temperature typically varied from 23 C to 29 C over a day.

There were many other highlights of our stay: worship in local churches; a visit to the grave of Dr L.I. Nommensen, the missionary and founder of the Batak Lutheran churches; visits to Elim orphanage and Nommensen University computer laboratory funded by the LCA; a visit to weavers of 'ulos', the traditional shawl, and a sightseeing trip to nearby Lake Toba.

We were surprised by the level of connectedness and understanding between us and the staff who helped us, despite the cultural differences and language difficulties. We joked, laughed and shared each other's lives and feelings and made some wonderful new friends.

We were joined through Jesus. We all knew of the love, forgiveness and acceptance he showed in his death, of the new life and the Spirit given to us through his resurrection, and of his teachings through his word, and we shared in grateful response in our worship and prayers. 'Horas' was a constant greeting and farewell, as was 'Shalom'. And each Sunday we were greeted with 'Happy Sunday' from our students. Perhaps this is something we could adopt in our churches on Sundays.

We were blessed by our experiences in Indonesia and we thank our church and their church for allowing us to serve in this way.



PRAYER POINTS...

for you to engage in God’s mission in the world

- Pastor Wayne Zweck - thankfulness to God for Wayne’s faithful leadership and service over 7 years as Director of Board for Mission and LCA Secretary as he prepares to retire from fulltime service
- Simon and Oiy Mackenzie (and baby Nopakorn) in Thailand as they serve in Chiang Rai and the Nan province
- Greg Schiller, our missionary stationed in Papua New Guinea as he takes his R&R (Rest and Refreshment)

- Pastor Samuel Wang, Emily Traeger, Peter Eckermann and others preparing to lead and attend the Giraffe course in Singapore

- Ray Winterfield serving as a lecturer in English at Nommensen University, Siantar campus in North Sumatra, Indonesia, together with his wife Janine and their son Jonathan

- Mostyn and Maxine Roocke as they serve as VIMOS (Volunteers in Mission Overseas), teaching English in the schools of the Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungan (GKPS) – one of our Lutheran partner churches in Indonesia

- International scholarship recipients, Jess Vun of the BCCM in Sabah (Basel Christian Church of Malaysia) and Pastors Erik Punde of the ELCPNG (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea) and Rumandja Purbu (GKPS, Indonesia) studying at Australian Lutheran College

- Pastor Roger and Lois Whittall as they lead teams of people from Australia to serve short-term in Preah Vahear, Cambodia

- The extension of God’s kingdom in Australia through the mission and ministry of the Sudanese and Chinese congregations in Australia

- Congregations engaged in, or preparing to engage in partnership with our overseas partner churches

- Thanks to God for faithful followers who have, and who continue to share the Good News

- For God to open our eyes to see the “fields that are ripe for the harvest” (John 4:35)

- For workers for the harvest that is all around us – in our homes, in Australia and overseas (Matthew 9:38)

- For the love of Jesus to grow in each one of us and for a willingness for us to go and join him wherever he opens our eyes to see the work that he is already doing in the lives of others

- For each and every one of us in the LCA to take seriously Jesus’ call to “Make disciples as we go”

- “Lord, renew your church, begin with me”



Search and Rescue

A BOOK REVIEW & MORE BY PASTOR NATHAN HEDT

I’ve loved receiving the magazine *Border Crossings* this year. It’s so good to hear some of the stories of how our LCA is ‘crossing borders’ through partnering in cross-cultural missions overseas.

But what about cross-cultural missions within our own country? Missiologists and sociologists are increasingly recognising that in Australia the Christian church finds itself in a mission situation (for example, see Alan Hirsch’s book *The Forgotten Ways*, p58). No longer can we assume that people have any connections to the church, or any knowledge whatsoever of the basics of the Christian faith. When I was working in a factory in Melbourne one of my workmates said to me, ‘I know what Labour Day’s all about, but I need someone to explain Christmas and Easter to me. Why do we have holidays at Easter?’

Not only are we in mission in terms of the vast majority of Australians and the gospel of Jesus, but we are also in *cross-cultural* mission. In seeking to bring the gospel to our Australian society, we are crossing borders and boundaries and cultural divides as large and difficult as when we take the gospel into overseas countries. Alan Hirsch comments on the basis of in-depth sociological research that ‘around 80% of Australians face such a culture gap that they will never be able to hear the gospel in a “church” environment’ (*Forgotten Ways* p35,36).

I think, for example, of the members of my cricket team. On holidays I sat in a church pew (I’m a pastor, so usually I don’t get to do this) and wondered how the worship would communicate to my cricket mates. My conclusion was that it wouldn’t. The gospel could have been proclaimed loudly and clearly (and, praise God, it was!), but my friends from cricket could not have heard it, even if they had been sitting in the pew, because of the cultural divide. It would have been like proclaiming the gospel to them in Greek. The language and cultural setting would not be appropriate for conveying the content of the message to them!

How will we cross *these* borders? What tool can we use to reach across the ‘culture gap’ so that our Australian friends can hear the gospel?

I’ve recently read a brilliant book that gives us a tool that will really work to bring the gospel across the divides of culture. The book by Neil

Cole is called *Search and Rescue*. The tool is called Life Transformation Groups or simply LTGs. Neil Cole is a church planter and ‘missionary to the West’ in the USA. God has given him an insight into the simplicity that lies on the other side of the complex cross-cultural mission situation in which we find ourselves at this time. LTGs have been shown to work in many and varied settings, from Australia to Sri Lanka to the USA to South Africa. They are reproducible, multipliable, and help to form deep disciples of Jesus. I’ve just started an LTG and it’s been going for a couple of weeks... with one of my cricket mates who is coming to know Jesus and getting baptised with his two kids in a few weeks’ time!

So, are you hanging out to find out what an LTG is? Here goes...

A Life Transformation Group is a group of *two or three* people who meet for an hour or so a week to engage in three essential disciplines for followers of Jesus: *confession of sin (and mutual accountability); reading large portions of Scripture continuously, in context, and in community; and prayer for those who don’t yet trust in Jesus as their Saviour.* Sounds simple? It’s the simplicity of genius, on several levels.

*Two or three* people means that the groups multiply easily. When a fourth person is added, the group considers itself pregnant and within a few weeks gives birth to two groups of two people. This means the group stays missional, rather than becoming a comfortable – and less authentic – larger group which doesn’t intend to split and multiply.

*Mutual accountability and confession of sin* mean that true Christian community is built (remember Luther’s saying in the Large Catechism, ‘When I call you to confession I am simply calling you to be a Christian’? And the ‘How to confess’ part of the small catechism?). In confessing mutually with a trusted brother or sister in Christ, the breakthrough to real community as a fellowship of forgiven sinners happens.

*Reading of Scripture.* At first this part sounds easy. But this is actually one of the most challenging parts of the LTG system. Why? Neil Cole recommends that for a steady diet of Scripture, each person should read twenty-five to thirty chapters a week. In the same book of the Bible! That might mean five times through Ephesians, or twice through Mark, in a week. And the reading is repeated for several weeks.

Before starting my LTG, I’d never read Scripture quite this way before. This has opened up for me such a hunger for God’s word. My friend from cricket said, ‘It’s like a good addiction’. He read the entire Gospel

of Mark in the first week. We’re aiming for twice through Mark this week. He said, ‘I can’t believe God has transformed me so much in one week. In a way, it’s kind of scary. I didn’t expect this kind of growth to happen so fast.’ If any member of the group doesn’t finish the reading for that week, the whole group reads the same book next week, expecting the Holy Spirit to reveal something new to group members.

Neil Cole says, ‘LTGs plant the seed; they are not a seed substitute ... the LTG system can bring health and vitality back to the follower of Christ, but the LTG system itself is not a solution for all that ails the church, nor is it the agent of transformation for lives, ministries and churches. *The Holy Spirit and the word of God bring transformation to a life that is cleansed and open to obey...* The LTG system is really just a catalyst that brings together the properties that cause spiritual change in a relational context that is conducive to growth via multiplication.’ (*Search and Rescue*, p178 (my emphasis). It’s not the LTG that changes people, it’s the word of God.

*Prayer for the lost* means that each member of the group prays intentionally, in a structured way, for two or three names the others suggest.

LTGs involve no curriculum except the word of God. There is no leadership training required. All you need is one other person (or two), a Bible, and a card which lists strategic prayer points for the lost and a set of mutual accountability questions. I’ve developed a card and set of questions based on Jesus’ two great commandments (Love God, love your neighbour), and a law and gospel understanding of Scripture. Please email me if you want a copy of this card that can easily be photocopied (nathan.hedt@lca.org.au).

LTGs are organic. They don’t need to be supervised or controlled by anyone except the Holy Spirit. The women’s LTG we’ve started at our congregation looks like splitting into two groups within just a few weeks of being formed.

As I was reading *Search and Rescue*, I thought to myself, ‘This is something I’ve been looking for all my life. This is a God-given gift. This is part of the answer to the ‘yes but how?’ question of crossing borders and cultures here in our own country.’ I heartily recommend it to you, for ‘border crossings’ and cross-cultural mission in Australia.

COULD YOU HELP PLEASE?

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

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

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

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (daytime) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (mobile) \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation name \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation address \_\_\_\_\_

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



Top left: Sokha, (primary teacher training) student of Plas Prai  
Bottom right: church of the BCCM in the interior of Sabah