

# BORDER CROSSINGS



*global partners · local church*



**LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**  
OF AUSTRALIA

**INTERNATIONAL  
MISSION**

*global partners · local church*

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# MARCHING FOR THE GOSPEL



Most pastors get asked to do some unusual things! A few years ago I was delighted to stand in as father for a Congolese bride, but not so thrilled when I realised it would involve dancing African-style into the reception in front of 300 people!

I've been brought on stage to perform with famous Burundian drummers, tortured people with my singing and made a fool of myself at more than a few youth nights! But never in my wildest dreams would I have thought my call would involve marching in an Indonesian Independence Day celebration!

My first trip as the LCA's incoming Assistant to the Bishop – International Mission was to Indonesia, where I was privileged to see firsthand how God is working in churches there to proclaim the saving gospel into the lives of many.

Marching behind students from the local Lutheran school which the LCA supports, the principal grabbed the opportunity of having two Aussies draw attention. He also made it clear everyone was welcome at this school where students not only receive an excellent education, but also many come to faith in Jesus as they hear about him for the first time. It became clear that we were actually marching for the gospel!

The work you support through LCA International Mission is happening in all sorts of places like the school we visited. Churches in Indonesia have discovered the treasure of Luther's Small Catechism and are running jamborees at which thousands of children are taught its truths. The LCA's *Growing as God's People* has been updated, translated and published in Mandarin and Bahasa, and is breathing new life into people growing in the knowledge of what Jesus has done for them. And our own Reconciliation Ministry training has Lutheran pastors from Japan to Indonesia declaring that, for the first time in their ministries, they are able to proclaim the free gift of forgiveness in Jesus' name!

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel that makes this mission work possible. The support you provide LCA International Mission is connecting people to Jesus, as we partner with churches to proclaim the gospel.

While I don't expect that marching in an Indonesian Independence Day celebration will ever be listed in the duties outlined in a pastor's call document, I look forward to the next opportunity to 'march for the gospel' on your behalf, as we support our partner churches in sharing the saving work of Jesus in their enormous mission fields.

The peace of the Lord Jesus be with you!

**Pastor Matt Anker**

Assistant to the Bishop – International Mission  
Lutheran Church of Australia



# Blessed to build up Christ's body

*More than 450 participants gathered in Malaysia for the 38th Synod of the Protestant Church in Sabah (PCS), focusing on the theme 'Memberkari Sesama Membangun Tubuh Kristus – 'to bless each other to build the body of Christ'. Three were from the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) – volunteers Ilene and Pastor John Thiel and LCA International Mission Program Officer Erin Kerber. In the presence of our brothers and sisters in Christ, they learnt what it means to bless each other and build the body of Christ.*

## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

We learnt about the opportunity to be blessed. We were welcomed into the PCS faith community with an almost overwhelming warmth and hospitality. We were given seats of honour at the front of the Synod where we not only had the best view but also felt the praise of our brothers and sisters to our Heavenly Father cascading around us. We joined in with praise and worship and Pastor John was asked to preach at a morning devotion. He explored the way Christ provides the church with teaching pastors who share the gospel. The Holy Spirit produces faith in those who hear the gospel and this is how the body of Christ is built up. We were given a feast for our cultural senses through dance, food and language, and Erin had the privilege of opening the Synod.

## THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN SABAH PRAYS FOR US

President Rev Jensey Mojuin included greetings to the LCA in his opening speech. He prayed for Bishop John Henderson's wisdom and good health and that he would lead the LCA with strength.

## BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

We learnt about the importance of building the body of Christ. While many in Australia have the opportunity to flourish through gifts including healthcare, schooling and employment, there continues to be a growing hollowness in our personal relationships as communities and families disengage. At the PCS synod, delegates and pastors met several hours before the program began, not to complete preparations or ensure administration was in order, but to enable life in communion. Together they experienced the unity created by their relationship with God in Christ.

## GOD MAKES US ONE

We were embraced by the partnership LCA International Mission has with PCS as we saw one another through the eyes of Jesus. The Holy Spirit reminded us to recognise each other as members of God's body, graced and loved by God, even as men and women with fears and struggles, hopes and longings, dreams and devastations. We were brought together in the sweep of God's immense love. As we are bound in his love and joined in him, he made and continues to make us one.

**- Erin Kerber, Ilene and Pastor John Thiel**

If you would like to consider serving as a volunteer in mission, serving in practical ways, teaching English, teaching in the seminaries and institutions of our partner churches, or in local churches, you are invited to phone Nevin on 08 8267 7300 or email [nevin.nitschke@lca.org.au](mailto:nevin.nitschke@lca.org.au)



# TO THE ENDS OF THE E

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

A modern-day take on this well-known verse may read 'and you will be my witnesses to your neighbours, to your country people, to people you do not like and to people living in places you don't want to go'.

The disciples lived in a culture where there was much hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans. Jesus challenged them to leave their homes and go to a people who might despise them.

For us, leaving beautiful and blessed Australia was, at times, difficult to understand. Not because we didn't want to go, but because living on the other side of the world, far from family and friends, is tough. We now live in a place filled with much Christian history, yet at times feel despised.

While visiting and seeing such historic sites has been an incredible experience, more importantly, we have seen some of the few believers in this land declare with tears and boldness that they now follow Jesus.

In this country, turning from the majority religion is a rare occurrence. Twenty-five years ago it was estimated that there were as few as 500 Protestant believers in this whole country, which today has a population of more than 75 million. It is considered highly unreached which, put simply, means most of the population will live their whole lives without ever meeting a Christian. This is one of the reasons we are here.

But the Protestant church is growing. Today the number of believers could be around 7000, however the local churches are still small and face persecution. This can range from not being given a job because you are Christian, to being kicked out of your family.

One of the local believers was sharing her testimony during a women's Bible study in our home. After she explained that she now follows Jesus, one of the non-believers present said: 'So you are not one of us anymore then?'. The family and social pressures to remain with the majority religion are huge. Turning from this is often seen as rejecting your nationality.

More than two-and-a-half years ago God put on our hearts to pack up our lives in Australia and move here. We spent the first part of our time here learning how to do everyday things, to speak the language, how to adjust our behaviour so we do not offend others and, ultimately, how to share our faith.

An important part of our role is to change the negative perception people here have about Christians through tangible love, humility and service. We have been involved in distributing clothes and food to refugees, making new discipleship resources available for children and the local church, and encouraging the local believers in their faith. To pray, read the Bible and talk with local Christians gives them much encouragement. And they have blessed us abundantly.

We thank everyone who has partnered with us to serve in this way. By the time you read this, we will be back in Adelaide for six months. If you would like us to share with your church or small group, or to meet you individually for a chat about what God has been doing in this part of the world, please contact [lcaim@lca.org.au](mailto:lcaim@lca.org.au)

**– Natalie and Stephen**





# EARTH



## FAITH BRINGS FREEDOM AND A FUTURE

Ouan was the last remaining doctor spirit in the village of Ban Huay Tong, in Thailand's Nan Province.

Spirits exist in many forms in Nan and the common element they share is the possibility that they will become evil if they are not properly appeased. Therefore the placating of offending spirits plays an important role in the life of the local Lua people, as the spirits are believed to cause loss of crops, illness and even death.

Those who have the power to appease these spirits are the doctor spirits. These doctor spirits are lavished with food and other payments for their important role.

Ouan's family lives in Laos, where she moved as a refugee. Without her family to care for her, she relied on her position as a doctor spirit to ensure she had a prosperous life. And yet, Ouan did not think she had a good life. She worried about everything. She felt enslaved. Her soul was restless.

Two years ago Lun Min, one of the Lua evangelists, visited Ban Huay Tong. The Holy Spirit spoke to Ouan through Lun Min, pouring God's love into her heart, reassuring her whose she is – that she belongs to her Heavenly Father. Ouan realised that because God is in control, she does not have to be. She left her life as a doctor spirit and now Jesus is her life.

Since Ouan has become a believer, she no longer has a status of power or wealth, however her strength now comes from the Lord. Ouan is now a person of hope, knowing that she rests in God's heart and her destiny is to share in Jesus' eternal glory and to delight in the love the Father has for her.

Ouan has the reassurance that she was created for God to love her and that, in his love, he is rescuing her for himself. She knows this is an abundance that cannot be bought but is a free gift and is everlasting.

**– Erin Kerber**

Program Officer LCA International Mission



# PARTNERSHIP BECOMES A WONDERFUL JOURNEY

Manawatu Lutheran Parish in New Zealand began a relationship with Rumah Chrestus, a home for orphaned or abused children located in Cheras, Malaysia, in July 2013.

The home is run by a Trust Board from Cheras Lutheran congregation of which Rev Eliezer Peter is pastor. Rumah Chrestus is home to up to 15 children, currently between the ages of eight and 16.

Over the years it has been a wonderful journey for us as we have got to know not only Pastor Eliezer Peter but also the children.

In 2015 our Mission Team decided that the relationship would be enhanced if we could personally meet the children and staff. In August that year, my husband Roy and I visited Rumah Chrestus for a week. It was a great experience to meet the young children, staff, Trust Board members, and Pastor Eliezer and his wife Sarah, as well as seeing firsthand how the home is run and the difficulties they experience.

The relationship between Rumah Chrestus and Manawatu Parish continued to develop with parish members making pillowslips for the children, sending numerous cards to them, particularly at Christmas time, and providing financial support each year. Pastor Eliezer told us that this support had been an answer to prayer, particularly when the home was damaged by fire and another time when the Board was considering closure due to a lack of funding.

As well as communication via text messages, the Mission Team sends occasional emails and a quarterly newsletter to the home and the children living there. It was really exciting to hear earlier this year that Pastor Eliezer and his wife wished to visit New Zealand and our parish. This took place in August and it was a wonderful time for everyone.

While in New Zealand, they took part in our Friday night youth group gathering, met with the Mission Team for discussion and to formalise a partnership agreement, gave a presentation in worship, and met socially with parish leaders as well as sightseeing. It was a great weekend during which God blessed not only Pastor Eliezer and Sarah but also the members of our parish.

We look forward to continuing the relationship we have with Rumah Chrestus and pray that God will continue to bless all involved with the home as we journey together.

- Lois Price



*Pastor Eliezer and his wife Sarah met with members of the Manawatu Overseas Mission team during their visit to Palmerston North, and displayed gifts made by the children.*

**In recent times, the Australian Government has alerted organisations and churches which support orphanages across Asia to be aware that our first concern needs to be for the children and their families. LCA International Mission is well informed of these concerns and is establishing policies accordingly.**

**If your congregation would like to know how you can connect to the mission of God through an LCA International Mission partnership, you are invited to phone Erin on 08 8267 7300 or email [erin.kerber@lca.org.au](mailto:erin.kerber@lca.org.au)**

# JOIN IN GOD'S MISSION

Through LCA International Mission, Lutherans in Australia and New Zealand are following our Lord Jesus Christ in his mission to make disciples of all nations.

## 1 PRAY

Many of our partner churches are working in new territory for the kingdom of God, and spiritual attack is their everyday reality. As a member of a congregation, school, or family, or as a couple or individual, please commit to praying for our partners in mission.



- Bishops, leaders and members of our overseas Lutheran partner churches in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Cambodia, Myanmar and Papua New Guinea, as they share the love of Jesus Christ with people in their regions
- The congregational partnership between Manawatu parish, New Zealand, and Rumah Chrestus, Malaysia
- Lua evangelists serving in Nan Province, Thailand
- Those who are on scholarships sponsored by LCA International Mission, both in their own countries and at Australian Lutheran College
- National Education Secretary for the Lutheran churches in Indonesia Mr Ridwin Purba, as he helps to support education reform in the schools of the Lutheran churches in Indonesia
- Michael (Mick) Hauser, as he serves as a lecturer at Martin Luther Seminary, Lae, Papua New Guinea
- Hanna Schulz, as she continues in the ministry of Bible translation for the Kope people in the Gulf Province of Papua New Guinea
- Natalie and Stephen, as they serve in West Asia
- Peter Nitschke and the stamp cleaners for the Stamps for Mission program, who give their time voluntarily to raise much needed funds for LCA International Mission programs
- Those LCA congregations and schools who have partnerships with our overseas brothers and sisters
- The LLL and everyone who donates for God's work to be done in Australia and overseas
- Those people who have committed to serve as congregational representatives for LCA International Mission
- People willing to serve as volunteers in and with our overseas partner churches
- The love, justice and compassion of Jesus Christ to grow in each one of us
- The willingness for us to join our Heavenly Father wherever he opens our eyes, to see the work that he is already doing in the lives of others through the Holy Spirit
- Glenice Hartwich, who has blessed us by serving LCA International Mission since 7 August 2006 with passion, love, humility and dedication. Thanks that God has used Glenice's bold faith to be a shining example to so many, in Australia and overseas. Pray that Glenice will have the peace to retire well as she looks forward to the opportunity to spend more time with her family.

For regular prayer point updates, check out the LCA International Mission website [www.lca.org.au/international-mission/join-gods-mission/pray/](http://www.lca.org.au/international-mission/join-gods-mission/pray/) They can also be accessed via the monthly LCA International Mission eNews – to sign up, go to [www.lca.org.au/enews](http://www.lca.org.au/enews)

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



## 2 GIVE

We take great care of your financial gifts. You can be confident they will assist our partner Lutheran churches to bring the good news of Jesus to their communities.



... LCA International Mission's work with our partner churches  
(Please indicate the people and projects you would like to support and write the amount of your gift/s in the spaces provided.)

- ☐ Teaching ministry by Mick Hauser in **Papua New Guinea (PNG)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Publication of tracts and other Christian literature for **PNG** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ LCA lecturers to teach courses in **Lutheran overseas partner churches** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Scholarships for pastors and teachers of **Lutheran overseas partner churches** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ School and ministry training rooms, Phnom Penh, Lutheran Church in **Cambodia** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Bethany Home for young people with disabilities in **Malaysia** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Ministry to and with indigenous people (Orang Asli) in **Malaysia** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Youth ministry program in Sabah, **Malaysia** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Mission work carried out with the Lua people in Nan Province, **Thailand** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Prison ministry in **Indonesia** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Books for the seminary libraries (for **overseas partner churches**) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Publication of Lutheran literature in **Indonesia** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Ministry in the Mekong region South-East Asia (through **Mekong Mission Forum**) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Women's Ministry Conference in **Myanmar** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **LCA International Mission** – sharing the stories of God's mission \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I would like to become a partner with LCA International Mission (please send me information)  
☐ Pray ☐ Give ☐ Connect ☐ Go
- ☐ I would like to leave a bequest for LCA International Mission in my will (please send me information)

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

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

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

Please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Card no

Expiry  /  CCV

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please send me a receipt

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

Want more? You can experience firsthand how God's love is coming to life through the word-and-action gospel work of our partner churches. Please talk to us about volunteering opportunities – and be prepared to be changed forever.



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

### CAMBODIA

- Teach English at the Rainbow Student Hostel (Phnom Penh)
- Teach music at Tang Krang Community Centre
- Set up a youth and children's club at Tang Krang Community Centre
- Support medical mission teams

### INDONESIA

- Teach English to students at STT HKBP Seminary, Pematangsiantar
- Teach conversational English at the Bible Frau School, which trains young women to preach and teach
- Teach English and help in the library at the Deaconess School, in North Sumatra
- Teach English to lecturers/students at Abdi Sabda Seminary, Medan

### THAILAND

- Teach English or use music, art, sport, special education or IT skills at Home of Praise, in the after-school care program for children living in the slums of Bangkok
- Teach English or use handcraft or café skills at Home of Grace, which cares for unmarried women and their infants
- Teach English in local schools in Nan Province
- Teach conversational English at the Lutheran seminary in Bangkok

### MALAYSIA

- Work with people with special needs, including speech/physical therapy, music, sport, nursing or pastoral care at Bethany Home
- Teach conversational English in rural Sabah, or volunteer to share any skills if you have a love for people
- Share farm knowledge and practical skills in Sabah
- Teach English at Grace Centre for Indonesian migrant children

### PAPUA NEW GUINEA

- Teach theology or English at Martin Luther Seminary – this role is also suitable for secondary teachers with a Diploma in Theology
- Partner with a men's ministry group in PNG to share their love for Jesus while also doing some maintenance work at Lae Guest House and at other locations
- Assist with building repairs at Gaubin Hospital, Karkar Island

### MYANMAR

- Assist with planting crops in local villages
- Lecture or teach in mission, agriculture and farming at the Lutheran Bible Training Institute, Mawbi
- Teach English, IT or business management for the Lutheran Bethlehem Church, Myanmar Lutheran Church or the Lutheran Church of Myanmar

### AUSTRALIA

- Care for scholarship holders, including providing transportation and companionship
- Edit articles and stories for publications, newsletters and promotions for mission

### WHAT TO DO NEXT ...

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



**SERVES 4**

## MENEMEN (men-Eh'-men)

*A breakfast classic from western Asia*

### Ingredients

- 6 eggs
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 large tomatoes (ripe)
- 2 sweet red capsicums
- 2 sweet green capsicums
- 1 teaspoon salt (more to taste)
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes (optional)

### Method

Peel and dice the onion.

Peel the tomatoes with a very sharp knife and dice them, saving the juice.

Remove the seeds from the peppers and dice them.

Melt the butter in a large pan. Sauté the onion until tender and translucent. When the onions are cooked, add all the diced vegetables and spices and stir to combine.

Bring the mixture to a boil, then cover and reduce the heat. Let the mixture simmer gently until the tomatoes and peppers soften and release their natural juices.

Remove the lid and continue to simmer, letting some of the liquid evaporate.

Lightly salt and beat the eggs in a separate bowl, then pour them in the centre of the pan. Don't stir the mixture. Let the eggs travel through the vegetables on their own. You can help them by moving the pan around.

Let the mixture continue to simmer until the eggs are cooked. If the tops of the eggs still seem raw, cover the pan for a few minutes. Your 'menemen' should be very juicy when fully cooked. You can drizzle melted butter over the top before serving if you wish and dip crusty bread in the buttery juice.