

# BORDER CROSSINGS



*global partners · local church*



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



**Pastor Matt Anker**

Assistant to the Bishop  
– International Mission  
Lutheran Church  
of Australia

## ANSWERING AN URGENT MISSION CALL

On a recent flight out of Singapore, the captain announced that we would be delayed as they had missed their window to travel through the narrow corridor of air space in the Middle East/Eastern Europe. Travel through this air space is restricted due to all the conflicts there.

While I was thankful for careful flight plans and scheduling to keep us all safe, I was also reminded of the terrible reality that faces the people on the ground in those regions, day after day. They cannot avoid the conflict by simply delaying their departure, and their future is constantly under threat as they watch the world disintegrate around them.

While we are a long way from even the closest of these conflicts in Myanmar, I hear more and more young people express their concern about what this might all mean. It's interesting to realise that they sound just like I did as a young person during the Cold War when such concerns occupied our thoughts on a daily basis.

Like you, I have been deeply saddened by the atrocities that are playing out on our TV screens. But as I watch I am also reminded of the urgency of the work you support through LCA International Mission. So many people have not heard the good news of forgiveness and life in Jesus' name and when their earthly lives are under threat, the urgency of proclaiming the gospel is hard to avoid. This is a timely reminder for us who live in the relative safety of Australia and New Zealand.

As you read the stories in this edition, I pray you hear the urgency with which our partners serve in mission. Many of them know first-hand what life without Jesus is like and they are desperate to ensure that their loved ones, friends and those around them have the same opportunity to live with hope in Christ just as they do. Whether it's in Cambodia or Sabah, Indonesia, or on the Singapore docks, our partners recognise that they may be the only connection some people have to Jesus and so urgently use every opportunity to reach out with God's love and mercy.

With all that is going on in the world and the questions it raises, perhaps God is calling us to a more urgent attitude toward our calling as his ambassadors. May God grant that we in the LCA NZ 'catch' some of the urgency that our partners have to share the gospel so that our mission at home would be inspired by their example, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

# 'PLEASE PRAY FOR MY MINISTRY'

I grew up in Cambodia in a poor family. My dad and oldest sister passed away and for most of my childhood, my mother raised me and my brothers and sisters on her own.

My mother wanted me to study at university after I finished high school, however, she could not afford it. So, one of my friends suggested I go to the Lutheran Church in Cambodia and ask if they could help me with a scholarship. My friend also inquired for himself, and we both received a scholarship.

While studying at university, I lived at the Lutheran Church in Cambodia's Rainbow Hostel in Phnom Penh. We had regular Bible studies and worship. I came to know God, but I did not yet believe. One day, the pastor said, 'If you want to know if God is a true God, you can pray to God. If God wills it, he will answer'. So, I prayed, 'If you are a true God, please call my whole family to become Christians'. God answered my prayer and now my mum, brothers, sisters and I are all Christian. Hallelujah! Now I know God prepares me and makes a way for me; he is always with me to lead, guide and protect me.

I have been saved because of the grace of God and want others to be saved like me. In the Khmer context, most people think they will be saved by their actions. But this is not true, and I want to bring the good news to them. This is why I decided to study to become a pastor and be ordained into the Lutheran Church in Cambodia.

One of my roles is to lead the ministry team at our new outreach point in Teuk Chenh village. Please pray for the small school there, where we teach children to learn Khmer and English and lead them to Christ.

As I begin my ministry as an ordained pastor, please pray that I will continue to gaze steadily at Jesus, allowing my thinking to be conformed to the truth about God, so I can share this truth with others. Pray that I will read the Bible in the hope and expectation that God will speak. Pray that the Spirit is at work in my heart calling me to prayer. Pray that I will lead with a servant heart by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Pray that I will put my trust in the power of God's Spirit to provide all I need.

I am married to Srey Lay and we have one daughter named Rebecca. I continue to praise God for their ongoing support. Please pray we continue to joyfully serve God and our community.

**Yin Dara**



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

*LCA International Mission partners with  
the Lutheran Church in Cambodia which  
is a channel of Christ's hope, love and life  
to those living in Cambodia.*

How can you support  
this work?

*If you would like to prayerfully support  
Yin Dara as he begins his ministry as an  
ordained pastor, please refer to the prayer  
point on the back of this edition.*



# Cultivating disciples in cross-cultural mission

Do you know a young person who would love to grow in faith and engage with Christians from other countries? Perhaps you are that young person! This is your opportunity to be strengthened in faith and to be a blessing to many.

From April 2024, LCA International Mission is partnering with the LCA NZ's Grow Ministries and working collaboratively with other Churchwide departments and our overseas partners in Malaysia to plan a program that helps young adults to grow as disciples of Jesus and to develop their ability to share the gospel.

There are many expected outcomes. These include the following:

- Participants from the LCA NZ and our overseas partner churches will discover a life of radical discipleship, lived in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the sure knowledge of the Father's love. Their lives may be transformed as they reflect Jesus' light, experience the freedom of his salvation, delight in knowing their Heavenly Father, and love others as he loves them.
- Participants will be introduced to different spiritual disciplines and church practices, and encouraged to participate for their own spiritual formation.
- Lifelong relationships will be formed between participants; friendships that will allow them to share faith struggles and joys and support one another on their faith journeys.
- The faith communities of which the participants are members will be encouraged to create spaces where the participants belong, are embraced and are enabled to encounter God in a real and personal way, where they will be given opportunities to explore and grow in the gifts they discover God has blessed them with.
- Participants will learn how to work more effectively with people of other cultures and develop relevant attitudes, skills and knowledge that will aid in future cross-cultural engagement.

- Through the practical opportunities available in Australia and Malaysia, participants will gain confidence in evangelism in their local context.

The program will include:

- weekly online connections during which participants will explore the Bible, discuss theology and grow in faith
- explorations of Christian spiritual practices
- the blessing of being mentored by a mature Christian
- practice in the discipline of keeping a journal
- practical ministry experience in current congregational context
- an intensive week-long program in Adelaide
- ministry experience in Sabah, Malaysia.



## Find out more today

If you or someone you know is aged between 18 and 25 years of age and are interested in being involved in this program, please contact Erin Kerber at [erin.kerber@lca.org.au](mailto:erin.kerber@lca.org.au) or phone **08 8267 7317**.

If you would like to financially support a young person from Australia or Malaysia to take part in this program, please refer to the donation form on the back of this edition.





PROCLAIMING  
THE

• GOSPEL •

How are we supporting our partners as they proclaim the gospel?

**LCA International Mission partners with the Lutheran Church in Singapore, which has been affiliated with the International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission since 1999.**

How can you support the proclamation of the gospel?

**The International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission is a current Stamps for Mission program. If you would like to know more about collecting used stamps to support ILSM, please phone Peter Nitschke on 0418 868 103**

## CARING FOR THE WELFARE of seafarers

A sea breeze and partly cloudy sky offered temporary relief from the Singapore heat as fishermen huddled under the shade outside the Migrant Workers Welfare Centre, a small container-sized building on the wharves of Jurong Fishery Port (JFP).

In June 2023, for the first time in three years, the sailors could finally disembark when they arrived in Singapore's harbours, to escape cramped quarters and the baking heat on their ships.

The welfare centre that had sat empty now bustled with renewed purpose, as crews took turns lounging in the air-conditioned space for up to 30 minutes.

At the centre, seafarers enjoyed food provided by Food Bank Singapore and made video calls to their wives and children. Despite language barriers, the men obeyed port chaplain Rev Andreas Latz's orders to clear their own rubbish and maintain the centre for other users.

Rev Andreas shared that, as much as possible, he did not want to collect money from the visitors, as some container yards and seafarer clubs do. The centre's services were simply to bless the men as they were not well-off.

He related an incident in which approximately 25 sailors were shortchanged by their captain, being paid \$200 instead of \$600 over nine months. They campaigned for compensation, but the captain insulted them, even when Rev Andreas interceded. The men had been working and living off the vessel for two years

and were ready to fly back to Indonesia. The irate captain backed off only when Rev Andreas invoked the power of God through the Ministry of Manpower and Migrant Workers' Centre (MWC). Later, the MWC agreed to investigate the case and promised compensation for the fishermen upon their return home.

In a recent discussion, MWC learned about the various needs of the seafarers, ranging from food and SIM cards to indoor entertainment. They prioritised providing staff to assist Rev Andreas in running the welfare centre, while the International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission sourced additional part-time hire, as JFP is one of many ports Rev Andreas ministers to. It was heartening that Lutheran congregations also contributed to clothes donation drives, which blessed between 60 and 80 fishermen each time.

Though weather-beaten and hardened by tough living conditions, the sun-burnt sailors expressed their gratitude for the Centre being opened to them and the generosity of the donations. Each one left beaming and some, even though they had limited English, thanked the reverend for his efforts.

Despite strict regulations and a lack of facilities on the floating platform, the good work continues unhindered, only by the grace of God and the sustaining support of multiple entities.

**Kylie Chia**



# SCHOOLS USE GIFTS TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER

The Bible is filled with images, models and practices of partnership within God, with God and with others, and encourages partnership in the gospel and in mission.

‘Why we should serve in partnership with others’ was one topic for reflection at the recent annual workshop for staff from schools in partnership with Lutheran schools in Indonesia.

Held at Endeavour College Mawson Lakes in South Australia, it also involved staff from Faith Lutheran College (Tanunda, SA), Grace Lutheran College (Rothwell and Caboolture, Qld), Navigator College (Port Lincoln, SA), St Martins Lutheran College (Mount Gambier, SA), Unity College (Murray Bridge, SA), Victory Lutheran College (Wodonga, Vic) and Holy Trinity Lutheran College (Horsham, Vic). Immanuel College (Buderim, Qld) also is in a school partnership but unfortunately, staff were unable to attend.

During the workshop, staff explored Biblical partnerships. Koinonia is a Greek word commonly translated as ‘intimate fellowship’. It may also mean ‘participation’, or ‘partnership’. As God reaches out to us by the Son, through the Holy Spirit, we are drawn into his life, then reach out to others so they can also be involved in the life

of God. When we partner, we live out koinonia, a two-way connection that includes giving, sharing property and breaking bread. The group explored how Biblical partnership includes individuals and organisations bringing their gifts and abilities to love and serve one another and to share the gospel through the power of the Spirit.

Participants discussed what it takes to partner effectively, then unpacked why and how to intentionally engage with God as you partner, and why and how to build trusting relationships central to partnership.

Jamie Fewster, who has had experience with Navigator College’s 10 years of partnership with SMA GKPS 1 Pentangraya, spoke about incorporating the partnership into the school’s Year 11 Christian Studies curriculum and shared the tension of the joys and challenges in sending staff and students overseas.

The day included the opportunity to share resources and advice, as the schools plan to travel with students to Indonesia and receive their partner schools here. There was also discussion about the ways schools have engaged staff and students who will not have an opportunity to go to Indonesia.

Partnerships will only have a lasting, eternal significance as they are informed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and to be aware of the Spirit, there must be continual prayer. Prayer puts the Spirit of God at the centre of the partnership, where his grace, power, insights, reconciliation and hope can radiate and transform diversity into unity. Please keep each of these schools in your prayers, as God’s grace and goodness are revealed to the staff and students through their partnerships.

How are we joining with God partnering in the gospel?

**LCA International Mission supports and resources Lutheran Education Australia schools in partnership with schools in Southeast Asia and Papua New Guinea.**

How can you partner?

**If your school would like to know more about how they can connect to the mission of God through an LCA International Mission service-learning and ministry partnership, please contact us.**





## TRAINING WITH THE GOSPEL

# PASSING ON THE JOY OF FAITH

How are we training  
in the gospel?

***LCA International Mission partners with the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia as it manages schools for immigrant children from Indonesia and the Philippines who are denied access to government schools because they do not have valid documents.***

How can you support  
this training in the  
gospel?

***If you would like to prayerfully support Ebenezer Home Kindergarten, please refer to the prayer point on the back of this edition.***

Alin Dagung radiates Christ's light and joy. She is a pastor serving the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia (BCCM) Mesilou church, which has responsibility for the Ebenezer Home Kindergarten.

This kindergarten is available for migrant families who have come from Indonesia to work in nearby farms. Alin has a passion for teaching God's word to children. She works with teachers at Ebenezer Home and parents of the Mesilou church to explain the Bible to children in ways they understand.

Growing up, Alin and her family believed harmful spirits ruled their lives. Her parents turned to shamans for help in appeasing the spirits. When Alin had an asthma attack, for example, she was taken to a shaman who healed her until the next attack.

The family worked in rubber tree plantations and Alin was a rubber tapper when she wasn't at school. At school, she noticed that some students wore beautiful cross necklaces and she longed to do the same.

When Alin was a child, Christianity was regarded as a religion for 'civilised Westerners'. But when Chinese evangelists from the BCCM visited her village, Alin's family became followers of Jesus. At the age of 12, she enjoyed becoming a Christian for several reasons. She noticed she no longer had asthma attacks, she was allowed to wear a cross around her neck and she no longer tapped rubber on Sundays, instead enjoying a day of rest.

It took three years after her baptism, however, for Alin to grasp who Jesus really is and what he has done for her. The Campus Crusade Ministry for Christ came to her school and provided valuable guidance. She discovered that being a disciple of Jesus is a victorious life. When faced with suffering, she now reflects on the suffering Jesus willingly went through for her. This is where her hope is founded.

After finishing school in 1983, Alin joined Campus Crusade for Christ (a worldwide interdenominational organisation) and remained serving there for 13 years, evangelising and discipling among the villages, schools, and to nurses. She then responded to the call to become a pastor.

For those with children in their lives, may Alin's story be an encouragement to teach them biblical truths. The Holy Spirit will surely work through this foundation so that, as they grow, these children trust God and are able to withstand life's storms, bearing fruit into eternity.



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

- BCCM Ebenezer Home Kindergarten staff, as they support the faith formation of the children in their care and, in doing so, build a strong foundation for their future
- Yin Dara, as he serves the Lutheran Church in Cambodia. Pray that he will continue to gaze steadily at Jesus, allowing his thinking to be conformed to the truth about God in Jesus so that he can share this truth with others

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

- The hard-working seafarers and fishers who spend months at sea, isolated and far from home, missed by their families, loved ones and friends. Pray that our Lord will open their hearts and minds to receive Christ's gospel
- The awareness of the Holy Spirit's promptings in the hearts of young adults living in Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia, who would most benefit from the learnings of the Cultivate program

- LEA schools to be prompted to partner with a school overseas and, in doing so, be a mutual encouragement for one another

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

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

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



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

### CAMBODIA – SOCCER COACH OR UMPIRE

The Lutheran Church in Cambodia uses its sports program to witness to the local community, aiming to make disciples of youth, their families and their communities through strategic sports ministry. Join them as a soccer coach or umpire.

### THAILAND – AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANT

Agricultural consultants are needed for a community transformation project to help local people maintain their greenhouses and teach them to improve their crops. The greenhouses enable people to grow crops or vegetables and help them earn an income.

### MALAYSIA – CRAFT TRAINER

An artistic person who can create and teach craft is needed to help Malaysian women become self-supporting financially. The craft will need to be made using inexpensive recycled materials. There will also be the opportunity to share your faith sensitively.

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

### INDONESIA – LIBRARY SUPPORT

The HKBP Deaconess School in Sumatra, Indonesia, is seeking assistance to develop and catalogue the books in its library, which is used by women studying there.

### AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND - RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH

LCA International Mission wants to put together resources for volunteers to use when they are teaching English overseas. This is ideal for people who have some experience with teaching English as a second language.

### WHAT TO DO NEXT ...

If you would like to know more about volunteering in mission overseas, go to [www.lca.org.au/international-mission](http://www.lca.org.au/international-mission), email [lcaim@lca.org.au](mailto:lcaim@lca.org.au) or phone **08 8267 7317**.



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

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

- Young people participating in the Cultivate program \$ \_\_\_\_\_ from **Malaysia, Australia** and **New Zealand**
- 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 Electronic Funds Transfer; please contact LCA International Mission on **08 8267 7300** for more details
- OR fill out the form below (credit card or cheque)

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

Please debit my  Visa  MasterCard

Card no

Expiry   /   CCV

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

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

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me a receipt

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