

The Communicator



Lutheran Society for Missiology

Volume 16, Issue 2

October 2011

The Purpose of LSFM

To be an instrument for communicating God's Mission to seek and to save lost people (Luke 19:10).

The Mission of LSFM

To provide a proactive forum for missiological research and critical reflection from a Lutheran perspective.

The Vision of LSFM

That the Lutheran contribution to missiology (Ephesians 2:8-10) impact God's worldwide mission.

Inside This Issue

Ecclesiology in the Latin American Context	2
Some Thoughts about the Attractional, Missional, and Engaged Church, Part II.....	2-3
Oswald Hoffman Institute for Christian Outreach	4
Board of Director's Meeting – A Quick Synopsis	5
Upcoming Coaching Clinics Opportunities	5
The Global Reach of the Graduate School of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.....	6
Graduation at the Centre Luthérien d'Etudes Théologique (CLET)	7-9
Concordia Theological Monthly and Missio Apostolica added to ATLAS (full text online)	9
Lutheran Society for Missiology Holds 20th Annual Meeting	10
Starting in the Middle?	11-12

The Future of Lutheran Missiology

—Rev. Robert Scudieri

"It will now be seen how it is impossible to separate works from faith, as impossible as it is to separate burning and shining from fire."
Martin Luther, WABII.98. 18ff.

It is important that the Lutheran Society for Missiology is celebrating its twentieth year by devoting the fall issue of *Missio Apostolica* to the future of Lutheran missiology. The society has as its mission "crossing the gap" between scholars and those involved in daily living out the mission of God, that is, bringing together the burning and the shining of the fire of the gospel. Theologians and practioners can learn from each other. Both have much to share; both have much to discover. This dialogue between theologians and practioners has been going on now for twenty years. Just think how much the world has changed since 1991 – cell phones were a novelty; flat screen tvs were in their infancy; the internet was just being born; houses held their value. I could go on.

Now we are being challenged to be prophets, se-ers into the future of Lutheran missiology. Who could have predicted twenty years ago that there would be more Lutherans in Africa than in North America? Or that the day would come when the

journal of the LSFM would be distributed digitally? For twenty years the primary way the dialogue between theologians and practioners was carried on was via the paper page. Needless to say even though the conversation in itself was an innovation it was limited in scope. We printed and distributed six hundred copies of the paper journal. Now, the dialogue will expand exponentially. The journal will still be accessed in forty seminaries around the world, but the audience will be dramatically larger. What other blessings does God have in store? Wikipedia (where were you twenty years ago?) tells us that one-third of the world, over 2 billion people, have internet access. What opportunities, what blessings, await us all in this new direction!

And, we invite you to join the conversation about the future of Lutheran missiology. By "going digital" we can hear many points of view, many God-given insights into the future. Visit the web site, www.lsfmissiology.org to hear what others are saying about a topic that should be of great interest to Lutherans everywhere. Join us in our digital beginnings. ■

Ecclesiology in the Latin American Context

—Rev. Douglas L. Rutt

Lutheran church presidents and theological educators from around Latin America met in Santiago, Chile, September 23-27, 2011, for their triennial regional conference of the International Lutheran Council. The topic, lead by Professor Gerson Linden and Dr. Douglas Rutt, was “Ecclesiology in the Latin American Context: Past, Present and Future.” The two conference speakers shared their perspectives on how the Lutheran church in Latin America has expressed itself historically and in the present, including a description of present day challenges to be faced, such as secularism, materialism, postmodernism, the growing Pentecostal and theology of prosperity movement, as well as how a church with such a rich Germanic heritage can relate to the Latin American worldview. This is especially a challenge for the churches in the Southern Latin America, where the members of the Lutheran churches are primarily immigrants from Northern Europe.

In the concluding remarks, Dr. Douglas Rutt suggested that the topic of ecclesiology in Latin America still needs more study and analysis. He quoted Dr. Robert Rosin, who, in a previous study on the ecclesiology of Martin Luther, stated that “Luther is quite flexible in terms of ecclesiology. What mattered most to him was an ecclesiology that serves best the gospel. Service to the gospel was his primary concern.” ■



Some Thoughts about the Attractional, Missional, and Engaged Church, Part II

—Rev. Dr. Paul Mueller

In the last issue of the *Communicator* I wrote some thoughts related to the attractional, missional, and engaged church. It briefly described a historical look at the church – from when I grew up in the 50s and 60s until today. Back in the good old days, the church, by virtue of being the church, was attractional. People showed up. It was the thing to do. The church was doing evangelism and it didn’t even know it was doing it. Of course, that has changed. Just because the church is present on a street corner does not result in people at the door on Sunday mornings. In fact, people may not even know there is a church on the street corner – I’m

sure you have heard the stories about the invisible church (and I don’t mean the theological understanding of that term). It really is invisible – no one even knows it exists except the members.

So, I encouraged churches not only to be missional – sending the members into the mission field of the local community to proclaim Jesus Christ – but I also indicated that congregations need to be engaged in their communities.

I would like to give a brief framework from out of which this grows. Theologically, this conversation grows

out of the first article of the apostle's creed. The first article focuses on God the Father, Creator and Sustainer of all things. God is very concerned about His creation. He intends that His creation remains concerned about His creation as well. Of course, the ultimate goal of God's concern is the salvation of His special creation, humans who are just a little lower than the angels. Once they fell from grace in the Garden of Eden, His attention in Scripture and history turned to His salvation plan through Jesus Christ as it unfolds in the Old Testament, culminates in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, and continues even today as noted clearly in passages such as Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8.

But God never indicated He was less concerned with the rest of His creation and how it lived and worked together while it walked toward the cross and empty tomb. And He continues to be concerned even today. That commission is no less powerful today than it was when God first gave it to Adam and Eve. A brief look at active and passive righteousness as Scripture knows it and Luther defines it might help. Passive righteousness is the righteousness of faith, the righteousness which is salvific, for that righteousness is found in and only in Jesus Christ and what He has done. We add nothing to His work on our behalf. We are completely passive, receptive vessels of His mercy and grace – and even that reception created by the power of God's Holy Spirit. We add absolutely nothing to the righteousness which gains us entrance into the eternal presence of God. Rightly so, it is called passive righteousness.

But Christians are, of course, interested in encouraging, disciplining, and teaching people to lead decent and upright lives – this is active righteousness. We want people to mow their lawns, pay their bills, harbor the homeless, feed the poor, care for one another. Living upright and decent lives includes how we interact with and care for God's creation – his special creation, people – as well as our attitude toward the environment and all things created by God on days 1-6. My neighbor's active righteousness, whether that person is a Christian or not, is part of God's providential care for me, and mine for my neighbor. My neighbor's concern and activity in the public debate about the local school closing down the street where my kids attend is important to me, too. Active righteousness contributes to the overall daily provision of our daily bread. And our neighbors are interested in this stuff – they just don't see that it has anything to do with Jesus. And the church, by becoming interested and involved, can help

them make that connection between those seemingly non-spiritual and secular issues and activities, and God's providential and sovereign concern. This position of the church – engaging in active righteousness – is very important. The church cannot ignore doing good, not for the sake of salvation, but we actively pursue that righteousness which is found in the eyes of humanity for the sake of the Gospel and God's mission.

Let me go a bit further. Found in Genesis 1:28, God tells His then sinless humans to take care of the earth, to subdue it, rule over it, and to fill it. The church is concerned about forgiveness, grace, salvation, the sins of homosexuality and abortion (and all the rest, too), but does not say too much about the environment, global warming, deforestation, immigration, school bussing, equitable taxation, homelessness, hunger, poverty, job creation, war, illiteracy, access to rights, and the list can go on and on. The local church continues to be a spiritual house for holy people, a place to go for conversations and activities about holy things. But rarely does the church engage

itself in the "unholy" or "unspiritual" conversation or activities of the community. If issues related to theology or doctrine or spiritual living are involved – the church is there with systematic answers and teaching. And rightly so. It is vitally important that the church continue to be the loud and clear voice of God's absolute spiritual truths. But when the community meets at City Hall to discuss closing a local school, the church also needs to speak. However, normally it is absent – except for those

But God never indicated He was less concerned with the rest of His creation and how it lived and worked together while it walked toward the cross and empty tomb. And He continues to be concerned even today.

Continued from page 3

members of the congregation who are involved and wish to speak. But they speak first as Christian parents of children, not as members representing the congregation. And they speak after developing the responses themselves without guidance from the church. Godly living and upright lives do make a difference in the world. Being engaged in the world and its issues and activities, though not becoming a part of it, is very important – not only as members of the Christian faithful, but also for faithful congregations.

I hope to finish this short piece next time with some questions to consider and ponder for further engaging the community. I surely do not have all the answers, and I surely do not claim to be an expert. But, as David Platt writes, “Anyone wanting to proclaim the glory of Christ to the ends of the earth must consider not only how to declare the gospel verbally but also how to demonstrate the gospel visibly in a world where so many are urgently hungry” (David Platt in *Radical*, Multnomah Books, Colorado Springs, CO, 2010, pg109). ■

Oswald Hoffman Institute for Christian Outreach

—Rev. Mark G. Press

Dr. Eugene Bunkowske recently completed the training to receive the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation’s Christian Stewardship Associate certificate. This milestone signifies that Dr. Bunkowske has demonstrated the ability to apply developmental skill in biblical stewardship in ministry training. The Hoffmann Institute looks forward to Dr. Bunkowske’s use of this training in helping our partners to apply their spiritual gifts of encouragement and generosity toward the goals of the Institute.

Rev. Dr. Mark Press, director of the Hoffmann Institute, has spent much of the summer recuperating from ankle replacement surgery. One of the projects which he has tried to move forward during his time of immobility has been the production of an outreach-centered Festschrift, a collection of new essays, designed to honor Dr. Eugene and Bernice Bunkowske’s long-time of service to the church and her Lord. A number of essays have been received, and these are being proof-written and readied

for publication. Questions or comments about this publication can be directed to Dr. Press at press@csp.edu or 651-641-8830.

The Master of Arts in Christian Outreach (MACO) program has been redesigned over the past several years. These actions are designed 1) to make the program entirely online, allowing people to participate from anyplace without having to travel regularly to St.

Paul, MN, for classes and 2) to focus on central elements of leadership. This last emphasis has resulted in the program being renamed the Master of Arts in Christian Outreach Leadership (MACOL). Many of

the excellent professors remain in place. A new cohort is scheduled to begin in January, 2012, and applications are currently being received. For more information, contact Norman Piatti, piatti@csp.edu or 651-641-8224, or check out the website, www.hoffmann-institute.org. ■



Hoffmann Institute

"Making the mission of God an unavoidable issue for the Christian community"

Mission Opportunities Available!

—Carly Stevens

Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST) Ministries, an RSO with the LCMS, has been sending short term teams since 1989 to meet strategic requests from our international partners. MOST Ministries is a Covenant Member of the U.S. Standards of Excellence in Short Term Missions. We spread the Gospel by deploying 25-30 teams annually to contribute to our mission of Empowering the Found in Reaching the Lost.

We still have openings on several fall teams. Working with Lutheran Hour Ministries, we plan to send a Health & Hygiene team to Paraguay (November 18-26) and an English Conversation team to Uruguay (October 7-16). Two of our November teams will serve the Lutheran Church in Nicaragua, providing Youth Evangelism (November 11-19) and Bio Sand Filters (November 4-12). Our October teams have an application deadline of September 8 and the November options have a September 30 deadline.

MOST is also pleased to offer domestic mission opportunities! We have two sets of dates (October 9-15 and November 20-29) to serve in the Katrina-stricken area of Louisiana working with Camp Restore. Please prayerfully consider joining one of these exciting opportunities.

MOST provides pre-field training and information to prepare team members culturally, spiritually and

logistically. Team members receive a training binder, Servanthood Bible Study, On-the-Field Journal, and a Re-Entry Bible Study. We also provide a medical kit, nursing protocols (written for us by a tropical disease specialist) and a 24/7 on-call doctor for all our teams.

MOST handles all field logistics and project set-up and provides supplemental health insurance for all team members. Trip cost includes all the aforementioned pre-field materials plus the team's international air and ground transportation, housing, food, visas (if required), and interpreters.

"I feel MOST is extremely well organized and has a very smooth, seamless sequence to help a team and all its members handle the many aspects of a mission trip with relative ease," says team member Dan Walther. "If one pays attention to all the printed and training materials, there can hardly be anything that catches you unaware."

We welcome you to join one of our teams and partner with us in impacting lives for Jesus Christ. Our website is www.mostministries.org ■

MOST provides pre-field training and information to prepare team members culturally, spiritually and logistically.

Upcoming Coaching Clinics Opportunities from Transforming Churches Network (TCN)

TCN Coaching focuses on the Eight Hinge Factors and, if there has been a consultation, the 5 prescriptions, for the purpose of transforming churches.

Many Pastors like to engage a TCN Coach when they join a Learning Community. Others may begin after their congregation has experienced a Hinge Training Event or after a Consultation. Contact with the TCN coach will help the pastor and leaders of the congregation develop strategies to grow in the eight core competencies. Coaching involves reporting, problem solving, brainstorming and action planning.

Directional Coaching Clinic- Kansas City, KS
Oct. 24-26, 2011

Coaching Clinic: Basics to Best Practices, Calgary,
January 30-Feb. 1, 2012

Coaching Clinic: Basics to Best Practices,
Vancouver, Feb. 2-4, 2012

These events, and more information about them, can be found on the TCN website:
<http://transformingchurchesnetwork.org>

The Global Reach of the Graduate School of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

This article has been adapted from a piece which appeared in the Spring/Summer 2011 edition of Concordia Seminary.

Currently more than 20 international students are enrolled in Concordia Seminary's graduate programs. Two-thirds to three-fourths of the students will return to their homelands to serve as seminary professors. "To recognize that one person returning to one seminary will train hundreds or more of future pastors who then will go out to proclaim Christ to hundreds and thousands of others—to see that kind of potential in one student after another really gets a person excited," says Dr. Bruce Schuchard, Dean of Advanced Studies. Many also go on to serve in other important leadership roles in their home church bodies. Schuchard cites the example of Rev. Amos Bolay, acting president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia.

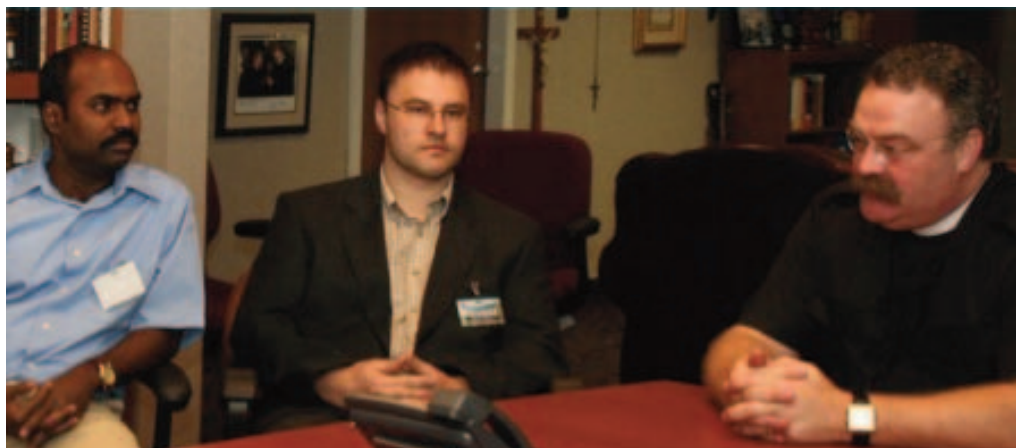
International students who are attracted to Concordia Seminary are "almost always Lutheran" notes Dr. Reed Lessing, Director of the Graduate School. This year, the graduate school has a total enrollment of over 100 students including the more than 20 international students. "The predominant reason is that we are a confessional Lutheran Seminary and we have church partners all around the world who send their brightest and best to us," Lessing says. "Think about the ramifications when you train a man who is going to return to mainland China with evangelical Lutheran theology and teach the Bible. Or think about our two students from India. God willing, they will train generations of pastors with the theology they learned here."

Deaconess Ruth McDonnell, Assistant Director of Master of Arts Programs, observes that the international students bring a unique dimension to the entire Seminary, "It's fascinating to learn the cultural differences from our students—to see them

interact theologically with other students in classes as they bring the flavor of life from places around the world. It helps us all see the worldwide picture and meet the challenge to express the Gospel in ways that relate to cultures and people who aren't like us."

Dr. Lessing provides these examples of the roles and responsibilities that international graduate students have taken upon returning to their home countries.

- Rev. Bulti Fayissa, instructor, Mekane Yesus Seminary, Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia
- Dr. Ingvar Floysvik, instructor, Bryne, Norway
- Rev. Anselmo Graff, instructor and dean of students, Seminário Concórdia, Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil
- Dr. Guntis Kalme, instructor, Luther Academy, Riga, Latvia
- Dr. Makito Masaki, president, Kobe Lutheran Theological Seminary, Japan
- Rev. Walter Obare, presiding bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Kenya
- Rev. Acir Raymann, academic dean, Seminário Concórdia, Sao Leopoldo, Brazil
- Dr. Jeffrey Silcock, head of theology department and vicarage coordinator, Australian Lutheran College, Adelaide, Australia ■



From left, Stanish Stanley, Guntars Baikovs, and LCMS President Rev. Matthew Harrison met with other international students to discuss the current state of Lutheranism in the world.

Graduation at the Centre Luthérien d'Etudes Théologique (CLET)

—Rev. Glenn Fluegge

The *Centre Luthérien d'Etudes Théologiques* (CLET - In English, Lutheran Center for Theological Studies) is located in Dapaong, Togo. Dapaong is a rather small town in northern Togo about 15 miles from the Burkina Faso border. It is about a 10-12 hour bus ride from the capital city of Lome on the southern coast of Togo to the town of Dapaong.

The CLET opened its doors in Feb, 1997, so it is less than 15 years old. It was started by close collaboration between the *Eglise Luthérienne du Togo* (Lutheran Church of Togo) and LCMS World Mission and was initially intended for the training of Togolese pastors only.

However, already during that first year, students from a partner Lutheran church in Ivory Coast began sending students there. It soon became an international seminary for which was formed an international union of French-speaking confessional Lutheran Churches with the express purpose of promoting theological education (the acronym for this union is rather long - UELCAFPET - it is often referred to simply as the "UNION"). Current members of this Union include Lutheran church bodies in Guinea, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), and Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa). The Union sends representatives to Togo each year to discuss the policies of the CLET. Union member churches also train their students at the CLET. This past year (2010-2011), the CLET had students from six different Lutheran churches scattered all over West and Central Africa: Guinea, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, and the Republic of Congo.

Many times, English-speakers are not aware that nearly half of Africa speaks French (and a good portion considered "English-speaking is actually much more comfortable in Swahili, e.g., Tanzania). The LCMS began work in Nigeria and Ghana originally. It wasn't until decades later (1980) that the first missionary was sent into Togo – LCMS' first French-speaking mission effort. As a result, the confessional Lutheran Church is still rather unknown and fairly small in French-speaking Africa as compared to the rather large English-speaking churches.

I bring this up to highlight the importance of what the CLET is doing. The CLET is the ONLY Lutheran seminary in French-speaking Africa that focuses specifically on teaching and training confessional Lutheran pastors for churches that are associated with the ILC.

Dr. Lussambu Dongo, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, is the current Director of the CLET. The CLET staff includes: Three theology professors (Dr. Dongo is one of these), an administrator, and a part-time French instructor. In addition, LCMS missionaries, professors, and pastors who are able to speak/teach in French are often invited to the CLET throughout the year to teach intensive courses. For example, I recently taught a course on Early Church History in the month of June. Rev. Dean Christ, an LCMS pastor from Trinity

Lutheran Church in Iowa, also recently led a course on "Christian Family."

The CLET is organized into two programs: 1) The



CLET Students with Staff and Visitors



Rev. Glenn Fluegge with two Togolese students



Rev. Fluegge with Jean-Lare (a former student and vicar)

Continued from page 7

Novice Program is a one-year beginning residential program (students study on campus) that prepares students for a limited ministry in the field. It also prepares students to enter the Pastoral Program. 2) The Pastoral Program consists of two cycles. The first cycle is a two year residential program of theological/academic studies aimed at preparing the student for the pastoral ministry in an African context. After successfully completing this first cycle, the student is recommended to continue on in the second cycle - the Vicarage. Vicars return to their home churches to do their vicarages (often far from the CLET). These vicarages can take anywhere from one to four years, purposefully designed to be flexible to accommodate the varied situations within which the vicars may find themselves. A vicarage consists in accomplishing a series of supervised tasks for which detailed reports are written and submitted. After successfully finishing his vicarage and receiving the recommendation of his church, a vicar receives his diploma from the CLET and can be ordained into the Pastoral Ministry.

In addition, the CLET recently opened an *Ecoles des Femmes* (Women's School), in which are enrolled the wives who are able to accompany their husbands to seminary. This school teaches basic literacy to the wives who do not know how to read. More advanced women take classes in basic catechetical training. Training not just the pastor, but equipping the pastor's whole family has always been a goal of the CLET.

The CLET's primary partner is the LCMS WM, which continues to help with significant financing and personnel.

Graduation day was on June 18, 2011. Four vicars graduated from seminary with their diplomas and are now awaiting ordination. They are:

- LARE Nangayabé (Togo),
- DABIRSOA Jean-Lare (Togo),
- GNANDE Evariste (Ivory Coast),
- GUEHI GUEHI Marc (Ivory Coast)

In August 2010 another three vicars (all from Togo) also received their diplomas and are awaiting ordination. That is a total of seven. Finishing the rather tedious vicarage in often challenging circumstances is fraught with difficulty. Most vicars/pastors are not adequately recompensed for their work (if they receive anything at all!) and so must be worker-priests.

Thirteen students from six different countries in

French-speaking Africa received their certificates for successfully finishing the academic cycle of the Pastoral Program and approval to begin their vicarages in their different churches. These students will now return home and continue their pastoral formation in the "school of the Holy Spirit" as they do their vicarages:

- NAPON Joseph (Burkina Faso)
- SAWADOGO Arzoumbila (Burkina Faso)
- SAMBIROU Kangniti (Togo)
- CNITCHIEME Lankondjoa (Togo)
- MALANDA Jean Bosco (Congo Brazzaville)
- MASSALA Judicaël Fred (Congo Brazzaville)
- MBOUNGOU Joseph (Congo Brazzaville)
- LAMBONI Remy (Togo)
- MANOUG Yentieme (Togo)
- TCHIRITEME Tanpo (Burkina Faso)
- KOUMBI LEGUE Abona (Benin)
- GALOO Roland (Ivory Coast)
- DESSAHON Paulin (Ivory Coast)

Eight students also finished the first year of the Pastoral Program and will continue on to their second year in August 2011.

It was also a very important and significant moment when about 20 student wives received certificates for having successfully completed the "Women's School" program.

With the number of students and their wives and families, the CLET "community" numbered over a hundred people this last year!

After teaching an intensive course, I purposefully stayed an extra week so to be able to attend the graduation ceremonies – and I was glad I did. The large "Salle de Classe" (Classroom) was transformed into a huge chapel that quickly filled up. At one point, I tried to count how many people there were. My best estimate would be around 500 people – many inside and some outside trying to get a glimpse of the festivities happening inside. The regular church service lasted about two to three hours and was interspersed with hymns accompanied by African drums sung in French from the new French Lutheran hymnal from Canada. The graduation ceremonies afterwards lasted about another two hours.

At one point, the ladies from the Women's School got up in the middle of the church service, sang songs,

Continued on page 9

Continued from page 8

and acted out skits about the importance of their supportive role in the pastoral ministries of their husbands. It brought tears to my eyes because I know how difficult it often is for these women whose husbands are often not supported as they should be.

I was Director and taught at the CLET for ten years from 1999 – 2009 before recently accepting a call to South Africa. The festivities brought back many fond memories. The ceremony was followed up by a meal of rice, goat meat, and tchokpah (the local millet drink). I enjoyed the opportunity to renew friendships with so many people whom I had not seen for such a long time. It was a time of mutual encouragement. And for that I thank the Lord!

Throughout the ceremonies, I could not help but think about the importance of what was happening. We are encouraged to pray that the Lord of the Harvest send workers out into the fields ripe for harvest – and they are so ripe in Africa! (Africa, if it is not already, will soon be the “center” of Christianity.) This has been the prayer of decades’ worth of missionaries in French-speaking Africa. What happened on June 18 was yet again an answer to this all-important prayer! The Lord of the Harvest was and continues to be at work through the CLET. ■



The CLET Community (some missing)



Burkinabe student receives certificate

Concordia Theological Monthly and Missio Apostolica added to ATLAS

—David O. Berger

Concordia *Theological Monthly* (1960-1972) and *CTM* (1973, January 1974) join *Concordia Journal* (1975 -) full-text online on ATLAS, linked to the American Theological Library Association's ATLA-Religion Database on the EBSCOhost platform. The remaining indexed issues from 1949-1959 are anticipated online by the end of 2011. ATLAS is available on the Concordia Seminary Library portal page to all members of the seminary community and via ATLAS for Alumni to all alumni who have requested access from public services librarian, Eric Stancliff - stancliffe@csl.edu .

Also accessible full text online on ATLAS for the first time are all issues of *Missio Apostolica* (1993-), the

publication of the Lutheran Society for Missiology, whose editorial staff includes several members of the Concordia Seminary faculty.

When all anticipated issues of the seminary publications are online, the collection will include *Concordia Theological Monthly* (1949-1972), *CTM* (1973, Jan. 1974), and *Concordia Journal* (1975-). The latter is also available from 2001- on the seminary's web site. It is the policy of the ATLA that only indexed journal issues are made available full text on ATLAS; thus, issues of the *Monthly* from 1930-1948 are not slated for inclusion until such time as retrospective indexing might be done. ■

Lutheran Society for Missiology Holds 20th Annual Meeting

The LSFM Board of Directors held its 20th Annual Meeting on September 16 on the campus of Concordia Seminary. The theme that quickly emerged from this meeting was “*Transition*.” LSFM continues to make the *Transition* from producing *Missio Apostolica* as a printed journal available by paid subscription to facilitating a website that not only provides a digital rendering of *Missio Apostolica* for free on-line, but also provides other meaningful articles, news items, and conversations as well as engages people from around the world in significant conversations around missiological issues facing the Church today. This *Transition* also requires a change in the LSFM’s funding model, moving from funding the ministry through paid journal subscriptions to funding the ministry through generous gifts from donors who support the values, mission, and ministry of the LSFM.

Transition was also evident as LSFM members elected new directors to the LSFM Board. Jorge Groh and Beatrice Hoppe were elected as two new members and join those who happily agreed to continue their service: Ken Reiner, Jim Pressnell, Ruth Mattson, Bob Scudieri, Victor Raj, and Henry Rowold.

In addition, *Transition* was evident as LSFM members ratified two changes to the By-Laws. The first change was the definition of membership required by the *Transition* from a subscription funding model to a donor gift funding model. LSFM membership is now defined as “those who

support the values, mission, and vision of the LSFM as demonstrated by their financial support in the current or previous fiscal year.” The second change added an Operations Committee alongside the Editorial Committee. The Operations Committee will use three sub-committees to attend to the website, develop donors, and manage on-line memberships and elections.

Transition was also evident in fine presentations delivered by Tony Cook and Bill Woolsey to the 35 attendees, both of them addressing the issue of an aging church in a dramatically changing world with the subsequent worldview of generations not in the church but yet asking spiritual questions. How can our church *Transition* appropriately to meet this spiritual generation with the life-changing truth found in Jesus Christ? Tony was with the group in person, while Bill attended from Texas via a Skype call.

Finally, *Transition* was evident in the passionate discussions about the future of LSFM, its role, and ministry. There was a powerful sense of excitement as the Board recommitted itself to be a leader in the missiological discussion from a Lutheran perspective and become a platform for important critical dialogue related to present and future missiological issues in the church. That contagious excitement continued as the Board identified critical strategies to fulfill its mission and become the vision. May God’s grace and Spirit lead and empower the LSFM! ■

20TH ANNIVERSARY



Lutheran Society for Missiology



Tony Cook, Professor at
Concordia Seminary,
St. Louis



Bill Woolsey, Pastor of
CrossPoint Community
Church, Katy Texas

LSFM membership is now defined as “those who support the values, mission, and vision of the LSFM as demonstrated by their financial support in the current or previous fiscal year.”

Starting in the Middle?

—Marshall Gillam

The mission of Lutheran Bible Translators is to help bring people to faith in Jesus Christ. As you know, we do that by translating the New Testament into the mother tongue languages of people around the world, providing them the opportunity to read and hear about the life, death and resurrection of our Lord.

But why did God send His Son to redeem us? How did the Jewish people come to live in Israel, and how and why had things changed so much by Jesus' time? What does it mean when Matthew states that the words or actions of Jesus fulfill a prophesy?

The answers, of course, can be found in the Old Testament. From the creation to Chronicles, from the Psalms to the prophets, the Old Testament tells of a living, majestic, vibrant God who worked in and through history to bring justification through His grace to fallen mankind.

Though New Testament translation is generally the focus of a language project, Old Testament portions are often translated as well. As one African gentleman said, "The story is incomplete if you start in the middle." Translating a

selection of Old Testament books helps complete the story, providing insights into New Testament imagery and history.



Moses, one of the Khwe translators, working on a passage from Genesis.

There are additional, compelling reasons for Old Testament translation. Virtually every culture agrees that there is a god, the giver of life. Genesis gives a name to that God, showing His active involvement with humanity.

The stories of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob provide common ground with Muslim groups. Old Testament culture is in many ways parallel to that of African and other countries. The importance of ancestors, the celebration of harvest festivals, the practice of the priesthood and sacrifices – all make the people and events of the Old Testament more relatable.

Rev. Tim Beckendorf, serving with the Khwe people of northern Botswana, reported the following.

As the team and I were working through Genesis 12 and the call of Abraham, someone asked where Abraham was when God called him and told him to go to Canaan (and where in the world was Canaan?). So, I brought out a map that showed the travels of Abraham. Someone else noticed Egypt on the map and asked, "Is that Egypt in the Bible the same one that is in Africa?" I assured him that yes, it was. The response: "Now I can believe in God! I thought that all those places in the Bible were a different world, not a real one."

The book of Psalms, with its entreaties for help, praise for blessings granted, and its lyrical style, also speaks to peoples' hearts. Bea Kun, a Klao woman of Liberia, told LBT missionary Alvina Federwitz she has always liked hearing the Psalms read in English because it sounded like music to her ears, but now, when she reads Psalms in Klao, her mother tongue, "the music has words of encouragement." For the first time in her life she can understand the many words that made no sense to her in English.

Continued from page 10

Other Old Testament books, like Jonah, can serve multiple purposes. Written in narrative style, Jonah is easy to translate. The story has a mission message, as God sends Jonah to Ninevah to preach repentance. The subsequent events – Jonah in the belly of the whale – can be transcribed into a memorable live dramatic performance that can also be filmed for presentation to groups, congregations or Sunday school classes.

Of course, Old Testament passages are also used in the lectionary and are published for church use.

Since the mission of LBT is to share Jesus Christ, the initial focus of translation may well be the New Testament. This is especially true in

communities with an existing Christian church presence. People want the Gospel in their language to better understand it. But there is no denying the importance of the Old Testament and the influence it can have as people learn about their Creator and the relationship He has always desired to have with us. In fact, half of LBT's current translation projects include all or portions of the Old Testament.

So as you can see, Lutheran Bible Translators is not a misnomer. The story starts in the Old Testament and is fulfilled in the New Testament in the person of Jesus Christ. From "In the beginning" to the last "Amen", God's Word spans the centuries and is still relevant for all people today, fortifying their understanding and faith. ■

Articles of Mission News and Reflection Needed

The Communicator is published twice yearly. Please remember to submit articles, mission news items, announcements, or other pieces appropriate to the purpose of the Lutheran Society for Missiology to the editor. Photos are always welcomed.

–The Editor

The Lutheran Society for Missiology (LSFM) is a society of Lutheran who are interested in the Apostolic mission of God in today's world. The Society was born on October 25, 1991, out of concern to promote Biblical attitudes for Missions. Among other things, the Society publishes a modest but very significant journal, *MISSIO APOSTOLICA*. To join or receive further information, please contact:



The Lutheran Society for Missiology
Concordia Seminary
880 Seminary Place
St. Louis, MO 63105

The Communicator is published twice yearly. Your mission news and announcements are welcome. Please send them one month in advance to:

Dr. Douglas L. Rutt, Editor
Lutheran Hour Ministries
660 Mason Ridge Center Drive
St. Louis, MO 63141-8557
Douglas.Rutt@LHM.org

Website:
www.LSFMissiology.org