

ELCA GLOBAL MISSION UPDATES

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Madagascar, West and Central Africa (MWCA) This past fall the MWCA team hosted Mr. Pascal Kama, General Secretary of the **Lutheran Church in Senegal (LCS)**. Mr. Kama spent a few days in Chicago and had an opportunity to present information on his home church to the churchwide organization. He then visited with their companion, the Grand Canyon Synod, and was able to visit congregations in Chicago, Arizona and Nevada.



Procession outside St. Peter's Lutheran Church

The 500th Anniversary of the Reformation was celebrated by the **Lutheran Communion of West and Central Africa** in September and hosted by the **Lutheran Church in Liberia**. Members of this team, leaders from around the region, as well as special guests from the Lutheran World Federation (LWF); Rev. Martin Junge, General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Elieshi Mungare, Area Secretary and Rev. Dr. Jeanette Ada Maina, Vice President for Africa, attended. The commemoration included a special service at St. Peter's Lutheran Church with performances by a number of choirs. The culmination was a procession to Antointe Tubman Stadium and a service that included guest dignitaries and church leaders from all over Liberia.

In November, a group of ELCA women leaders traveled to Ghana. The purpose of this trip, part of the **MWCA4MWCA project**, was to speak with women about gender justice, see the work women had accomplished and discover what women all over the world have in common. Those who traveled were Jia Starr Brown: a student at Luther Seminary, Rhondean Johnson: of the ELCA Churchwide Office, Toromare Mananato: from the Malagasy Lutheran Church along with Rev. Andrea Walker: Area Director.

They visited St. Paul Lutheran Church and met with the women leaders. A lively time of singing, dancing and conversation was had at **Good News Theological Seminary** as well as meeting with women theological students. The last visit was to two villages to witness the work of women at the Skill Development projects of Good News Theological Seminary. These projects support youth, women and girls in learning weaving and tie-dying cloth.



Women participants in the weaving and tie-dying cloth program



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Asia Pacific The fall 2017 Global Mission Updates noted developments in the **Lutheran Church in Cambodia (LCC)** which is a part of the *Campaign for the ELCA*. The Rev. Daniel Orn was ordained in November, as announced, and a relationship agreement between the LCC and ELCA was signed. While the Lutheran Church in Singapore helped “birth” this church, as ELCA we are blessed to be part of the further growth of the church in Cambodia.



The newly ordained Rev. Daniel Orn

The ordination in Cambodia occurred in conjunction with a meeting of the **Mekong Mission Forum (MMF)**. The MMF is a consortium of churches and agencies that encourages mission in the Mekong River area, including Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar. It is particularly supported by Lutheran churches in Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore, plus other Asian churches and including those in Europe and the US that engage in mission in the region. It is through this forum that the ELCA has participated in the development of Lutheran churches in Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam; relationships with the Protestant churches in Laos and Vietnam; and community and sustainable development projects in various places.



The first three BTh women graduates of Martin Luther Seminary, ELC-PNG

In January, the one-million-member **Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (ELCPNG)** held its first Synod (assembly) since Bishop Jack Urame took office. Bishop Urame and his leadership team continue to bring a fresh voice to a church and country that faces the challenge of linguistic and cultural differences. Martin Luther Seminary (the principal seminary of the ELCPNG) graduated its first three women in the Bachelor of Theology program, paving the way for possible ordination. Bp. Urame is leading the discussion toward women’s ordination.

Several ELCA missionaries in the region are making contributions that reach beyond their immediate places of service. **Dr. Jeffrey Truscott** (Singapore) has written two books based on his experiences in Asia and now widely read: *Worship: A Practical Guide* and *The Sacraments: A Practical Guide*. He also has lectured in Indonesia, India, Malaysia and China. **Dr. Eric Trozzo** (Sabah, East Malaysia) is helping bring better understandings of Lutheran identity not just in Sabah, but to other parts of Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Australia. **Dr. Phillip Baker** (regional representative, Cambodia) has become a theologian-envoy as he has lectured and provided theological guidance among churches in Myanmar, Indonesia, India, Cambodia and for regional bodies.

East and Southern Africa Thanks to generous donors to the *Campaign for the ELCA*, from November 16 to December 31, 2017 thousands of South Sudanese came together to worship, celebrate, organize and learn at the **Reconciliation Lutheran Center and Clinic in Juba**. On November 16, 2017 over 5,000 people gathered with the President of South Sudan and other government officials to celebrate the grand opening. The Sunday worship service was attended by the Paramount Chief, seven local chiefs and more than 1,500 women, men, youth and children. Christmas services brought together more than 3,000 people. On any given day the center is filled with people searching for community, seeking hope and finding a center of peace and reconciliation.

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The Lutheran Center is fulfilling a void that was identified several years ago by South Sudanese representatives and ELCA Global Mission. Women come to the Lutheran Center to learn how to sew and start small income generating programs. People that are differently-abled come to partake in opportunities to further their contributions to society.



Community members gathering at the Reconciliation Center, Juba South Sudan

Young men and women come for short courses and trainings on using desktop computers. The Reconciliation Center is a place where students can get help doing their homework and participate in after school activities. After just a couple of months there is excitement in the air and it continues to grow. The ELCA and the Reconciliation Lutheran Center have earned the trust of the community and the government.

Global Mission hopes to work with the church leadership in the **Evangelical Lutheran Church of Africa Mission** (South Sudan) to identify an ESL teacher, as English is the official language of South Sudan. Staff at the center are

beginning to work closely with Ministry of Gender and Children to address early marriage, rape, exploitation of women and children, homelessness and extreme poverty. Global Health Ministries, along with Dr. Mark Jacobson and Tanzanian doctors, have begun to train staff in providing competent and professional health care services. A surgery and recovery room at the Reconciliation Lutheran Center are being completed.

The Reconciliation Center is more than a community center. Rather, it is a symbol of peace and reconciliation among a people that have suffered through many conflicts.

Latin America and Caribbean Lutheran churches throughout the region actively participated in the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. In Central America, the **Lutheran Christian Church of Honduras** (ICLH) ended the anniversary year with many activities, including a leadership training workshop on Lutheran identity. This was held for pastors and lay leaders from all ICLH faith communities and was co-facilitated by a group of teaching pastors from their companion synod, the **Northeastern Minnesota Synod**.

A bust of Martin Luther was unveiled in the middle of a major traffic intersection in downtown Tegucigalpa. The land for the plaza – now officially called the Luther Plaza – was donated by the mayor's office and the unveiling ceremony was attended by representatives of the German Embassy and other invited guests.



Unveiling of the bust of Martin Luther in *The Luther Plaza*

An ecumenical, open-air worship service celebrated in downtown Tegucigalpa and attended not only by ICLH church members, but also by many passers-by who fill the city's Central Park on a typical Sunday morning.



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Educación Popular en Salud (EPES), Chile Seventeen people, from Puerto Rico, Colombia, Nicaragua, Venezuela and several regions of Chile, graduated from the IX International School of Popular Education in Health that was held in Santiago and Concepcion from January 7 to 17, 2018. Out of the participation in this Escuela Internacional de EPES (EPES International School), attendees can understand and apply popular education methods in health promotion, know how to form community health groups, work with local organizations and explore the role of the Church in the fight for the Right to Health. Two leaders of our companion church, **Iglesia Evangélica Luterana en Chile**, participated as well.



Participants from the IX International School

Europe, Middle East and North Africa The 500th anniversary of the Reformation was observed throughout the region. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, Global Mission's Executive Director preached at Wittenberg's Castle Church with Robert Moore and Viking and Marissa Dietrich in attendance. Cindy Halmarson, desk director, attended Reformation Day events in Moscow at the invitation of the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia**.

In November, Cairo's **St Andrews Refugee Service (StARS)** received the prestigious Ockenden Prize from Oxford University with the first-ever "prom" for unaccompanied migrant youth in programs supported in part by ELCA GM.



Photo of Bishop Azar by Ben Gray/ELCJHL

From the ELCJHL Press Release, "on January 12, 2018, the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL)** consecrated and installed The Rev. Sani Ibrahim Charlie "Barhoum" Azar as its fourth Bishop. Under the guidance of the Scripture, "You did not choose me, but I chose you," John 15:16 Bishop Azar addressed the congregation and honored guests. "It seems the Lord has called me today to follow in a new way, and to bear new fruit. Today, the six congregations of the ELCJHL are under my care. I am humbled and honored to take up

this new responsibility, and promise to continue our relationship based on love, companionship and respect."

Presiding Bishop Eaton led a delegation of staff and synodical bishops that included, Bishop Richard Jaech of **Southwestern Washington**, Bishop Paul Erickson of **Greater Milwaukee**, Bishop Donald Kreiss of **Southeast Michigan** (Companion Synod to ELCJHL), and Bishop Erik Gronberg of **Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana**, Bishop Steven Delzer of **Southeast Minnesota**, and Bishop James Hazelwood of **New England Synod** also attended from ELCJHL's Companion Synod.

Central Europe Teachers recruitment is underway for six to twelve volunteers to serve as English lectors

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in Slovakia, Poland and Hungary for the 2018-2019 academic year. This program is open to people with a love of travel and experience working with high school youth. A Bachelor's degree is required.

On August 1, 2018 **Cindy Halmarson**, desk director, will retire, concluding her service with ELCA Global Mission. The search for a new Area Director for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa will commence soon. Halmarson said: "Working with Global Mission was a surprising adventure at the end of my career, but it is time to go home to Canada."

Companion Synod Program Global Mission continues to nurture, grow, and renew 119 companion synod relationships, and several relationships have been highlighted in previous pages of this update. Relationship Managers work with 64 ELCA synods and five synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada who walk with 64 international churches and their judicatories throughout the world. Global Mission brings synods and companions together in dedicated ways throughout the year, below are a few examples of how we are working to deepen connections to companion churches.

Accompaniment recognizes that each of us contributes gifts to the global work through the Companion Synod Program with our Lutheran brothers and sisters around the world. Companion Synod relationships are complex, dynamic, self-governed and are constantly confronted with inter-cultural factors that influence the way we listen to each other. Network meetings and Consultations provide us an opportunity to have specific conversations and opportunities to revisit **accompaniment** values, to talk about global engagement, and to learn from each other while working with the same companion. These gatherings afford us the opportunity to network and discuss our work together.

The following synods, **Nebraska, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Metropolitan Chicago, Western Iowa, Northeastern Iowa, Northwestern Ohio, Southern Ohio and Florida Bahamas**, are participating in the redesigned International Companion Program for this year's Youth Gathering in Houston. All participating synods will receive a grant from Global Mission to support their international youth delegate. Mission Formation will lead orientation in Chicago, prior to the international guests visiting their Companion Synod, and then the Youth Gathering.

The International Camp Counselor Program is a collaboration between the Domestic Mission unit and the Global Mission unit of the ELCA to invite young adults from our Companion churches to serve as camp counselors at ELCA camps for the summer. International participants will arrive in late May for orientation, once they have completed this orientation they will travel to their respective camps for three months to work and share the gospel to campers across the country. This is a great ministry to consider when thinking of ways to deepen engagement in your Companion Synod relationship.

AMMPARO – As of February 1st, 2018 there are 75 welcoming and sanctuary congregations in the AMMPARO network. These congregations are in 28 synods, some of which are sanctuary (5) or AMMPARO Welcoming Synods (11).

Nebraska and Western Iowa Synods begin new Guardian Angel program in Omaha Immigration Court. In January, more than 40 people from these two Synods were trained to be the physical presence of the church in Omaha Immigration Court, accompanying migrant children and families through



January Guardian Angel Training in Omaha



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their court hearings. All migrants who live in both Iowa and Nebraska go to this court complex in Omaha for their hearings. Each month, two to three Guardian Angels will be present for each court hearing, introducing themselves to families before they go into court, praying for justice to be done in their cases, accompanying families through the court hearing and afterwards assisting especially those without lawyers to answer any questions they might have about what just happened. The hearings are in English with translation, but for many, things can be confusing.

The Omaha Guardian Angel program is the third in the ELCA, with other programs in Los Angeles and Chicago. A fourth program will begin in March 2018 in the Denver Immigration Court. If you are in the greater Denver area and are interested, please contact Pastor Alena Lamirato at pastoralena@yahoo.com. A fifth program will begin in Atlanta, possibly spring 2018.

Mission Formation - *Glocal* continues to partner with congregations and synods to explore together *accompaniment* as a narrative, lens, and methodology for engaging God's mission at global and local intersections. In the past year Mission Formation, the education and interpretation team of Global Mission, brought *Glocal* worship and education to over 20 events to enhance connections with the worldwide Christian family and receiving the gift of the global church.

Mission Formation has also expanded its educational offerings with the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) a tool which builds our capacity to:

- Engage in faithful and healthy relationships to participate in God's reconciling and restoring work.
- Develop reciprocal relationships of mutuality for proclamation and service.
- Address asymmetries in power and move towards more just and equitable relationships.

The backbone of this work continues to be the leadership development program led through our *Annual Musician-educators' Training* with a diverse and dynamic group of almost 200 musician-educators who serve at *Glocal* events and in their home contexts. For a list of events currently scheduled for 2018 visit, www.elca.org/glocal



2018 Annual Musician-educators' Training Participants



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Diakonia In fiscal year 2018, Diakonia will be stewarding funds to **250 World Hunger projects**, of which 67 are starting a new three-year project cycle. Support to projects implemented by companion churches increased in the FY2018 budget. The number of projects focusing on **Peace, Justice & Human Rights** continues to grow, with four of the nine new projects this year being focused in this sector.

Diakonia continues to take a proactive role in enhancing coordination and collaboration with Mission Advancement, which has led to more streamlined and efficient gathering and review of programmatic information, and marketing materials that are increasingly **reflective of the accompaniment ethos** that defines the work of Global Mission.

Lutheran Disaster Response-International provided support for **20 disaster relief and recovery projects in 18 countries** in FY2017. These were initiated in response to a wide variety of disasters and include ongoing responses to the refugee crises in **Europe, the Middle East, and Myanmar/Bangladesh, as well as the crisis in South Sudan**. LDR-International also responded to hurricanes in the Atlantic through companion churches and ecumenical partners in Cuba and Haiti. In December 2018, Global Mission staff visited Cuba to discuss ongoing disaster recovery and preparedness efforts with the Cuban Council of Churches.

Diakonia staff are actively involved in both the continued **design and the piloting of the new grant management software**, working with Global Mission Area Desks to ensure that companion church trainings are successful and ongoing, and that **qualitative and quantitative reporting** is accurately captured within the software.

Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) The YAGM program has just finished accepting applications for the 2018-2019 program year and is currently conducting candidate interviews. With God's help, and your support of the *Campaign for the ELCA*, we hope to invite and place 91 YAGM volunteers for the coming year in our 11 country programs. Because of the YAGM program's emphasis on building leaders for the ELCA, we are working more closely this year with Savanna Sullivan, the Program Director for Young Adult Ministry, to find sustainable ways to bring our YAGM alumni into leadership roles within the wider church.

Madagascar YAGM volunteer, Katie Elkin, wrote a beautiful newsletter article about how important it is to be open to trying new things. She writes,



Katie and Jeanne in Madagascar

On Wednesday, my friend Jeanne was helping me "mikarakara" the vegetables for lunch. We were peeling carrots and potatoes and making small talk, when a visitor in the yard piped up and said "Mahay teny Gasyizy!" I hear this phrase often, even though it is not true, and it means "She knows the Malagasy language!" Learning a new language was something that excited me about my YAGM year, but also something that utterly terrified me. I do think I have made progress, but I do NOT think that I know the language. So I responded to the visitor, "Misaotra fa mbola tsy mahay be" (Thanks, but I still don't know a lot). I told Jeanne (who speaks English very well) that my current obstacle is that I can understand a lot of what people say to me, but I don't know what to say in response. Or if I do know what to say, I don't know HOW to say it! Her response was simple and hit me hard. She said "Katie, to try is not mistake."



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I have tried a lot of things since coming to Madagascar. And daily, I try speaking Malagasy. Jeanne's nugget of wisdom spoke to me in so many ways. The fact that her English sentence contained a mistake, but still had such an impact on me, reminded me that I don't have to have perfect Malagasy to communicate with and relate to people. It reminded me that while trying and succeeding is usually more pleasant, trying and failing is not necessarily bad. When it comes to speaking Malagasy, my failures are usually followed by some laughter, but then smiles and encouragement as I learn what I should (or should not) have said. This whole year has been, and will continue to be, an exercise in trying things. I am grateful to have a community here that is patient with, gracious towards, and receptive of me - mistakes and all.

International Leaders Program Thanks to the generous support of donors to the Campaign for the ELCA, the **International Women Leaders (IWL)** initiative continues to grow in its accompaniment of emerging young leaders from around the world. At the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year, the ILP scholarship staff welcomed **seven new recipients of 4-year scholarship awards for bachelor's degree study at ELCA colleges and universities**. This brings the total of current IWL students at ELCA colleges/universities to 19. Seven to eight new IWL scholarships will be awarded for the 2018-2019 academic year.

This initiative for women is thriving, thanks in large part to the faithful partnership of our excellent ELCA colleges and universities. Educational partners now include: **Augsburg University, Concordia College, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Luther College, Newberry College, St. Olaf College, and Wartburg College. California Lutheran University and Wittenberg University** have joined this list of partners and will receive their first IWL scholars in the fall. We also depend on the program's partnership with the ELCA global companion churches who have raised up these scholars and who will welcome them back after graduation. We're grateful to now partner with 10 companions in the work of the IWL initiative, spanning Cameroon, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Rwanda, Suriname, Thailand, and Zimbabwe.



IWL scholars Rebeca Amaro-Treviño (Mexico), Phephile Ndlovu (Zimbabwe), Fillonie Debully (Malaysia), and Angeline Neo (Malaysia) are pursuing bachelor's degrees at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa.

The **International Leaders Program (ILP)** "traditional" scholarship work also continues in full force, partnering to support educational opportunities for women and men in a variety of subject areas, educational levels, and places of study. This "traditional" scholarship track is primarily supported by Mission Support dollars. We give thanks for the financial gifts provided by ELCA members in their Sunday morning offerings. Currently, **more than 125 individuals** receive support for degree programs and other leadership development experiences in the United States and in or near their home



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context. In hopes to continue to enhance access to these exciting opportunities and to improve efficiency in processing requests, the ILP staff has transitioned to an **online application process** utilizing the Churchwide organization's grantmaking system for the 2017-2018 intake. This significant operational shift will allow the ILP team to provide enhanced support to companions and applicants as they submit grant requests.

Under the leadership of the ILP staff, Global Mission is currently engaged in a process of renewing its commitment to gender justice. Drawing on 30 years of experience and looking toward the future, all of GM's sections are contributing to a comprehensive Gender Justice Strategy that will strategically shape our work in the coming years.

Lutheran Office for World Community (LOWC) Work continues at United Nations headquarters in New York on the **Global Compact for Migration**, which will be the first inter-governmentally negotiated agreement designed to address all aspects of international migration. The "Zero Draft", in which member states will base negotiations, was issued in early February 2018. The negotiations are to be completed in July, with compact's adoption scheduled for December 2018.

LOWC has been active in a subcommittee of the NGO Committee on Migration focusing on advocacy for the compact. The committee has provided input to the "Ten Acts for the Global Compact," outlining the essentials for a meaningful compact, which was endorsed by The Lutheran World Federation, and has met regularly with the Special Representative for the Global Compact on Migration, Louise Arbour.

Dennis Frado, Director, participated at an early 2018 UNICEF consultation exploring children's rights in the Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration and shared perspectives provided by the experiences of several Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) country programs including **Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda, Myanmar, Central African Republic, Cameroon and Colombia**, many which receive ELCA World Hunger support. To protect and assist unaccompanied and separated children in refugee and internally displaced situations, LWF has partnered with UNICEF, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), other non-governmental organizations and host governments to set up child-protection and education programs. Using a community-based approach, LWF builds the capacities of foster parents, teachers, care-givers and community members to understand and protect child rights as well as strengthen mechanisms for prevention and response to rights violations.

In addition to providing basic education at two refugee camps in Kenya and six camps in South Sudan, incentives promote the enrollment and regular attendance of girls, given the numerous barriers to girls' education. Another focus is on accessibility for and inclusion of physically challenged youth to education. Malnutrition, child health and regular attendance concerns are addressed through school feeding programs.

The sixty-second session of the **Commission on the Status of Women** (CSW) will be held in March 2018 at the United Nations, focusing on challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. Approximately twenty participants are registered with the Lutheran World Federation to attend the session, including representatives from **Rwanda, India, Thailand, Malaysia and El Salvador**. LOWC will serve as local host, participate in Ecumenical Women of the UN's orientation, offer a Lutheran Day, and co-sponsor an inter-faith event titled "Do You Have Faith in Sustainable Development Goals? Faith Sensitive Gender Justice."



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Global Service In early February the Global Service team completed a winter orientation program for 6 new missionaries – two couples who will serve long-term appointments in Japan, an alumna of the Young Adults in Global Mission UK program who will begin a new, long-term volunteer appointment in Nepal, and a parish pastor who will serve in Costa Rica in a joint appointment between the Global Mission unit and Costa Rica's companion, the Southwestern Texas Synod. These new missionaries join 200 other global personnel serving in 41 countries.



Six new ELCA missionaries participate in winter orientation before deploying to their countries of service.

The Global Service team is deep into the candidate evaluation process for the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program as we anticipate sending 91 new volunteers into service in 2018. We are also in the recruitment and/or interview stage for several other positions – a Regional Representative for Chinese-speaking areas of Asia, a parish pastor for Honduras, two ESL teachers for Japan, and 7-8 instructors for our Central Europe Teachers program. Finally, Global Mission has called three new Horizon International seminary interns to serve their ELCA internships in congregations in Uruguay, Slovakia, and Malaysia. We give thanks for the partnership with seminaries and candidacy committees which makes these placements possible.

