

WHERE HE LEADS..

FOREIGN MISSION OF THE APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

WITH LOVE FROM GHANA

BY PASTOR FRANK FAMIYEH

"...How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom 10:15)

Pastors and believers of the Christ Salvation Lutheran Church in Western Ghana apparently acknowledged this biblical truth as they welcomed Pastor Bob Maki, Pastor John Feroze, of Pakistan, and me to the churches and joyfully received the preaching of the saving Gospel which comes alive to them every new day.

For five days, Pastor Bob Maki and I took turns teaching the seminars that had been arranged for pastors but which attracted many other church leaders and members of the Flock of Jesus Christ at Asanteaye and at Afamasi. Our theme for the seminars was "The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation."

With more and more Christians demonstrating renewed interest in the Holy Spirit in recent times but, sadly, doing so with distorted understandings of scriptural witness to the Spirit and His work, we were left in no doubt that the Spirit Himself had given us an appropriate theme. Pastor Maki had so much to teach and preach on the Holy Spirit that I was left with very little to contribute. Questions and answers from our listeners clearly indicated that the seminars had erased their previous misconceptions and brought much

enlightenment to them regarding who the Spirit truly is and how He works in the salvation and sanctification of men.

Our house to house preaching sessions attracted several people to the homes we visited, so they could also hear and believe the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Children followed us wherever we went and Pastor Bob Maki took the opportunity to teach them Christian children's songs, which they sang with joy. With me still working in Western Ghana, the teaching and preaching of the Gospel will surely continue here so that many more dying souls would repent and receive faith to believe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

...AND FROM TOGO

The story was no different in Togo. All the pastors of the Apostolic Lutheran Church in Togo, along with their wives and several members of the local Church, attended the seminars. The power of the Gospel touched the hearts of the Pastors' wives so that they requested that, henceforth, they should also be sponsored to attend the regular seminars I conduct for their husbands. The pastors themselves are grateful to the Foreign Mission for the regular seminars which, doubtless, continue to enhance their growth in



Pastors Bob and Frank take turns to pray for a sick person.

grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their leader enthusiastically remarked that these seminars should be continued until the final appearance of the Lord Jesus.

Pastor Bob Maki blessed all the children who hung around to listen to our preaching at the seminars and church services, and in the end earned the nickname "GOD BLESS YOU." To these Togo kids therefore, we now have Pastor God Bless You instead of Pastor Bob Maki.

On behalf of the Flock in Ghana and Togo, I send sincere gratitude to all the saints in the Church in the United States whose financial support enables us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ through the preaching and teachings at these Foreign Mission sponsored seminars in our countries.

God's peace!



Left: A household listening to the preaching of the Gospel.

Middle: Pastors and church leaders at a seminar.

Right: Pastors Maki and Frank being received to a home by the family head.

From the Foreign Mission Administrator Desk

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BY JOHN RUOTSALA

Dear Readers, God's Peace!

I would like to extend a warm and heartfelt thank you to the Eastside Apostolic Lutheran Church (ALC) in South Carolina for the great hospitality your congregation showed to all attending the 2016 Annual Convention in June. It was a blessed time and we pray that the Word of God spoken will feed and nourish all that heard it and all that will continue to hear it online. Your technology team in arranging the online services was outstanding, and we thank you all so much.

During the Convention the Foreign Mission did a presentation. If you missed the presentation we have made a 20-minute video of it that includes beautiful singing in the Spanish language and a sermon by Timo Kontio. You can access the video link by visiting themissionsite.com and clicking the 'Latest News Blog' button in the left column.

For this year's video about Foreign Mission work, we chose a few noteworthy examples of the changes that God can work in the hearts of men, and the results that come from such changes:

- A man, living as an unbeliever in Russia, heard the Word through missionaries, repented, believed and now, years later, is on the ALC's Foreign Mission Board of Directors.
- A pastor once gathered a tiny group of people in a Hindu village in India and now over 500 attend his church.
- A tract was found on a train in Guatemala, which led an individual to contact the ALCA and has resulted in about 50 years of ongoing church work!
- An African Pastor came to a seminar sponsored by the ALCA and was transformed by the Spirit of God, and now he ministers in many countries in Africa.

Through God's Word we are made to be conquerors, because Jesus Christ conquered and lives! Enjoy the online presentation and please be in prayer that God will continue to provide willing workers in His vineyard.



Visit TheMissionSite.com and click 'Latest News Blog' for a link to the Foreign Mission Video for 2016.

More Than Words Can Say

BY BRINNA MYLLYMAKI



In the latter part of March, I was blessed to be able to join a small team from the ALCA Foreign Mission on a mission trip to the Philippines. Getting to know everybody on the team, as well as countless locals, was an absolutely amazing experience. What truly amazed me, and still does, about fellowship between fellow Christians from such different cultures, is that no matter how different we are by physical appearance, diet, or even the languages we speak, there is an unmistakable family bond among us because of our mutual faith. The relationship we have with our Lord gives us a tie so strong that it surpasses all differences and boundaries among His children. It doesn't matter that we live on completely opposite ends of the world, speak a different language, and have never spoken to each other before, when we join together as fellow Christians, we ARE a family. Here are just a few examples of how I witnessed this in the Philippines:



Using up energy before the church service.

- At one of the first churches we visited in a small village at the top of a mountain, there was one elderly woman who glowed with joy for meeting us. To my knowledge, she didn't speak a word of English, but her precious, constant smile and her gentle hand caressing my cheek made her joy and hospitality more clear than words ever could.
- One evening in a tiny open-air church, we were well into a song before I realized that I didn't even know the words that were being sung. I had been so caught up in the energy of worshipping God that it felt no less heartfelt than if we had all been singing the same language.
- Julie and I inflated and handed out balloons to the children prior to a service we held at a beach. I noticed two small boys watching curiously from a distance, too shy to come get a balloon from the strange white people. When I made an extra effort to give them each a balloon and a smile, their faces beamed with pure joy at the simple gift.



It was made clear to me that both fellowship and worship are so much more than the words that roll off of our tongue. God sees our hearts more clearly than we could ever put what we experience into words. We truly are very blessed to have Christian fellowship around the world and to know that even if we don't see again those who we've met along the way in this life, we will be joined again in glory when we are called Home to be with Jesus!

Women sit in a church service in a mountain village.

ARE THE SEEDS TAKING ROOT?

BY BRIAN NIEMITALO

It has been difficult to write about the trip we took to the Philippines in April, mainly because when I try to think of what to write about, I come up empty. Nothing happened on this trip that I would say was especially rewarding to my heart or showed that the preaching of the Word to the people affected them much. Oh yes, we (Carl Aho, Randy Kinnunen and I) preached the Word in every village and church we visited. Julie Matson, our faithful Youth Coordinator, with help from young Brinna Myllymaki, sang with and taught the young children whenever they could. We visited villages in the mountains of the Sarangani Province in southern Mindanao, churches on the other side of the island in the city of Cagayan de Oro, churches further North in Surigao and also in the capitol city of Manila. We tried to do Christ's bidding to preach repentance and remission of sins to all. We tried to help some with physical and health needs as well. I would like to be able to report of people outwardly rejoicing and praising God because of the Word and work but I have no examples to report from this trip.

Sometimes this work has its discouraging moments, times when nothing extraordinary happens, but I take refuge in the fact



Speaking the Word with Bishop Hermie translating.

that Jesus has not commanded us to get 'results'. He commanded us to preach the Word, as the sower did in the parable when he sowed the seed of the Word as he walked. It is possible that much of the seed falls by the wayside or on other than good ground, but some may fall on good ground, and that is our hope. We may not have seen the outward manifestation of the Word's work but I trust that it will not return void, as the prophet Isaiah has indicated in Isaiah 55:11 - So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing wherein I sent it.

So, I ask your prayers for us missionaries and all that work with us. This work often creates experiences of great inner joy as well as external evidence of great things happening in the hearts of the people to whom we minister, but perhaps just as often we wonder if God is at all working through us. We need your prayers for strength and encouragement to keep the faith and to be faithful to this great commission.



Randy Kinnunen, Brinna Myllymaki, Brian Niemitalo, Carl Aho and Julie Matson traveled to The Philippines in April.

Love in Action

"Much of what is 'done' on a mission trip is not planned, it simply happens in addition to preaching and teaching the gospel." – Julie Matson



On an 'afternoon off' these two walked by a construction site and didn't worry about getting their dress clothes dirty. They joined a crew of guys doing concrete work. Working side-by-side with locals develops cultural understanding, as well as provides us with an opportunity to let actions speak when we feel that words are not having an impact. While this activity was definitely not on the schedule, it is yet another way the Word can be spread - without even speaking.



Please keep the Senonis family in your prayers as they miss their dear daughter.



Please keep the Senonis family in your prayers as they miss their dear daughter.



Carl Aho with some new Philippine friends. Encouragement is often received just by being with other believers.



Carl hopped out of the truck to help out with a stranger's tire. Again, while this was not a planned activity, it was another opportunity to show someone the love of Christ through helping hands.

GUATEMALA CONVENTION

BY BRIAN NIEMITALO

My trip to Guatemala, with my brother Scott, was the first return trip in eight years for me. We attended the annual church convention in Zacapa. I have been to Guatemala several times prior to this and just want to write of some observations that I had during this visit.

On our arrival, as in times past, we were met by Ryan Ruotsala and driven to the mission house of Paul Somero, our lodgings while we were there. We then drove to Juan Ponce for a youth gathering in their new church. Where there was just a palm leaf pole shelter on my last visit, there is now a nice, well-made concrete block church. Pastor Giovanni holds a youth gathering there on Thursdays, and this evening we had between 20 and 30 youth there for activities and Bible teaching. This group of young Christians is much larger than I saw in past trips, and I think pastor Giovanni is doing very good work there.

For the convention services, the people from Juan Ponce and Piedras Azules congregations

were bussed to Zacapa. The youth 'camped' at the Somero home. In Zacapa, I came to know a young man, named Carlos Cruz, who has been working very hard with Ryan in the youth ministry, primarily with the very young. In our discussions, it was my joy to find in him a solid understanding of living Christianity and a sincerely lived faith. We often sigh and lament in our hearts during prayers to God about the lack of faithful laborers to lead the flocks in these churches. I believe God has heard these prayers and is preparing this young man for further service in His kingdom.

The convention and fellowship was such a blessing, with each congregation participating in songs and with Scott and me preaching the Word of truth. Ryan has become a very capable translator into the Spanish language. Thank you, Father, for these convention services and for your blessings on your saints in Guatemala.



Pastors Giovanni and Scott Niemitalo open the Convention.

Continued on page 6



The Zacapa congregation hosted congregants from Juan Ponce and Piedras Azules for the Guatemala Convention, June 4 – 5.



Ryan Ruotsala translates Scott Niemetalo's message.



Carlos Cruz works with the very young in Guatemala.



Ryan Ruotsala talks to the youth at an evening event.

SUPPORT A NEEDY CHILD

Recently there has been much interest in helping needy children in foreign countries. The Foreign Mission does not actually own, run or donate to homes for children. However, we do work with two children's homes and many ALCA Sunday Schools, homeschool families and other individuals support children in these two homes.

The main benefits in the life of a child in these homes are: 1) Christianity is taught, 2) They are provided food and clothing and enjoy a safe environment, 3) They are educated as much as possible, and some are able to go to public schools if funds are available, 4) The girls especially are able to escape the cycle of poverty and the need to support and care for grandparents or other relatives after their parents have died, which often results in poverty, no education, no marriage, no children and no future when they are older.

ALC CHILDREN'S HOME, KAPILESWARAPURAM, INDIA

This home is well-established and run by Pastor K. Yesuratnam and his wife, Ruth. There are about 45 children in the home and they are housed in dorm-like rooms. Most of the children are NOT true orphans and will have at least one parent who are often very poor. Here is some basic information about supporting a child in this home:

- Cost per child: \$40/month; the child is identified by name.
- Sponsor can receive feedback on the child from a representative on the yearly mission trip to India.



ST. JOHN'S CHAMPION CHILDREN'S HOME, KENYA

This home is run by Pastor Charles and his wife, Mary. Only true orphans (no parents alive) are in this home. Most often their parents have died from AIDS, and the children are very poor and need help just to stay alive. Donations cannot be made to selected orphans since there are about 70 children and the money sent is only enough for the very basic food supplies. A visit to the home is made on our yearly mission trips, so feedback about the welfare of the children is available to donors. The home is located in a beautiful setting, and a new dormitory has just been completed for the girls (funded by ladies in Canada through yard sales).



Other ways to help people in foreign countries can be explored at "themissionsite.com," where the top five needs are often identified. Current high priority needs include money for Bibles, church buildings, a boy's dormitory for the St. John's Champion Children's Home, Sunday school material, and a feeding program in the Philippines. At times the needs can be overwhelming, but the love shown through hands that give is very encouraging to those who have traveled to places where basic needs are the main focus of people of all ages.

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WAYS TO HELP THE FOREIGN MISSION

- Foreign Mission general fund support used for the preaching of the Gospel
- Specially Earmarked Funds such as:
 - Bible Fund
 - Emergency Medical Fund
 - Church Building Fund
 - Bicycles for poor pastors (\$85)
 - Water wells
 - Mission Hospital in India
- Other Funding Ideas:
 - Memorial Funds
 - Endowment Funds
 - Top five current specific needs list (available by emailing: foreignmission@comcast.net)

DONATIONS

Donations in support of Foreign Mission efforts can be made electronically at www.themissionsite.com using the 'Click here to Donate' Button, or you can mail a check to:

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America
1601 NW 4th Avenue
Battle Ground, WA 98604

On check, write: Apostolic Lutheran Church Foreign Mission. Donations can be earmarked to support any of the areas identified.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**HAVE YOU MOVED
RECENTLY?**

Have you moved recently? When we get returned newsletters, the Foreign Mission has to pay for the return postage. Help us avoid this unnecessary cost by notifying us if your mailing address has changed. Please send email to Liisa Seppanen at jacobandliisa@gmail.com.

FROM PAKISTAN TO GHANA AND BACK

BY JOHN FEROZE MASIH

Greetings and God's peace be with you. Our church board is very thankful for your kindness and love in regards to our Ministry work in Pakistan. We are thankful for the support and encouragement from Brother John Ruotsala and Brother Bob Maki. I was so happy to get to visit Ghana with Pastor Bob. Unfortunately, I had to return to Pakistan early because of my mother's death. However, even in this situation, God's mercy was shown as my rescheduled flight caused me to miss the terrorist attack during my originally scheduled layover in Turkey.

In Ghana Pastor Bob taught the people in seminars and in meetings. I have learned much more about the Holy Spirit and the Good News and I took many notes. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the best news anyone will ever hear, and what a person does with this news will determine where he or she

spends eternity. God is calling you to choose life. Romans 10:13 tells us that to call on the name of the Lord is to be saved! It is my pleasure to gain knowledge of the Bible through teaching by Pastor Bob. May God bless him always in his life.

The Lord is blessing our evangelism work more and more and many people are coming to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a great honor for us to distribute Bibles in the Urdu language to villages and towns. The people are very poor and are not able to purchase their own Bibles.

The Holy Bible supports new believers in their faith. Our Ministry has a goal to reach many souls with the love of Jesus Christ this year through preaching and teaching.



Pastors John Feroze, Frank Famiyeh and Bob Maki with the local pastors outside the seminar hall.

We pray for the Foreign Mission board and also the missionaries who are serving for Jesus Christ throughout the world. May God bless you all.