

# *PROCLAIMING THE COMING LORD*

*LCC'S MISSIONS AND SOCIAL MINISTRY SERVICES*

## MISSION NEWSLETTER 2016



***“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”***

***– Revelation 22:20 –***

Mission and Social Ministry Services

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**LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA**  
**ÉGLISE LUTHÉRIENNE du CANADA**

500  
**Reformation**  
Five Hundred Years 1517-2017

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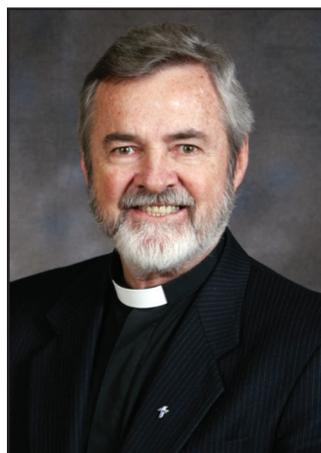
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Nicaraguan youth are encouraged to use their musical gifts during worship.

## INTRODUCTION FROM REV. DR. LEONARDO NEITZEL

**B**eloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Advent of our Lord is upon us, not just as a celebration on the Church Calendar, but in a tri-dimensional way: through His mighty presence and rule over the universe, through His coming to us daily in His means of grace, both individually and in the fellowship of believers, and also through His *Parousia*, when He will return visibly to take home His church. The *now* and *then* of the Church's History motivates us to daily live and proclaim the blessed foretaste of the feast to come.



Lutheran Church–Canada's (LCC) Missions Newsletter is prepared and shared in the spirit of the coming of Christ, with *prayer* that His tri-dimensional kingdom may continue to come, with *gratefulness* for all His blessings on our mission work, and with *celebration* of the Reformation's milestone.

### Prayer

LCC's theme for the triennium is taken from Psalm 65:2 and is "Come to Him who answers prayer." We encourage you to pray for the Lord's mission through LCC and for each of the workers and projects that you see in this Newsletter. Martin Luther prayed for missions in this way:

"Dear Father, we pray Thee, give us Thy Word, that the Gospel may be sincerely preached throughout the world and that it may be received by faith and may work and live in us. So we pray that thy kingdom may prevail among us through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit, that the devil's kingdom may be overthrown and he may have no right or power over us, until finally the devil's kingdom shall be utterly destroyed and sin,

## ***INTRODUCTION***

death, and hell exterminated, and that we may live forever in perfect righteousness and blessedness” (*Large Catechism: the Lord’s Prayer, Second Petition*).

### **Gratefulness**

We encourage prayers of thanksgiving for the sowing of God’s Word and His love in Christ through His church this year. We encourage prayers of thanksgiving for the harvest of blessings the Lord has granted to many touched by Him through the projects of LCC.

Prayers of thanksgiving are raised to the throne of God for all financial offerings and support to LCC’s missions at home and abroad. Also we pray in gratefulness for the work related to LCC’s restructuring process, LWMLC’s restructuring process and for the Reformation’s 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### **Celebration**

Once again in 2016 many people were touched by the love of Jesus. This encourages LCC to celebrate even more Christ’s coming. Along with all heaven, we rejoice over even one lost soul that is brought to Christ. And you can too, as you read through LCC’s mission highlights of the past year.

May the Lord Jesus grant you His love and strength this Advent, Christmas and New Year. Count His Advent’s many blessings and give thanks.

### **Theological Education and the Training of Pastors and Deaconesses for International Partner Churches**

LCC is blessed to assist our partner churches in Central America, Ukraine and Southeast Asia in training their pastors and deaconesses. Through our work there are currently 25 ordained pastors and around 28 deaconesses in Central America; 14 pastors and 4 seminary students in Ukraine; 15 pastors, 10 deaconesses, and 10 women evangelists in Cambodia; and 5 pastors in Thailand.

By God's grace, LCC maintains the Seminary program for our partner church, the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine (SELCU). The current program counts four students. The cost of operating the three year program is \$20,000 CAD per year, with primary support coming from Concordia Lutheran Mission Society and the Lutheran Missionary League-Canada.

In 2016 the SELCU students, together with their Rector, Rev. Dr. William Torgerson, and Bishop Sasha Urchenko traveled on a learning tour to Germany. They visited Luther sites and had a session at the Oberursel seminary of our partner church in Germany.

The SELCU students are married, and LCC has been able to provide stipends for the families while they attend seminary.

# ***THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION***



Students at the Ukraine seminary pose with their Bishop, their Rector, and LCC's missionary to Ukraine.



New pastors for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cambodia.

## *CONTINUING EDUCATION*

### **Continuing Education Seminars and Workshops**

In 2016, five formal continuing education seminars were offered to all church workers in Nicaragua, in addition to several Bible study seminars sponsored by members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. These seminars are ongoing, and Nicaragua’s church workers express sincere thankfulness to Lutheran Church—Canada for the great benefit they bring to the mission, ministry, and education programs of our workers in Central America.

LCC is grateful to Marvin Schwan Foundation and Concordia Lutheran Mission Society for their tremendous financial support to this program on a yearly basis.



Deaconesses in the Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua take part in continuing education seminars.

## ***CONTINUING EDUCATION***



Pastors in the Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua take part in continuing education seminars studying New Testament Greek.



Deaconesses in the Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua take part in continuing education seminars.

## *CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS*

### **Christian Education and Feeding Programs for Children**

The Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua reaches out to 675 children and their families on a regular basis. Through the work of local pastors and deaconesses, children are taught God's Word and also receive nutritional food. Agencies of LCC and the LCMS work together to provide yearly scholarships of \$130 to each child. This scholarship includes two sets of school uniforms, shoes, school supplies, and Christian education resources. There are also informal feeding programs which allow children who are not enrolled in the regular education program to receive a free meal up to three times a week. These initiatives, besides assisting the children in body, mind, and soul, have also helped open doors to assist the children's families as well, for the sake of extending Christ's care to all.

In Ukraine several pastors and congregations minister regularly to orphan children and youth.



Members of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine bring joy to orphaned children with special needs.

## ***CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS***



Children in Nicaragua enjoy a free, healthy meal thanks to the programs of the Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua.



Nicaraguan children take part in educational activities that help them with their school work and also teach them the good news of Jesus Christ.

## **Ethnic Outreach in Canada**

With the influx of immigrants to Canada in recent years, especially refugees, LCC congregations are blessed with tremendous opportunities to reach out and welcome newcomers to church events. And once involved in a congregation locally, many immigrants naturally want to reach out to their own people groups in Canada, as well as in their country of origin. This is nothing less than Matthew 28:19 in action: the Gospel of Jesus Christ going out to all nations.

As a result of expansion and growth in LCC's ethnic missions in Canada, Intercultural Conferences are hosted biennially, with each District taking turns hosting. These conferences bring together students in the Pastors with Alternate Training (PAT) program and pastors, as well as congregational and ethnic community representatives involved in the front line of mission.

On a formal theological education level, LCC's PAT program continues to prepare, train and commission ethnic pastors for specific ministry and mission to their peoples groups in Canada. Three pastors have now been ordained and are actively working with their communities. Moreover, there are four PAT students in preparation to begin ministry in the near future.

## ***ETHNIC OUTREACH IN CANADA***



PAT student Aboch Oboya (left) poses with his family. Oboya is training to be a pastor for the Anyuak Christian community in Winnipeg.



Participants at Lutheran Church–Canada’s 2016 Intercultural Church Workers Conference in Etobicoke, Ontario.

# *NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERINGS*

## **National Youth Ministry and Mission in Nicaragua**

Since the beginning of LCC's mission in Nicaragua it has focused on ministry and mission to families, acknowledging the strong family oriented culture that exists in Nicaragua. After more than ten years of work, many of these children LCC worked with are now youth. For that reason, LCC has supported the Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua since 2015 in holding an annual National Youth Gathering. 240 youth attended the first NYG in 2015, and about half of these were not related to the church.

A national youth committee was organized under the spiritual mentorship of two pastors, and the second National Youth Gathering took place in October 2016. The theme of the event was the same as LCC's National Youth Gathering: H2O – Christ, the Living Water. About the same number of youth attended the 2016 gathering as did the 2015 event.



Some of the youth at the National Youth Gathering of the Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua.

# ***PUBLIC SCHOOL OUTREACH***

## **Outreach to Public Schools in Ukraine**

Rev. Valery Verba, ordained as a pastor of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine in 2014, has embraced a new mission opportunity in Nova Kahovka, reaching out to students in public schools throughout the city.

Part of the project involves lecturing on the many negative challenges facing young people in Ukraine today, and will range from sex outside marriage, drug use, alcohol abuse, depression, and more. Some of the course material has been developed by Christian churches in Ukraine with the cooperation and approval of the Ukrainian ministry of education.

These courses have led to additional encounters with the church, as students make connections with the local congregation's youth group—connections which bring opportunities to share the Gospel.



Rev. Valery Verba engages in mission outreach to public school students Nova Kahovka.

## *RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT*

### **Emergency Relief and Humanitarian Mercy Ministry**

Over the years, LCC has been called upon to assist people in various emergency situations throughout the world. This year Nicaragua was hit by a 6.1 magnitude earthquake. LCC immediately sent relief funds for those who had been affected, in order to purchase basic foods, clothing, and medication. Local pastors and congregations in Nicaragua continue to reach out to those affected by the earthquake, caring for their physical needs and also using the opportunity to bring the comfort of the Gospel to them.

Nicaragua's church workers do not have standard health benefits. Health care in the country is public and difficult to access. In certain situations, LCC forwards funds to the Nicaraguan church to assist with the costs of medical treatment of pastors and deaconesses. We thank God for the opportunity to help in such emergency situations, and we are grateful for all those in LCC whose donations fund this life-saving work.



A building damaged during the June 2016 earthquakes and aftershocks in Nicaragua.

## ***RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT***



Distributing food and other supplies to those affected by the June earthquake in Nicaragua.



Families sleep in a make-shift shelter following June 2016 earthquakes and aftershocks in Nicaragua.

## *FULLTIME MISSIONARY SUPPORT*

### **Missionaries, Deaconesses, and Women Evangelists**

Above and beyond regular support to our partner churches, Lutheran Church–Canada is blessed to be able to fully maintain the ministry and mission of one fulltime missionary in Ukraine (Rev. Oleksiy Navrotskyy), one in Thailand (Rev. Suchart Chujit), and seven missionaries and deacons in Central America (Rev. Edmundo and Deaconess Betty Retana in Costa Rica; Rev. Junior Martinez and Deacon Tulio Meza in Honduras; and Revs. Rufino Quintero, Maximo Urroz and Hector Morales in Nicaragua).

Lutheran Women’s Missionary League-Canada has been generous in providing funds to support three deaconesses (wives of missionaries in Nicaragua) and the 15 women evangelists for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cambodia.



LCC’s missionary to Ukraine, Rev. Oleksiy Navrotskyy (far-right) poses with the congregation in Nikolaev following his installation in August.

## ***FINAL THOUGHTS***

We take this opportunity to thank all those who support LCC's missions in Canada and around the world, above and beyond their regular contributions to their congregations. We also thank LCC's auxiliaries and listed service organizations for their vital support. We look forward to continuing our journey together with you in prayer and financial support for LCC's mission work.

Pray for LCC's missions. Remember especially the following churches and workers:

### **EAST ASIA**

- The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cambodia
- The Thailand Concordia Lutheran Church
- Rev. Suchart Chujit and his family (Thailand)
- Rev. Srikakarn Chujit and his family (Thailand)

### **UKRAINE**

- The Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine
- Rev. Oleksiy Navrotsky and his family
- Seminary students, instructors and their families

### **CENTRAL AMERICA**

- The Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua
- Rev. Junior Martinez and his family (Honduras)
- Deacon Tulio Meza and his family (Honduras)
- Rev. Maximo Urroz and his family (Nicaragua)
- Rev. Hector Morales and his family (Nicaragua)
- Rev. Rufino Quintero and his family (Nicaragua)
- Rev. Pastor Edmundo Retana (Costa Rica)
- Deaconess Betty Solorzano (Costa Rica)

Finally, resolve to pray for all the pastors, deacons, and deaconesses, church administrators, teachers, seminary professors, evangelists, projects, programs and events of Lutheran Church–Canada and all its partner churches.

**F**or more news on LCC's Missions and Social Ministry Services, and to donate online, visit [www.lutheranchurch.ca](http://www.lutheranchurch.ca). Be sure also to read the Mission Section in *The Canadian Lutheran* and to watch for regular updates at [CanadianLutheran.ca](http://CanadianLutheran.ca).

For further information on LCC's Missions and Social Ministry Services, contact:

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