

CONCORDIA *mission* ADVOCATE

a publication of Concordia Lutheran Mission Society (CLMS)



Spring 2009

From the Lenin Room to the Lutheran Church

Can you imagine, when you were a child, asking a simple question about God...and getting reprimanded for having done so? This reality faced many young people in the former Soviet Union. LCC's foreign mission student at the St. Catharines seminary, Oleg Schewtschenko, was born during a time when reading or even speaking about Christ was frowned on. He recalls once asking a schoolteacher about God and, in return, being forced to sit and think about his bad behaviour in a place called the "Lenin Room." As years passed and communism crumbled, people were once again free to practise organized religion. The largest church in Ukraine at this time was the Orthodox Church.

The Holy Spirit began to open the eyes and ears of this young person. He attended a Seventh Day Adventist forum that included a question-and-answer period. He was amazed to hear people asking questions about God, talking about Him as though a person could have a real relationship with Him. One evening he was given a copy of the New Testament. He began by reading the gospel of John and couldn't go to sleep that night; he kept reading and reading. He became a member of a new Seventh Day Adventist church and eventually his whole family became Christians. He became more involved with the church, taking part in children's

programs and music ministry. Time went by and Oleg continued reading the Bible. His reading led him to question some of the teachings in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. He visited every denomination looking for answers to his faith questions and eventually became connected to a German Lutheran Church. The pastor of this church preached the Gospel and answered many of his questions. He took up contact with the "Alpha and Omega" Student Centre and with LCC's missionary to Ukraine, Pastor Roland Syens. Oleg led a Bible study consisting of eighty people, thirty of whom became members of the Lutheran Church in Dnepropetrovsk. At 16 years of age he had finished high school and had the desire to go to seminary. He studied at a fledgling Lutheran Seminary in southern Ukraine, where courses were taught by professors and pastors from LCC. When he was 18 he was assigned to be the vicar of a small church in the village of Kamenka which had no pastor and where he served for just over two years. During this time he continued to read and study theology, wanting to know more and more. He knew he needed a larger library to draw from. Although he had finished the seminary courses, he was reluctant to be ordained at the young age of 19.

In 2001 Oleg's mother resettled the family in Germany. After learning some German and



Oleg Schewtschenko, speaker at the annual Board of Directors meeting.

studying at college he completed a three year program in two years. Eventually Oleg ended up enrolling at the Oberursel seminary of our sister church there. He felt uneasy with their more critical approach to the Bible, especially following the training he had received in Ukraine with LCC professors. He is deeply committed to the

teaching that the Bible is true in all its parts. In August of 2007 he came to Canada. He is enrolled at the St. Catharines Seminary which is helping him to get an accredited degree through distance examinations from London University in England. He continues to learn how to, in his own words, "teach this beautiful Gospel to others."

This was some of the story Oleg presented to listeners at the recent annual meeting of the Concordia Lutheran Mission Society, held in early February at First Lutheran Church, Windsor, Ontario. He thanked everyone present, reminding them that the Lord is using the mission partners of CLMS to help change the lives of people in Ukraine by supporting the training of future pastors...of whom he is just one.

Lauren Bugbee

AN INVITATION IS EXTENDED TO YOU

Visit our website at www.concordiamissions.org.



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visit our web site at <http://www.concordiamissions.org>

"...but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires." Romans 8: 5b

A sailing ship soars along over the seas, blown along by the wind – quite an effortless movement with the unseen wind providing the power. Effortless that is, as long as the ship and the wind want to go in the same direction. At our board meeting this year we listened hard to discern the “direction of the wind” as we struggled with setting a mission project total. For the last two years we have set bold targets, and have been blessed in being able to fulfill all the project requirements, though we have had to use some reserves in both years. What to do this year? So many project opportunities before us tugging on one side. The fact that Canada is heading into a recession that some are saying may approach a depression, tugging on the other.

After prayer and Spirit-led reflection we individually submitted where we thought the “wind was blowing.” Averaging the results led to a projects total of \$120,000, a modest \$4,000 increase over last year, yet very bold in this economic climate. Unfortunately there were some very worthy projects not included on the list.

Approximately \$147,000 was disbursed towards mission projects and donor-initiated projects in 2008. Almost all the donor-initiated funds channeled through the mission society were for Ukraine projects, including \$13,000 for the Seminary/Mission Centre.

The Ukraine Seminary/Mission Centre returns on our list. In 2007 we anticipated the funding sent would come close to completing the building,

but Ukraine inflation rates are staggering. The gas service, initially estimated at a few hundred dollars, grew to \$5,000 in 2007, and sits at \$15,000 now. While this is frustrating for us, we are constantly reminded that we cannot confine ourselves to a North American world view in dealing with overseas mission.

Our annual meeting this year was hosted very ably by First Lutheran in Windsor. The 65 tasty dishes set before us in the meal preceding the meeting set the tone for the day. Our speaker – Oleg Schewtschenko – delighted us with a very informative presentation on the ministry happenings in Ukraine. We got to know new board members, Rev. Gilvan Azevedo and Darcy Wershler, in the three days of board meetings preceding the annual meeting as we made plans for the entire year. We also said goodbye to Jodie Haberstock and Rev. Konny Hahn as their terms have ended.

As we enter our thirteenth year as a mission society and I reflect back, it has been obvious that our ship has been sailing with the wind. That is reflected in Synod's often-expressed appreciation of our ministry, in the blessings we have seen in all three of our church's main overseas mission areas and the response of our mission partners over the years. I would like to once again express our deep appreciation to our mission partners who have been sailing along in the direction of the wind with us. If you have not been on board with us, I invite you to hop on. Moisten your finger and stick it in the air! What direction is the “wind” leading you?

Blessings, Terry Goertz

Board adopts new projects

0901: Ukrainian Seminary/Mission Centre. **Grant for construction of seminary building hampered by inflation and rising costs near Odessa. \$20,000**

0902: Outreach to Women and Children, Cambodia. **Grant to undergird evangelistic work by women in villages in Cambodia. \$15,000.**

0903: Children's Outreach, Thailand. **Grant for outreach to village children and girls at risk to work in the sex trade. \$10,000.**

0904: Vacation Bible School, Nicaragua. **Grant to support VBSs in remote villages in Nicaragua. \$6,000.**

0905: Children's Christian Education, Nicaragua. **Grant to provide educational costs for 60 children as an outreach tool for pastors and deaconesses in Nicaragua. \$7,500.**

0906: Deaconess Support, Nicaragua. **Grant to cover travel costs, lodging and food for deaconesses who travel from home to serve the church. \$4,500.**

0907: Theological Education, Southeast Asia. **Grant to enable Canadian professors to travel in Thailand and Cambodia to teach. \$10,000.**

0908: Ukrainian Seminary/Mission Centre. **Supplemental grant to help complete this**

facility and resume seminary classes. \$20,000.

0909: Worship Centre Renovations, Otscharetnja, Ukraine. **Grant to enable a mission congregation to renovate its worship centre. \$3,000.**

0910: Mission Start, Kapong, Thailand. **Grant to pay the rental of a facility, as well as material resources for this mission start. \$4,000.**

0911: Orphanage Ministry, Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine. **Grant to provide transportation, craft supplies, and special events costs for outreach in an orphanage. \$3,000.**

0912: Costa Rica Mission Facilities Rental. **Grant for rent and utilities for facility from which mission outreach can occur. \$7,000.**

0913: Granada Mission Property. **Grant to pay balance of land on which a church has been built for a growing community of believers. \$6,000.**

0914: Summer Camp, Ukraine. **Grant to provide refreshment through study and fellowship for needy children and the families of Lutheran pastors. \$4,000.**

Total cost of adopted 2009 projects: \$120,000.

Concordia Lutheran Mission Society (CLMS), an auxiliary of Lutheran Church Canada, serves the church by promoting and supporting our church's missions and keeping the members of our synod informed of mission work carried out both on a corporate and individual basis.

Thai girls at risk

Four hours northeast of Bangkok, a young Christian couple, Satit and Rattana Kantatiam, are carrying out an outreach mission to village children and young girls. Village girls in Thailand are at great risk from becoming prostitutes because, as soon as they quit school, their parents send them to work in the sex trade to help support their family. With the help of a grant of \$8,500 from the Concordia Lutheran



Mission Society in 2008, the Kantatiams were able to rescue three girls, aged 11, 15 and 16

from this fate. The girls were enabled to continue their high school education in Chiangmai

where they were housed in a boarding school with 35 other children under the supervision of Christian house parents. They hope to finish their high school, attend Bible school and then engage in some form of Christian work. This project will again be supported in 2009.

*Dr. Norman J. Threinen
Director of Ministries and
Projects*

Project money at work



Rev. Dr. Norman Threinen teaching in Bangkok, Thailand, March 2009. See page 4 and read about the next Canadian teacher going to Southeast Asia.

CLMS Board of Directors

At the annual Board of Directors meeting held in Windsor, two newly elected board members, Rev. Gilvan de Azevedo, Windsor, Ontario and Darcy Wershler, Winnipeg, were welcomed to the Board. Both bring mission experience, enthusiasm and a joy in serving God. The Board also said “goodbye” and “thank you” to outgoing board members, Rev. Konstantin Hahn, Kitchener, Ontario and Jodie Haberstock, Vernon, B.C.

Rev. Hahn will continue to work with the Board updating the website.

For the past number of years, Elroy Mann of Kitchener has served as data manager for CLMS. He has updated addresses and other necessary information whenever necessary and has been a great help at mailing time. The Board of CLMS extends a big “thank you” to Elroy for his invaluable service.

Also, our thanks to past Board member, David Schick, Port Coquitlum, B.C. who maintains an e-mail list of pastors within LCC. At various times throughout the year, Dave sends prayers via e-mail to these pastors for use during the worship service.

Faithful supporter



Sarah Buller of First Lutheran Church, Windsor, Ontario. Sarah and her late husband, Bill, were two of the first members of Concordia Lutheran Mission Society. Sarah remains a faithful supporter of CLMS

WANTED: New or used digital cameras for use by our pastors in Nicaragua as they report on their various ministries. When sending cameras it is important that they be in good working condition, including battery chargers, memory cards, any proprietary software disks and connecting cables or card readers. A work team will be traveling to Nicaragua in May. If you are able to supply a camera, please forward it to Lutheran Church—Canada offices in Winnipeg, 3074 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3K 0Y2 before April 30, 2009.



Back (l-r): Rev. Dr. Norman Threinen, Terry Goerz, Rev. Irwin Pudrycki; Centre: Jodie Haberstock, Lauren Bugbee, Rev. Konny Hahn, Darcy Wershler; Front: Bill Andrew, Rev. Gilvan de Azevedo, Anne Taylor, Rev. Al Schmidt, Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman

Looking Forward to Thailand and Cambodia

In May, God willing, I will be going to Thailand and Cambodia to teach a course at the Lutheran Institute in South Asia. The dates are May 4-11 in Thailand and May 11-18 in Cambodia. I was encouraged by Dr. Norman Threinen to volunteer for this project, and after praying about it and thinking about it I volunteered and my offer was accepted. I now have the same anticipation as St. Paul had when he wrote to Christians in Rome, *"I long to see you so that I might impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong"* (Romans 1:11).

I have travelled to Asia a number of times as a tourist and to visit our daughter and her family in Japan. Now I will be going for a different reason. I will be teaching the course "The life of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels" (Matthew, Mark and Luke). I am confident the Lord will use me to help train pastors in that part of the world to preach the Gospel of Christ, to teach God's Word to people, and to administer the Sacraments.

I have taught a number of times in the seminary in Ukraine to both of the classes that have graduated. It is indeed rewarding today to meet those young

pastors, who, when they came to the seminary seemed immature, lacking in Biblical knowledge, and even had misconceptions, and to hear how they are today serving congregations or serving as mission developers, with the help of the Holy Spirit, bringing people into a saving relationship with Christ and into the fellowship of believers in a congregation.

I ask you to pray for me as I prepare, and when I go over to teach in Thailand and Cambodia. Pray that God will protect me in my travels, and that He may give me a measure of the Holy Spirit when I teach.

Together as "Partners in Mission" I encourage you to give generously and to pray for God's blessings upon the projects undertaken by Concordia Lutheran Mission Society throughout this year.

Pastor Al Schmidt
Board member

TOLL FREE NUMBER

If you do not have access to the Internet and need to contact CLMS you may do so at our new toll free number:

1-866-799-2567

Response Form

We invite you to become a partner in mission. Kindly indicate how we may direct your donation by checking off your selected mission project and returning this form along with your cheque made out to "Concordia Lutheran Mission Society" and forwarded to **William Andrew, 180 South Alder Street, Campbell River, BC V9W 5H8.**

- ☐ 0901 Seminary/Mission Centre, Ukraine
☐ 0902 Outreach to Women and Children, Cambodia
☐ 0903 Children's Outreach, Thailand
☐ 0904 Vacation Bible School, Nicaragua
☐ 0905 Children's Christian Education, Nicaragua
☐ 0906 Deaconess Support, Nicaragua
☐ 0907 Theological Education, Southeast Asia
☐ 0908 Seminary/Mission Centre, Ukraine

- ☐ 0909 Worship Centre Renovations, Ukraine
☐ 0910 Mission Start, Kapong, Thailand
☐ 0911 Orphanage Ministry, Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine
☐ 0912 Mission Facilities Rental, Costa Rica
☐ 0913 Granada Mission Property
☐ 0914 Summer Camp, Ukraine

Each gift designated toward a board approved project will be used as specified, with the understanding that when any given project has been fully funded, designated gifts will be used where needed most.

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Please provide the following information so that a charitable receipt might be forwarded to you and to keep you informed on current mission projects via our semi annual mailings. If you fill in the form as "Mr. & Mrs." you will receive two ballots for mail-in elections. In this case both your first names are helpful.

Mr., Mrs., Ms., Rev. _____ First name(s) _____ Last name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov. _____ Country _____ Postal Code _____

The following information is optional. The e-mail address can be very helpful to us in sharing mission news with you.

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____ Home Congregation _____

Recent legislation requires your authorization to collect this information. CLMS has a privacy policy in place to protect your personal information.

Please sign below authorizing us to use this information in accordance with our privacy policy. Our privacy policy can be found on our website: www.concordiamissions.org.

Signature _____