

We were made for this

In the past year we have been presented with so many new opportunities and relationships that despite the struggle of the pandemic we are calling this season a blessing. Early on in the days of lockdown and church closures we were approached by one of our partner/friends, Pastor Cody Cooper. Our relationship with Pastor Cody started while he was serving in the remote community of La Ronge, Saskatchewan, and was rejuvenated after he moved to Meadowvale, Alberta, just before the pandemic hit Canada. Pastor Cody is extremely creative in serving his new congregation and offered to help us reach young children in the new world of worship at home by offering Kid's Lectionary Learning activity pages. We started sending the pages out to the churches who promote The Lutheran Hour in their bulletins and we quickly received requests from individuals all across Canada wanting to share the materials with their Sunday school families. Not only have the activity pages become an eagerly anticipated tool for families but the relationship between our office and your congregations has been strengthened through the weekly check-ins and feedback you are sharing about how we can serve you now and as we navigate through our new world. We could not have created that connection on our own, and we are so thankful for the way Pastor Cody has blessed us with his talent and time.

As the days at home stretched out further before us, our conversations with Pastor Cody turned to the isolation everyone was experiencing and how that can amplify feelings of loneliness and anxiety. Our fear was that the endless days of isolation would be particularly dangerous for people already struggling with depression and suicide ideation. Sharing ideas with individuals from within the church and mental health community we released social media tools designed to reach out in two stages. The first component addressed the topic of suicide and how close it can be to us as members of the same family of Christ. The second component provided social media



tools for us as Christians to share with our friends and acquaintances online. Our goal was to encourage our brothers and sisters to shine a light while including concrete actions of love. Communications Director for LCC, Alex Steinke, picked up these tools and promoted them within *The Canadian Lutheran* and on LCC social media groups which helped our message reach a wider audience.

You can find all these resources and more at www.lla.ca/social-isolation/.



The ongoing work in Nicaragua

In January, during a trip to Nicaragua and Costa Rica as part of Lutheran Church–Canada missions Team Zion, I was able to once again see the Nicaraguan Lutheran Hour Ministries team in action. In Spanish LHM is referred to as CPTLN (Cristo para todos las naciones) and is well-known and respected within the León area where they have their office. As a part of Team Zion I have been visiting the mission field in Nicaragua for ten years and have noticed that not all the pastors and deaconesses in Nicaragua are taking advantage of CPTLN and its resources. Team Zion has worked with the LLL in Nicaragua for many years, doing our part to connect the two organizations in a joint effort of sharing the gospel and brotherly love.

During this year’s mission visit we arranged with Ricardo Arguello (Ministry Director for CPTLN Nicaragua) to host the Team Zion kick-off meeting and dinner at the LLL office in León—demonstrating partnership and bringing together 30 Nicaraguan pastors and deaconesses, 26 Canadians and the CPTLN staff and volunteers. For some of the Nicaraguans this was their first time at the LLL office and it was a wonderful evening for brothers and sisters in Christ to have fellowship together while we did our planning for the week. During our visit, a workshop demonstrating some of the latest Lutheran Hour Ministries resources was hosted at the Mission Center in Chinandega. The workshop was coordinated in partnership with Nicaragua Synod president, Marvin Donaire, and LCC Mission



Lisa Jackson and a young member of Team Zion demonstrate the Moses craft to be used during the Vacation Bible School in Nicaragua.

Executive, Rev. Mark Smith, to strengthen the relationship between our organization and the church. All pastors and deaconesses were invited to attend, and I shared with them the Spanish resources for “How to talk about your faith” as an example of tools that can be shared with active and engaged laypeople in their various congregations.

The end of my time in Nicaragua coincided with Pastor Mark Smith’s LCC mission oversight visit to Nicaragua and Costa Rica. We discussed the opportunity of facilitating a workshop later this year, bringing the CPTLN team in Nicaragua to the Mission Center to speak about all the different resources available for pastors and deaconesses. Pastor Smith asked us to coordinate the workshop as part of Lutheran Church–Canada’s continuing education program. At this time, the workshop had to be postponed from its scheduled date of June 2020 due to the global pandemic and travel restrictions.



Above: Pastors, deaconesses, Team Zion, CPTLN staff and volunteers eat together at the LLL office in León.

Right: Lisa Jackson, Managing Director for LLL Canada, presents the layperson resource, How to talk about your faith, to the pastors and deaconesses of the Nicaragua Synod at the Mission Center in Chinandega, Nicaragua.



Additional support for francophones

Rev. Dr. David Somers has been a partner with the Lutheran Laymen's League for many years, allowing us to provide French language resources for Francophone Lutherans across Canada as well in outreach efforts all over the world. At our budget planning meeting in June, the LLL-Canada board of directors voted to formalize our support for French outreach ministry by making a financial commitment to support Rev. Somers for the next few years. The decision to strengthen our partnership with Dr. Somers will allow us to make more

dynamic resources and ensure that the ministry is sustainable. Pastor Somers reported in the September/October 2020 edition of *The Canadian Lutheran* that the pandemic and resulting distance protocols has created new avenues for outreach to the Lutheran francophone communities. One of the projects we have embarked upon, as a part of this new partnership, is a French-language Facebook page that will serve as a vehicle for the many translated Lutheran Hour Ministries materials. Facebook,

YouTube and other digital formats are valuable connection tools that will allow us to share existing and new materials to a much larger audience.

We officially launch the French Lutheran Hour Ministries-Canada Facebook page on the first day of Advent. Advent devotions in French will be available for reading and sharing in daily segments, similar to what is done on our English Facebook pages.

To capitalize on the expected momentum over Advent and Christmas, Pastor Somers has created a list of resources needed to support the ongoing spiritual well-being and instruction of francophone Lutherans. Together we are prioritizing, translating, formatting and digitizing to ensure that Pastor Somers has what he needs to continue his work. You can support this important work in your donations to LLL-Canada by indicating that your gift is for "French Ministries."



Helping serve remote First Nations during a lockdown



Late in the summer both the BC Mission Boat and the Lutheran Association of Missionary Pilots (LAMP) approached us to help with keeping commitments in the communities they serve. Due to the pandemic and travel restrictions both organizations

were limited to the amount of face to face interaction they could have with their contacts in remote First Nations. We were happy to provide both support and resources to the organizations in different ways.

BC Mission Boat included copies of the Lutheran Hour Ministries children's booklets *Learning to Pray* and *The Bible Tells Me So* in care packages that were packed and taken by ferry up the B.C. coast. Community leaders received the kits and distributed the co-branded bags to families that had been planning for a visit from teams who have been coming to support them in their faith for several years.

LAMP faced a similar challenge, as a few of their

teams from the United States were unable to enter Canada when the border closed to manage the spread of COVID-19. Executive Director of LAMP, Ron Ludke, asked if we would help by assembling 500 care packages that could be flown into remote areas in Northern Canada. With much love, we put together a kit that included a snack, a craft kit and a copy of the Lutheran Hour Ministries booklet *The Bible Tells Me So*. The packages were sent to a LAMP volunteer in Winnipeg and from there they were picked up and flown into 30 different communities. We included copies of *30 Days of Household Devotions* for community leaders and several CREW Ministry music CDs for use on their local radio stations.



Although we aren't always together, the team of staff and partners got together for a picture this fall. L-r: Davian Hart, Social Media; Lisa Jackson, Managing Director; Amelia Hatzitolios, Artist; Sharon McKie, Community Engagement Manager; Barb Fooks, Bookkeeper.

Did you know that Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) has partnered with Barna Group to produce research-based insights about faith and culture?

"This research allows LHM to provide timely and relevant resources that meet people where they are at. It enables us to gain a hearing for the Gospel in an inviting and contextual way—guiding those who seek toward faith." Rev. Dr. Tony Cook, LHM's Vice-President – Global Ministries.

For more information reach out to us using the contacts below. Partner with us, and be part of Media on a Mission!



Partnering with You
in HIS mission



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LLL Canada's mission is to assist in the proclamation of the Gospel by creating, distributing and promoting resources through various media and equipping Christians for outreach.

Board of Directors: President, Gordon Schoepp, Onoway, AB; Directors: Marilyn Jacobi, Kitchener, ON; Joel Haberstock, Coldstream BC; Stephen Braaten, Regina, SK.; Brian Wardle, Kitchener, ON.

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