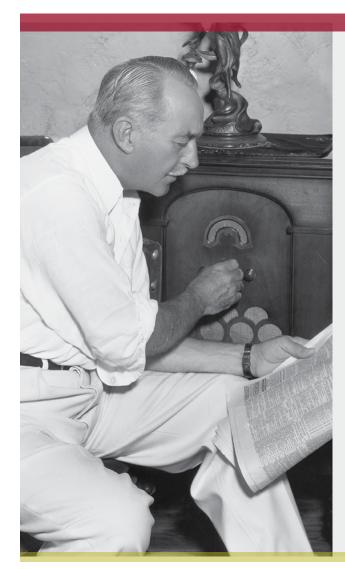


LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES WWW.lhm ord





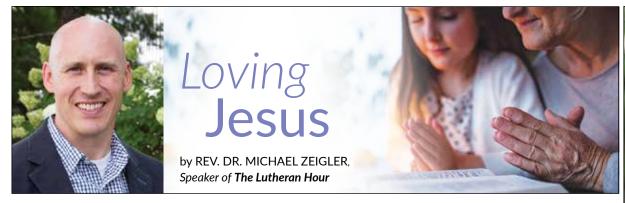
Celebrating 90 Seasons of Sharing God's Word Through Radio



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n September 25, 1955, at Epiphany Lutheran Church in Detroit, Michigan, Pastor "Ossie" Hoffmann recorded his first sermon as Speaker of **The Lutheran Hour.** He recorded the message at 12:30 p.m. that Sunday afternoon. The broadcast was scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m.

After the recording was complete, Ossie went to the house of a friend in Detroit to listen to the broadcast. At the house, he was joined by his friend's mother- and father-in-law, a Mr.

and Mrs. Broeker. Ossie marveled at how the Broekers showed their love for Jesus. Mrs. Broeker sang along with the hymns on the program. And Mr. Broeker, who was hard of hearing, leaned in with his ear close to the radio so he wouldn't miss a single word.

share—and again During that broadcast, they heard their new Speaker say, "I want you to know that our only purpose in these broadcasts is to share—and

to share—and again to share—Jesus Christ with you." Much has changed since then, but the multi-faceted efforts of Lutheran Hour Ministries continue in that same Spirit. We who have the Gospel must continue to share the Gospel, in word and deed.

Why do we do it? Week after week, it takes a whole team of people to get a message for The Lutheran Hour scheduled, recorded, edited, transcripted, reviewed, files uploaded, and in some cases mailed across the continent on compact discs in time for the next week's broadcast. And then there is the team to receive and relay messages from listeners, as well as other responses to LHM's many other modes of outreach around the globe, none of which would be possible without the support of

thousands and thousands of generous donors. So, why do we do it? Because we love Jesus. We've heard what He said and did, and we love Him for it. And if you already love Him, we hope you will love Him more. If you don't love Him yet, we pray that you will see and feel and know what it is we love about Him. Doing this, we are simply carrying on the work of His earliest followers. As one of them said, "Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying

Someone once said to me, "Mike, you're a really religious guy." I answered, "I don't think of myself as religious. I just love Jesus" (I had heard someone else say something like that once, so I figured I would try it out). The person looked at me weirdly, a reaction that wasn't completely surprising. Loving a firstcentury Jewish construction worker who is risen from the dead because He is the Son of God is a little weird.

People express love for Jesus in a variety of ways. For some, you can hear the love in the emotion of their voice when they talk about how He gave His life for theirs. For others, you can see their love in the devotion of their service to Jesus, to His people and His world. Some show it publicly. Others show it quietly, and others, by the way they lean in to listen to His Word. Every Christian has a unique way of expressing his or her love for Jesus. But the Bible says they all have one thing in common: they are loved back (see John 14:21). And in one way or another, we all come to marvel at how He loved us first (see 1 John 4:19).¹ ◆

¹ Thanks to Mark Allen Powell for phrasing it like this in Loving Jesus (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004).

love" (Ephesians 6:24). "I want you to know that our only purpose in these broadcasts is to share—and to

to share—Jesus

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View previous

Chad Fix, Editor • Andrea Thompson, Layout

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LHM Response Center: 1-800-876-9880

Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church



THANK YOU!

Sangduen is 53 years old and has spent her life practicing a non-Christian religion. She has faced trials in her life and is now divorced with three children. A friend introduced her to a local church where she enrolled in the Bible **Correspondence Courses (BCC)** hosted by **LHM-Thailand**. The staff worked with Sangduen to help her understand the Gospel message. Through the power of God's Word, Sangduen became a Christian. She got baptized and is continuing to grow in her faith every day.

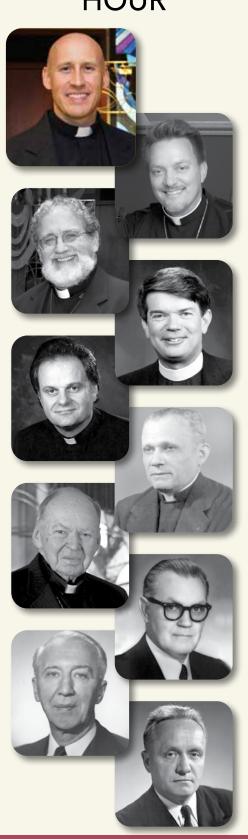
Because of **YOU**, people like Sangduen are experiencing the hope of the Gospel.

To continue supporting our mission, visit **LHM.ORG/GIVE** and put your gift to work **TODAY**.



The Lutheran







by CHAD FIX

he first broadcast of **The Lutheran** Hour® radio program was aired on October 2, 1930, with Dr. Walter A. Maier as Speaker. The Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL), which had formed 13 years earlier, shared Maier's vision of spreading the Gospel message using the young technology of broadcast radio and raised funds through its few thousand members for "the boldest undertaking ever conceived by a body of American Lutherans."

In his initial message titled, "There is a God!," Maier announced, "the Lutheran Laymen's League is conscious of but one purpose, actuated by one impulse: the consuming desire to hold up the Cross of Christ of Jesus Christ to the 120 million people of our nation as the only but all-sufficient source "the boldest of salvation, both spiritual and

undertaking temporal." Those words are as true today as ever conceived they were in 1930. As The Lutheran Hour began its 90th broadcast season by a body in September 2022, it is evident of American that Maier's desire for the public Lutherans." preaching and teaching of the Gospel so that all might believe and know life in His Name left a legacy of outreach that has reached into the homes, hearts, and lives of countless millions over succeeding years.

Nothing would deter him from sharing the message of Jesus when people's souls were in the balance. Even when financial problems put the broadcast on hold from 1931 into early 1935, Maier's dream of using radio to preach the Gospel would not die. In February 1935, the program returned to the airwaves, this time on an early network of 11 stations in the Mutual Broadcasting System.

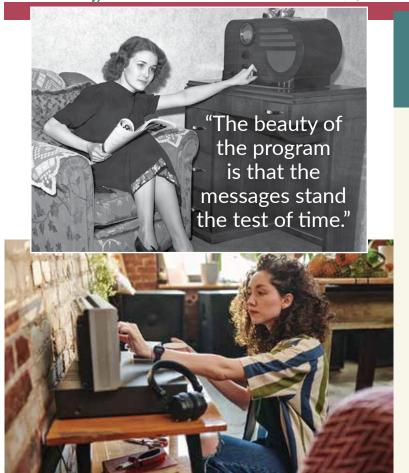
Maier's preaching style blended solid biblical theology with practical application and intriguing examples from the past and present to establish a bond between the broadcaster and his audience. Listeners responded in droves, not only by tuning in each week, but by mailing in letters and donations.

The broadcast's immense popularity in the late 1930s paved the way for the LLL to take

> the Gospel message overseas with the beginning of foreign language broadcasting. Dr. Andrew Melendez was elected in 1941 as the Spanish Speaker to bring the Good News offered through The Lutheran Hour to Latin America, Spain, and cities in the United States with Spanish-language radio stations. While Melendez spoke in a different language to people of a different culture, the call of Christ remained

the same and opened additional doors for the use of radio as the ministry known today as Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) expanded around the world.

see next page



Broadcasting a Timeless Message

Even Maier's death in January 1950 did not halt the program's progress. That should be no surprise for a program that offers a weekly message that is timeless and life changing. Whenever a new Speaker stepped behind the microphone, **The Lutheran Hour** may have changed in style of delivery, but not in solid content. God's Word was still being delivered under the Lord's direction whether Dr. Maier, Dr. Melendez, Dr. Lawrence Acker, Dr. Armin Oldsen, Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, Rev. Wallace Schulz, Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer, Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus, Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, or Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler shared it.

"The beauty of the program is that the messages stand the test of time," says Jim Arand, audio development manager for LHM. "You could preach any of the messages from through the years and just replace the different life situations that

The Lutheran **Hour** may have changed in style of delivery, but not in solid content.

are happening. They would still be relevant because Jesus is still relevant. Jesus is still the same. While our lives change, Jesus is that permanent stability. He is that security for our souls, our lives, and our future. And as we live in the insecure time of today, we have that spiritual certainty and security in Iesus."

Sharing God's Word with Those Who Need to Hear It

Today, Zeigler and a variety of guest speakers continue to get to the heart of the matter through the weekly broadcasts. They preach Christ crucified, salvation, restoration, and reconciliation with God in His Name! They preach this message because it is the foundation of new life, eternal life, now and forever.

As the broadcast recently entered its 90th broadcast season, each message reaches hundreds of thousands of people each week, one person at a time. Countless people have come to faith, are sustained in their faith, or are encouraged in their faith just by listening each week.

Chuck says, "One morning near the end of my 35-year wandering like a stiff-necked Israelite, I woke up and turned on my radio to WGN in Chicago and your broadcast came on. This was the first seed planted in me to come back to church. Thank you for sharing the Good News!"





Even though Bill and his wife are Southern Baptists, they listen to The Lutheran Hour every Sunday morning on TuneIn as they get ready for church. "We are always encouraged and edified," he says. "Praise to our Lord Jesus for making your broadcast available to us!"

Marilyn listens to The Lutheran Hour each week on a local radio station. She shared that she is mostly homebound and starts every Sunday morning with the broadcast.





James works on T38 jets at an Air Force base in Texas and has been a long-time listener of The Lutheran Hour. He says that some of his earliest memories as a child are being at his grandparents' house in Chicago while his grandma listened to the broadcast. Now, when he goes out on Saturday mornings to do inspections, he puts in his earbuds and spends time with the Lord by listening to the radio program. He said at times, he stops what he is doing so he can pay attention to what Rev. Zeigler, or the guest speaker, is saying while lying under a jet.

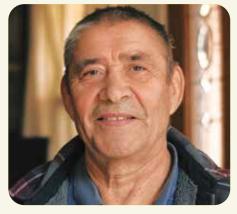
This message is the foundation of new life, eternal life, now and forever.



Judy shared that Dr. Oswald Hoffmann had a profound effect on her young life in becoming a child of God, just as Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler now has a profound effect on her in the latter years of her life. "These two men are the bookends of my Life in Christ," she says. "Their sermons, as well as those from all the Speakers in between, have been so meaningful to me! I love how God has used them to put His Word into pictures through the years. Thank you for being God's messengers."

Kevin is a college student who recently started listening to The Lutheran Hour during his daily drives to school. He says the program has helped him grow in his faith.





"Reverend Zeigler continues to bless so many with his Christ-centered, 'down to earth' style of sharing God's grace through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ! I really appreciate how the sermons speak so powerfully to my own struggles," says Robert. "Many of the messages have smashed through my heart, making me realize how full of pride I am and in need of repentance.

Still, the Lord loves me in that He calls me through His Law to repentance and then through the Gospel to forgiveness and restoration. Glory be to God for His amazing grace! Thank you to Rev. Zeigler and The Lutheran Hour for offering so many sermons that have been what I needed to hear and just when I needed to hear it!"

Joseph was recently introduced to The Lutheran Hour by a friend who is Lutheran and has become more fervent in his faith as a practicing believer over the past several months. His eyes are now open, he is "on fire" for the Lord, and he is very appreciative for the part The Lutheran Hour has played in his new walk with Christ. He even plans to go with his friend spreading the Word among people in his local community soon.



Paving the Way for Global Outreach

Even as LHM invests in new outreach strategies, radio continues to play a significant role in our global efforts. Today, in addition to The Lutheran Hour being broadcast on more than 1,800 traditional radio stations throughout North America, LHM ministry centers around the globe offer many locally produced, topical programs, and syndicated episodes that encourage a wide variety of audiences to contact LHM to learn more about the Gospel. These

This more than a century-old medium continues to positively impact millions of lives every day and illustrates why we need it today more than ever.

programs attract a wide variety of audiences and invite listeners and viewers to contact the local ministry center to receive resources that address the topic from a Christian perspective, along with opportunities to take a **Bible Correspondence Course** (BCC) and connect with a local Christian community. The staff member may also offer to pray with the new contact.

This more than a century-old medium continues to positively impact millions of lives every day—and illustrates why we need it today more than ever. Notably, radio represents a focal point for community life, accessible even in the most remote and underserved locations. It has been said that more than 90 percent of the world's population currently has access to radio.

"Radio can cross borders and reach into the homes, workplaces, and vehicles of people almost anywhere in the world, which is why it continues to be an important strategy in our global ministry efforts," says LHM President and CEO Kurt Buchholz.

see next page



Where You Can Listen to The Lutheran Hour Today

The Lutheran Hour is available today in many other ways than traditional radio. From the American Forces Network and Sirius XM satellite radio, to lutheranhour.org and a podcast, to new media platforms like Amazon Alexa, Spotify, iHeartRadio, and more, listeners can hear the weekly sermons whenever and wherever they are. In addition, an archive at **lutheranhour.org** provides immediate access

to sermons from the past couple of decades as well as selected historic sermons from past Speakers. SENT Radio (lhm.org/sentradio) provides around-the-clock archived sermons from all Speakers of The Lutheran Hour, as well as hymns, contemporary music, Scripture readings, morning prayers, and evening vespers. ◆

Chad Fix oversees the corporate communications of LHM.



Upcoming Broadcasts

Speaker Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

NOVEMBER 27 Freshly Fallen Snow

Dr. Michael Zeigler talks about fresh snow and fresh starts.

DECEMBER 4 Paradise Restored

If God is love, what are we to make of God's wrath?

DECEMBER 11 Beauty We Can't See

We often feel our need for God's presence only when we see what it looks like when He's absent.

DECEMBER 18 Gestures of Hope

Dr. Michael Zeigler shows how even the smallest acts of kindness can go a long way, by God's grace.

DECEMBER 25 A Shoot from the Stump

A shoot springs forth from the stump of Jesse. Is it a sign of hope—or a threat?

Find a station near you at Ihm.org/guide.

Endow LHM's Future with Our New Named Endowment Program by MEGAN MCDANIEL

hen the Lord calls you home, who will carry forward your faith and your commitment to sharing Jesus with a world in need? Our new Vine and Branches program allows you to establish or add to an endowment that will share the Gospel with future generations—a legacy of your faith. Your gift will continue to provide support year after year to the mission and ministry work you care most about, even after the Lord brings you to your home in heaven.

Iesus calls us as Christians to act as good stewards of the resources and opportunities set before us by our Lord. Creating an endowment is one way to answer this call.

Giving through an endowment provides security and control to supporters. This type of gift sustains your ministry impact into the future while allowing

Your gift will continue to provide support year after year to the mission and ministry work you care most about.

you the freedom to determine how your contributions are used. Lutheran Hour Ministries receives the proceeds of the funds to use for ministry, while the initial investment into the fund is protected for perpetuity.

When endowments are established with The Lutheran Hour Ministries Foundation, you can elect to have the fund support specific areas of ministry or the

area of greatest need. Like many types of planned gifts, you can give to an endowment with many types of assets. You may also be able to realize a significant tax deduction. Giving to an endowment can

encourage multiple generations to support a family legacy. What a wonderful legacy to know that ministry will continue to go on in your loved one's name!

No matter how you decide to give, through an endowment, you will be providing sustainable support that will continue to impact Gospel outreach for generations to come. You can establish a named endowment with as little as a \$10,000 commitment. The best part of this type of gift is that as investments grow, the impact on ministry over time will far surpass your initial investment.

If you are interested in impacting Gospel ministry for years to come, please contact us at 877-333-1963 or lhm-gift@lhm.org or visit us at lhm.org/foundation. ◆

Megan McDaniel reports on the impact of LHM's ministry work around the world.



Experience LHM's Vision

by KURT BUCHHOLZ, President & CEO, Lutheran Hour Ministries



utheran Hour Ministries is driven by ministry family members like you to share the Word of God with people around the globe more than 150 million times every week. Guided by your passion to make His Name known, we continually keep our eyes on the future and challenge ourselves to build capacity that takes advantage of new opportunities to broaden the reach of the Gospel.

One of the greatest blessings of my position is being able to meet with people to talk about the extraordinary things God is doing through our global ministry efforts. There is nothing I appreciate more than having conversations with people like you who are committed to the mission and vision of LHM, seeing how our staff and volunteers implement innovative approaches to share the Gospel with individuals who have never experienced our Savior's transformative love, and hearing about people around the world who have come to know Christ because of your involvement and support.

These are just a few of the reasons why I am excited to invite you to join me and other LHM leaders October 16-28, 2023, for the LHM Vision Cruise on the Mediterranean. You will see the Bible come alive right before your eves in places where many momentous events of our faith occurred. Embarking and culminating in Greece with additional stops along the way, this trip offers a chance to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and the apostle Paul as you tour Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Galilee region, Limassol, Athens, Corinth, and other locations.

In addition to visiting a variety of historic sites, I am looking forward to spending time with God's people who join us in our travels. You will have a chance to interact daily with ministry leaders from our headquarters and meet with various ministry center staff and partners to hear about the innovative ways they are sharing the hope and love of Christ with people in other countries. I promise that you will gain a deeper appreciation of God's Word and a better understanding of how the Holy Spirit is working through LHM to reach people

worldwide with the Gospel.

We will travel on the luxurious Azamara Journey cruise ship, which provides an intimate, boutique-style venue featuring modern amenities and furnishings, world-class dining options, spa experiences to relax and refresh, and all-new entertainment offerings. The onboard experience will be matched only by the immersive cultural encounters you will experience on shore. The spectacular sightseeing opportunities and the Christian fellowship with new friends will make this an experience you will never forget.

I encourage you, dedicated members of our LHM family, to check out the information about this cruise at **lhm.org/visioncruise** and then make plans to join us for this once-in-alifetime adventure. This will not just be one of those "bucket list" educational tours; instead, it will be a wonderful opportunity for us to spend quality time discussing our shared passion for Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church and what that means for our ministry today and into the future. •



In this year's Advent devotions from LHM, we look at the promise of God to send His Messiah as fulfilled in Jesus. The Heavenly Father made good on His ancient pledge. In Jesus we have the love of God come to earth in the form of a Child, who is for us the Savior of the world.



Access for FREE at







The Hopeful Neighborhood Project Celebrates National Good Neighbor Day

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

eptember 28 was National Good Neighbor Day, a day signed into law as a national holiday in 1978 by President Jimmy Carter. To celebrate this day, **The Hopeful** Neighborhood Project (HNP) team led a collaborative group of more than 50 community leaders, faith leaders, and writers to find ways to help people become more engaged neighbors.

The group worked with the owner of nationalgoodneighborday.org to add a map where people celebrating National Good Neighbor Day could register their ZIP Code and get resources from various organizations represented in the collaboration. "Start with Hello" was highlighted as this year's theme to encourage others to get to know their neighbors and build hopeful neighborhoods right where they live.

This summer, Missouri Governor Mike Parson signed Missouri Good Neighbor Week into law. HNP joined the University of Missouri Extension Council's Engaged Neighbor Program as the state's cosponsors for the celebration. The campaign's results were overwhelming:

- 12,594 Acts of Neighboring were registered, surpassing the goal of 10,000
- 124 Engaged Neighbors were nominated for a state-wide award; each nominee received an Amazon gift card and some neighboring items from HNP
- 295,812 social media views on posts related to Missouri Good Neighbor Week
- 40,765 visits to the campaign's dedicated web pages

While the numbers are impressive, the individual stories are what really matter. Sherry McCallister, from Houston, Missouri, uses her flower shop to celebrate the day. Together with local sponsors she purchased 3,000 roses for her community of 2,900 this year. On Sept. 28, community members could stop by her flower shop to get a dozen roses, one for themselves and 11 to give away. She has been celebrating National Good Neighbor Day this way for the past 15 years, and this year was the biggest yet.

"National Good Neighbor Day is a great time to focus on neighboring, but neighboring that matters is not celebrated on just one day."

In addition, the HNP team celebrated the day by teaming up with a local coffee shop, Teleo, to buy community members a "Love Your Neighbor" Latte. Teleo's mission is to love their neighbors through their coffee shop, which made them a perfect partner. The Love Your Neighbor Latte is a standard menu item and ten percent of each purchase goes to support a local charity.

"National Good Neighbor Day is a great time to focus on neighboring, but neighboring that matters is not celebrated on just one day," says Jennifer Prophete, LHM's director for community programming and HNP program director. "The beauty of neighboring is in the constant presence of people who live near to you, being people you can count on when you need them. People who bring hope by simply doing good, right where they live." ◆

Reach the Unreached on GivingTuesday by CHAD FIX

lobally, there are billions of people who have not yet experienced the transformative love of our Savior. Many of these unreached people live in places that are dominated by other majority religions, which means they have had little or no opportunity to hear about the love of God in Jesus Christ and likely have never even met a Christian. This presents a tremendous opportunity to reach so many more for Christ.

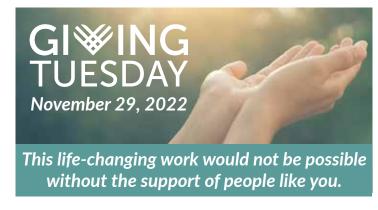
God has called Lutheran Hour Ministries to proclaim the risen Savior around the world to reach these people. As a mass communications ministry using locally established ministry centers to develop programs and resources in local languages that are culturally relevant and attractive, we are uniquely poised to reach beyond those areas where Christ is already known.

This life-changing work would not be possible without the support of people like you. This year on Giving Tuesday (Nov. 29), you can help these unreached people around the world find answers and relief in the Gospel.

GivingTuesday is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving and the widely recognized shopping days of Black Friday and Cyber Monday, Giving Tuesday kicks off the charitable season, when people often begin to focus on holiday and end-of-year giving. In fact, studies show that more than 30 percent of donations given to nonprofit organizations annually take place from Thanksgiving through the end of the calendar year.

Giving Tuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Since then, it has grown into a year-round global movement that inspires tens of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity by supporting the causes that mean the most to them. Nearly \$2.7 billion was donated to U.S. nonprofits during last year's GivingTuesday to benefit a tremendously broad range of organizations, and much more was given in volunteer hours, donations of materials, and acts of kindness.

Please consider a gift to LHM on GivingTuesday 2022 to share the gift of the Gospel with people around the world who desperately need to hear it. Watch your email inbox, visit **lhm.org/givingtuesday**, or check LHM's social media accounts in the coming weeks for additional details on how LHM is celebrating GivingTuesday this year. You will also learn how your support of LHM on this annual day of giving will make your gift go even further. ◆





What Kind of Person Are You?



As Christians, we want everybody to say: "I identify as a child of God, a human created in the image of God, created to enjoy life forever with God." But the destruction of that identity leads humans to establish their identity based on secondary, false gods. For many, identity itself has become a god. But this god cannot deliver. It cannot deliver satisfaction. It cannot deliver a sense of wholeness or forgiveness. It cannot deliver you from sin, from death, or from the devil. This Bible study will focus on the Triune and true God who can and does deliver. The God who initiates deliverance for us from the tyranny of identity confusion. The God who rescues us from the "identity theft" we suffer from at the hands of 1) a deceptive culture, 2) our own deviant devices, and/or 3) directly from the devil himself. Praise God for this work of reconciliation, earned by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Let's begin with this first truth: My identity is established by the reconciling work of Jesus Christ.

IDENTITY CONFUSION

The identity of human persons is not only in a state of confusion, but the dignity of human persons is in a state of endangerment. Identity issues are a battleground topic in our culture. Even the very word "identity" can be a source of anxiety between groups of people. These divisive rifts run across a variety of political, socio-economic, gender/ sexuality, and cultural categories. What is the cause of these struggles? At the root of this crisis is a deeply spiritual core concern. As J.A.O. Preus III (1953-2022) once proclaimed:

"We have different genders, races, ethnicities, ages, sizes, abilities, families, interests, occupations, and a hundred other distinctions that mark each of us as unique. However, the diversity that God created as good, we have, through our sinfulness, turned into something that divides us. Rather than rejoicing in God's diversity, we view others who differ from us with suspicion, ignorance, and even hatred." (Just Words: Understanding the Fullness of the Gospel, pg 140)

We must repattern ourselves. By following what Paul advises Timothy "the pattern of sound words" (2 Timothy 1:13b), we can discover an ancient and tested set of teachings. This "pattern" consists of the teaching of the

church derived from the Scriptures—that's our source, our guide, our standard. This Bible study examines what God's Word says about God's work of reconciliation—the ways in which God takes us as we are, as sinners, and makes us saints, makes us otherwise (katallage) than we are. Our identity is changed from trying to fit into the flawed and finite categories of this world to being renewed, transformed (see Romans 12:2), conformed to whom God intended us be, shaped in the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ (see Romans 8:29).

What kind of person are you? Here's what "the pattern of sound words" teaches us:

- You are a person whom God created with His own intimate imprint on your soul.
- You are a person born into a broken world in which that imprint is shattered.
- You are a person whom God deeply desires to heal, to mold, to restore in order that you might enjoy eternity with God. That eternity, by the way, begins in this life. "I believe that I shall see," David resolutely declared, "the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Psalm 27:13).



REFLECT

- 1. What are some of the ways church people can be so heavenly minded that they aren't much earthly good?
- 2. When we are tempted into a hyper-spiritual identity, we can also become inattentive to the real lives of real people. How might that detract from our ability to connect with people grinding their way through their everyday callings?

continued on next page

A note about "land of the living"... According to The Lutheran Study Bible, the "land of the living" is not referring to heaven, but to this world, this life. Precisely where life, love, work, play, and prayer is the land where you can expect to see God. The mission of Jesus, both heavenly minded and desiring earthly good, never swerves from either God's holy plan nor veers from the ordinary people for whom God's love is directed. It's perfectly both. What greater sight for sore eyes than the glory of God in Jesus—both fully human and fully divine!

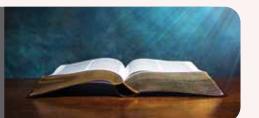


RESILIENCE VS. FRAGILITY

Through the Scriptures, we 1) discern our true identity and 2) we become equipped to help a broken humanity rediscover God's plan for fuller human flourishing individually and in our life together in the community called the church.

Some people estimate that more than 100 billion people have been born in the history of humanity. There are approximately 8 billion people alive on the Earth today. Every single person who has ever lived is a person for whom God had a plan, a person loved by God for whom Jesus Christ lived, died, and was resurrected. A person in whom the Holy Spirit desired to be at work in order to create faith for that person to realize his or her true identity. This reconciling work of the Holy Spirit touches the core of the human experience. Reconciliation is perhaps both the most personal and the most universal way that the sacred Scriptures describe how God recovers the human identity we lost. We are descendants of the catastrophic plunge of Adam and Eve. The waves of their original disobedience are like multigenerational waves that obscure our true identity.

> Watch the video at **lhm.org/studies** from Rev. Dr. John Nunes on this topic and then come back here to finish the study below.



REFLECT

- 1. What factors or pressures have you seen impacting the identities of young people and old people alike?
- 2. Read Psalm 18:2. How does this verse support us in our fragility? Can you think of other Scripture passages that remind us of our resilience in Christ?

A RESTORED IMAGE

In the United States, some claim they can trace their family tree to the Mayflower, which sailed to Massachusetts from England. All Americans didn't get to these shores in the same way. Some U.S. Lutherans with names like Walther and Pfotenhauer have ancestors who arrived in the U.S. in the 1830s on ships from Germany with names like the Copernicus and the Republik. One ship, the Amalia, sank en route. Some Africans arrived as chattel slaves, chained on board in utterly squalid conditions. On whatever ship you came, we are all in the same boat together: "we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

We have drifted off course from the Creator's intent. All of us need to have the image of God restored by Jesus Christ, the One who is "the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation" (Colossians 1:15b). Born of the virgin Mary, "in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell," (Colossians 1:19). Jesus came from heaven to earth "to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:20b).

God desires "that all should reach repentance" (2 Peter 3:9b). That's why He makes an in-the-flesh investment for us, a blood, sweat, and tears commitment for our salvation, a down payment for every human person ever born. We who are born again receive the ultimate makeover, enabling us to attempt daily the do-over of putting "on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:24b). He is the ransom paid for our sinful identity, including acts of unfaith, making us ambassadors of reconciliation and justice.

Because of the divine purpose within every human being, all persons are seeking re-union with God. God alone accomplishes the sense of at-one-ment, through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ (see 1 John 2:2). Jesus' perfect obedience, as contrasted with our imperfect disobedience, reshapes our identity into a cross-shaped. or cruciform pattern. This saving Word is applied to us through the saving water, "the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5b) in Baptism. The old person drowns and dies "a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God" (Luther, Small Catechism, Baptism).



- 1. What was the Creator's original intent for His creation?
- 2. Read Romans 6:4. How does your daily new birth shape your identity?

CONCLUSION

Life is not easy. Thanks be to God—we have a Savior. Thanks be to the Spirit—we have the faith to trust His promises. Our God desires for us to flourish in relationships of integrity. For this to happen, we need to maintain an awareness of our true identity—whom we were created to be, whom we are called to be, to whom we are saved to serve. Too often we settle for secondary identifiers, for little or petty things when God intends great and eternal things for us. We have emphasized how Christ Jesus at the cross makes all things right. He reconciles any sin-caused false ideas about who or what we are. In the sessions to come, we will see how the ongoing work of Christ solidifies us in a community of the Holy Spirit and secures our identities even through every difficulty in life.



PRAY

We lift up our lives to you, O God; preserve us from the tricks and traps of the evil one. Keep us in Your path. Nurture us in Your love. Hold us in Your safekeeping. Guide us in Your truth. To Your name be praise forever and ever, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DOWNLOAD STUDY GUIDE AND VIDEO AT LHM.ORG/STUDIES





A Witness in the Public Square

by DR. KURT SENSKE, Chairman, Int'l LLL Board of Directors

y wife Laurie and I recently had the privilege of joining Kurt Buchholz and his wife Jenny in New York City as Kurt was honored by the Atlantic District of the LCMS as a Witness in the Public Square. As I was preparing remarks to introduce Kurt during this celebration, I looked back at some of the advances LHM has made for sharing the Gospel worldwide since Kurt became president & CEO in 2013. It is clear that God has used Kurt's leadership abilities to allow LHM to accomplish some truly amazing things over the past decade:

- LHM has more than tripled the number of times each week that it reaches people with the Gospel message. Today, this number stands north of 150 million each week!
- The ministry set forth in its calling to go out into the world and grow, nurture, and expand the Body of Christ by implementing a funding initiative called SENT that raised more than \$264 million. As an expansive, holistic, multi-layered plan to answer the pressing challenges and realities of the 21st century, SENT brought greater vision, clarity, and definition to the work LHM was already doing.
- LHM has opened six new mission fields around the world to share the hope of Christ in places where people had largely not been previously exposed to the Gospel.
- The Lutheran Hour radio footprint has increased to more than 1.800 stations throughout North America, Sirius XM satellite radio, several new national radio networks, and many on-demand platforms.

- LHM's declaration of the digital realm as a third global mission field led to the launch of tremendously successful digital platforms for reaching the lost in the Americas, Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Eurasia.
- The engaged constituency of LHM has risen to more than 175,000 individuals around the world.
- During the past twelve months, more than 1.2 million people reached out directly to LHM for materials, to engage in a conversation, attend an event. or ask about Christ in an online chat room. During this same time, nearly 120,000 people were referred to a church or Christian community. To God be the glory!
- An ongoing partnership with Barna Group has provided research on topics related to faith in America. The monograph produced from the initial study, *Spiritual Conversations in the* Digital Age, was awarded with the Evangelism Resource of the Year in 2018 by *Outreach Magazine*. This partnership has also led to innovative programming and resources that more than one million people have used.
- Over the past several years, LHM has partnered with SAT-7 to co-produce satellite TV programming that shines the light of Christ into dozens of countries throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia. Many viewers watching these broadcasts are hearing about Christ for the first time.

This partnership continues to flourish with the recent launch of the third season of New Light, a weekly, 55-minute talk show where three co-hosts engage the audience and introduce a topic for the program. Going live this season enables real-time viewer interaction and brings more voices and variety to the program. Other new features on the broadcasts are designed to capture the attention of the viewers, including a segment with youth guests in the studio, outdoor interviews, a spiritual message, and pre-recorded inspirational success stories.

In one of the new season's first programs, the theme addressed how young people can boldly make changes in their lives and communities. Testimonies by two young women who opened an online clothing store in a large metropolitan area shared how incorporating family values

into their shop helped empower the women who work there. The devotional segment taught how people from the Bible also used their situation in life to let God's light shine in a dark world. Examples of Esther, Joseph, David, and Daniel encouraged viewers to live confidently in their faith.

Because of Kurt's leadership, a talented and passionate group of staff members and volunteers around the world, and your generous support of ministry efforts like these, Lutheran Hour Ministries is truly a bright light within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as we fulfill our mission of Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the *Nations to the Church.* Thank you for your ongoing involvement! ◆





And He said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation." Mark 16:15





Discover LHM With Your Congregation by MEGAN MCDANIEL

re you looking for a way to share LHM's mission with others? We have resources to help church leaders share our mission with members of your congregation.

By promoting LHM in your congregation, church members encounter the life-changing nature of the Lord's work through LHM and learn how they can be a part of its mission of Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church.

When you choose a day that your church can highlight LHM's mission, you provide the opportunity to come together and celebrate the impact that the Lord makes in people's lives every single day.

How to Host in Your Congregation:

- 1. Choose a date that works for the congregation. Although the tradition has been the first weekend in February, any date will work.
- 2. Visit **lhm.org/lhmsunday** to find a variety of digital resources including bulletin inserts, a poster, and more that share the message and mission of LHM.
- 3. Promote the event on your church website, in bulletins or online newsletters, and during announcements.
- 4. Provide more information about the mission and vision of LHM by printing or digitally sharing bulletin inserts.

Ideas for More Engagement:

- Ask a member who uses LHM resources like Daily Devotions, LHM Learn, or Project Connect booklets to share his or her experience with congregation members.
- Encourage your church's men's club, youth group, LWML group, or small group to get involved with LHM and use our resources.
- Host a virtual Bible study using LHM's online resources found at **lhm.org/resources**.
- Set up a small table display with LHM information.

Achieving our mission is possible because of our supporters like YOU. With YOUR support, we are able to reach out with the Gospel message to all who will hear.

We hope you will celebrate our mission of *Bringing* Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church with us by hosting an LHM Sunday at your church on whatever day during the year is best for your congregation. ◆



It was a great day of fun and fellowship that ultimately furthers LHM's mission.

30 Years of the St. Louis Zone Golf Classic

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

round 90 golfers gathered together and hit the course on October 3, 2022, for the 30th annual St. Louis Zone Golf Classic at Westborough Country Club in St. Louis, Missouri.

Many of the golfers are faithful players each year, as well as some Concordia Seminary students that attend through sponsorship opportunities offered each year that allow them to play and stay for the program and dinner.

After golf, players and guests gathered for a dinner banquet with remarks led by Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, Speaker of The Lutheran Hour. A live auction and awards ceremony rounded out the evening.

"It was a great day of fun and fellowship that ultimately furthers LHM's mission," says Melissa Bohlmann, associate director of shared services for LHM. "It's amazing that so many people come together to make this a wonderful event each year. I always enjoy seeing all the people that

return every year and new ones that join."

Over 30 years ago, the Lutheran Laymen's League-STL Zone golf tournament committee members joined together and created the tournament out of the desire for an event to raise money locally to support the mission of Lutheran Hour Ministries. Each year, the golf tournament committee chooses an LHM ministry or project to dedicate the proceeds to. In the 30 years that this tournament has been held, LHM has received more than \$1 million that will continue our mission of Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church.

"This event is always a great opportunity to gather together as brothers and sisters in Christ to raise support for the mission and ministry of LHM," says Jeff Craig-Mever, senior vice president and chief strategy officer for LHM. "We are very thankful for our sponsors, volunteers, and participants who help make this event possible." ◆





"A New Day with Jesus" Dawns on LHM's 2023 Rose Parade Float

The float carries on a mission to provide a Gospel witness to viewers everywhere.

n keeping with its "Never on Sunday" tradition followed since 1893, the 134th Tournament of Roses Parade will be held on Monday, January 2, 2023, in Pasadena, California, under the theme of "Turning the Corner." The iconic annual parade, beginning at 8 a.m. Pacific Time, will feature marching bands from throughout the United States, high-stepping equestrian units, and dozens of majestic floral floats.

Lutheran Hour Ministries will participate for the 72nd time with a float entry titled "A New Day with Jesus." A new day is dawning on this year's float, as the sun rises from

behind a church and families gather. The steeple directs our eyes upward to the cross of Christ and the stained-glass windows tell the story of how God is making all things new. Jesus stands at the open doors of the church ready to welcome everyone into His fold, where He promises to make Himself known in the gathering of His people, the reading and proclamation of His Word, and participation in His Holy Baptism and Communion. With this year's float, viewers are invited to meet—or meet anew—the Source of hope and joy that cannot be taken away by anything that the world throws at us.

As a self-funded project of the Lutheran Hour Ministries Float Committee and the Southern California District of the International Lutheran Lavmen's League, the LHM float is the only Christian float in the annual parade. The float carries on a mission to provide a Gospel witness to viewers everywhere, from the 5.5-mile parade route in Pasadena to televisions and computers around the world. There are several television channels, streaming outlets, and social media platforms televising the 2023 parade, including the Hallmark Channel, ABC, NBC, RFD-TV, Univision,

AT&T TV Live, Hulu Plus Live TV, Peacock TV, and Sling TV. Check your local listings for the best viewing options.

Hundreds of individuals are still needed to help decorate the LHM float as well as others completed by the Petal Pushers' decorating team of around 4,000 volunteers. Petal Pushers volunteers must be at least 13 years old and commit to at least one eight-hour shift during the month of December.

To learn more about the LHM float, volunteer opportunities, or ways to support this project, visit petalpushers.org. ◆

Ministry Programs Encourage Individuals in Ghana by MEGAN MCDANIEL

LHM-Ghana worked with a local Lutheran church during their summer programs to help children grow their faith. These summer programs are an opportunity for interested children to engage in activities outside of their academic classes. LHM-Ghana introduced the children to their children's Bible Correspondence Course (BCC) during one of the events. Over 100 students enrolled in the BCC, and they asked questions to further their understanding of the lessons.

One of the topics covered was bad conduct, especially as it relates to the behavior of children. LHM-Ghana used this lesson as a way to blend the Word of God with their lifestyles. The younger children were taught how to have good conduct at home and in the world and were encouraged to stay away from bad activities that would not benefit them. They were told that God provides the things that are given to them by their parents, and He expects them to take care of their property.

The older children were taught to share the Word of God with their friends and family. Some of them were excited to go share the Gospel with people who do not know Jesus. All of the children enjoyed the lessons and were interested in learning more about the Gospel.

Benstil, an elder of a Lutheran church, shared how two individuals were recently evangelized by Christians trained in an **Equipping the Saints** (ETS) seminar conducted by LHM-Ghana at a local Lutheran church. These seminars train mature Christians in practical skills to share the Gospel with their friends and neighbors. Upon completion of the ETS seminars, inspired Christians participate in evangelism activities in their local communities. One man reached through these local events was Emmanuel, a mechanical engineer who had previously hardened his heart toward Christianity. After hearing the hopeful message of the Gospel shared through these volunteers, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, Emmanuel became a Christian. Now he is participating in the church and growing in his faith. Agnes works as a trader and, after hearing the Gospel from an ETS volunteer, is now interested in being a part of the church. She is continuing to connect with LHM-Ghana staff to learn more about Jesus. Benstil shared that the training held at the church was very helpful, and the membership has increased significantly with the help of God as a result of their regular community evangelism efforts. •



Over 100 students enrolled in the Bible Correspondence Course.





Emmanuel and Agnes continue to learn more about Jesus.

LHM Staff Present on Relatable Topics at Fall Conferences

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

BEST PRACTICES FOR MINISTRY: HEARTLAND CONFERENCE FRANKENMUTH, MICHIGAN / SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2022



n September, LHM staff traveled to St. Lorenz Lutheran Church in Michigan for the Best Practices for Ministry: Heartland Conference. On the heels of the town's annual Oktoberfest celebration, conference events included keynotes, breakout sessions, exhibit time, and of course, plenty of hospitality and gathering time that the Best Practices are known for. Rev. Dr.

Chad Lakies, LHM's regional director for North America, presented twice on "How to 'Find Yourself' in a Secular Age." Deaconess Noemí Guerra, program developer for Hispanic Ministry at LHM, presented "No Comprendo! You Can

Reach Your Hispanic Neighbor!" Participants discovered action steps from what they learned, and Lakies and Guerra enjoyed engaging in conversations in their rooms and talking about LHM's newly released Spanish resources app. The CPTLN (Cristo Para Todas Las Naciones: Christ for All Nations) mobile app is LHM's first smartphone app entirely in Spanish. The app is available by visiting **lhm.org/apps**.

LUTHERAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION CONVOCATION MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN / OCTOBER 6-8, 2022



LHM staff took on Milwaukee for this year's Lutheran Education Association (LEA) Convocation held under the theme "together," drawn from Ephesians 2:19-22. From the Speaker of **The Lutheran Hour**. Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler's presentation "Bible Telling Together," to Rev. Dr. Jason Broge, senior director of design and development, and Ashley Bayless, director of production, highlighting Gospel Adventures and Spiritual Conversations, we had many

great exchanges and moments throughout the conference. Learners of all ages enjoyed their time at the Gospel Adventures prayer station and took advantage of the photo opportunity with foam core cut-outs of the different Gospel Adventures characters.



MICHIGAN DISTRICT ALL PASTOR'S CONFERENCE **BOYNE FALLS, MICHIGAN** OCTOBER 9-12, 2022

LHM staff were back in Michigan in October for the Michigan District All Pastor's Conference in Boyne Falls, Rev. Dr. Chad Lakies presented two keynotes titled "Plausible Hope: Faithful Witness in an Age of Distrust" and "How to 'Find Yourself' in a Secular Age." Lakies also participated in a Q & A with the other two keynote presenters and had many other conversations throughout the conference. Nicole Heerlein, associate director of external relations, ran the LHM exhibit area with two dedicated LLL volunteers, Gil and Barb Bartz. Together, they shared LHM's work through conversations with many pastors who stopped by. LHM's Households of Faith and Gifted for More resources, which Lakies referenced in his keynotes, were available to be viewed and discussed. There was also a special LHM giveaway to celebrate Oktoberfest and the builtin Gemütlichkeit of the conference (a German-language word used to convey the idea of a state or feeling of warmth, friendliness, and good cheer). •



"It is a joy to offer this gift to welcome newly confirmed children, and some adults, into the Lutheran Church-Canada family."

Engaging Youth Across Canada by CHAD FIX

rom its office in Kitchener. Ontario, **LHM-Canada** is a self-supporting auxiliary organization of Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) that develops and distributes materials to congregations, church groups, and individuals as part of LHM's global outreach efforts.

In partnership with Pastor Cody Cooper, LHM-Canada now offers weekly children's activity pages following the three-year lectionary. The Kids' Lectionary Learning was originally developed as a tool to support teaching for children during at-home worship but has now grown into a regular part of LHM-Canada's library of resources. In addition, Pastor Cooper has augmented the learning with pages marking notable events during the church year. This unique liturgical content is so welcomed throughout Canada that it now includes a parent/teacher guide outlining the text, providing explanations for the images, and

preparing adult hearts so they may lead children through the content.

Youth also draw closer to God through the sharing of The Illuminated Catechism. Since they started offering this resource as a gift to all catechumens, LHM-Canada has sent more than 150 copies to churches across Canada,

and they continue to receive requests for the book in both English and French. LHM-Canada is the only place in the

world where someone can obtain a French version of this resource.

"It is a joy to offer this gift to welcome newly confirmed children, and some adults, into the Lutheran Church-Canada family," says Lisa Jackson, director of LHM-Canada.

In addition to providing relevant children's resources, LHM-Canada has been engaging younger Lutherans to serve the Church. This past summer marked the second

year they collaborated with LCC on a communications internship program. The interns provided fresh ideas and energy to the ministry's work while also facilitating an introduction to younger generations. Activity pages were also created in French (and Portuguese) for Reformation and Advent, and plans are underway for expanding this library of children's resources.

LHM-Canada has also partnered with Amelia, a visual artist who designs their tribute and memorial cards as well as covers for seasonal devotions, and Philippe, a French ministry assistant who witnesses to unchurched individuals who are seeking. LHM-Canada's digital reach to French speakers through Facebook is now in the tens of thousands. Philippe has also recently been collaborating with a Facebook group called frère de la Concorde that has gained many followers interested in discussing the Lutheran faith. ◆



by CHAD FIX

↑ ↑ ant to help Lutheran Hour Ministries achieve its mission? As part of the ministry's annual election process, you can have a say in who serves on our Board of Directors in 2023 and beyond.

Anyone who has given a gift to the ministry between July 1, 2021, and December 31, 2022 (and is also a member of a congregation of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod or Lutheran Church-Canada) will receive a postcard in early February with details on how to become part of the voting membership in Spring 2023. Members will have the option of registering online to receive an electronic ballot (the preferred method since it saves substantial ministry dollars) or mailing back the postcard to receive a paper ballot for the annual election that takes place April 15 through May 15.

Since a new voting membership is established for each election cycle, you must sign up to participate in the 2023 election regardless of whether you registered (or voted) in previous years.

The 2023 election will include a vote for open positions on the Board of Directors. You will be able to view information about the slate of candidates in the next issue of *The Lutheran Layman*. You are then encouraged to register to vote by March 15 to ensure that your voice is heard during the 2023 election!

Election results will be announced online in early June 2023 and in next summer's issue of *The Lutheran Layman*. If you have questions about the election process, please call 1-800-876-9880 or send an email to info@lhm.org. ◆



LHM Christmas TV Specials

Visit our broadcast guide to see which of our Christmas classics are airing near you.



Old-School Hard Copies of Advent Devotions Still a Winner! by PAUL SCHREIBER



uring Christmas, extra church activities like musical productions, choral programs, and drama re-enactments bring to life the wonder of Christ's birth. LHM makes its Advent devotions, A Son Is Given, in English, or *Lo imposible es posible* ("The Impossible Is Possible"), in Spanish, available to print ahead of the holidays. That way churches can pass out printed copies to members and visitors.

Available as a FREE PDF, full copies of either Advent version can be printed and given to individuals and families when Advent begins November 27. An excellent resource for personal contemplation and group conversation, each devotion is focused on a Scripture text. Three reflection questions spark thought and get people talking about the text. Dr. Kari Vo wrote the English version. The Spanish version was written by Rev. Omar R. Weber of Santa Fe, Argentina.

LHM's seasonal devotions have been much enjoyed by those who've read or listened to either the Advent or Lent versions in the past. Cordero de Dios from Talca, Chile, had this to say about last year's Advent devotions in Spanish. "I really appreciate the production of this material! It is very useful for the devotional life of our church members and for evangelistic purposes."

Part of what makes Advent devotions an

excellent resource for congregations to share is the easy way the Christmas story is conveyed, with warmth and insight. Cindy Korte writes, "Just wanted to pass along to Dr. Vo that I greatly enjoyed her Advent devotions. Her writing is like sitting across from my best friend. It is down-to-earth, conversational, and yet so thought-provoking."

Jan Posch told us, "I got the Child of Promise (last year's Advent devotion) through another church and wanted to comment on how much I loved it. So relatable, easy, thought-provoking. I wanted to say thank you to Lutheran Hour Ministries and Dr. Kari Vo. It was a blessing."

Congregations can use these seasonal messages in many ways: make full copies available on site at church; take a bunch and pass them out when your youth group goes caroling; or drop off copies for residents at area nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, homeless shelters, or substance-abuse treatment centers.

Both A Son Is Given and Lo imposible es posible can be accessed now to download, print, and share with others. Visit **lhm.org/advent** to download the devotions in both English and Spanish.

Paul Schreiber reports on the impact of LHM's ministry work in the United States.

Mental Health—a Big Deal at St. Peter's Lutheran Church by PAUL SCHREIBER

s part of its Community of Care vision plan, St. Peter's Lutheran Church & School in Fort Wayne, Indiana, holds quarterly events that feature a speaker or activity, along with a meal. To celebrate the increased awareness on mental health issues this past year, St. Peter's offered gifts to attendees at a recent event. Among these were LHM resources such as The Vibrant Conversations Deck of playing cards from our Households of Faith kit and our 30 Days of Household Devotions.

"The Community of Care has already proven to be an outreach tool," said Michelle Leahy, pastoral care coordinator for St. Peter's. "In addition to the order from LHM, we've ordered books on grief, caregiving, pain/suffering, rest, and a few other topics. We're also offering a game for families and a calendar of activities to help reduce stress. The LHM cards and devotions

will be offered to everyone as a way to strengthen the family."

St. Peter's belongs to a Lutheran community of 91 churches in northeast Indiana that are members of The Lutheran Foundation, a grant organization zeroed in on "transforming and supporting the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of our community," per its website, thelutheranfoundation.org. Beginning in 1904 as the Fort Wayne Lutheran Hospital, the Foundation began in 1995 from proceeds of the original hospital sale. It has awarded \$200-plus million in grants to organizations, schools, and churches in northern Indiana.

People with mental health concerns are sometimes closer than we think. Recently, before addressing a Look Up conference on faith and mental health issues sponsored by The Lutheran Foundation, Leahy said she met a woman whose son had a severe

mental illness—but no one knew. She kept it hidden from those in the church for fear of the stigma attached to her son's illness. "She was so afraid of being judged and shamed that she isolated herself from the very community that could have loved and supported her."

People are seeing St. Peter's care ministry as a safe place to express their mental health experiences. "Once they receive care here, then

we have the opportunity to share the Gospel with them and enfold them into our Community of Care," Leahy said. LHM's resources complement the church's mission of bringing the light of the Gospel to real-world problems. Our Christcentered podcasts. Project Connect booklets, LHM Learn courses, and Barna-based materials speak to a host of human concerns. They're available at **lhm.org**. ◆



Sharing the Gospel in Latvia

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

ut of two million people in Latvia today, around 80 percent of people identify as Christian. However, many of them have never been to church or have stopped going. Since the pandemic, the evangelical Lutheran church of Latvia has lost around 20 percent of its congregation members.

Because of this, one of the main goals for LHM-Latvia is to bring people to church. They do this through ministry activities, including Bible Correspondence Courses (BCC), Equipping the Saints (ETS) seminars, youth programs, movie showings, social media, podcasts, and more. Here are some of the popular ministry activities that LHM-Latvia does.



Bible Correspondence Courses

When someone responds to an outreach activity, LHM-Latvia will typically invite the respondent to begin a BCC as the next step in his or her spiritual journey. Bible Correspondence Courses introduce the Gospel to people who don't know Jesus and reinforce a biblical understanding for people growing in their faith. After taking the BCC through LHM-Latvia, many people have started going to church.

Social Media

The primary social media platform used by LHM-Latvia is Facebook. Their Facebook page now has almost 5,000 followers who see the pictures and messages. Devotions, Christian quotes, event reviews, and audio from their radio program are some of the pieces of content shared on Facebook.





"It's Time to Dance" Program

These dance events are geared toward youth, featuring Christian hip-hop dance instructors. During the course of one hour, teenagers learn a dance sequence to Christian hip-hop music. Young people enjoy the music and activity while also learning about the Christian faith. Most of the time, participants leave the event

feeling encouraged by the Christian lyrics to the songs and further connect with the ministry center staff to learn more about the Gospel.

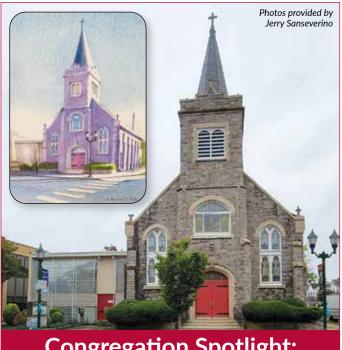
New Podcast

Podcasts are rising in popularity in Latvia. A new media program that LHM-Latvia recently launched is a video podcast called **Under Four**. In Latvia, when two people want to talk, it is common for them to say, "let's talk under four." This means talking under the four eyes of two people or having a private conversation between two people. LHM-Latvia films two episodes for this



podcast every month and uploads them as videos on YouTube and audio files for the podcast version. During this podcast, the host will talk with a guest, having a conversation "under four," about God working in our daily lives, and how we can apply the Christian faith to daily life. ◆





Congregation Spotlight: How YOU Can Join LHM's Mission

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

Congregation name: St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

Location: Raritan, New Jersey **Congregation size:** 40 members **Contact person:** Jerry Sanseverino

How does your congregation support LHM?

Our church no longer needed our parsonage and decided to sell it with the understanding that two-thirds of the net proceeds go to various Lutheran and local charities. We asked the members of the congregation for recommendations, and Lutheran Hour Ministries was included.

What was the motivation behind supporting LHM?

We wanted to share the message of the Gospel through the charities we selected. Our motivation behind our donation to LHM was to support The Lutheran Hour radio program. We decided to direct half of our gift toward the sponsorship of our local radio station WNYM 970 AM, which airs The Lutheran Hour every Sunday at 7:30 a.m. The other half will go toward supporting the continued broadcasts of The Lutheran Hour on stations across North America.

What has been your members' feedback? What do your members like about LHM?

A few of our home-bound members suggested Lutheran Hour Ministries. They listen to your uplifting message of The Lutheran Hour every Sunday morning. One long-standing member, who is blind and cannot attend church, says, "It is very important to me to hear the message every Sunday."

If your congregation would like to learn more about how you can support LHM's mission, contact Robin Forsythe at 314-317-4152 or robin.forsythe@lhm.org. If you would like to make a gift of support, visit Ihm.org/give. ◆



Access Day One of Celebrate India NOW!

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

Gospel Adventures[™] is going to Celebrate India in 2023! Just like Zambia Bound, Thailand Trek, Go Mongolia, and Passport to Peru. Gospel Adventures: Celebrate India is a free resource available to Christian schools, homeschools, churches, and individuals. The curriculum is filled with fun activities and an interactive website for students to learn about Christian children in another country.

Like last year, the first day of the curriculum is already available! Visit gospeladventures.org to register for the virtual "trip" and access this content to get a glimpse into the newest interactive experience. As always, the full curriculum and supporting materials will be available to everyone who has registered in January.

India is the second-largest country in the world when it comes to population, with an estimated 1.3 billion inhabitants as of July 2021. About the only parts of the country that do not have a lot of people living there are the northern mountain fringe and the Thar Desert. India is a relatively young country, with a median age of about 28. There are plenty of younger people to support the elderly.

India has made great strides in improving access to quality education, increasing elementary school enrollment, and reducing the number of out-of-school children. However, challenges do remain. Around 50 percent of adolescents do not complete secondary education, while approximately 20 million children do not attend preschool (Source: Rapid Survey of Children 2013-2014 MWCD). Furthermore, half of primary school-going children—which constitutes nearly 50 million children—do not achieve grade-appropriate learning levels (Source: National Achievement Survey, NCERT 2017).

As a way to support children's ministry around the world, individuals, schools, and churches participating in Gospel Adventures: Celebrate India can choose to donate through chapel offerings or change drives. These donations will go toward LHM's Global Kids Fund, which supports programs that are similar to the ones they see during the Gospel Adventures program. This year, gifts made to the Global Kids Fund will supply games and resources for youth clubs in India.

One of the ways **LHM-India** reaches out to individuals is by focusing on the spiritual needs of the younger generation. Therefore, they have created several youth clubs in many parts of the country. Through participating in these clubs, youths are encouraged to follow four goals in their lives.

- 1. Create an environment of unity
- 2. Self-development through education
- 3. Keeping their village clean and green
- **4.** Social concern and serving their community

Each youth club is equipped with games and materials to help promote the four goals. You and your classroom can help support these programs by purchasing items for the youth clubs. Around \$50 will supply one youth club with the following items:

- One blackboard
- One Carrom board (Indian board game)
- Chess set
- Vollevball
- *Tennikoit (ring tennis)*
- Badminton rackets
- Badminton net
- Badminton cork

Visit gospeladventures.org/globalkidsfund to support LHM's children's ministry through the Global Kids Fund. ◆

Buchholz Honored as a "Witness in the Public Square" by CHAD FIX

LHM President & CEO Kurt

Buchholz was one of the recipients of the "Witness in the Public Square" award for 2022 during a special ceremony October 25 at the New York Athletic Club in New York City. The annual award is presented by the Atlantic District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to honor individuals who have provided an exemplary witness in bringing Christian values to the public square through word and deed.

Buchholz was honored this year alongside Todd and Laurie Mueller, a district manager of pharmacy and retail operations for Walgreen Co. and senior manager, P.L. marketing, and Victor and Marcia Nelson, pastor and wife in ministry at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cairo, New York.

Serving as president & CEO of LHM since 2013, Buchholz brings a diverse background in international mission outreach and organizational leadership, along with a dedication for using today's digital media resources to reach more people than ever before with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Leading a worldwide ministry team that today reaches individuals with the Gospel more than 150



million times each week, his passion for the personal call and vocation of the laity leads to full engagement in boldly proclaiming Christ everywhere.

"Kurt Buchholz has shown a commitment to continuing the ministry of Jesus, Paul, the saints who have gone before us, and all who bring the love of God to bear, outside the sanctuary into their communities for the sake of the world," says Rev. Dr. Derek G. Lecakes, President/Bishop of the Atlantic District-LCMS (pictured to the left with Buchholz). "Kurt has 'Engaged the World with the Gospel of Hope."

The catalyst of the event was the need for hope and comfort following the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001. Atlantic District leaders determined to memorialize this opportunity for Christian witness in conjunction with multiple endeavors in global mission taking place in New York and around the world. The "Witness in the Public Square" is the primary mission funding event of the district and has provided over \$2.5 million in support of various mission endeavors such as work among many Chinese, Korean, Bengali, Liberian, Pakistani, and others in New York; feeding people in Liberia during the Ebola crisis: social ministry efforts in Far Rockaway after Superstorm Sandy; and many other efforts. ◆

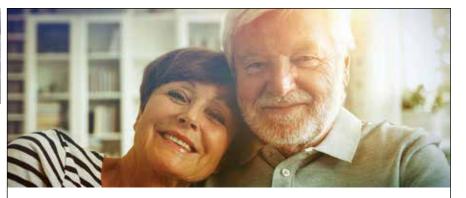
Sharing God's Love with Children

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

ince the beginning of this year, Sri Lanka has been battling rising inflation. This struggle has impacted almost all industries, including the ministry work of **LHM-Sri Lanka**. Even with the challenges, LHM-Sri Lanka continues to share the Good News through their radio programs, booklets, and Bible Correspondence Courses.

Two years ago, LHM-Sri Lanka's audience relations staff member visited a pastor in a village about 80 miles from their ministry center. The pastor reached out requesting help with reaching individuals in his area. He serves a poor community and visits people by walking many miles. He couldn't afford materials to share the Gospel but was eager to work with LHM-Sri Lanka for ideas to develop his ministry, especially children's ministry. However, once the pandemic hit, he was no longer able to follow through on the plans he made.

Recently, he decided he was going to visit the LHM-Sri Lanka office to pick up booklets, but without a lot of money, he was worried he wouldn't be able to make the trip. He prayed to God, asking for help. Someone graciously gave him money that he was able to use for his travel expenses. He reconnected with LHM-Sri Lanka staff and made the trip to the office to request children's Bible lessons. He wanted to share them with his Sunday school classes, where he has a total of 100 children. Since then, 80 of those children enrolled in LHM-Sri Lanka's children's Bible lessons. We are thankful for the relationship with this pastor and the opportunity to share the Gospel with children. ◆



Join our mission of Bringing Christ to the Nations®—and the Nations to the Church by giving a gift to our endowment. With your gift today, you can impact generations to come while receiving some immediate personal benefits.

- The principal of your gift is kept intact, and LHM uses the annual earnings—typically income and a portion of the capital growth to fund current critical needs.
- Create a named endowment through our new Vine and Branches program when you make a gift of \$10,000 or more.
- You may be entitled to take a charitable income deduction.

Learn about the various giving strategies that can help sustain our ministry for the future.



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CHANGING LIVES Around the World with the GOSPEI by MEGAN MCDANIEL

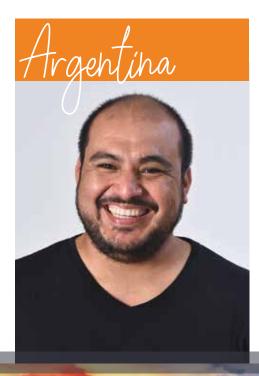


Famata, a 59-year-old widow and grandmother to six, comes from a non-Christian religious family. She said she didn't have a choice growing up and was told what religion she needed to follow. Recently, one of Famata's grandchildren picked up booklets from LHM-Liberia. Famata noticed her granddaughter reading something, and she asked what it was. It was an LHM-Liberia booklet about faith during life's adversity. For the next few days, the two of them read booklets and talked about the things they had learned. Famata said that all the questions she had about life and faith came back to her. She reached out to LHM-Liberia staff and shared the impact the booklets had made in her and her granddaughter's lives. LHM-Liberia staff set up a time to meet at their house and they prayed together. LHM-Liberia staff referred Famata to a local church where she can continue to learn more about Jesus.

> Famata said that all the auestions she had about life and faith came back to her.

Marcelo enrolled in a **Bible Correspondence Course** offered by LHM and is now attending a local church.

Marcelo reached out to LHM-Argentina staff through Facebook. He shared that he had previously attended a church, but since he moved, he hasn't found a new church to go to. He was looking for spiritual advice, so LHM-Argentina staff connected him to a local chaplain. They talked, and the chaplain asked Marcelo if he had a Bible. Marcelo said he had given it to another person, so the chaplain gave him one and encouraged him to enroll in a Bible Correspondence Course (BCC) offered by LHM. LHM-Argentina staff referred him to a local church, and he is continuing to complete the BCC lessons.



Mariam recently finished the **Bible Correspondence Course** hosted by LHM-Ethiopia. She said that when she first enrolled in the program, she had a negative outlook on the Bible because she had difficulty reading and understanding it. However, she shared that once she began the lessons her worries went away, and she was able to enjoy reading the Bible. Now she shares the Gospel with others and encourages them to read the Bible and learn more about Christianity.

Mariam now shares the Gospel and encourages others to read the Bible.

Ines is thankful for the LHM-Nicaragua programs that have helped her learn more about the Gospel message.

Ines is a young mother who participates in the adult fellowship hosted by LHM-Nicaragua. She shared that she is thankful for the LHM-Nicaragua programs that are geared toward children and adults. She has learned more about the Gospel message and her relationship with her son has improved.



Individuals around the world are reached more than 150 million times each week with the Gospel through Lutheran Hour Ministries' culturally relevant programs and resources. Below are just a few examples to show how God has been using LHM recently to change lives around the world with His Good News.



Nathan and his cousin Daniel are both young farmers who grow cashew trees for a living. One of their friends invited them to attend a youth gathering in the local town hosted by LHM-**Cambodia**. It was the first time they experienced a Christian program and heard the Gospel message. The boys sometimes feel lonely since they live in the country and don't speak the same language as people in town. During the youth gathering, they connected with other people. They took LHM-Cambodia booklets home with them and expressed their desire to attend church services to learn more about Jesus.

It was the first time Nathan and Daniel experienced a Christian program and heard the Gospel message.

Radmir and his grandmother are now attending church services regularly.

Radmir is 12 years old and lives with his grandmother. They do not have a lot of money, so he does not have new shoes or clothes. Because of that, he is embarrassed when he goes to school. An LHM-Kazakhstan volunteer connected with Radmir and his grandmother and supplied them with food and other basic necessities while sharing the Gospel with them. The volunteer also encouraged them to visit a local church. They agreed to visit the church and are now attending services regularly.



.hdohesia Nikita is in fifth grade and enrolled

in a children's **Bible Correspondence** Course offered through LHM-**Indonesia**. She learned more about the Bible and feels like she now understands the stories in the Bible better. She reads the Bible daily and knows that she has a purpose in life through Jesus. She is eager to learn more about Jesus and grow in her

Nikita reads the Bible daily and knows that she has a purpose in life through Jesus.

Oskar read the Gospel message and felt led to learn more about Christianity.

Oskar is 28 years old and reached out to LHM staff in Central and **South Asia** through WhatsApp. He requested a copy of the New Testament, which staff members sent through an online link. Oskar read the Gospel message and felt led to learn more about Christianity. Oskar's mom became interested in reading the Bible, too, so they started reading it together. There is not a church in the area that Oskar lives in, but he is staying in touch with LHM staff members and is learning more about Jesus. ♦



Carrying Out His Mother's Heart for Ministry

by MEGAN MCDANIEL

ev. Harold Bender grew up knowing about Lutheran Hour Ministries. His parents were supporters of LHM because they loved its mission of reaching individuals around the world with the hope of the Gospel. When he was a child, Bender attended Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Centennial, Colorado. In the car on the way home, his dad would turn on the radio to find **The Lutheran Hour**.

Living in Littleton, Colorado, Bender's father was a certified public accountant. Bender followed in his father's accounting footsteps. When his father passed away in 1984. Bender stepped in to take over his CPA practice.

Bender shared that his dad's death was a huge part of his spiritual growth. "Easter 1985 was the most impactful Easter for me," says Bender. "I realized that the resurrection is everything. You can have everything in the world, but without the resurrection and Jesus in your heart, you have nothing."

Later that year, he was helping lead a devotional midweek advent service, and two separate people asked him when he was going to go to the seminary. God was working in his heart, and after thinking about it, he really believed that the Lord wanted him to be a pastor. His wife, however, wasn't happy with the idea.

Bender felt this was a "God direction," so he spoke with a pastor friend about his going to the seminary. He shared with the pastor that his wife was not keen on the idea of walking away from his CPA profession and selling the business. The pastor suggested that he pray for his wife and God will do the work on her heart if this is God's will. He began praying, and a year later, she had a change of heart and agreed to the change of careers.

Bender's family was willing to forgive the debt on the CPA practice, but he was adamant that



"Pastor Bender's commitment to serving the Lord demonstrates his faith, faith that Bender said is available to each one of us through the grace of God, the willingness to trust God, and then take action."

if he was going to change careers, there would be a clear answer and direction, that God would provide a way to easily sell the practice.

In 1987 the answer came when someone called him and wanted to buy his practice. He wasn't advertising that the practice was for sale. The only person that knew he was considering selling was his pastor friend. Bender said there were many affirmations that selling the practice was the best move and that he should make the transition to ministry.

In 1988 he moved to St. Louis. Missouri, and started at Concordia Seminary. After graduating in 1993, he began his vicarage at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Carson City, Nevada. After three and a half years there, he was called to the Lutheran Church of St. John in Quincy,

Illinois, serving there for 15 and a half years. Then he moved to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School in West Allis, Wisconsin, where he has been serving as the senior pastor since 2012.

As he became a pastor, he realized that we are living in a visual age. He knew he needed video-based resources that he could use to engage people in the Gospel message. He looked to LHM's video studies. In his 29 years of being a pastor, he has used about a dozen of them with small groups and adult Bible studies.

His personal relationship with LHM started recently when he made a gift to LHM from his mother's estate. After his mother's passing last year, Bender knew he would honor his mother's wish of gifting a percentage of her estate to LHM.

Bender recalls that she was a strong Christian influence in his family when he was growing up and throughout his life and how much she believed in LHM's mission.

"Pastor Bender's commitment to serving the Lord demonstrates his faith, faith that Bender said is available to each one of us through the grace of God, the willingness to trust God, and then take action," says Bob MacAllister, ministry advancement counselor for LHM.

Bender and his family have always been strong members of the LCMS. He shared that they like the LHM materials because they trust their alignment with the Truth and the Lutheran teachings. Bender stays connected to LHM now through the stories available online and in *The* Lutheran Lavman.

Since his church began to focus more on missional communities, he has especially become interested in The Hopeful Neighborhood **Project** (**HNP**) offered by LHM. Bender says they are moving with missional communities and a cultural mindset, pushing the need for building Christian community in neighborhoods. He believes that we are all missionaries right where we are planted in our neighborhoods and that we should reach out to our neighbors. When appropriate, we then share our faith with our neighbors. All these things follow HNP's philosophy.

Bender went through a program for missional communities and has renamed the church evangelism board as the board of missional communities. The associate pastor leads that board and has been walking the members through *The* Hopeful Neighborhood book one chapter at a time.

To learn more about how you can continue LHM's mission for years to come, visit **lhm.org/giftplan** or call 877-333-1963. ♦

Kansas City Hosts Workshop for The Hopeful Neighborhood Project

by PAUL SCHREIBER

ecently, The Hopeful **Neighborhood Project** (HNP) partnered with the Chestnut Avenue Resource Center. a Kansas City-based nonprofit that connects people to area resources. Held in the neighborhood of Oak Park, 19 people attended the interactive "lab." It was facilitated by LHM's Sara Johnson, neighborhood project coach, and Jennifer Prophete, LHM's director for community programming. Together they worked with Joan McDowd and Janay Reliford-Davis, the center's program director and resource connector.

Workshop applications are open to neighborhood groups in the United States and Canada. For a limited time, \$500 Neighborhood Project Grants are available to groups completing the six-hour lab. Workshop philosophy is based on an asset-based community development approach that looks at what's "strong not wrong" in a neighborhood. In other words, by using the three steps of the HNP process (Discover, Imagine, Pursue), attendees can identify gifts and use them in meaningful ways.

Before the workshop, attendees will take the *EveryGift Inventory* located at **hopefulneighborhood.org**. This assessment gives facilitators a sense of the strengths and skill sets present in the group. During the workshop, participants work together to plot neighborhood assets on a Neighborhood Gift Map, using recall, reconnaissance. and research. Possibility statements help attendees brainstorm how

these gifts can be used to enhance neighborhood wellbeing. Following this exercise, the folks in Oak Park created a plan to provide Mental Health First Aid training for their neighbors to increase the emotional health of their neighborhood.

As in so many communities, needs are great, yet opportunities abound. Oak Park is no exception, but bringing people together is a challenge, even when neighbors know their neighborhood needs work. This is where the \$500 grant comes in handy. "The stipend provided to neighbors was essential to get them to the table," said Reliford-Davis. "And the Neighborhood Action Plan was a great exercise to get us to a common issue to tackle. Since the group decided as a whole to take on the issue of mental health, they are all passionate about the work and want to be engaged," she added.

Exploring untapped neighborhood potential is a primary focus behind these inperson workshops. "Attendees realized that they are surrounded by individual and neighborhood gifts and felt empowered to use them in creative ways. There was also an element of 'we're in this together' for the sake of our neighborhood," Johnson said. HNP workshops can be split into two gatherings. A facilitator and all materials are provided. To submit an application for your neighborhood, go to hopefulneighborhood.org/labs. •

As in so many communities, needs are great, yet opportunities abound.









****LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES**

IHM Vision CRUISE

October 16-28, 2023

Join LHM leaders and partners while visiting historic places where many momentous events of our faith occurred. You will gain a deeper appreciation of God's Word and a better understanding of how the Holy Spirit is working through LHM to reach people worldwide with the Gospel.







Learn more at LHM.ORG/VISIONCRUISE or (800) 876-9880

Project JOEL Encourages Children in Latin America by MEGAN MCDANIEL

Project JOEL has been integrated into school curricula in some countries as part of LHM's global strategy for reaching out to youth. Since its introduction by LHM-Panama in 1996, Project JOEL has been recognized by the Ministry of Education in Panama and Guatemala for its positive impact on youth. It has also been implemented in other Latin American countries, including Argentina, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Paraguay.

PANAMA



In Panama, staff and volunteers use a variety of innovative activities to connect with children through Project JOEL. One of these was a presentation called "Dream and Fly" where sixth grade students learned about emotions, values, physical development, and goals from a

biblical perspective. This particular presentation was the first stop in a series of presentations to three schools.

Another activity included second grade students building paper airplanes while listening to a presentation about dreams, goals, obstacles, and how to overcome them. After the presentation, the children went outside to fly their paper airplanes, and they received a devotional to keep.



ARGENTINA



Over the summer, **LHM-Argentina** began a series of presentations that brought together over 300 children from four different schools. The presentations were held at a local church and led by the pastor and Cintia, a psychological consultant. In addition, a volunteer managed the audio-visual needs for the events.

The schools requested the presentations to cover anxiety and self-esteem. These topics were presented to the children from a biblical and psychological point of view. Many of the children expressed difficulties



in their lives and looked to these talks to get help and answers. Children shared how much the topics helped them and how they can apply the things they learned to their everyday lives.

After the series of presentations were finished, Cintia was contacted by a student named María. María was unable to participate in the presentations due to personal issues. One of her classmates knew she was going through a hard time, so she went to María's house to tell her about the presentations. Her classmate gave María Cintia's contact information and encouraged her to reach out. María reached out to LHM-Argentina and shared her current situation and the challenges she is currently facing. She also requested booklets and materials that were given out during the events. Cintia worked with the pastor to create a plan to help guide María and encourage her during the difficult times in her life.

The Season of Giving Is Upon Us by CHAD FIX



ecember is the season of giving. Not only is this season about giving love and thanks, but it is also about faith, showing appreciation, and helping those in need. How can you make a difference during this season of giving?

A gift to Lutheran Hour Ministries shares the Gospel with people in more than 60 countries, often connecting with individuals in places where they have no other opportunity to hear of Jesus. As 2022 ends, you can support this mission to proclaim the Good News to all who would hear by making an end-of-year gift in one of the following ways:

- **1.** Make a direct gift through 9 p.m. CST on December 31! You can donate online via credit card or PayPal at **lhm.org/give** or by calling 1-877-333-1963. Or mail a check to Lutheran Hour Ministries, 660 Mason Ridge Center Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63141 just make sure it is postmarked for December 31 or earlier.
- 2. Participate in a matching gift campaign. LHM is blessed to have generous donors who match every dollar given by donors like you at special times during the year. You can respond to these limited-time opportunities online and through the mail.
- **3.** Give a Christmas gift to LHM in honor of a special friend or family member.
- **4.** Support ministry through a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA. Or consider other popular giving options such as the establishment of a charitable gift annuity, donation of appreciated securities, or the creation of a donor advised fund to receive potential tax savings. Find out more at **lhm.org/giftplan** or by calling our gift planning staff at 1-877-333-1963. ◆



Bringing You the Gospel Message Every Week



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