

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Doctor of Ministry Major Applied Project

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

3-1-2012

Aligning Mission Expectations and Practice in a Denominational Context

John Mehl

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, mehlj@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/dmin>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mehl, John, "Aligning Mission Expectations and Practice in a Denominational Context" (2012). *Doctor of Ministry Major Applied Project*. 174.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/dmin/174>

This Major Applied Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctor of Ministry Major Applied Project by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

CONCORDIA SEMINARY

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

ALIGNING MISSION EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICE
IN A DENOMINATIONAL CONTEXT

A MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY STUDIES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY DEGREE

BY

JOHN L. MEHL

1 MARCH 2011

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

Copyright © April 2012 by John L. Mehl
All rights reserved

ALIGNING MISSION EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICE
IN A DENOMINATIONAL CONTEXT

JOHN L. MEHL

MARCH 1, 2012

Concordia Seminary

Saint Louis, Missouri



Advisor: Dr. Robert Kolb

2/27/15
Date



Reader: Dr. Victor Raj

2/27/15
Date



Reader: Dr. William Schumacher

3/10/15
Date



Director, Doctor of Ministry Program

2/27/2015
Date

CONTENTS

TABLES	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
Chapter	
1. THE PROJECT IN DETAIL.....	1
2. THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	8
3. THE PROJECT IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE	42
4. THE PROJECT DEVELOPED	79
5. THE PROJECT EVALUATED	85
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	102
Appendix	
1. APPENDIX A: ORGANIZATION KRA MATRIX	111
2. APPENDIX B: DMIN MAP RESULTS PRESENTATION	112
3. APPENDIX C: SURVEY 1, MISSIONARY TASKS.....	118
BIBLIOGRAPHY	125

TABLES

Table	Page
1. LCMS GIVING TRENDS COMPARED TO MEMBERSHIP	68
2. SURVEY 1 RESULTS AFTER GROUPING	86
3. SURVEY 2 RESULTS FOR ALL CONSTITUENCY GROUPS COMBINED.....	89
4. PARTNER CHURCH RESULTS FOR SURVEY 2	90
5. SEMINARY PROFESSOR RESULTS FOR SURVEY 2	90
6. U.S. MISSION STAFF RESULTS FOR SURVEY 2	91
7. FIELD MISSIONARY RESULTS FOR SURVEY 2	91

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Projects such as this are a reminder that we are always building on the work of those who have gone before us, and even our present tasks are accomplished with the help, support, and encouragement of many people.

I give thanks to God for all my colleagues who provided feedback and encouragement to complete this project. This project would not have been possible without the backing of David Birner, who always sees the big picture, as well as partners in mission: Brent Smith, Michael Rodewald, and Jorge Groh. The LCMS Asia Management Team, Edward Strohschein, Michelle Cagnin, Carl Hanson, and Theodore Englebrecht, have been gracious and supportive with suggestions and feedback from the field perspective.

A debt of gratitude is due to Laine Rosin and Megan Kincaid who joyfully provided technical support for the paper, as well as to Will Schumacher and Victor Raj, who are colleagues in the practice of mission as well as in the study of mission practice.

Robert Kolb is more than my advisor on this project. He is my teacher, colleague, and friend. He and his wife, Pauline, have encouraged the whole Mehl family in mission for 20 years.

Family must be acknowledged as providing support for this work, beginning with Robert and Nancy Lange, who have always made a spare bedroom available for anytime I needed to be in St. Louis for studies or mission meetings. Their daughter, my wife, Susan, as well as our three children, Katrina, Louisa, and Theodore, have provided unflagging encouragement.

It is my hope that this work can shed some light on how the LCMS can better be involved in God's sending, acknowledging that all glory is his.

ABSTRACT

John L. Mehl. "Aligning Mission Expectations and Practice in a Denominational Context."
D.Min. Major Applied Project, Concordia Seminary, 2012.

In an era when inexpensive travel and communication have flattened the world and made it possible for everyone to be involved in mission in foreign lands, denominations struggle to maintain a unified mission effort. This study included survey work of major stakeholders in the foreign mission effort of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, including partner church leadership from around the world, in an effort to identify points where mission efforts lacked alignment. The results showed that besides agreeing on mission tasks, stakeholders need to step out of silos, communicate with one another in an atmosphere of trust, and develop common goals. The findings of the project can provide insights for those working in North America based denominations that seek to refine unified partnership efforts between different stakeholders.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROJECT IN DETAIL

The Problem That the Project Addresses

Look at the 2000-year history of Christian mission, and we see the inevitable change that has taken place since Christ sent out his disciples two by two in Luke 10. David Bosch, in *Transforming Mission*, goes so far as to set out what he sees as six clearly defined paradigms of mission from St. Paul to the 1980s.¹ Mission methods have been altered through the years, and even what constitutes a sending organization has taken on different forms over the centuries. Monasteries as mission outposts are no longer popular in the twenty-first century,² and there are today few “royal missionaries” as Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg was called when sent by Danish King Frederick IV to serve as the first Protestant missionary to India.³

Foreign mission based in the U.S. has seen much transformation since The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) sent its first missionaries to India in 1895. The changes are stark when comparing the robust mission activity of the LCMS in Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong, and other countries that opened up after World War II to LCMS mission activity in those countries today. Post-WWII missionaries in these countries did raw evangelism work, proclaiming the gospel in places it had never been heard before. They planted churches and established seminaries, grade schools, hospitals, and institutions for the disabled. All of

¹ David J. Bosch. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991), 181.

² *Ibid.*, 232.

³ D. Christudas, *Tranquebar to Travancore* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2008), 33.

these contributed to the introduction of the gospel and the church's presence in many areas where indigenous Christian churches largely did not exist.

Large North American mission teams were common in these mission efforts. For instance, the LCMS mission effort to Papua New Guinea that began with two families grew to 88 by 1969.⁴ The large forces of clergy and lay missionaries made it possible to make a powerful and broad impact on the fabric of societies, but with the development of partner churches and changing needs, the missionaries of today fulfill different roles in these places. For the missionary with decades of experience, the change isn't always easy. Writing about a mission leader burdened with changes of the twenty-first century, James F. Engel and William A. Dyrness write:

Bud's sense of burden becomes even greater. . . . While he praises God for the increase in numbers of converts and indigenous leadership, he cannot ignore the fact that missionaries no longer are needed or wanted to play the pioneering role they once did. His greatest concern is with the twenty-one missionary couples over the age of fifty who went to the field in totally different times and now find themselves caught in the trap of a mission that to a high degree has "worked itself out of a job."⁵

Missionaries who experienced the "good old days" often wish those days would return.⁶ Seminary professors training those who will go into the mission fields are sometimes uninformed about the changes that have taken place in the foreign missionary task.⁷ The discussions in North America about missionary roles go on while indigenous church leaders long for a seat at the discussion table, because while they desire mission partnership, they do

⁴ *1979 Statistical Yearbook* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1980), 228–29.

⁵ James F. Engel and William A. Dyrness, *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where Have We Gone Wrong?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 13.

⁶ At the Philippine Missionary Reunion in the summer of 2008, Rev. Robert Selle asked Dr. David Birner, associate executive director of LCMS World Mission, when the LCMS was going to return to the former way of doing mission. Former LCMS missionary to Russia Rev. Jeff Thormodson put the same question to John Mehl in June 2008.

⁷ Dr. Bruce Hartung, dean of ministerial formation and associate professor of practical theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, raised this point in the context of one of his former students in June 2008.

not want a return to the old days. In the 1970s, there was a strong feeling among indigenous Asia church leaders that they were ready to cut the apron strings. Emerito Nacpil stated at a mission consultation in Kuala Lumpur, “The most missionary service a missionary under the present system can do today to Asia is to go home!”⁸ While that may have been the sentiment of the 1970s, indigenous churches are longing for partnership, but on their terms. Governor Peter Ipatas from the Enga Province of Papua New Guinea, while in the U.S. speaking to former missionaries, stated that the Gutnius Lutheran Church wants missionaries, but things are different than they were 50 years ago. He said:

If we were given the opportunity we would like to see missionaries come back, not only to spread the Word of God but also to be more involved in the social services that you were involved in. And I think you older folks—you've done your bit, but the challenges in PNG are different now. We need missionaries to meet the challenges of today. When you came as missionaries the challenges were different. Today the challenges are . . . more challenging. If there is any way the LCMS can think about sending missionaries, volunteers, back into Enga, the time is good.⁹

Mission leaders in home offices are often former missionaries who think in terms of the paradigms that worked when they were in the fields. Former missionaries who worked in brand new fields often populate mission societies and sometimes serve as seminary professors. Missionaries on the fields today find it easy to become caught between what is expected from the sending church in the U.S. and what indigenous partners in the field want and need.

Financial realities have also affected foreign mission efforts and cannot be ignored. John and Sylvia Ronsvalle in their 2003 study of church giving state, “On the whole, church leadership at all levels has made a primary commitment not to the Great Commission, but to

⁸ Emerito Nacpil, “Whom Does the Missionary Serve and What Does He Do?,” *Missionary Service in Asia Today* (Hong Kong: Chinese Christian Literature Council, 1971), 79.

⁹ Peter Ipatas at the Papua New Guinea Mission Society gathering, July 30, 2011, Timothy Lutheran Church, St. Louis. Video transcript in e-mail from Dan Kunert, December 2, 2011.

maintaining church structures.”¹⁰ They go on to say that the “consequence is that church leaders have tried to capture, tame, and train international missions to raise funds for congregational operations and the unified budget.”¹¹ David Bosch sees the problem that the church “ceased to be a movement and turned into an institution.”¹² Philip Jenkins writes that during the 1970s, “mainstream U.S. churches like the Lutherans and Episcopalians severely pruned their funds for missionary work, preferring to spend money on social programs at home.”¹³ The result is a decline in giving to foreign mission work in order to maintain U.S.-based congregations. The broad and expensive mission efforts of the 1960s are no longer possible because of a lack of funding, but funding is only one aspect of the change that is taking place.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is no different from other North American denominations in that they are finding their role in foreign mission changing.¹⁴ While Christian mission efforts should always be guided by biblical doctrine, there will be differences—different emphases, methods, tools, training, funding, and varying evaluations or understandings of the cultural situations of the mission. Church politics can have an effect on mission if a leader or group in power champions a particular mission emphasis.

Confusion arises when mission is identified with only one practice or method. While gospel proclamation is the core mission task, there is also discipling, theological education for leaders, Bible and literature translation, human care work, schools, and partner church relations, all of which have places in a well-rounded mission effort.

¹⁰ John L. Ronswalle and Sylvia Ronswalle, *The State of Church Giving Through 2003* (Champaign, IL: empty tomb, inc., 2005), 105.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Bosch, 50.

¹³ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 42.

¹⁴ Engel and Dyrness, 13.

While limited financial resources and changing needs on the field may hinder mission outreach, **an underlying problem for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is that mission partners who do not agree on how to accomplish the mission task can frustrate the goal of reaching the lost with the gospel.** Without digging too deeply, it would appear that there is not agreement between the foreign missionaries of the LCMS, LCMS mission support staff, LCMS seminary faculty, and LCMS partner church leadership concerning the means through which the LCMS carries out its foreign mission efforts. The basic goals of God’s mission are mandated in Scripture (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:14–18) and remain at the core of LCMS work, but the practice or means for accomplishing the mission have changed over the years and are perceived differently by different partners.

The Purpose of the Project

This project will identify areas of disagreement between mission stakeholders and formulate recommendations designed to promote shared expectations and alignment of practice in foreign missionary formation and deployment by the LCMS and other U.S. denominations.

Useful guidelines for foreign missionary efforts can be used by missionaries and mission support staff to guide field work, as well as by seminaries in the formation of missionaries, and by partner churches as joint efforts are planned. By conducting qualitative and quantitative research with one denomination, the LCMS, it will become clear where there is agreement and disagreement about how the LCMS goes about the missionary task. It will give opportunity to evaluate methods, as well as emphases, tools, personnel needs, and

funding. It should also provide for open communication for mission partners as they work to align their needs and priorities in their mission efforts.

The Process

The process will gather and examine qualitative and quantitative information from LCMS foreign mission partners.

1. The first step will begin by defining possible expectations concerning foreign mission efforts. This will include a history of past and present LCMS mission emphases and practices.
2. LCMS missionaries, support staff, seminary faculty, and partner church leadership will also be surveyed for what they consider to be important missionary tasks. There will be an evaluation of the theological implications of the different tasks. This information will be used to develop a Likert scale to help determine which expectations hold the greatest priority. The tool will be given to a total of 98 LCMS missionaries, mission leadership, seminary faculty, and partner church leadership from all world areas.
3. Questions will be developed from the findings of the research for qualitative interviews with a total of 12 individuals from the four groups surveyed.
4. Recommendations drawn from the data will then be presented in the form of recommendations to the LCMS chief mission officer, and the co-executive director for LCMS Office of International Mission.

Parameters of the Project

The Bible is the source and norm of doctrine and practice for all aspects of the life of the church, including missions. The work on this project will see the Scriptures as the ultimate guide for mission principles.

LCMS mission efforts will be done in compliance with the constitution and bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod since LCMS World Mission is an entity of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The project will limit itself to working with four groups: (a) U.S.-based LCMS mission leadership from the Chief Mission Officer to director level staff; (b) LCMS missionary staff working in foreign fields; (c) LCMS seminary faculty, including mission professors; and (d) the leadership of LCMS partner churches.

The results of the study and recommendations will be shared with the mission leadership of the LCMS and partner church leaders for the express purpose of developing a greater understanding of how the LCMS can better participate in the foreign mission fields, especially in partnership with Lutheran churches with whom the LCMS is in formal fellowship.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Biblical Foundation

The English word “mission” is rooted in the Latin *mittere*, meaning “to send.” In John 20:21, we hear Jesus say, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” In the Vulgate the text reads, “*Sicut misit me Pater, et ego mitto vos.*” Apart from use in church settings, modern use of the word “mission” has somewhat changed in meaning to define an objective or purpose. Organizations today use the term “mission statements” for the short and concise declarations that describe their desired outcomes. However, the use of the word “mission” as “sending,” maintains some of its original meaning when used for space, diplomatic, or military missions.

The Christian church still describes sending workers with the light of the gospel as mission. Those sent are “missionaries.” Missionaries are sent to mission fields. St. Paul writes:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?¹⁵

The labor of those sent is called “mission work,” and the new churches established in new places are often called “mission congregations.”

¹⁵ Romans 10:13–15 ESV.

Sending is an action that displays God’s love for mankind for all time. When sin entered the world and with it a broken relationship between Creator and creation, God sent the solution. “For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.”¹⁶ To Adam and Eve, in Genesis 3:15, the seed who would be sent to crush the head of Satan was promised. The same promise comes to Abraham. Paul says, “The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say ‘and to seeds,’ meaning many people, but ‘and to your seed,’ meaning one person, who is Christ.”¹⁷

The love of God for his people continues as he sends Moses to Egypt. God says, “So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”¹⁸ Moses goes and God uses him to save his people, and God continues to help his people arrive in the Promised Land by sending ahead of the children of Israel terror, the hornet, and angels.¹⁹

God sent his prophets to his people throughout the Old Testament times. Isaiah answers God’s call for workers by saying, “Here am I, send me,” and in Isaiah 9 we see the sending of the Messiah foretold: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.”²⁰ God’s promises to send the Messiah is fulfilled with the birth of Jesus the Savior.

Isaiah prophesied²¹ that John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for Christ’s ministry, and as he began his work, Jesus “appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.”²² Then the Lord “appointed seventy-two others and

¹⁶ Romans 8:3 NIV.

¹⁷ Galatians 3:16 NIV.

¹⁸ Exodus 3:10 NIV.

¹⁹ Exodus 23:27; 23:28; 33:2.

²⁰ Isaiah 6:8; 9:6 KJV.

²¹ Mark 1:2.

²² Mark 3:14 NIV.

sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.”²³

Jesus also promised the Holy Spirit, “whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—He will testify about me.”²⁴

Finally we see that Christ intends to send his disciples to all the world. “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you”;²⁵ “therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”;²⁶ “and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”²⁷

It is clear that God is the one who initiates mission and the salvation of his people, and he uses his people—his church—to accomplish this mission. Georg Vicedom reminds us that mission and church cannot be separated. Just as the Father sent his Son, and the Father and Son sent the Spirit, so the church is sent.²⁸ He says that “mission as the business of God implies that he lays claim to make use of all his believers exactly as he wishes, in order to impart His love to all men through His believers.”²⁹ This is not optional. “Mission is not just a program of the church. It defines the church as God’s sent people.”³⁰

Why does God need to be sending? Already from the days of Erasmus, arguments have been made that people can exercise their free will and choose God, an idea that undermines the need for God’s mission.³¹ Scriptures could be seen as backing up this thought

²³ Luke 10:1 NIV.

²⁴ John 15:26 NIV.

²⁵ John 20:21 NIV.

²⁶ Matthew 28:19-20 NIV.

²⁷ Acts 1:8 NIV.

²⁸ Georg F. Vicedom, *The Mission of God: An Introduction to a Theology of Mission* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

³⁰ Darrell L. Guder, ed., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 6.

³¹ LW 33:135. Quotations marked LW are from Luther’s Works, American Edition (56 vols.; St. Louis:

that man can turn to God for salvation. The Lord says through the prophet Ezekiel, “Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?”³²

Martin Luther responds to the use of this quote to defend a free will by saying:

Hence nothing could have been more inappropriately quoted in support of free choice than this passage of Ezekiel, which actually stands in the strongest opposition to free choice. For here we are shown what free choice is like, and what it can do about sin when sin is recognized, or about its own conversion to God; that is to say, nothing but fall into a worse state and add despair and impenitence to its sins.³³

No one wants to face the truth about his or her own sinfulness. The truth is devastating and will cause despair. It is easier to compare oneself to worse sinners, or try to manipulate the “spirits” through rituals, or claim that there is no God at all. Though consciences convict, the hope remains that they might be good enough to avoid divine punishment. Oswald Bayer writes, “Throughout our lives we continually seek to find excuses for the fact that we live as we do, that we are existent rather than nonexistent, and that we are as we are and not something different.”³⁴ Though it can be clear that the sinfulness of man is the barrier in the relationship with God, mankind embraces sin and makes excuses for it.

Gerhard Forde compares the sinner to an alcoholic who denies his addiction and claims to be in control. He refuses to admit that he is a damned sinner needing help. The sinner will do good works and trust in them rather than trusting in God. He will use God’s law as a defense against the gift of forgiveness by keeping the law, by doing good works that give glory to God. “One can be addicted to either what is base or to what is high, either to

Concordia Publishing House and Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955–86).

³² Ezekiel 18:23 ESV.

³³ LW 33:138.

³⁴ Oswald Bayer, *Living by Faith: Justification and Sanctification* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 3.

lawlessness or to lawfulness.”³⁵ “In theological terms, we must come to confess that we are addicted to sin, addicted to self, whatever form that may take, pious or impious.”³⁶ Is it a wonder that people don’t come seeking out God if they must make such a confession? “We can’t accept an electing God.”³⁷

The alternative to justifying oneself is extremely repulsive to human nature. One must admit that we can do no good thing and merit only damnation. How do we receive God’s grace and forgiveness? “It is acquired when we are so completely humbled by God’s alien work in the law and wrath that we see how completely we are caught in the web of sin and turn to Christ as the only hope.”³⁸ That is the theology of the cross. The cross serves as a mirror to show the damning sin and Christ’s sacrifice for sin. The theology of the cross calls a spade a spade and sugarcoats nothing. Our sin is real sin and damning. In fact, “Humans must confess not only that their best works are sinful, but also that in the fact that they resist such judgment and pride themselves in their works, their works are actually deadly (mortal) sin.”³⁹

One of the most refreshing things about new Christians is their clear understanding of who they really are. They can see where they have just been. They know the helplessness of being where there is no hope, and now they are basking in God’s love. In Forde’s language, they are like alcoholics who have already hit bottom.

The theologian of the cross is one who sees the bottom and knows his works earn him nothing, for there is no escape through work. The only hope is to give up control. But the

³⁵ Gerhard O. Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther’s Heidelberg Disputation, 1518* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 30.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

theology of the cross is even more radical than this, for life is found in death. Addictions are not overcome by feeding them. There is no hope of salvation in doing works that give glory to God (and justify self). Luther's own failed efforts at pleasing God with good works and self-punishment forced him to this truth. Death is the only solution. Paul says, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."⁴⁰ Luther says that baptism signifies that "the Old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever."⁴¹ Daily we need to hit bottom. We need to pray David's prayer:

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD!
O Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?
But with you there is forgiveness,
that you may be feared.⁴²

The theologian of the cross hopes only in God's grace for Jesus' sake. Luther writes, "He is not righteous who works much, but he who, without work, believes much in Christ."⁴³ This seems to support the opinion of many that Lutherans have wonderful theology, but they don't live it. They don't serve God. Luther explains that it is "not that the righteous person

⁴⁰Romans 6:4 KJV.

⁴¹ *A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943), 17.

⁴²Psalm 130:1-4 ESV.

⁴³ Forde, *On Being a Theologian*, 103.

does nothing, but that his works do not make him righteous, rather that his righteousness creates works.”⁴⁴

In God’s grace the theologian of the cross has shed the need to earn salvation. He has confidence in God’s forgiveness and love. He is free to do good works, as St. Paul says, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”⁴⁵

God sends his love into a world that sees God as the enemy who accuses and threatens wrath. Mankind does everything in its power to avoid God in the same way that Adam and Eve hid in the Garden of Eden. It would be God’s death sentence on mankind if he simply did not send his Word into the world. But God’s Word is sent on a rescue mission to seize from the jaws of sin, death, and everlasting damnation those who will believe.

This becomes so real that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”⁴⁶ The same Word through which all was created is sent to take on flesh and live under the law and endure the cross as the sacrifice for the sins of mankind. He proclaimed himself as Savior and sends his disciples to do the same.

On its face, being a part of God’s mission by proclaiming Christ may seem like a simple thing, but from experience we know that Satan cleverly derails proclamation. We can see the problem when we witness the focus shifting from Christ, the object of our proclamation, to the individuals doing the proclaiming.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 106.

⁴⁵ Ephesians 2:8–10 NIV.

⁴⁶ John 1:14 ESV.

Western Christians put great stock in education. We expect our church leaders and missionaries to be theologically well trained. This is good and necessary. But as with other gifts from God, knowledge can be misused. Knowledge is misused when people use it to manipulate others. This can even happen with teachers of biblical knowledge. A second temptation is for the educated leader to do more explaining than proclaiming. Explaining becomes a problem when it is used to bring focus onto the proclaimer rather than onto Christ. Throwing in a few Greek words, quoting Scripture from memory, and telling interesting things about the shape of the water jars at the wedding of Cana can be used to focus on Christ, or to make the teacher look smart. Explainers often avoid the discomfort that results when someone is confronted with Law and Gospel, when Christ is actually proclaimed to a person. Even when proclaimers explain the text well and effectively, they are tempted to hold the conversation with God at arms length. The difference between explaining the gospel and proclaiming the gospel is like the difference between talking about love and declaring one's love for another.⁴⁷ The latter act is not done lightly and certainly risks rejection and is therefore the more difficult.

Explaining can result in trying to *convince* people that they should believe. Bible classes become a time to prove that the Bible is true instead of proclaiming Christ. The result is that people are taught to trust in the Bible instead of in Jesus. We end up teaching good behavior and ethics and asking, "What would Jesus do?" Instead of "Christ crucified," we have "Be like Jesus" or even "trust in your faith," which will be confirmed by the fact that you are being like Jesus.

The emphasis on changing actions and even culture instead of proclaiming Christ and allowing the Spirit to change hearts is nothing new. Paul fought the teaching of Judaizers in

⁴⁷ Gerhard O. Forde, *Theology Is for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 3.

Galatia over circumcision. Missionaries are always tempted to look for the fruit of the Spirit as a sign that they've done their work. David Bosch quotes John Philip, superintendent of the London Missionary Society, who in 1828 wrote, "While our missionaries . . . are everywhere scattering the seeds of civilization, social order, happiness, they are, by the most unexceptionable means, extending British interests."⁴⁸ Of course, the colonialism part of that sentence grates on us in this day when we are sensitive to such offenses, but we can't overlook the emphasis on civilization, social order, and happiness. Missionaries are expected to bring changes in culture. In fact, the expectations are often as prominent in the people receiving the missionaries as in the mission itself. Rather than changes in behavior being the natural results of faith, what should be the fruit of faith become the focus.

Lamin Sanneh suggests that we stop thinking of Christianity as having a distinctively Western culture. He says:

Christianity is no longer "Christendom," a religion of one cultural mandate. We would do well to remember that the language of Christianity is the language of the people whoever they happen to be. The Chinese, therefore, do not have to renounce their language or their culture to embrace Christianity. We should learn by now that the gospel is not the monopoly of the West, as African Christianity has demonstrated.⁴⁹

Islam requires one language of faith and a single culture mandated by law. Christianity is not so. "Christianity is the religion of over two thousand different language groups in the world. More people pray and worship in more languages in Christianity than in any other religion in the world."⁵⁰ Proclaiming Christ is not about the law. It is not about making everyone look the same. It is not about the outward actions that will lead to worldly success.

⁴⁸ Bosch, 305.

⁴⁹ Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 69.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

In the introduction to *God Is Back*, the authors describe a house church in Shanghai, in which Chinese house church leader Wang encourages evangelism, not for the sake of God's kingdom, but to build up China. "Countries with lots of Christians become more powerful. America grew strong because it was Christian. The more Christian China becomes, the mightier it will be. If you want China to be a truly prosperous country, you must spread the Word to nonbelievers. If you are a patriotic Chinese, you have to be a Christian."⁵¹

The missionary who wants to explain God or teach ethics appeals to man's idea that he can choose to serve God. The fact that natural man is blind, dead, and an enemy of God with no free will is hard to swallow. Proclamation is difficult. People don't like it. I think it is especially difficult for missionaries to proclaim when we live in a strange land with few friends. People like to be liked. Proclamation will be offensive. Forde says:

God does not come hat in hand begging, "Won't somebody please believe in me?" God does not come in ways that pander to our so-called freedom of choice. God comes to invade the house of the "strong man armed" who aims to keep his goods in peace. God comes to challenge the adversary to battle for the life of the captive.⁵²

Proclamation is confronting someone with the fact that they "have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."⁵³ Proclamation is not secondary discourse talking *about* God. It is God talking.

Proclamation as primary discourse demands an answer in like discourse be it positive or negative: "I repent, I believe" or "I don't, I won't, I can't." In other words, when the proclamation announces, "I declare unto you the forgiveness of all your sins," the appropriate response is not, "Well, that's your opinion!"⁵⁴

⁵¹ John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, *God Is Back: How the Global Revival of Faith Is Changing the World* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2009), 3.

⁵² Forde, *Theology Is for Proclamation*, 56.

⁵³ Romans 3:23–24 NIV.

⁵⁴ Forde, *Theology Is for Proclamation*, 2.

This is not up for debate. Proclamation is to speak fighting words. This is God seeking to save the damned, and it is repulsive and glorious at the same time. “The sinner must die to be raised to newness of life. The proclamation is shaped by that realization. It administers death in order to call to life.”⁵⁵ Explanation makes everyone feel good, but the result is death. Proclamation doesn’t feel good at all; in fact it kills, but the result is life. This is the work of the Holy Spirit and the heart of a theology and a missiology of the cross—the Word being proclaimed.

Lutheran Mission Practice Is Defined by Lutheran Distinctives

Scripture Alone (*sola scriptura*) is one of the three *solas* of the Reformation. Lutherans “believe, teach, and confess that the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testament are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrine and teachers alike must be appraised and judged.”⁵⁶ “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”⁵⁷ The Word provides all that is needed for salvation and life and doesn’t have gaps that need to be filled in by modern-day prophets and councils.

This Word of God has divine authority for preaching, teaching, faith, and life, but there is more. Lutherans also believe that the Word is efficacious. The Lutheran Confessors write, “In these matters, which concern the external, spoken Word, it must be firmly maintained that God gives no one his Spirit or grace apart from the external Word which

⁵⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁵⁶ Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2000), FC Ep I 1, 486.

⁵⁷ 2 Timothy 3:16 NIV.

goes before.”⁵⁸ The Holy Spirit, working with and through the Word, creates faith and keeps a believer in faith.

This faith is more than a mere understanding of what is said in Scripture. Faith is where we find a right relationship with the heavenly Father. The Word of God is part of the conversation with God. Jesus, the Word made flesh, clearly states that he is part of that conversation. Jesus tells his disciples, “These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”⁵⁹ Christ’s words together with his actions are where we find the Father speaking to us and asking us to trust in him.

Lutherans believe that Scriptures clearly teach that natural man is born blind, dead, and an enemy of God. This is a spiritual death, a complete loss of a right relationship with God. This is total depravity from the beginning of life. David says, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”⁶⁰ Paul tells us that before being made spiritually alive, “You were dead in your transgressions and sins.”⁶¹

This becomes a starting place for mission as Christians encounter unbelievers. There is no assumption that there is a spark of goodness in everyone that needs only to be awakened. The unbeliever is spiritually dead. The fact that an unbeliever may look moral and good to the world is of no consequence when considering the spiritual life of a person. What matters is the heart and the relationship with God. At this point it is helpful to consider the Lutheran teaching on the two kinds of righteousness.

Luther writes, “This is our theology, by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works

⁵⁸Kolb-Wengert, SA III VIII 3, 322.

⁵⁹ John 14:24 NIV.

⁶⁰ Psalm 51:5 ESV.

⁶¹ Ephesians 2:1 NIV.

and grace, secular society and religion may not be confused.”⁶² There are two relationships about which the Scriptures teach. One is the relationship people have with one another. In this horizontal plane, morality and works in secular society can be judged as good and loving and kind. These good works and right relationships with men, however, have no bearing on the relationship one must have with God. It is finally with God, the judge of all mankind, that one must have a right relationship. The problem for humanity is that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”⁶³ To deny this would “Make human nature righteous through natural powers, thus insulting the suffering and merit of Christ.”⁶⁴

Lutherans also teach and believe that it is impossible for the spiritually dead to convert themselves. Humans have free will in things below, but not in things above. They can make decisions about what kind of cereal they will eat in the morning, but find it impossible to work out their salvation or bring themselves to God. Something that is dead cannot bring itself to life. A candle does not light itself, but must wait passively for someone to bring fire. Luther’s explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed states, “I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel.”⁶⁵

This is different from the Roman Catholic Church understanding of conversion, which teaches that grace helps humans use their free will to choose to believe and trust in Jesus as Savior. Many Evangelicals, on the other hand, teach that humans “receive” Christ.⁶⁶ The picture painted by many Evangelical Christians is of Jesus inviting an unbeliever to

⁶² LW 26:7.

⁶³ Romans 3:23 NIV.

⁶⁴ Kolb-Wengert, AC II 3, 38.

⁶⁵ Ibid., SC II 6, 355.

⁶⁶ Campus Crusade for Christ, Four Spiritual Laws, <http://www.campuscrusade.com/fourlawseng.htm>, accessed December 6, 2011.

receive Christ into their lives “by faith, as an act of the will.”⁶⁷ A message on the Campus Crusade for Christ website declares that “You Can Receive Christ Right Now by Faith Through Prayer.”⁶⁸ The passage often quoted to support the idea of “accepting” Christ is “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”⁶⁹ These words of Jesus, however, are not directed to unbelievers, but to the Christians in the church at Laodicea, where he is reproofing the church and calling for repentance.

Lutherans believe and teach that natural man is in a state of sin and spiritual death and cannot know this unless it is “learned and ‘believed on the basis of the revelation of the Scriptures.’”⁷⁰ Conversion comes in two parts: “Contrition and sorrow, or terror about sin, and yet at the same time to believe in the gospel and absolution that sin is forgiven and grace is obtained through Christ.”⁷¹ It may look as though conversion is a process, but it is ultimately an all-or-nothing event. “While the preparation for conversion may extend over a longer period of time, conversion itself takes place the moment when the Holy Spirit kindles a spark of faith in the heart of the sinner or awakens in a person a desire for the grace of God in Christ.”⁷²

Contrition for sin is brought about by the preaching of the law, and the gospel works faith. The distinction between these two doctrines of Scripture must be

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Revelation 3:20 ESV.

⁷⁰ Kolb-Wengert, FC SD I 8, 533.

⁷¹ Ibid., AC XII 4–5, 44.

⁷² Commission on Theology and Church Relations, *Evangelism and Church Growth with Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1987), 10.

“preserved with great diligence.”⁷³ Distinguishing between law and gospel is not always easy. C. F. W. Walther writes,

In one place the Bible offers forgiveness to all sinners; in another place forgiveness of sins is withheld from all sinners. In one passage a free offer of life everlasting is made to all men; in another, men are directed to do something themselves towards being saved. This riddle is solved when we reflect that there are in the Scriptures two entirely different doctrines, the doctrine of the Law and the doctrine of the Gospel.⁷⁴

Confusion or melding these two doctrines can give the impression that there is salvation through the law. The gospel will always be hidden if mixed with the law, and the saving work of Christ will be diminished.

“Everything that condemns sin is and belongs to the proclamation of the law.”⁷⁵ The law must be proclaimed to unrepentant sinners. It is through the mirror of the law that sin is recognized and can be confessed. If there is no law, there is nothing to confess. This is true for believers and unbelievers.

I was teaching an introduction to Christianity class in Moscow in 1994 to about 15 friends of a Russian acquaintance. I proclaimed the grace of God in Jesus Christ with great care and clarity. At the end of our third session, one of the ladies in the group asked me pointedly, “What exactly are these sins we have committed that Jesus needs to forgive?” We began the next week with the First Commandment and before we made it to the Tenth, our group had grown from 15 to 90 members. “Luther realized early on, as he planned instruction for Christian living, that people who do not recognize that they are ill do not normally seek a cure.”⁷⁶

⁷³ Kolb-Wengert, FC Ep, V 2, 500.

⁷⁴ C. F. W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1929), 6.

⁷⁵ Kolb-Wengert, BC Ep V 4, 500.

⁷⁶ Robert Kolb, “Luther’s Theology as a Foundation for Twenty-first Century Missiology,” unpublished article. 5.

Once there is a realization that something is terribly wrong, most people want to know more. How and when the law is proclaimed is an art. I have often wondered what would have happened to those classes in Moscow if I had started with the Ten Commandments. Would they have been receptive or not? While normally we think of the law preceding the gospel, it is difficult in mission to devise a formula for proclamation. The point is proclamation of the law is not optional. "It is only by the law that sins are recognized and confessed."⁷⁷ The law does not change hearts, and

neither does God love service rendered under coercion. Preachers who have succeeded in abolishing certain evils by the preaching of the Law must not think that they have achieved something great. Even the most corrupt congregations can be improved by nothing else than the preaching of the Gospel in all its sweetness. The reason why congregations are corrupt is invariably this, that its ministers have not sufficiently preached the Gospel to the people.⁷⁸

The law kills so that the gospel can raise us to life.

The gospel, like the law, must be proclaimed clearly in a way that strikes home with God's love and comfort to the terrified heart.

The gospel is not a proclamation of repentance or retribution, but is, strictly speaking, nothing else than a proclamation of comfort and a joyous message which does not rebuke or terrify but comforts consciences against the terror of the law, directs them solely to Christ's merit, and lifts them up again through the delightful proclamation of the grace and favor of God, won through Christ's merit.⁷⁹

The object of gospel proclamation is Christ, the active agent whose life, death, and resurrection pay the debt for sin.

Some gospel proclamation belittles the death of Christ as simply painful. This is not simply a torturous martyr's death, but the sacrifice for all sin. "For our sake he made him to

⁷⁷ Commission on Theology and Church Relations, 5.

⁷⁸ Walther, 388.

⁷⁹ Kolb-Wengert, FC Ep V 7, 501.

be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”⁸⁰

Francis Pieper notes that some timid theologians disapprove of the idea that Jesus suffered hell for all mankind. He says:

Their pretended piety has rightly been pronounced folly; for as surely as the wages of sin is not merely temporal death, but eternal punishment in hell, and as surely as Christ has borne all punishment of all sinners in the world, it is Scriptural to call Christ’s suffering an enduring of the torments of hell.⁸¹

Christ suffered the eternal punishment we deserve and for him is no substitute. He is the only object of faith and “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”⁸²

The Word of God is for Lutherans a means of grace. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not merely information, but it is the means through which the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to those spiritually dead. It is the means through which God’s grace is imparted to sinners.

It is correct and true when it is said, “No one comes to Christ unless drawn by the Father” [John 6:44]. But the Father does not intend to draw us apart from means. Instead, he has preordained his Word and sacraments as the regular means and instruments for drawing people to himself.⁸³

The sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, are included as means of grace. They are the Word of God’s promise connected to visible elements as commanded by God for the forgiveness of sins.

The sacrament of Holy Baptism has always played a significant role in the mission of the church. In St. Peter’s Pentecost sermon he says, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift

⁸⁰ 1 Corinthians 5:25 ESV.

⁸¹ Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. 2 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), 311.

⁸² Acts 4:12 ESV.

⁸³ Kolb-Wengert, FC SD XI 76, 652.

of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children.”⁸⁴ The result of the preaching and baptizing is that “there were added that day about three thousand souls.”⁸⁵

Baptism is more than a public declaration of faith or an ordinance of the church that must be obeyed. “Baptism is God’s sacramental Word that initiates the relationship between the heavenly Father and his reborn child.”⁸⁶ Baptism confronts. It drowns the old sinful man and joins one to Christ in new life. It changes everything! Vicedom writes:

It is significant that Baptism is understood exactly in this way by the heathen while we Christians are always hesitant to recognize this external side of Baptism as important. The heathen generally do not object if their countrymen hear the Word of God or if they honor Christ. Their religion makes room for that. However, when anyone permits himself to be baptized, the heathen become intolerant.⁸⁷

Rather than avoid talking about Baptism, Robert Kolb suggests “moving toward an understanding of Baptism can hardly begin too soon, as those outside the faith begin to learn the Christian message.”⁸⁸ Baptism is part of proclaiming the Word of God and an important element of mission.⁸⁹

Missionaries Are Baptized into Service

From time to time a question is raised about who qualifies as a “missionary,” one who is sent to proclaim Christ. The royal priesthood of 2 Peter 2:9 is really synonymous with all believers. The commands of Christ to proclaim his gospel is for all believers. The words of

⁸⁴ Acts 2:38–39 ESV.

⁸⁵ Acts 2:41 ESV.

⁸⁶ Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius of Luther’s Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 190.

⁸⁷ Vicedom, 126.

⁸⁸ Robert Kolb, *Making Disciples, Baptizing: God’s Gift of New Life and Christian Witness* (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Publications, 1997), 75.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 76. In Baptism, Christians have a most powerful way of expressing the good news of Jesus Christ, and thus applying the power of his Word for the salvation of the lost to the lives of those whose spirit have been perked up by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew's Great Commission passage "were not limited to the eleven disciples, for Jesus added the words: 'And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'" ⁹⁰ Luther was clear that proclamation is part of the reason all Christians exist.

Well, what is this "holy adornment," these priestly garments which adorn the Christians so that they become His holy priesthood? Nothing else than the beautiful, divine, and various gifts of the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul (Eph. 4:11, 12) and St. Peter (1 Peter 4:10) say, which were given to Christendom to advance the knowledge and the praise of God, a function which is carried out pre-eminently by the ministry of preaching the Gospel. For St. Paul says that these gifts exist "for the common good" of Christendom (1 Cor. 12:7), which means that our preaching and confessing serve the purpose of bringing people to the knowledge of God so that He will be honored thereby. This is the reason why we are God's servants and are called priests. ⁹¹

Even those Christians who are not ordained into the office of the public ministry put on the holy robes of Christ's righteousness and are sanctified for his kingdom work, "for he who ordains Christians as priests is a person different from anyone else. He is the one High Priest Jesus Christ." ⁹² Christians become proclaimers of God's Word. Luther writes,

But after we have become Christians through this Priest and His priestly office, incorporated in Him by Baptism through faith, then each one, according to his calling and position, obtains the right and the power of teaching and confessing before others this Word which we have obtained from Him. Even though not everybody has the public office and calling, every Christian has the right and the duty to teach, instruct, admonish, comfort, and rebuke his neighbor with the Word of God at every opportunity and whenever necessary. ⁹³

Proclaiming, teaching, and confessing God's Word should be a part of the daily life of every Christian. Walther states that "every believing Christian should really be a missionary, that is that everyone has the duty to do everything within his calling and station in life to bring also

⁹⁰ Lewis W. Spitz, *The Abiding Word*, vol. 1, *The Universal Priesthood of Believers* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946), 331–32.

⁹¹ LW 13:294.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 295. "Christians, however, must be completely holy priests and possess holy adornment; for He who ordains Christians as priests is a Person different from anyone else. He is the one High Priest Jesus Christ."

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 333

to others the treasure of the saving knowledge which he has already found.”⁹⁴ The constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod recognizes that one of the objectives of the Synod is to “strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world.”⁹⁵

Laypeople can and do serve as missionaries. They are often sent by the church to serve in a variety of vocations in which they are able to be proclaimers of God’s Word. Missionary doctors, teachers, human care workers, business managers, and others often have the opportunities to fulfill their callings as God’s royal priests and share the saving truth of their Savior, Jesus Christ.

That laypeople can and should proclaim Christ in no way suggests that the office of public minister is unnecessary in the mission field. For the sake of the expansion of his kingdom, “God instituted the office of preaching, giving the gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when he wills, in those who hear the gospel.”⁹⁶

Because under normal circumstances a pastor receives a call to serve in the public ministry in a congregation, some argue that “where there are no Christian congregations, as in a pagan country, there can be no public ministry, no service in the name of a congregation.”⁹⁷ Luther says that this should not stop one from proclaiming Christ.

If one landed among people who are not Christians, one might do as did the Apostles and not wait for a call; for there [where there are no Christians] the public office of

⁹⁴ C. F. W. Walther, “Arise, Let the Light Shine,” *The Word of His Grace, Occasional and Festival Sermons*, Translated and edited by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Translation Committee (Lake Mills, IA: Graphic Publishing Company, Inc., 1978), 217.

⁹⁵ *Handbook of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, 2007 edition (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2007), 2.

⁹⁶ Kolb-Wengert, AC V 1–2, 40.

⁹⁷ Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. 3 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), 440.

preaching does not exist, and one might say: Here there are no Christians, I will preach and instruct them in Christianity. And if a group formed, chose and called me to be their bishop, I would have a call.⁹⁸

From a Lutheran mission perspective, the pastor of a congregation serves in the public ministry and “no one should publically teach, preach, or administer the sacraments without a proper [public] call.”⁹⁹ But that being said, ordained missionaries find themselves involved with different duties at different times in the mission timeline. A primary focus of raw evangelism, teaching, and proclamation at the beginning of a mission effort will turn into the work of a parish pastor serving a congregation that did not exist before a congregation was formed.

The mission worker who seems to have slipped through the cracks for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is the “evangelist.” St. Paul writes of a loving Lord who gave to the church “the apostles, the prophets, the evangelist, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”¹⁰⁰ The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has many specially trained professional lay workers who serve the church as teachers, directors of Christian education, deaconesses, and so on, but no evangelist.

Some partner churches of the LCMS have the office of evangelist. Statistics from the India Evangelical Lutheran Church indicate that they have 46 fulltime lay evangelists and 350 volunteer evangelists who support the outreach work of the 210 pastors and 764 congregations and 635 preaching stations.¹⁰¹ The Gutnius Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea (GLC-PNG) indicates that they have 532 evangelists who serve the church and assist

⁹⁸Martin Luther quoted by Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. 3 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), 440.

⁹⁹ Kolb-Wengert, AC XIV, 46.

¹⁰⁰ Ephesians 4:11–12 ESV.

¹⁰¹ India Evangelical Lutheran Church website, <http://www.ielc.in/statistics.htm>, accessed December 8, 2011.

the 257 pastors in outreach, especially in the bush areas of the Highlands.¹⁰² These churches find lay evangelists to be vital in the outreach of the church. They often do the gathering of people into Christian communities that are then served by pastors.

From the beginning of time when God walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, we see that God and men want this personal relationship. Those who have a relationship by faith with God are members of the Christian church. This is “properly speaking, the assembly of saints and those who truly believe,”¹⁰³ the bride of Christ.¹⁰⁴ In the mission context, we are concerned with communities of faith, or congregations. We know that Jesus promises to hear our prayers even if we stand distant from other believers,¹⁰⁵ but he also promises that “where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”¹⁰⁶ It is in congregations where the gospel is to be taught purely and the sacraments rightly administered.¹⁰⁷

The church is not a human creation as a club filled with like-minded people. “The church herself is only the outcome of the activity of God who sends and saves.”¹⁰⁸ Christians in a congregation have the privilege to commune with God and fellow Christians. They pray for one another,¹⁰⁹ encourage one another,¹¹⁰ and even suffer with one another for the faith.¹¹¹ And ultimately, Christian congregations are about God’s mission. As members of the priesthood of all believers—Christians individually and in community—we belong to Christ, Peter says, “that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness

¹⁰² LCMS website, <http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=406>, accessed December 8, 2011.

¹⁰³ Kolb-Wengert, AC VIII, 43.

¹⁰⁴ Ephesians 5: 23, 29, 32; Revelation 21:2, 9, 17.

¹⁰⁵ Mark 11:24; Luke 18.

¹⁰⁶ Matthew 18:20 ESV.

¹⁰⁷ Kolb-Wengert, AC VII 1, 43.

¹⁰⁸ Vicedom, 5.

¹⁰⁹ Ephesians 6:18–22.

¹¹⁰ Galatians 6:2.

¹¹¹ I Peter 1:6–7.

into his marvelous light.”¹¹² “The entire congregation, through its life, through its word from person to person, through its contacts which the individual member has with his fellow beings, imparts the word and should be an attraction for all men.”¹¹³ For being a part of God’s church is to be a part of his sending.

The Lutheran Doctrine of Creation and Its Mission Implications

In the Nicene Creed we confess, “We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things, seen and unseen.”¹¹⁴ The doctrine of creation plays an important role in mission. It reminds us that God’s created world is “very good”¹¹⁵ and in this very good creation God has given special attention to man, creating them in his own image.¹¹⁶ God gives man the responsibility to care for the world¹¹⁷ and does not leave him without tools with which to accomplish this. God has given his people intellect, wisdom, and insight.¹¹⁸ Scriptures also speak of those who have special gifts for craftsmanship or art,¹¹⁹ as well as administrative abilities¹²⁰ and business acumen.¹²¹ Luther says that “next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise,”¹²² and we can see music and song play a role in

¹¹² 1 Peter 2:9 ESV.

¹¹³ Vicedom, 90.

¹¹⁴ Kolb-Wengert, 22.

¹¹⁵ Genesis 1:3 ESV: “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.”

¹¹⁶ Genesis 1:27 ESV: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

¹¹⁷ Genesis 1:28 ESV: “And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

¹¹⁸ Daniel 1:17 ESV: “As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”

¹¹⁹ Exodus 35:30–33 ESV: “See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft.”

¹²⁰ Joseph in Genesis 41 and Daniel in Daniel 6.

¹²¹ Parable of the talents, Luke 19:11ff.

¹²² LW 53:322.

God's work.¹²³ Physical strength in Sampson and in David's "mighty men" was a gift used by these men to accomplish the work of God.¹²⁴

God gives these abilities and more to his people for the fulfillment of his purposes. If it is true that Christians have been called by grace through faith "to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do,"¹²⁵ then we can expect that Christians will use the good gifts and talents God has given to accomplish the work of mission that he has given to his church.

Biblical proclamation of the gospel is central to the sending of God, but this is supported by all the other gifts given to the church. Intellect and linguistic skills are needed in Bible translations. The disciplines of the social sciences help understand the context in which the gospel is proclaimed. Music and the arts bring beauty to worship. Business acumen and administrative skills provide structure and faithful stewardship of time and talent. Even physical strength is needed as missionaries, still today, are sent off into the bush on foot to build communities, that by the grace of God can become communities of faith. Mankind's sinful imagination can always find ways to misuse God's good gifts so a biblical critique is always necessary.

All of creation is connected to Jesus, "for by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."¹²⁶ Mission efforts cannot be limited to the few things over which the

¹²³ 1 Samuel 16:23 ESV: "And whenever the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

¹²⁴ 1 Chronicles 11:10 NKJV: "Now these were the heads of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel."

¹²⁵ Ephesians 2:10 NIV.

¹²⁶ Colossians 1:16–17 ESV.

church can exercise control. God’s mission includes his use of all that is visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities. Everything was created by him and for him. Rather than being shocked and depressed by world events as portrayed on the evening news, the church in mission should be able to look on with awe and wonder as we consider how the Creator’s hand will shape events to serve his mission of salvation for the world.

Mission Tasks Theologically Considered

Keeping in mind the commands of our Lord Jesus to “go therefore and make disciples of all nations,”¹²⁷ we understand that gospel proclamation is the core mission task. The gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.”¹²⁸ Proclamation takes place in a variety of contexts. The gospel is certainly proclaimed in a worship service by pastors, but it must be proclaimed outside the church walls to those who are not Christian if we are to reach the unreached. This is often accomplished in the context of diaconal work, including service provided in the realms of medicine, education, water wells, disaster relief, and many other forms of social and support services.

Diaconal Work

Service, or *diakonia*, is a concept found throughout Scripture. God is concerned about the total well-being of all mankind. Luther understands this care of the physical wellness of people as flowing from God’s First Article creative action. Luther writes, “We Christians know that with God creating and preserving are identical.”¹²⁹ We also know that God calls us to be his instruments of mercy and service. Jesus says that on the Last Day, he will tell those

¹²⁷ Matthew 28:19 ESV.

¹²⁸ Romans 1:16 ESV.

¹²⁹ LW 4:136.

who will inherit eternal life, “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.”¹³⁰ Moses declares, “Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.”¹³¹ Jesus says, “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.”¹³² In Acts 6 we see that seven deacons were chosen for service. James says that it is more than simply a good idea to serve our neighbor; it is part of who we are as Christians.¹³³

When Christians serve their fellowman, they are fulfilling the vocations to which God has called them. Vocation or calling describes not only the work of proclamation done by the mouths of Christians, but also what is done with their hands. Those in need are the focus of vocation.

Christians stand alone before God, but on earth we are always in relation to a community that includes both those who trust in Jesus and those who don't. When called to faith, we are also prepared and called to serve God as his instruments in the world by giving witness to God's love to individuals in our communities. Our life in witness to others is our vocation as Christians.

We proclaim the love of God through good deeds done and in words of Gospel spoken. God gives no list of what must be accomplished in Christian vocation. He sends the Spirit to bring about love that discovers how best to help the neighbor in earthly and in spiritual things, and gives the strength and courage to accomplish those works of love.

God calls us to vocation not because he needs help, and not for the benefit of the person with the vocation, but for the good of the neighbor.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Matthew 25:35–36 ESV.

¹³¹ Deuteronomy 27:19 ESV.

¹³² Luke 6:36 ESV.

¹³³ James 2:14–16 ESV: “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?”

¹³⁴ John Mehl, used as “Mission Perspectives” for LCMS World Mission training, July 2011.

Luther describes God's love and service to mankind as being hidden in the Christian. He says of the work of Christians, "These are the masks of God behind which He wants to remain concealed and do all things."¹³⁵ Christians have the privilege of serving as God's instruments.

For hundreds of years, mission teams have included diaconal workers who have labored side by side with evangelists. Medical mission has long been associated with ministry of proclamation. Jesus himself healed the sick and proclaimed the gospel of the forgiveness of sins.¹³⁶ Where the church was established, there were also healing ministries. In 1569, the Roman Catholic Church founded a hospital in Macau, known as Santa Casa da Misericordia (Holy House of Mercy).¹³⁷ The London Mission Society sent a surgeon along with a group of missionaries headed for the Pacific as early as 1796.¹³⁸ Charles Estes reports that in mainland China "in 1892 there were in connection with the missions sixty-one hospitals and forty-four dispensaries, one hundred male and twenty-six female physicians."¹³⁹ Medical missions changed the hierarchy of missions and gave authority to laymen. "No ministerial senior could meaningfully overrule him [the doctor] or question his judgment in his own field; and the ordained chaplain, if there was one, must work under his direction."¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ LW 14:114.

¹³⁶ Matthew 4:23–24 ESV: "And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them."

¹³⁷ Macau Tourism Board. http://hk.macautourism.gov.mo/en/discovering/sightseeing_detail.php?catid=54#178, accessed January 15, 2012.

¹³⁸ Andrew Walls, *The Cross-cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), 228.

¹³⁹ Charles Sumner Estes, *Christian Missions in China* (PhD dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1895), 42.

¹⁴⁰ Walls, 229.

The missionary efforts of the LCMS also included medical ministry. Lulu Ellermann, RN, is considered the first medical missionary sent by the LCMS, going to India in 1913. She worked in Bargur, and her work was part of the foundation of Bethesda Hospital in Ambur, founded in 1923. In Nigeria, the Evangelical Lutheran Hospital at Eket was established in 1952 and was served by missionary doctors Lofgren, Reule, and Maier. The Wheat Ridge Foundation helped build and equip the Children's Hospital in Ajiro, Japan, and the Haven of Hope Sanatorium in Hong Kong.¹⁴¹ In Papua New Guinea, Immanuel Lutheran Hospital was established at Mambisanda in the Enga Province and was served by LCMS missionary doctors until 2009. In Central Asia, missionary nurses Marguerite Nickel and Susan Pfeil served in the field with community health education and in partnership with the Concordia Mission Society on a mobile medical clinic. This medical assistance, together with the Word of God, is given out of love. The medical ministry efforts in one of the aforementioned countries have so far led to the establishment of 11 Lutheran congregations.¹⁴²

Human care ministries include a variety of assistance. It can be bringing fresh water to communities through wells or cisterns. Agricultural projects can help raise the level of income for whole communities, making it possible for them to afford better food and health care. Emergency relief supplies of food and water after floods, hurricanes, or other natural or man-made disasters are human care service.

What Christians do through social and medical services are never intended as devices to manipulate people into becoming believers. These are ways that Christians show the love of God that has been shown to them in Christ. Over time, however, this aid can and does

¹⁴¹ *Mission Digest*, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Department of Stewardship, Mission Education, and Promotion (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1959), 56–57.

¹⁴² Brent Smith, e-mail February 27, 2012. The congregations are located in the following villages: Panfilovka, Kara-Balta, Vorontsovka, Jangi-Pahta, Ak-Suu, Lesnoe, Kemin, Orlovka, Kant, Rot Front, and Kainda.

often build relationships of care and love through which Christians can reflect God's unconditional love.

Education Ministries

Together with medical outreach into communities, Lutheran missionaries have also provided education. Education is part of the Lutheran heritage. Luther wrote much about the needs of people, including their educational needs. He preached sermons about education, including one titled *Keeping Children in School* (1530). He wrote open letters advocating better education such as *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* (1520) and *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools* (1524). Luther was innovative and even pressed for the education of girls. "The education of girls as a general principle, while not unheard-of, was essentially something new."¹⁴³ He was serious enough about education for both sexes that he invited Else von Kanitz to open a school for girls in Wittenberg and offered her room and board in his home.

The Lutheran emphasis on education was carried with missionaries into foreign fields. Because of the work begun by Lutheran missionaries, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church owns and operates 61 elementary schools and 12 high schools, along with eight schools for the disabled.¹⁴⁴ In Papua New Guinea, the LCMS established 30 elementary school, four high schools, and an international school. The "roof-top" schools run by education missionaries in Hong Kong for refugees fleeing China were literally located on the roofs of hotels and other buildings. These grew into 33 schools that are now operated by the

¹⁴³ LW 45:344.

¹⁴⁴ India Evangelical Lutheran Church website. <http://www.ielc.in/statistics.htm>, accessed December 12, 2011.

Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod. Altogether, there are about 200 Lutheran schools in Asia that have been planted by the LCMS, with about 100,000 students in attendance.¹⁴⁵

The ministry of these schools is intended not only to serve the students by giving them a quality education, but also to witness to what Jesus has done for them. Concordia Middle School in Chiayi, Taiwan, was established by the LCMS in 1967 and today educates 2,300 students.¹⁴⁶ The ministry goal of Concordia is clearly evangelical: To know and care for our youth; to bring them to the Lord; to train them to be his disciples; to send them out to share the love of the Lord for the enrichment of the Church.¹⁴⁷ Christians often make up fewer than 10 percent of the student bodies of these Asian Lutheran schools, making them ripe for evangelistic outreach. It is common in the Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod schools to have a pastor on staff and a congregation that meets in the school building. Christian education is in this way part of God's sending.

One of the teaching roles that cannot be ignored in this decade is the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), which has proven to be an effective way to interact with young people who are eager to develop their English skills. In countries and cultures where English proficiency is seen as a ticket to improved education and job opportunities, EFL programs draw. Many EFL teachers are able to use biblical materials for their teaching and have regular opportunities to proclaim the gospel in the classroom.

¹⁴⁵ Presentation by Dr. Allan Schmidt, Director of Asia Lutheran Education Association, given at Concordia International School Shanghai, April 8, 2006.

¹⁴⁶ LCMS website, <http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=421>, accessed December 11, 2011.

¹⁴⁷ Concordia Middle School, Taiwan website, <http://www.cms.hk.cyc.edu.tw/eng/ministry.php>, accessed December 12, 2011.

Theological Education

As evangelism takes place, new Christians are baptized and brought together in communities of faith or congregations to be served by pastors. Part of the missionary task is certainly to plant these congregations, but also to train indigenous leaders to serve. The idea of missionaries working themselves out of a job by training national leaders is not new. David Birner, associate executive director of LCMS World Mission, reminds the mission community that their focus is long-term when he writes, “Lutheran missionaries and the people who send them are firmly committed to planting churches that are well-equipped to pass on their faith from generation to generation.”¹⁴⁸ In order to equip indigenous churches for being a part of God’s sending, missionaries engage in theological education.

Mike Rodewald describes how missionaries “back up the theological education ladder.”¹⁴⁹ What he means is that missionaries who begin by teaching theology at a catechetical level will soon equip a national church leader to do this. Next the national catechist will be trained and equipped to be a pastor and the goal then becomes for some of the national pastors to become trainers of pastors. Jesus clearly states that in mission we are to make disciples, and, he says, be “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”¹⁵⁰

Theological education, whether done formally in seminaries and Bible schools, informally in small groups, or non-formally in mentoring situations, is a vital part of God’s sending, a part of mission.

¹⁴⁸ David Birner, *LCMS World Mission Harvest News*, Fall 2011, vol. 11, no. 3, 2.

¹⁴⁹ Michael Rodewald, presentation in Raleigh, NC, to LCMS mission directors, November 15, 2011.

¹⁵⁰ Matthew 28:20 NIV.

Bible Translation

There are other tasks in mission that are also important. Some are basic and could be overlooked. When we read that “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ”¹⁵¹ and that “all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,”¹⁵² we cannot take it for granted that the Scriptures are translated into the heart languages of those to whom the Word of God is being proclaimed. Lamin Sanneh makes the case that the Bible must be translated into the language of the people as “our assurance that we can know God as one who speaks and woos us personally, not as one who writes and threatens us anonymously.”¹⁵³ These are not commentaries that are being translated, but God’s Word.¹⁵⁴ Even though the Gospels are written in Greek, they are God’s Word in the same way that “a king’s speech, which he uttered in Parliament, being translated into French, Dutch, Italian and Latin, is still the King’s speech.”¹⁵⁵

The power of the Spirit working through the Word is sufficient to change hearts. The efficacious Word needs to be heard and understood. God promises:

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.¹⁵⁶

The work of translating Scripture into the vernacular is near and dear to Lutherans. Luther understood the power of God’s Word, and it was he who put the Scriptures into German to

¹⁵¹ Romans 10:17 ESV.

¹⁵² 2 Timothy 3:16 ESV.

¹⁵³ Sanneh, *Whose Religion*, 117.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁵⁶ Isaiah 55:10–11 ESV.

make them accessible to all. The task of Bible translation, as well as the translation of other Christian materials, cannot be taken for granted and must be part of the core work of mission.

Capacity Building

It must also be stated that the work of building the capacity of indigenous church leaders must be expanded beyond simply the pastoral role. A healthy church must have Spirit-filled workers who are musicians, teachers, and administrators. Some of the unforeseen developments around the world are regulations for local churches that have been put in place by governments. In many countries, proper financial audits and registration papers now must be filed annually. If churches are going to remain true witnesses from generation to generation, they must learn how to properly maintain their legal standing with governments. We can say that this, too, is part of God's sending.

Administration and Support

Finally, we can say that mission teams must include all kinds of support teams. Some of this support is anchored in the church that is sending missionaries to foreign fields; some of it is on the field, where missionary positions include accountants, architects, builders, anthropologists, and others. Support positions may not be daily involved in proclamation of the gospel or in providing theological education, but they make it possible for those mission tasks to be done. In many cases, there would be no mission activity were it not for support personnel.

Conclusion

In this chapter we see that the biblical foundation for God's mission, or sending, is extensive. It is the story of his Word and is personified in the sent Word, Jesus Christ. Christians, who are part of the Body of Christ, the church, by virtue of their baptisms are also sent into the world to proclaim the gospel.

The church is sent not only locally, but also to "the ends of the earth."¹⁵⁷ Many who are sent by the church into foreign mission fields fulfill a variety of tasks that surround the proclamation of the gospel, but proclamation is fundamental. The elements of mission that work directly in support of evangelism and church planting, such as theological education and Bible translation, are different from medical services, schools, well digging, and other service works in that service can also be done by secular or non-Christian organizations. Mission tasks that directly support proclamation can only be done by the church. While it is often impossible to separate proclamation from other mission tasks, what is fundamental becomes even clearer when we ask what *cannot* be taken away if we are still going to call the effort "mission." Mission can survive without medical ministry, but it can't be mission without the proclamation or sending of God's Word.

¹⁵⁷ Acts 1:8 NIV.

CHAPTER THREE

PROJECT IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter will give context for the foreign mission efforts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the different training methods used to prepare missionaries for service, the changing missionary force, the effect of world events on mission, and a discussion of how relationships change in the field as mission plants become partner churches. There will also be a short review of literature on the subject of denominational partnership. This should help provide structure to present questions about how to find agreement between mission partners in order to better accomplish mission.

Context of Christian Mission

In *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch uses Hans Küng's outline of Christian history as a guide for describing the six contexts in which Christians understood their faith and fulfilled the mission task of the church.¹⁵⁸ Shifts in mission paradigms came in support of the gospel. The first period of the Early Christian Church moved to the Greek Patristic period. The shift was from Hebrew to Greek worlds as the urgency of an imminent Parousia faded. Christians despised pagan religions but embraced pagan philosophy. The church began a fight against heresies such as Gnosticism. Ecclesiology became important. The mission paradigm took on a universalistic view of existing on earth but being citizens of heaven. The church was intellectually active. It worked to lift people out of a fatalistic world and gave them a vision of heaven in the liturgy.

¹⁵⁸ Bosch, 181.

In the medieval Roman Catholic mission context, the church needed to fight against Donatism and Pelagianism. Augustine argued that the Donatists should be forced to return to the fold of the church. This attitude became a missional concept—that it was in the best interest of people to be members of the Roman Catholic Church. This included the creation of a Christian civilization.

Martin Luther was the catalyst for the missionary paradigm of the Protestant Reformation.¹⁵⁹ Luther's rediscovery of Paul and the gospel as a power for salvation in Romans 1:16ff becomes the missionary text for Protestants. Lutherans clearly taught that Christianity was not about what people can do to earn their salvation, but about what God has done for mankind in sending Jesus Christ.

The paradigm change at the Enlightenment made a significant impact on the Protestant mission view. The previous structure of God, church, state, and people was disrupted by an anthropocentric worldview that didn't need God. Love became a driving motivation. Cultures often clashed. "Colonialism" was first viewed as good and an opportunity to bring order and prosperity to those lacking. Millennialism became a prominent part of Protestant mission culture in the last two centuries with its guaranteed happy ending. Bosch believes that the Enlightenment in part brought a denominational emphasis with confessional Lutheran missions reviving after the 1830 celebration of the Augsburg Confession.¹⁶⁰ This Lutheran revival gave way to Lutheran missionary societies that benefited the Missouri Synod and defined Lutheran distinctives in mission that still shape Lutheran work today.

¹⁵⁹ Bosch, 239.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 331.

The final period of church and mission for Bosch came with the shift from Modernism to Postmodernism and with it the doubt that science and knowledge can save the world. While we can agree that it is not helpful for the church to engage in reductionism, there is no need to stop thinking and thinking critically. In the last decade or so, the idea of a post-Postmodernism that claims to transcend the irony and skepticism of the Postmoderns has emerged. Architect Tom Turner wrote already in 1995 that in his profession, “the build environment professions are witnessing the gradual dawn of a post-Postmodernism that seeks to temper reason with faith.”¹⁶¹ For an architect this can mean a return to time-tested geometric shapes and patterns in reaction to the “anything goes” of the Postmodern era with its unbridled subjectivity and individualism. Whether or not this will take hold, it is a trend being talked about in universities as social scientists struggle to define the changes since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington DC, and the wars that have followed. When all is said and done, the common people still need structure in culture to survive.

There is always going to be unrest and discomfort for the church in the midst of changing culture. One reaction has been to wall the church and her people off from the world. This effort seems to come from a sincere desire to hold on to the timeless truths of God’s love and salvation in Christ. However, the brief look at the changes in church and mission over the past two thousand years illustrate that the power of the gospel does not change even when culture does. Just as the Word of God can be translated into a different language, it also translates into different cultures. Lamin Sanneh assures us that “Christianity

¹⁶¹ Tom Turner, *City as Landscape: A Post-postmodern View of Design and Planning* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1995), 9.

is remarkable for the relative ease with which it encounters living cultures.”¹⁶² Rather than trying to save a culture of 1930, church and mission need to be engaging the culture of today.

A History of LCMS in Mission

As we consider the context of changing cultures in the mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we need to reflect on its history, especially its mission history.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was mostly a German immigrant church with a core of dedicated confessional Lutherans who worked hard to reach German immigrants in the Midwest. While not the only parts in the mix that would become the LCMS, the Saxon Lutherans, who left the rationalism and the Prussian Union for America with its religious freedom and economic opportunity, together with those led by Friedrich Wyneken and later those sent by J. K. W. Loehe, became the driving forces in a new Lutheran synod in the New World.

Rev. Wyneken has been called the “Father of Home Missions” in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.¹⁶³ While the Saxons landed in Missouri in 1838, built a seminary and churches, Wyneken came to America in that same year and started work with Germans in and around Fort Wayne, Indiana. The need for German-speaking clergymen for American Germans was great, and Wyneken convinced Loehe to send more men from Germany to help. The mission efforts of Wyneken and Loehe included outreach to Native Americans in the Saginaw Valley of Michigan.

¹⁶² Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2009, 1989), 56.

¹⁶³ Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 91.

It was not the Saxons from Missouri who made the overtures to Wyneken that resulted in the organization of the LCMS, but rather the other way around.¹⁶⁴ In April 1847, at a founding convention in Chicago, a first constitution was adopted that included a “commission for heathen missions” and a “correspondent with the Lutheran Church in foreign lands.”¹⁶⁵ Instructions for the synodical conventions included directives that “the assembly shall discuss suitable measures for the conduct of home missions outside the synodical District boundaries” and after the reading of the commission on heathen missions report, “the assembly shall deliberate on further steps in matters of heathen missions.”¹⁶⁶ Mission was part of the DNA of the LCMS from its inception. While there was certainly an emphasis on organizing German Lutherans into congregations, the LCMS had a mechanism for “heathen missions.” The result of the convention in Chicago was the formation of the “German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States,” which was in 1947 shortened to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or the LCMS.¹⁶⁷

C. F. W. Walther from the Missouri Saxons was the first president of the LCMS. He was focused on confessional Lutheranism, but also had a heart for foreign mission and the mission to German immigrants who were acculturated through worship, social services, and education into one of the most impressive religious subcultures in the North American experiment. However, mission was at the core of those sent by Loehe and the Hermannsburg Mission in Germany. William Danker writes,

If the Saxons, who chose Perry County, Mo., because they sought religious freedom, project the image of concern for doctrinal purity, then the Franconians, who selected

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 143.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 155.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 157.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 440.

Michigan's Saginaw Valley to bring the Gospel to the Indians, are the symbol of concern for missions, although they share their primary concerns as well.¹⁶⁸

While the LCMS was heavily invested in German-speaking people in the U.S., there was also work being done among the “foreign tongued” in America. Besides English speakers, there was also work with Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Assyrian, Chinese, Italian, and Spanish speakers.¹⁶⁹ When we begin to talk about the LCMS being involved in foreign mission, things become a little murky, because of the robust “home mission abroad” program that was run by the Synod. Until 1895, most of the mission work done on foreign soil fell into this “home mission abroad” category. In other words, it was mission to Germans in Brazil, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, London, and even in Germany.¹⁷⁰ The “home mission abroad” work of the LCMS was quite robust in the first half of the twentieth century, especially in Brazil and Argentina.¹⁷¹ While comparisons will be made to the “home mission abroad,” the focus of this study is Synod’s “foreign mission abroad” work to non-German speakers on foreign soil.

Foreign Mission Abroad

“Foreign” mission was part of the Lutheran confessional revival of the nineteenth century. Besides Loehe and the Harms brothers in Germany who were intent on sending missionaries to foreign lands, there were significant efforts by mission societies from

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 294.

¹⁶⁹ *Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1930* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931), 201–2.

¹⁷⁰ *Statistisches Jarbuch der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staten fur das Jahr 1900* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1901), 114.

¹⁷¹ In the 1920 *Statistical Year-Book* (124), the “home mission abroad” program of the Synod has a budget of \$97,294 supporting 77 missionaries in South America and 5 in Europe. The “foreign mission abroad” budget was \$88,794 to support 11 missionaries in India and 7 in China (129). In the 1970 *Statistical Yearbook* (278), there are 47 Argentinian and 155 Brazilian workers listed, but they are not called “missionaries,” but “district pastors.”

Scandinavia and Finland. Lutheran mission efforts from these countries were, in fact, well established in China when Eduard Arndt arrived in 1913.¹⁷² That the Missouri Synod was new at sending to foreign fields should not surprise anyone. As we will see later on, it seems to take about 50 years for a church body to have the *ability* to project missionally to foreign countries. The Missouri Synod was formally constituted in 1847 and would turn 50 in 1897.

LCMS Mission between 1895 and 1945

The idea of a broader mission to those not German finally looked as though it would become reality in 1895 when Japanese student Shigetaro “Henry” Midsuno graduated from Concordia Seminary in Springfield, Illinois.¹⁷³ But before Midsuno could be sent, internal struggles in the Leipzig Mission Society in India left Theodore Naether and Franz Mohn without financial support. They returned to Germany and made an appeal to the Missouri Synod. Naether and Mohn came to America in 1894 and were colloquized into the Missouri Synod. They were commissioned in a worship service at Immanuel Lutheran Church, in St. Charles, Missouri, on October 14, 1894, and were sent to India as the Synod’s first “foreign” missionaries.¹⁷⁴

By 1910, the LCMS missionary force in India had risen to 10 with a budget of \$20,705,¹⁷⁵ while the budget for “home mission abroad” in Brazil, Berlin, London, Australia, and New Zealand was \$24,323.¹⁷⁶ This trend continued, and in 1920 there were 19

¹⁷² F. Dean Lueking, *Mission in the Making: The Missionary Enterprise Among Missouri Synod Lutherans 1846–1963* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 248.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 202.

¹⁷⁴ Christudas, 39.

¹⁷⁵ *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten für das Jahr 1910* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1911), 171.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 161.

missionaries in India and China doing “foreign mission abroad”¹⁷⁷ while there were 82 missionaries working at “home mission abroad,” and 77 of them were in Brazil.¹⁷⁸

One of the biggest problems facing mission in the beginning of the twentieth century was debt. It was reported in 1911 that the mission budget was \$2,000 in debt.¹⁷⁹ The initial enthusiasm for foreign mission abroad had waned. At about this same time, Prof. Eduard Arndt was being removed from the faculty of Concordia College, St. Paul, Minnesota. At the age of 47, Arndt formed a mission society, wrote and sold books of sermons to raise funds, all with an eye on mission in China. The Synod was not inclined to support Arndt in his China project, in part because of his dismissal from Concordia College and because of the synodical deficit.¹⁸⁰ Arndt prevailed by organizing a mission society of almost a thousand Lutheran pastors and teachers that extended to him a call to serve in China.¹⁸¹ He arrived in 1913, and the Synod finally took responsibility for the effort in 1917.¹⁸² Mission efforts in China expanded until 1949, when all foreign missionaries were deported. Because the present policy of the Chinese government maintains that the Protestant Church is post-denominational, there are no Lutheran congregations left today in the same way there are no Baptist or Presbyterian congregations. There are, however, good relationships with the Christian church in China. The missionaries who left China in 1949 went on to serve in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan and helped build self-sustaining synods in those countries.

While some might argue that in India and China, the Missouri Synod backed into mission, all agree that God’s mission was accomplished in both of these countries. The

¹⁷⁷ *Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1920* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), 129.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁷⁹ Lueking, 230.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 239.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 240.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 252.

situation in both countries was difficult from the start. Before WWI began, the majority of the 20 Missouri Synod missionaries were German.¹⁸³ WWI brought challenges for home and foreign mission as the German language became a stumbling block. The Missouri Synod continued growing and developing the mission in India and China, and before World War II, the Synod expanded mission efforts to Sri Lanka in 1927, a first step into Africa with work in Nigeria beginning in 1936,¹⁸⁴ and expanded work in Paraguay (1938), Mexico (1940 by the Texas District), and Panama (1941).

LCMS Mission between 1945 and 1960

Following WWII, the Missouri Synod grew in North America, and the foreign mission effort grew as well. Between 1940 and 1969, the Synod grew from 1,342,533¹⁸⁵ to 2,875,187¹⁸⁶ baptized members. During the same years, the number of career foreign mission workers grew from 67¹⁸⁷ to 365.¹⁸⁸ The latter number from 1969 does not include the 194 “home mission abroad” missionaries in Argentina and Brazil.¹⁸⁹ “Home and at Large” giving increased from \$15,580,427¹⁹⁰ in 1940 to \$239,358,663¹⁹¹ in 1969.

The previous paragraph reflects how the mission context of North America shifted dramatically after World War II. Young men and women in military service had seen the world, and Americans were welcomed in places where they had never been welcomed before. Missouri Synod members were among those who had seen the world, and already in

¹⁸³ Ibid., 263.

¹⁸⁴ Meyer, 321.

¹⁸⁵ *1960 Statistical Yearbook of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1961), 278–79.

¹⁸⁶ *1990 Statistical Yearbook* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1991), 281–89.

¹⁸⁷ *1960 Yearbook*, 280–81.

¹⁸⁸ *1979 Statistical Yearbook* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1980), 228–29.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. It should be noted that it is unclear how counting was done in these official numbers.

¹⁹⁰ *1960 Yearbook*, 278–79.

¹⁹¹ *1979 Yearbook*, 229.

the late 1940s, the LCMS began foreign work in places involved in the war. The LCMS began work in the Philippines in 1947 led by Alvaro Carino, a Philippine national, and Herman Mayer. Within three years, there were 11 missionary families working in the country.¹⁹²

In 1947, Willard Burce and Otto Hintze were tapped by the Synod to go into missions. They prepared by studying an extra year at the seminary, earning an advanced degree. Though Burce initially thought Russia would be their destination, the two families were sent in November 1948 to Papua New Guinea, where they worked together with Australian Lutheran A. P. Freund in Enga Province. The work was labor-intensive with outreach into the tribal areas done on foot. Medical work and schools provided a great outreach. By 1955, the mission had established 19 schools. Even with this investment in the mission, Hintze reports that it was nine years from the time of their arrival in Enga before they would celebrate their first Baptisms.¹⁹³ The field in Papua New Guinea grew to a high point in 1967, when there were 89 LCMS missionary families on the field.¹⁹⁴

During the years between the end of WWII and 1960, the Missouri Synod began work in Guatemala (1947), Philippines (1947), Papua New Guinea (1948), Japan (1948), Lebanon (1950), Hong Kong (1950), Taiwan (1951), Venezuela (1952), Portugal (1956), South Korea (1958), Chile (1960), Uruguay (1960), and Ghana (1960)¹⁹⁵—13 new countries in almost the same number of years. Some of this was new Lutheran work in the country, but other work was new only to the Missouri Synod. As it always is with God's mission, this

¹⁹² Lueking, 291.

¹⁹³ Otto Hintze in a presentation at the PNG Mission Society Bung, Timothy Lutheran Church, St. Louis, July 29, 2011.

¹⁹⁴ *1977 Statistical Yearbook* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1978), 227.

¹⁹⁵ "LCMS World Mission Report," *Convention Workbook: Reports and Overtures* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2001), 18-19. Some include El Salvador (1958) and Honduras (1961), but the report to convention does not.

expansion often had less to do with man's plan and everything to do with God's sending. A good illustration of this is found in the unforeseen development of the Chinese Revolution of 1949 and the expulsion of Christian missionaries. These missionaries went to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan. Female missionaries redeployed from China made especially significant impact on the work with Chinese refugees in both Hong Kong and Taiwan. Deaconesses Martha Boss and Gertrude Simon were among those missionaries who came to Hong Kong, while Deaconess Olive Gruen transferred to Taiwan. The results of the work of these "exile" mission efforts are three self-sustaining partner churches, each with a Lutheran school system.

While Lutheran mission activity first touched Korea in 1832 when German Lutheran Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff spent a month in Korea distributing tracts,¹⁹⁶ the LCMS began the first organized Lutheran mission efforts to the peninsula under the leadership of LCMS Korean Lutheran Won Yong Ji in 1958.¹⁹⁷ This was soon after the end of the Korean War, and again we see that major world events were often the openings for God's sending.

In most of the mission efforts following WWII, we see the LCMS working mission in a robust way, establishing institutions such as schools, seminaries, and hospitals. By the late-1960s, the number of missionary families made it possible for large teams to be working together. Veterans who knew what worked and what didn't mentored new missionaries. The focus was on the long-term and the establishment of self-standing church bodies. Of the 13 foreign mission initiatives between 1947 and 1960, 12 resulted in indigenous church bodies, 10 of which have formal relationships with the Missouri Synod.

¹⁹⁶ Won Yong Ji, *A History of Lutheranism in Korea: A Personal Account* (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1988), 66.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

LCMS Mission between 1960 and 1990

The LCMS mission expansion that took place immediately following WWII stands in contrast to new LCMS work in the three decades from 1960 to 1990 where the LCMS became involved in nine new countries. The work also began to change because of already existing partners near the new work. The work in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Thailand were LCMS-initiated work. But mission activity in Macau that marks a start in 1988 was done in partnership with the Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod and the new activity in Botswana, the Congo-Kinshasa, Eritrea, and South Africa was not pioneer work, but was partnership with Lutheran partners already in the region.

The makeup of foreign mission teams also changed dramatically between 1970 and 1990. The number of career Missouri Synod missionaries working in foreign fields peaked in 1969 with 365,¹⁹⁸ which does not include those working in “home mission abroad” fields of Brazil and Argentina. Due to financial shortfalls, the Synod drew down its missionary force rapidly. Statistics show a drop of 91 to 273 just between 1969 and 1970.¹⁹⁹ By 1975, the missionary population had dropped to 157,²⁰⁰ a drawdown of 207 missionaries in six years. This was followed by a disruptive internal struggle in the Missouri Synod; some have suggested that the declining missionary numbers are tied to the disorder, if not directly then indirectly, because focus was on internal problems and not on external sending. By 1980, the missionary count was down to 101.²⁰¹ The missionary force was reinvigorated in the late

¹⁹⁸ 1979 *Statistical Yearbook*, 228–29.

¹⁹⁹ 1970 *Yearbook*, 278–79. Part of the rapid drop in missionaries can be seen in a 31 missionary drop in Hong Kong between 1969 and 1970. This coincides with the development of Hong Kong International School. As the school grew, it became independent of the synodical funding stream.

²⁰⁰ 1975 *Statistical Yearbook* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1976), 222–23.

²⁰¹ 1980 *Statistical Yearbook* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1981), 220–21.

'80s, reaching 161 mission units in 1990²⁰² before leveling off at about 100 missionaries for the next decade.

LCMS Mission between 1990 and 2010

It wasn't until another major world event, the collapse of the Iron Curtain, that foreign mission sending in the Missouri Synod found a renewed spirit. Between 1990 and the present day, the Missouri Synod has begun new mission activity in 45 countries (15 in Africa, 5 in Asia, 15 in Eurasia, 10 in Latin America). Some of the new mission involvement for the LCMS was begun through partnerships with other Lutheran churches. Mike Rodewald counts six African countries where the new work during this period is the result of partner church leadership. He calls these African Initiated Lutheran Churches (AILCs).²⁰³ Missionaries were placed in approximately 25 new countries during this 20-year period, but often to work together with already established Lutheran churches with which the LCMS had new relationships, such as in Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Kenya, Indonesia, and Slovakia. There was a wide variety of mission activity begun during this 20-year period from pioneer work in Guinea and Kyrgyzstan to small projects or partnership activities with Lutherans in Madagascar and Myanmar.

John Mueller was the Missouri Synod's missionary recruiter in the 1990s. He visited my wife and me in our Kansas parsonage in early 1993. He was focused on the newly opened areas in the former Soviet Union and expressed an urgency that was not driven by goals developed in St. Louis offices or a mission five-year plan. He stated bluntly, "The church won't wait," implying that if LCMS World Mission didn't get missionaries into these new

²⁰² *1990 Yearbook*, 251–72.

²⁰³ Mike Rodewald counts Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, Gambia, and Uganda as places where partners started work.

mission fields quickly, someone else in the Missouri Synod would. Missionary expansion into the countries of the former Soviet Union was a strong program, but not all of it was pioneer work. The Lutheran church in Russia had been around for centuries because of the German, Finnish, Swedish, Latvian, and Estonian Lutherans who had lived in the Russia Empire and the Soviet Union. Russian-speaking Lutheran churches were reemerging and at the same time steeped in history and tradition when the LCMS began work in St. Petersburg in 1992.

Church planting and leadership formation were the basic mission tasks of LCMS World Mission in the early 1990s. Missouri Synod missionaries in the former Soviet Union did plant churches and provide theological education, but just as important for the mission effort were the relationships that were built with already established Lutheran synods in the Eastern Bloc countries. While church planting was always a goal, it became clear as the decade moved on that there would be a greater missional impact if the Missouri Synod spent time educating national pastors and church planters. “Church planting and leadership formation” became “church planting *through* leadership formation.”²⁰⁴ The change in emphasis was an admission that the world in 1995 was different from the world of 1945. Pioneer church planting work was still done. In the former Soviet Bloc countries of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, church planting, medical work, and theological education were and are done among ethnic Kazakh and Kyrgyz. In the mid-1990s, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries became more open and the LCMS began work in countries where there had been war only a few decades before. It was during these decades, however, when the LCMS saw a great shift from only pioneer work to some pioneer work, but also pioneer

²⁰⁴ Daniel L. Mattson, “Church Planting through Leadership Formation,” *Missio Apostolica*, November 1995, vol. 3, no. 2, 79–84.

work with partners, building new partnerships with already established Lutherans, and working to build capacity of those partners to be better equipped to do mission in their contexts.

At the beginning of the new millennium, Glenn O’Shoney, executive director of LCMS World Mission, wrote to missionaries explaining a change in the structure of the organization. He wrote in part that “in the past decade, the financial resources available to World Mission have more than doubled” and “we are now involved in some way in mission work in 68 countries.”²⁰⁵ Also of note was the dramatic change in the way mission was being funded. “In 1990, 74% of support came from Sunday offerings; by 1999, 28% came from weekly offerings.”²⁰⁶ This change in giving patterns had several implications, including the lack of flexibility that comes from designated gifts. The most important change was the desire for direct involvement by congregations and individuals. O’Shoney wrote:

Congregations and even individuals desire to be personally involved in the mission of the church. This is illustrated by the grown [growth] of volunteer missionary service over the past few years and the desire of congregations to begin their own foreign mission work. Most supporters of missions do not want more and better contacts with St. Louis, but with the people who are in service throughout the world. If we are to move to a new level of service, people serving in mission fields must increasingly be involved. The growth of mission societies, etc. shows that people want to be involved, want to offer spiritual support and be of personal assistance to the missionary task of the church.²⁰⁷

O’Shoney and his team recognized early on the shift in North American mission involvement and were planning to implement a strategy to change the core structure of the organization to meet the needs of the church.

²⁰⁵ Glenn O’Shoney, e-mail to all career missionaries with the subject line “Waking the Sleeping Giant,” March 2000.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

A Volunteer Youth Mission was already well established in Japan and Taiwan and provided a way for young and old to be directly involved in mission. This expanded in the 1990s as the Eastern Bloc countries opened with new agencies, such as Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST), Lutheran Hour Ministries, and Central American Lutheran Mission Society (CALMS), all sending LCMS volunteers to mission fields. The long-term mission opportunities continue to grow. Long-term volunteers serve on mission fields doing a variety of work, from teaching ESL to building airstrips. These volunteers fill important gaps in the mission efforts of the church and are a blessing.

Because the desire of the church was to be more connected to mission, O’Shoney’s reorganization sought to flatten the organization and decentralize it. The design was for 10 decision-making centers around the world, and the staff in St. Louis would be “shaped by a common vision”²⁰⁸ but operate with a greater degree of autonomy. Instead of four area secretaries in the St. Louis office, there were to be 10 to 12 area directors deployed to mission fields and responsible for smaller, more manageable numbers of countries. Each area director and his team would be more involved in strategy development, recruitment, and communication and look to St. Louis for support of field decisions. The mission board was supportive of the change in structure as was synodical president Dr. A. L. Barry. President Barry wrote out his expectations of the area directors, including quarterly partner church reports, and promised the support of the Synod.²⁰⁹

In 2001, O’Shoney and staff developed a vision statement that included a “big, hairy, audacious goal” of 100 million people touched by the gospel. This first draft came after countless hours of discussion of the Lutheran theology of mission.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ A. L. Barry, memo to BFMS Area Directors, July 11, 2000.

Together with global partners in Christ, LCMS World Mission will cultivate a mutual passion to shake the earth with the Good News of Jesus Christ and to that end in this generation will pray for, reach, teach and prepare 100,000,000 people for service and witness.²¹⁰

There is always a great deal of care taken to recognize that the mission remains God's and that faith and conversion are the work of the Holy Spirit and at the same time reflect urgency in response to the Great Commission.

The final statement with revisions became the mission statement of LCMS World Mission:

Praying to the Lord of the harvest, LCMS World Mission, in collaboration with its North American and worldwide partners, will share the Good News of Jesus with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.²¹¹

The goal of "sharing the gospel with 100 million" became part of what was hoped would become an *Ablaze!* movement. Partner churches were invited to participate and develop their own goals. The Lutheran Church in the Philippines is an example of an *Ablaze!* partner that made a goal of planting 100 new congregations by 2017.²¹²

The *Ablaze!* initiative received both praise and criticism. Many said it was much like an older LCMS outreach initiative called *Each One Reach One* that was revived by some congregations to promote their *Ablaze!* efforts.²¹³ Others felt it put too much emphasis on

²¹⁰ "Strategic Plan: Concepts and Definitions," draft May 5, 2001.

²¹¹ Daniel L. Mattson, *Ablaze! Theologically Considered*, October 28, 2005, 3.

²¹² *LCP President's Report*, The Lutheran Church in the Philippines 21st General Convention Workbook, October 24–28, 2011.

²¹³ Joe Isenhower Jr., "Third 'Igniting' event looks at worship attendance," *The Reporter Online*, January 2004, accessed January 21, 2012, <http://reporter.lcms.org/pages/rpage.asp?NavID=3805>.

man's efforts in mission with an emphasis on counting and was a return to Lutheran pietism.²¹⁴

The *Ablaze!* initiative put an emphasis on evangelism and set high church-planting goals. The *Ablaze!* goal presented to the LCMS synodical convention in 2004 included the planting of 2000 new congregations by 2017.²¹⁵ Foreign LCMS missionaries welcomed the evangelism emphasis because it helped communicate to established congregations that their work was not over once they had legally registered. The focus on outreach gave not just pastors but also whole congregations an external focus.

Area director development of Key Result Areas (KRAs) in 2001 reflected the changing mission landscape and the recognition of partnership as an important slice of mission. At the same time, the KRAs maintained traditional mission tasks. The four KRAs for all world areas were (1) Strategic Alliances Formed, (2) National Church Workers Trained, (3) New Congregations Planted, and (4) New Missionaries Required.²¹⁶ Under each of these KRAs was room for estimated costs and people reached with the gospel. These KRAs were nothing different from what had always been done in mission but with a new emphasis on “strategic alliances.” This reflected the new reality that the LCMS mission efforts were less pioneer work and more partnership with existing Lutherans. The “Organizational KRA Matrix” was not implemented because of chaos that followed another sharp drawdown of missionaries in 2003.

²¹⁴ Klemet Preus, John Maxfield, ed., “Pietism in Missouri’s Mission: From Mission Affirmations to *Ablaze!*,” *Mission Accomplished? Challenges to and Opportunities for Lutheran Missions in the 21st Century* (St. Louis: The Luther Academy, 2008), 93–114.

²¹⁵ Convention Proceedings 2004, Resolution 1-05A (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2004), 121.

²¹⁶ LCMS World Mission Organization KRA Matrix for 2002–2006. See appendix A.

The stock market meltdown in 2001 following the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington caused a financial crisis in mission giving that forced the removal of 17 staff positions from the St. Louis support team²¹⁷ and 27 field missionary staff²¹⁸ in December 2002. Since 2003, the Missouri Synod's career missionary force has stayed between 60 and 70. There are presently 59 career LCMS missionary families filling 69 paid positions. This number includes 33 clergy, 1 deaconess, 4 directors of Christian education or directors of Christian outreach, 8 teachers, and 23 laypersons. The broader team includes 53 teachers who are on the LCMS professional roster serving in six Asian countries and 61 long-term volunteers (serving 1–2 years).²¹⁹

The last three sentences in the paragraph above should give the reader another insight into the fact that as with everything in missions, it is difficult to compare the work and workforce of one decade to another. The fact that there are 59 career families hides the fact that in 10 instances, both spouses serve as missionaries and are compensated accordingly. This was not the practice in 1940. We can also see that 53 LCMS teachers have received calls through the Missouri Synod's Board for Missions, but receive their salaries from Lutheran schools in foreign countries that operate independently from the synodical funding stream. Finally, there is the long-term volunteer force. Eleven of the 61 long-term volunteers are on the synodical roster of professional church workers, including one pastor.

²¹⁷ Robert Roegner, letter to LCMS missionaries, December 2, 2002.

²¹⁸ Robert Roegner, letter to LCMS missionaries, December 13, 2002.

²¹⁹ Kim Plummer Krull, "Mission Heritage Sets Stage for Global Reach," *The Lutheran Witness*, May 2011, 7.

Training the Missionary Force

Missionary education is done in different ways. In his work on theological education across cultures, Eugene Bunkowske identifies three educational methodologies: formal education, informal education, and non-formal education.

Formal education is degree oriented. “It intentionally speeds up the access to cognitive knowledge at the expense of spiritual, affective and cognitive knowledge.”²²⁰ This education delivers theory and concepts, but because of the classroom setting, it can lack practical application and depth. In the realm of society, this education offers the option to move socially, geographically, and financially. For missionaries, this type of education is vital for understanding the theology of mission, language learning, context, communication methods, and so on.

Informal education focuses on life. “It leads to an integrated development of knowledge (spiritual, affective and cognitive), to a back and forth knowledge connection between the surface and deep level structures of life.”²²¹ What we learn from our parents on how to raise children or how to grieve at the death of a loved one are examples of this type of education. This education keeps people in stable situations in their own communities. This kind of education for missionaries is less applicable than formal and non-formal, but explains why missionary kids are often skilled at negotiating cross-cultural situations.

Non-formal education is work oriented. “It emphasizes specialization through the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that apply to problem solving and getting a

²²⁰ Eugene W. Bunkowske, *Educational Methodologies*, class handout for DMSL 910 Theological Education Across Cultures, 1.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

defined job done.”²²² Mentoring programs and apprenticeships are examples of this type of education. Classroom knowledge needs to be put into practice, and mentors are needed. This education is important for missionaries and has become difficult with small mission teams.

From the beginning of the LCMS “foreign mission abroad” work, there have been a variety of missionary training methods. Below are a few examples of missionary preparation since 1940.

Dr. Luther Meinzen was sent to India as a missionary in the mid-1940s. Before he left for the field, he had a year of mission school at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. There was no cultural orientation, and language training was done on the field.²²³ This pre-field education was formal.

Dr. Otto Hintze and **Dr. Willard Burce** went to Papua New Guinea in 1948 with “no specific preparation for work there.”²²⁴ Hintze and Burce spent the 1947-48 school year working on STMs at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. They sat in on missions classes taught by Professor Zimmerman (former missionary to China), as well as attending Theodore Graebner’s world religions class. There was no linguistic training other than a Kenneth Pike’s *Phonemics*, which was sent to Hintze by a classmate.²²⁵

The education for Drs. Hintze and Burce was self-directed but academic in nature. There was very little mentoring until they arrived on the field and were able to talk to missionaries from other mission organizations.

Rev. James Vehling and his wife, Jane, were among twenty couples who attended mission school at Concordia Seminary in 1966. The six-week course gave the missionaries

²²² Ibid., 1.

²²³ Luther Meinzen, August 22, 2007, e-mail.

²²⁴ Otto Hintze, August 22, 2007, e-mail.

²²⁵ Ibid.

six graduate hours of credit. Textbooks and tests were part of the routine. Prominent linguist John Hohlfeld taught language-learning skills. R. Pierce Beaver, a leading missiologist of the day, joined William Danker and Martin Kretzmann in teaching missiology classes.

Kretzmann was one of the authors of *Mission Affirmations*. Special classes were taught for each world region. For instance, those going to Asia had special classes taught by Asia Secretary Paul Strege. Between classes, the organization structure and life issues were discussed.²²⁶

This education was in many ways formal, but at the same time there was some non-formal education going on as future missionaries were given as many practical tools as possible as they headed for the fields.

Ken and Dar Reiner attended the same orientation with the Vehlings. Ken wrote that once he and Dar arrived in Nigeria, “Rev. Harold Heine and Rev. Paul Volz took us under their wings and were mentors to us. . . . The greatest lessons were learned from the Heine family—such as, how to be a mission family, how to be a guest in the country, [how to develop] relationships with Nigerians, etc.”²²⁷ This is non-formal education, a mentoring.

Rev. David Birner went to Papua New Guinea as a vicar in 1975 with little or no pre-field preparation. In the context of divisions in the LCMS, the mission program found itself in chaos. When the Birners went as career missionaries in 1977, their pre-field orientation was five days spent with Jim Mayer, Paul Strege, and former Papua New Guinea missionary Karl Reko.

²²⁶ James Vehling, August 17, 2007, e-mail.

²²⁷ Ken Reiner, August 16, 2007, e-mail.

Dr. Willard Burce and other missionaries mentored Birner during his vicarage and early years of career missionary service in Papua New Guinea. Even the missionary orientation he received from Mayer, Strege, and Reko was more non-formal than formal.

1985 to 2010. LCMS missionary orientations have remained fairly consistent for the past two decades. One or two weeks are interspersed with basic missiology, spiritual warfare skills, a cursory understanding of how the organization works, and information about healthcare, evacuation contingencies, and education resources for children. In the 1980s and '90s, this was done mostly in-house at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis or at a Concordia University campus.

Some of the pre-field orientation has been outsourced to organizations that specialize in teaching language-acquisition skills and cross-cultural skills. Link Care (based in California) and Mission Training International (based in Colorado Springs) are two organizations LCMS World Mission has used consistently during the past 20 years.

Pathways. In the late 1990s, it was recognized that missionary orientation needed to be deepened. It was agreed that this was best done on the field. *Pathways* was developed by LCMS World Mission employee Mark Schroeder to provide a basic mentoring structure for the first 18 months of new missionary field experience. A set of core, advanced, and elective modules gave the missionary and his mentor the opportunity to tailor a program. All modules required homework. Some modules required U.S.-based guidance. For instance, Module 5 was titled “How do I observe behavior, analyze data, and use cultural informants to increase my understanding of the culture in which I live?” LCMS anthropologist Dr. Jack Schulz helped develop the module and was contracted to guide new missionaries through this

module via e-mail. *Pathways* has not been formally used as a part of missionary training since 2003.

If *Pathways* must be classified, I would call it non-formal. While one read books and wrote reaction papers, the learning was all done in context. New missionaries struggled with *Pathways* because of their great desire to start working once they arrived on the field. Those who did the work, however, found the 18 months was not time wasted and gave them a deeper understanding of their host culture, of how to witness cross-culturally, a humility, and a stronger relationship with God. The program seemed to offer the spiritual, affective, and cognitive knowledge that formal education cannot give.

In 2011, the LCMS had mission personnel in 32 countries, making it impossible to build the large mission teams possible before 1975.²²⁸ The low missionary density makes non-formal missionary education for new missionaries difficult in many LCMS mission contexts.

Synodical Foreign Mission Abroad Budget

The original constitution of the LCMS has a strong focus on mission, and the mission of the church in a foreign context was from the beginning something easier for congregations to do together rather than on their own. What the Synod does together includes funding foreign mission. The Missouri Synod grew from 715,483²²⁹ baptized members in 1900 to 2,877,291²³⁰ in 1970 and dropped to 2,278,586²³¹ in 2010. Some of this decline can be

²²⁸ LCMS World Mission “At a Glance” handout updated September 2011, available at <http://lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=294>, accessed February 27, 2012.

²²⁹ *Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1940* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), 242, 235.

²³⁰ *1990 Yearbook*, 218–19

attributed to the 94,000²³² member loss that came when the Canadian districts of the LCMS formed their own synod in 1988.²³³ The Brazil and Argentine districts of the LCMS together numbered just over 200,000 baptized members and became independent church bodies in 1980 and 1985, but their membership was never counted in the North American numbers. At the same time that the LCMS has lost membership, the money collected for the work of the church has grown. In 1920, \$9,429,813²³⁴ was given to Missouri Synod congregations for work “at home and at large.” By 2010, the amount rose to \$1,375,784,215.²³⁵ Of the \$1.375 billion given in 2010, \$1,254,192,118²³⁶ stayed “at home” to support local congregations and their ministries. The rest supports various entities of the Synod, including the foreign mission effort. In 1900, the foreign mission abroad budget was \$20,256; in 2010, the budget was \$22,577,613²³⁷ to support foreign mission efforts as well as Ministry to the Armed Forces.

Much has been said about the lack of giving to foreign mission initiatives by the Synod in the recent past. In 2003, *The Lutheran Witness* dedicated an issue to the mission efforts of the church and included raw statistics on giving. The article notes that while “giving per confirmed member in the Synod for all purposes rose from \$259.39 in 1981 to \$633.62 in 2001,” the average that reached the national level stayed flat at about \$12.65 during the same decades.²³⁸

²³¹ *The Lutheran Annual 2012* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod), 771.

²³² *1986 Statistical Yearbook* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1981), 222.

²³³ Lutheran Church Canada website, <http://www.lutheranchurch-canada.ca/history.php>, accessed January 21, 2012.

²³⁴ *1940 Yearbook*, 242, 235.

²³⁵ *The Lutheran Annual 2012*, 771.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ Ross Stroh, e-mail, January 19, 2012.

²³⁸ “Funding the Mission,” *The Lutheran Witness*, February 2003, 27.

If we look at the percentage of total funding that goes to support foreign mission efforts, we see that in 1930, 1.8% of Synod's total giving supported the "foreign mission abroad" budget. In 2010, we see that \$22 million is 1.6% of the Synod's total giving, and this supported 60 career missionaries and 61 long-term volunteers. The peak of mission giving was at the height of LCMS mission activity in about 1970, when about 4% of the overall giving to the Synod was used for foreign mission activity. The \$10,120,000 foreign mission budget in 1970 is the equivalent of \$57 million 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation.²³⁹ As we have already seen, even with such good giving, the program in 1970 was not sustainable from a budgeting standpoint, and missionaries were brought home to bring spending under control. Calculating for inflation, the \$20,000 from the 1900 foreign mission budget equals about \$585,000²⁴⁰ in 2011 dollars—a little more than \$100,000 per missionary, which is not so different from the cost of an LCMS missionary in 2011. While salaries paid to missionaries are standardized, the cost of missionaries varies widely depending on the country where work is being done because of cost of living differences, travel involved in the work, and education costs for dependent children.

²³⁹ Conversion factors from <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/sahr/sahr>, accessed January 20, 2012.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

Table 1. LCMS Giving Trends Compared to Membership and Foreign Missionary Workers

Year	LCMS Baptized	Home & At Large LCMS Donations	Foreign Mission Abroad Budget	Mission Budget As % of Total	LCMS Career Missionaries
1900	715,483	²⁴¹	\$20,256		5
1910	848,905		\$20,705		10
1920	948,298	\$9,429,813	\$88,794	0.94	19
1930	1,135,635	\$15,201,172	\$279,061	1.8	63
1940	1,342,533	\$15,580,427	\$183,557	1.1	67
1950	1,728,472	\$60,531,591	\$728,870	1.2	115
1960	2,369,036	\$149,866,005	\$1,823,042	1.2	201
1970	2,877,291	\$246,945,632	\$10,120,473	4	273
1980	2,719,319	\$469,172,902	\$11,091,221	2.3	101
1990	2,692,607	\$831,581,497	\$12,433,618	1.4	161
2000	2,553,971	\$1,229,244,829	\$24,375,581	1.9	106
2010	2,278,586	\$1,375,784,215	\$22,577,613	1.6	60

Sources: LCMS *Statistical Yearbooks* from 1900 to 1990, the *2012 Lutheran Annual*, LCMS Convention Workbooks, and LCMS Accounting Department.

The overall cost of a foreign mission program is easy enough to see by the numbers, but it is much more difficult to talk in terms of the actual cost of a missionary on the foreign field because of all the added costs associated with mission work in the LCMS. Support teams, recruitment services, accounting, fundraising, and administration are all housed in the St. Louis offices of the Synod, where rent is paid for space used by the mission department. Missionaries also need funding for field ministries and programs. About 5% of the total budget is given as direct grants to partner churches to subsidize their seminary programs.²⁴²

Glenn O’Shoney in his March 2000 letter to missionaries saw the trend away from denominational giving to direct support. The downward trend of unrestricted funding coming from the Synod suggests that it is possible in a short time to see all LCMS foreign mission

²⁴¹ Efforts were made to find these “home and at large” donation numbers from the LCMS accounting department, the LCMS rosters and statistics department, and at the Concordia Historical Institute. No data was found for LCMS gifts given for “at home” congregation work for 1900 and 1910.

²⁴² David Birner on regional director conference call, January 4, 2012.

funding will come directly from supporting congregations and individuals. Even so, the Missouri Synod continues to give generously and support mission. The desire to be involved is clear in the mission fields, where dozens of groups from the LCMS are involved in foreign mission apart from the synodical effort.

Mission Societies, Auxiliaries, and Registered Service Organizations

Eduard Arndt's Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society that finally called and sent him to China was not a new idea. Mission societies were common practice in Germany from the mid-1800s.²⁴³ The calling of Arndt to foreign missionary service apart from the Synod did and does raise questions about ecclesiastical authority. Arndt wisely started an independent mission magazine, *Missionsbriefe*, and developed direct support from congregations. While Arndt was called to defend himself in light of passages such as Hebrews 5:4, "And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was" (ESV). But the fact that no calls were coming from congregations in foreign countries seems to have been glossed over by the Synod, which gave pastors authority as extensions of the sending church. Lueking says, "Arndt appealed to the same strategy and was tactful in introducing the right phrase (*das reine lautere Evangelium*) and linking his position with both scholastic dogmaticians and Luther."²⁴⁴

In the years since a mission society sent Arndt to China, mission societies in the LCMS have been working to do the same. The Missouri Synod has tried different ways to get a handle on the splintered mission effort with a bylaw that states that for the sake of a unified mission effort, the Board for International Mission "shall serve as the only sending agency

²⁴³ Bosch, 331.

²⁴⁴ Lueking, 240.

through which workers and funds are sent to the foreign mission areas of the Synod, including the calling, appointing, assigning, withdrawing and releasing of missionaries and other workers for the ministries in foreign areas.²⁴⁵ At the same time, the Synod recognizes Registered Service Organizations (RSOs) that have the right to call rostered personnel. There are 27 RSOs²⁴⁶ associated with the mission efforts of the LCMS, including Lutheran Bible Translators, Mission Opportunities Short Term, Lutheran Heritage Foundation, and others that operate in the international realm. Besides RSOs, the Missouri Synod recognizes two auxiliary organizations, the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and the Lutheran Layman's League. The colleges and seminaries of the LCMS are also active on the international stage with programs for their own students and for students from other countries.²⁴⁷ These LCMS entities open offices and register legal organizations in foreign countries with budgets and programs that meet their own needs as well as those of mission.

The mission zeal of so many in the LCMS is positive, while the lack of unity in efforts is not always helpful. Efforts to unify the Synod's mission outreach become even more difficult as the price of airline tickets make travel to almost any destination affordable. Communication has become easy and inexpensive with Skype and e-mail available for anyone with access to a computer. The balance between grass roots involvement and a long-

²⁴⁵ *2010 Constitution, Bylaws, and Articles of Incorporation* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2010), 139.

²⁴⁶ *Lutheran Annual 2012*, 746–47.

²⁴⁷ A list of non-Asian organizations that partner with the LCMS in Asia include Lutheran Women's Missionary League, LCMS World Relief, Wheat Ridge Ministries, Habitat for Humanity, Mission Opportunities Short Term, Concordia University System, Lutheran Hour Ministries, Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Lutheran Bible Translators, Hmong Mission Society, Pastoral Leadership Institute, Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation, Lutheran Education Association, The Sending Place, Chinese Lutherans in Mission Building, Florida/Georgia, South Wisconsin, Missouri, and Southeastern Districts, Luther Institute of Southeast Asia, Messengers of Life, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Norwegian Lutheran Mission, People Of the Book Lutheran Outreach, Malabar Mission Society, Christian Children's Concern Society, LCMS Seminaries, Garuna Foundation, Ephphatha Lutheran Mission Society, Agglobe Services International, Christian Friends of Korea.

term mission effort is not easy to find and takes a great deal of humility and regular interaction.

Literature Review

There is little literature available that addresses directly the central thesis of this study, that the roles of denominational foreign mission efforts are changing. You will see that James Engle and William Dyrness recognize mission change, but they look at this from a mission agency perspective and not from a denominational perspective where daughter churches in some ways have capacity that the mother church doesn't possess. Partnership is a theme that must be prominent as North Americans work as guests in foreign mission stations with indigenous churches.

In *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where Have We Gone Wrong?* authors James F. Engel and William A. Dyrness illustrate the change that has taken place in North American Evangelical mission in the past 20 years. Agencies have been making minor adjustments in their operations and worldview when major overhauls are required. These agencies find themselves trapped by American cultural realities, economics, and politics. This point is well aligned with the LCMS mission situation. Institutional success as a priority and all the economics and politics that go with the need for success become a stumbling block at home to foreign mission abroad if the home institution cannot capitalize on some accomplishment.

A second point that resonates for the LCMS is that younger churches are not recognized as true partners, even when the indigenous churches are doing a much better job at missions than the North Americans. This is especially true when money is involved. Shifts

are taking place, however, that could easily swing the funding pendulum away from North America to Asia, and the relationships will change.

Finally, missions have often allowed their theology to be tainted by modernity and “reducing the gospel to proclamation.”²⁴⁸ This later point seems almost ironic in LCMS circles, where the complaint has been that extended discipleship periods have prevented people from ever being prepared enough to bear witness to their faith. The *Ablaze!* movement was all about inviting people to proclamation where this was perceived as a weakness of the LCMS. A balance between proclamation and discipleship must be maintained.

Though 15 years old, *Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions*,²⁴⁹ edited by William D. Taylor, provides an interesting look into how organizations work with multinational teams to accomplish mission. These participants are working to put into practice true partnership. The suggestions are important for the LCMS as we see roles in the mission tasks changing from leading efforts to partnering as equals, or even playing a supporting role while others lead.

This book is a compilation of articles written from different organizational and cultural perspectives. It is reassuring in some ways to see that the same struggles these organizations were working through in the 1990s are the same we have today.

Michael Griffiths, in the preface, notes that there are so many organizations working at cross-purposes with one another that it only makes sense to work together. He noted that at the time of his writing, there were seven different Baptist missions working in the

²⁴⁸ Engel and Dyrness, 18.

²⁴⁹ William D. Taylor, ed., *Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1994).

Philippines. He, like many of the authors, thinks that Western individualism is a factor in the “Lone Ranger” missionaries and organizations. His idea is simple: “We should never struggle to do something alone, that we can do better if we cooperate with others in ‘partnerships,’”²⁵⁰ and yet he recognizes that this is not always easy.

William Taylor defines partnerships as “using mutual gifts to accomplish tasks,”²⁵¹ but it is not always so simple. Luis Bush says partnership is “an association of two or more autonomous bodies who have formed trusting relationships, and fulfill agreed-upon expectations by sharing complementary strengths and resources, to reach their mutual goal.”²⁵² Not surprisingly, the majority of articles speak to the pitfalls that keep relationships from being “trusting.”

The problem areas identified included cultural differences, lack of effective communication, money issues, personality conflicts, and a lack of clear objectives. It was a bit surprising that the Western leaders were less worried about clear objectives than were the non-Westerners. Another point made by several of the authors is that there is a tension between individual and community. Westerners can tend to work as individuals and rely on someone to make decisions, while Eastern cultures often want to work for consensus, allowing all voices to be heard. While there is a place for both, some cultures lean toward one or the other, and this causes confusion in all aspects of partnership. Philip Butler pointed out that we in the West think so much about an individual confession that we often forget that a community witness can be much more powerful than an individual one.²⁵³

²⁵⁰ Ibid., ix.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 4.

²⁵² Ibid., 4.

²⁵³ Ibid., 16.

Paul McKaughan's article is brutally honest as he declares that "productive Christian partnerships are not natural,"²⁵⁴ and that the least complicated partnership is one where there is a dominant partner. Miakudi Kure gives a perspective from Nigeria that states bluntly, "Westerners never learned from the previous occurrences"²⁵⁵ of paternalism and the use of funding to be paternalistic. Joshua Ogawa points out that Western missionaries often focus on knowing and "doing," while Asians often consider "being" the most important thing. The goal for a Westerner is often to get the job over and done, while the Asian values being together. Value differences are certain to cause clashes.

The book ends with examples of partnerships that are working, but none is significant in terms of a denomination partnering. Almost all the organizations and partnerships considered in the book are between para-church organizations or stand-alone mission agencies and national church partners. The lessons are still applicable. While we may like to put emphasis on theological underpinnings of a partnership, time and again this book reveals that the rubber hits the road with people working with other people. Relationships are always going to be key in partnerships. Taylor in the conclusion notes that even the best of partnerships still struggle with "personal pride and agenda, personality conflicts, cultural variants, inadequate personal relationships upon which to build trust, differing expectations and guidelines for measuring results."²⁵⁶

There is little written about the changing role of denominational foreign mission efforts in the twenty-first century. There are examples of how to partner well and many

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 70.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 90.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 238.

books that describe how to “pass the baton,”²⁵⁷ but little on how to stay engaged in meaningful partnership with daughter churches that have grown up. As with every kind of relationship, good communication and respect are keys to good planning and managing expectations. Communication means different things to different people. Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod president Dr. Allan Yung recently told me, “Don’t write me e-mails. Come drink tea with me and talk.”²⁵⁸ Relationships with one another are what Jesus has made possible when he repaired our relationship with the Father. The relationships a church has built can be tended and strengthened for mutual work in God’s mission. When relationships are strong, the mission tasks that need to be accomplished will be clear, along with the role to be played by missionaries and mission teams.

Conclusion

The first inclination of the LCMS was to be involved in German mission. This German mission included “home mission abroad,” which was in some ways focused internally. There was a sincere desire to build Lutheran churches in these efforts, but especially in Brazil and Argentina; these were districts of the LCMS until the 1980s. This does not discount the mission zeal of the LCMS and the “foreign mission abroad,” to non-Germans.

In this foreign mission abroad history we learn there will always be changing paradigms for mission, and we can identify four distinct periods of foreign mission abroad activity for the LCMS. Between 1895 and 1945, the three major foreign mission emphases

²⁵⁷ Tom A. Steffen, *Passing the Baton: Church Planting That Empowers* (La Habra, CA: Center for Organizational & Ministry Development, 1997).

²⁵⁸ Allan Yung, February 6, 2012, conversation at the Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod office.

were India, China, and Nigeria. This work was marked by the establishment not only of congregations, but institutions such as schools, seminaries, and hospitals.

In the 15 years following WWII, there was mission activity in 13 countries that became more open as a result of the war. LCMS activity in these new mission fields was instigated by different means, but the majority of the work was much like LCMS work before WWII, which involved planting church bodies, the majority of which have become LCMS partner churches. Fewer institutions were established in countries during these years, but seminaries and schools were part of the mission strategy.

A third major mission period in the LCMS mission history began in 1962 and continues through the fall of the Iron Curtain in about 1990. During these years, the LCMS was involved in nine new fields, and the majority of these were developed with indigenous partners. This is nine in almost 30 years compared to the previous period, when the LCMS was beginning work in a new country almost every year. The emphasis during these years was to deepen previously begun work and strengthen partners. This represents the time when as many as 365 career missionaries were on the field at any one time, and when up to 4% of the total LCMS budget was used for foreign mission abroad. These decades also represent the maturing of partner churches that became independent. Between 1959 and 1986, 12 former mission fields saw the establishment of synods with which the LCMS had official church-to-church protocols.²⁵⁹ Relationships and mission tasks changed as LCMS missionaries and new partner churches developed new ways to work together, even when projecting missionally into countries where neither the LCMS nor partners had previously

²⁵⁹ David Birner, *Forging a Multinational Global Missionary Force* (DMin dissertation, Bakke Graduate University, 2010), 178–80. India (1959), Chile (1960), Nigeria (1963), Taiwan (1966), Ghana (1971), Papua New Guinea (1971), Korea (1971), Philippines (1971), Japan (1976), Hong Kong (1977), Brazil (1980), and Argentina (1986).

worked. By the end of this period, the work was becoming focused more sharply on church planting and leadership development. Only two missionary doctors remained at the end of this time, and missionary teachers were few.

The present period of LCMS mission activity began in 1990 with the fall of the Iron Curtain. From 1990 to 2010, the LCMS initiated traditional mission work with people groups where Lutherans had not worked in major ways,²⁶⁰ but a majority of the new foreign mission work was built on new relationships with preexisting Lutheran churches²⁶¹ or mission efforts initiated by partner churches.²⁶² As the world became populated with more Lutheran churches, the paradigm shifted from working alone to working with partners. As the number of career LCMS missionaries has fallen, the fields have lost all career medical professionals and teachers. The only institutions that are being established are international schools that prove to be self-sustaining. The human care work is carried out by LCMS career missionaries, but apart from institutions; long-term volunteers are involved in teaching, but at partner church institutions.

The Missouri Synod's 115-year experience in "foreign mission abroad" has seen many shifts in various tasks of mission, driven by funding, wars and other world events, organizational structure, the worldview of the United States, and foreign partners. Often, mission involvement in specific countries came not out of careful planning, but out of the reaction to opportunities that God placed before the church, and there are many paths to the foreign mission field, through family members or partner church affiliations, or through

²⁶⁰ LCMS mission to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are examples of this work.

²⁶¹ For example: Lutherans in Latvia, Lithuania, and the Czech Republic.

²⁶² The work in Uganda, Gambia, and Benin are examples of African Initiated Lutheran Churches that represent work begun by LCMS daughter churches, and LCMS partnership with the Lutherans in Argentina has led to church planting in Spain.

RSOs and other organizations. Some of the richest rewards come in following the sweep of God's hand rather than trying to force it.

The 2010 LCMS Mission Report to the synodical convention noted that the LCMS is involved in mission activity in 88, countries 24 of which are marked as “historic or working relationships supported by regional budgets.”²⁶³ Even without those supported financially by local funds, the LCMS has a hand in mission in many corners of the world. It is not likely or prudent for the LCMS to withdraw missionaries and funding from a majority of these 88 countries in order to return to the kind of work done in India at the turn of the century, nor would the present LCMS partners hear of it. The LCMS will need to adapt and focus. How this happens will depend on partners around the world, mission leadership in St. Louis, those who train missionaries, and the missionaries themselves.

The LCMS is not the only denomination that faces change. How the Synod works in the future in many parts of the world is a question of how the Synod will partner with other churches to accomplish God's mission of bringing the gospel to those who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

²⁶³ *Convention Workbook Reports and Overtures 2010* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2010), 31–32.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT DEVELOPED

This chapter will explain the process that led the author to identify specific ministry challenges in the foreign mission efforts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, what informed this choice of the challenges, and the process that led to recommendations to help meet these challenges.

Background for Topic

I began work as a foreign missionary in 1993 in Moscow as a church planter following the opening of the former Soviet Union. Lutheran churches existed in Russia for centuries before the 1917 October Revolution. As these churches began to reestablish themselves, one of the guiding principles of LCMS work included working “through Lutheran church structures where these exist and through appropriate mission structures where Lutheran churches do not exist.”²⁶⁴ This was a new mission strategy for the LCMS, an approach that deliberately worked with and through already established Lutheran churches, churches with which the LCMS had no formal ecclesiastical relationship. This strategy would necessitate giving up control, but offered a greater opportunity to influence Lutheran church bodies in countries where the LCMS had no previous presence.

This was also a time when congregations, institutions, and mission societies were clamoring for opportunities to be involved in foreign mission, often working in competition with official mission efforts of the LCMS. The disruption caused hard feelings among members of the LCMS and among national church leaders when jealousy and competition

²⁶⁴ BFMS —LLL Strategy Statement on Russia, Draft of 920925, 1.

for funds developed. Uncoordinated mission efforts in the same field rarely unify an emerging national church.

Funding for the LCMS foreign mission effort has dramatically changed in the past 19 years. In 1990, 74% of the mission budget support came from weekly congregation offerings as unrestricted funding from Synod.²⁶⁵ In 2012, about 7% of mission funding for the mission budget comes as unrestricted money from Synod, and 93% must be raised from direct appeal and special gifts.²⁶⁶ Missionaries must aggressively fundraise for their own support and trust that there is enough from other sources to fund field projects and support staff in St. Louis.

As an administrator in Asia, I had the opportunity to work with daughter synods of the LCMS and saw that many of them were looking for relationships with the LCMS that were not “mother/daughter,” but “partner/partner.”

Initial thinking about the Major Applied Project was that a study of missionary formation would provide needed guidance for a well-trained mission force that could better manage problems on the field. Even skilled missionaries, however, are not going to be able to overcome differences in emphasis and need that come from partners in the fields and mission staff in the U.S. What is needed is alignment, and the ever-changing world makes that difficult.

Everyone will agree that the gospel should be proclaimed, but there are differences of opinion about how gospel work is done. Questions of priority must always be asked when there are limited resources. These questions cannot be answered effectively by one person or constituency, especially in a world that is becoming increasingly flat with easy travel and

²⁶⁵ Glenn O’Shoney, “Waking the Sleeping Giant.”

²⁶⁶ Ross Stroh, conversation February 26, 2012.

communication. The project then is to discover the mission priorities of four groups, provide the results to help inform decisions, and develop guidelines for defining mission tasks in the future with alignment among major stakeholders.

The Design of the Project

The first step in discovering if there are differing ideas about how to accomplish mission is to discover what the stakeholders think are the important mission tasks. Stakeholder groups that had the most impact on alignment in the mission field were chosen. Missionaries are always going to be major players because they are the practitioners of mission. Seminary professors were chosen as stakeholders because traditionally at least 50% of LCMS missionaries have been clergy trained by the two LCMS seminaries, and it is important to know the mind of those who are preparing mission workers. Mission directors and support staff in the synodical office were chosen because of the influence they have over the direction of mission. The final, and maybe most important, group to be surveyed was partner church leadership. The feedback from this group is vital to field alignment and mission work that is sustainable.

Other groups were suggested as providing valuable input, such as district presidents, mega-church pastors, and major donors, but while these groups are often stakeholders in the Synod's foreign mission efforts, the perspective of their input would be removed from the mission fields and have less impact on alignment issues.

A review of Lutheran mission distinctives in chapter 2 and the history of LCMS mission work in chapter 3 give a picture of mission tasks employed by missionaries in well-

established fields and provided context as well as a general catalogue of mission tasks employed by the LCMS.

The next step was to develop a survey that would provide general input from four stakeholder groups. This first survey gave three examples of mission tasks and asked for more suggestions. These examples were used because they are historically part of every mission effort. The survey was built on a free website for survey work called Survey Monkey²⁶⁷ and invitations were sent via e-mail to each member of the four groups. The survey stated: *Evangelism, Church Planting and Human Care Projects are often considered important mission tasks. Please make a list of other mission tasks you believe are important.* Ten blanks were available for answers. This survey was originally sent out on August 22, 2011, and was resent to those who did not respond. The results of this survey were compiled. The results were verified and ranked. The top-ranking tasks were to be used to prepare a second survey that would further refine mission priorities of the four groups. Dr. Bruce Hartung gave guidance on the surveys and advised that no more than six questions be asked on the second survey and that using a Likert scale would make answering simple and provide good feedback from respondents.

The second survey was also prepared on Survey Monkey, and the instructions reminded them of what this was about and how to rate each mission task. The instructions were as follows:

My name is John Mehl and I am doing mission research for a DMin program. In a previous survey I asked you about what you think the role of LCMS World Mission should be in the 21st century. I have tallied the results and come up with six

²⁶⁷ www.surveymonkey.com.

categories that were most mentioned by you. Please help me again by rating each of these mission activities on a scale of 1 to 7 with 7 being the highest in importance.

The results can be sorted to make it possible to analyze the differences between the four groups. The responses to this survey came in faster than the first survey.

From the beginning of the project it seemed that a way to get clear information from stakeholder groups was to use a mixed method using both quantitative and qualitative research. The *DM-995 Project Research and Writing* was helpful in helping crystalize the advantages of giving different kinds of voices to respondents. The surveys gave all participants the opportunity to give input in a quantitative process. With qualitative research, respondents give answers to specific questions usually based on a theory or idea that the researcher wants to test.

In this case, I wanted feedback on already gathered information about mission tasks and their ranking. Those questioned already had the opportunity to respond to both previous surveys and would be asked about the results. Three members from reach stakeholder group were chosen to give a worldwide perspective.

My project advisor discussed the results of the second survey and the rankings of mission tasks. The five questions were developed to allow thoughts to be shared about the LCMS foreign mission effort. The questions are:

1. From your perspective, what do you think is presently the highest priority of the LCMS's foreign mission program?
2. What do you think should be the highest priority of the LCMS's foreign mission program?
3. In the survey taken by LCMS seminary professors, St. Louis mission leaders, field missionaries, and partner church leaders, "partnering in theological education" and "building partner church capacity" were the highest rated. What do you think this means?

4. The two rated at the lowest were “providing and managing volunteer mission opportunities” and “providing pastoral leadership for local congregations.” What do you think this means?

5. Is there anything else about the role of LCMS you would like to share?

The fifth question was added at Bruce Hartung’s suggestion to provide an opportunity for further input about the LCMS involvement in mission without constraints.

After data gathering was done, an analysis was done on surveys as a whole and from the perspective of the four groups. Conclusions were drawn and recommendations made to better facilitate alignment in the mission fields of the LCMS. The conclusions and recommendations were presented to Rev. Greg Williamson, chief mission officer of the LCMS, together with Rev. John Fale and Dr. David Birner, co-executive directors for the LCMS Office of International Mission on February 27, 2012 (Appendix B).

Conclusion

The quantitative research portion of this project was made easier with widely available access to the Internet, even for missionaries in the far corners of Africa. That being said, diligence was required to get a suitable number of responses. Encouragement to respond was required, but when the responses did come, they were worth the effort. Survey Monkey was a great tool, making it possible to see results from respondents instantly as well as a list of those who had not responded. Megan Kincaid, a fellow missionary in the Asia Pacific field, was helpful in setting up the surveys and providing feedback in a timely way.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROJECT EVALUATED

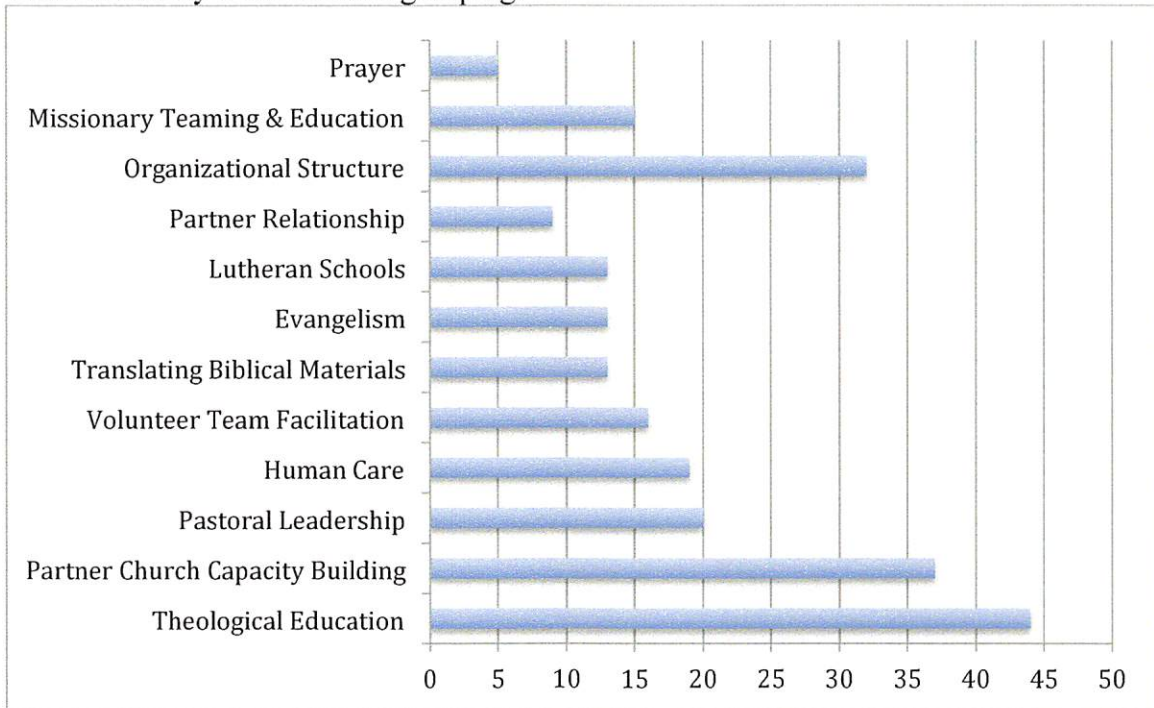
In this chapter, the results of the three surveys will be presented along with analysis of how this information can inform guidelines for LCMS foreign mission work. Analysis will be done on the basis of the theological review of Lutheran mission distinctives described in chapter 2 and in the context of LCMS mission history from 1895 to the present.

Survey 1

A link to Survey Monkey for Survey 1, titled *Important Mission Tasks*, was sent to 98 missionaries, St. Louis mission staff, partner church presidents, and seminary professors. Forty-two stakeholders responded to this survey. Twenty-seven responses came from missionaries, 4 from St. Louis staff, 5 from partner church leaders and 6 from seminary professors. These 42 stakeholders submitted 236 mission tasks (see Appendix C).

For the sake of this exercise, all responses were bundled together to get a list of missionary tasks that are prominent among the stakeholders in LCMS foreign mission efforts. The 236 responses were divided into 12 groups as noted in the following chart.

Table 2. Survey 1 results after grouping.



There were questions that arose in grouping because some of the mission tasks in this chart can fall into more than one category. For instance, *Lutheran Schools* could be seen as evangelism if a majority of the students are not Christian, as is the case at Concordia Middle School in Chaiyi, Taiwan. Schools could also be *Partner Church Capacity Building* if a majority of the students are partner church members and they see the school as building future church leaders, which is how the Gutnius Lutheran Church looks at St. Paul’s Lutheran School in Pausa. Schools were named enough times that it was decided to warrant a separate category.

Pre-evangelism activities were placed into the *Evangelism* category. This includes relationship building, ESL, youth ministries, and so on. *Human Care* responses could also be viewed as pre-evangelism or *Partner Church Capacity Building*, but again there were many

responses that clearly defined “human care” as a missionary task, that it too warranted its own category.

Prayer was named the least number of times as a mission task, but the fact that it was mentioned five times is insightful. This was only recognized as a missionary task by missionaries, and more research is needed to understand what is behind seeing prayer as mission work, where as worship or Bible study was not mentioned.

Partner Relationship is a category that probably needs more attention. The fact that it didn’t receive a large number of responses does not mean that it is not important. This is also a group that overlaps with *Partner Church Capacity Building*, but was more focused on communication, listening, and relationship building.

The two tasks of *Missionary Training* and *Organizational Structure* were listed quite often as part of the missionary work. *Organizational Structure* included all responses that dealt with administration, financial controls, support raising, strategy, mission management, and missionary care. These are essential support tasks, without which missionary work would be impossible. *Organizational Structure* is about resources in much the same way that *Missionary Training* is about developing personnel resources. This includes missionary education, language and culture training, and spiritual support. Because these two groups are really about resources for other missionary tasks, they were not included in the second survey, even though they were mentioned more times than some of the tasks that were included.

The most prominent response was *Theological Education*. It was articulated as a mission task 44 times by the 42 respondents in one form or another. Included in this category are any kind of theological education, including refresher courses and lay theological

training. There is no doubt that the training of indigenous pastoral leadership is seen by a majority of respondents as a critical mission task.

The second most popular response had to do with *Partner Church Capacity Building*. Theological education can be seen as building capacity in that it does develop pastoral leadership, but there were enough responses apart from theological education that this category merited its own category. Included here were responses that ranged from “training in writing their own hymns and liturgy” to “money management training.”

The *Pastoral Leadership* category included everything that dealt with congregational life, from “church planting” to “worship.” *Teams Facilitation* was another category that had a surprising number of responses that ranged from “connecting U.S. congregations” to “advising short-term visitors so they can avoid pitfalls and maximize impact for good.”

The goal of Survey 2 was to define more clearly how stakeholders rate the mission tasks that were mentioned the most in Survey 1. A difficulty came when trying to keep Survey 2 down to six questions because *Translating Biblical Materials*, *Evangelism*, and *Lutheran Schools* all came in with relatively the same number of responses. *Translating Biblical Materials* was chosen to be included because it was a different task that was less easily subsumed under *Pastoral Leadership* or *Partner Church Capacity Building* and would give a broader offering of mission tasks for Survey 2.

These categories do not have hardened definitions and the lines can look quite blurry. This can work as an advantage in that it helps illustrate the multidimensional reach of mission tasks. If we try to limit any one task to a category, we miss the broad impact that is truly made. Limiting mission tasks to specific categories will miss the broad integration into the spiritual and physical realms of ministry.

Survey 2

The six categories chosen for Survey 2: *Pastoral Leadership, Translating Biblical Materials, Volunteer Team Facilitation, Human Care, Partner Church Capacity Building, and Theological Education*. This survey was developed on Survey Monkey using a Likert scale for each category, asking that each be rated as to their importance as a missionary task for the LCMS with a “1” rating giving the task little importance and a “7” rating showing the task to be very important. These tasks were not ranked, but each rated individually.

The survey was sent to the same 98 individuals who received Survey 1. This survey seemed to be easier to take, and 69 responded: 12 partner church leaders, 9 seminary professors, 7 US staff, and 39 missionaries. Table 3 shows the results of the four constituency groups combined, tabulated by percentages, using the number of times the stakeholders chose a rating for a specific category. What follows on the next pages are breakouts from the four groups and commentary will follow.

All Groups Combined (69 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	2.90%	0.00%	1.45%	5.80%	21.74%	27.54%	40.58%
	2	0	1	4	15	19	28
Church Capacity	2.90%	4.35%	5.80%	4.35%	10.14%	28.99%	43.48%
	2	3	4	3	7	20	30
Human Care	4.35%	2.90%	11.59%	18.84%	26.09%	27.54%	8.70%
	3	2	8	13	18	19	6
Translation	4.35%	4.35%	7.25%	15.94%	13.04%	26.09%	28.99%
	3	3	5	11	9	18	20
Pastoral Leadership	27.54%	20.29%	5.80%	10.14%	20.29%	8.70%	7.25%
	19	14	4	7	14	6	5
Volunteers	4.35%	7.25%	27.54%	23.19%	18.84%	13.04%	5.80%
	3	5	19	16	13	9	4

Table 3. Survey 2 results for all constituency groups combined.

Partner Church Leadership (12 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	8.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	8.33%	50.00%
	1				4	1	6
Church Capacity	8.33%	0.00%	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	33.33%	25.00%
	1		2	1	1	4	3
Human Care	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	8.33%	25.00%	16.67%	16.67%
	2	1	1	1	3	2	2
Translation	25.00%	0.00%	8.33%	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	33.33%
	3		1	2	1	1	4
Pastoral Leadership	41.67%	8.33%	0.00%	0.00%	41.67%	8.33%	0.00%
	5	1			5	1	
Volunteers	8.33%	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	41.67%	16.67%	0.00%
	1	2	1	1	5	2	

Table 4. Partner church results for Survey 2.

Seminary Professors (9 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	22.22%	66.67%
					1	2	6
Church Capacity	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	44.44%	44.44%
					1	4	4
Human Care	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	22.22%	44.44%	0.00%
				3	2	4	
Translation	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	11.11%	22.22%	11.11%	44.44%
			1	1	2	1	4
Pastoral Leadership	22.22%	11.11%	0.00%	22.22%	22.22%	0.00%	22.22%
	2	1		2	2		2
Volunteers	0.00%	11.11%	44.44%	22.22%	22.22%	0.00%	0.00%
		1	4	2	2		

Table 5. Seminary professor results for Survey 2.

U.S. Mission Staff (7 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	57.14%	42.86%
						4	3
Church Capacity	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	28.57%	57.14%
					1	2	4
Human Care	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	28.57%	28.57%
					3	2	2
Translation	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	14.29%	14.29%	28.57%
				3	1	1	2
Pastoral Leadership	14.29%	28.57%	14.29%	14.29%	28.57%	0.00%	0.00%
	1	2	1	1	2		
Volunteers	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	14.29%	28.57%	14.29%	0.00%
			3	1	2	1	

Table 6. U.S. mission staff results for Survey 2.

Field Missionaries (39 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	2.56%	0.00%	0.00%	7.69%	25.64%	30.77%	33.33%
	1			3	10	12	13
Church Capacity	2.56%	5.13%	5.13%	2.56%	10.26%	25.64%	48.72%
	1	2	2	1	4	10	19
Human Care	2.56%	2.56%	15.38%	23.08%	25.64%	28.21%	2.56%
	1	1	6	9	10	11	1
Translation	0.00%	5.13%	10.26%	12.82%	12.82%	33.33%	25.64%
		2	4	5	5	13	10
Pastoral Leadership	25.64%	25.64%	7.69%	10.26%	12.82%	10.26%	7.69%
	10	10	3	4	5	4	3
Volunteers	5.13%	5.13%	33.33%	23.08%	10.26%	15.38%	7.69%
	2	2	13	9	4	6	3

Table 7. Field missionary results for Survey 2.

Evaluation of Survey 2 with Responses from Survey 3

Theological Education and *Building Partner Church Capacity* received high marks in Survey 2 much as it did in Survey 1. This trend will hold in all of the four stakeholder groups as well. When combining ratings 6 and 7, more than 50% of all groups rated these two missionary tasks as being of highest importance. Partner churches and missionaries rated these two lower than seminary professors and St. Louis missionary staff.

When partner church leaders were asked about the role of theological education and capacity building as missionary tasks, all responded positively. One stated that the LCMS “can speed up the growth of partner churches,” but warned that “dependency on dollars leads to negatives” and that the LCMS should “be a smart Santa Claus.”

Money is, for the receiving partner church, and in differing ways for the giving church, both a blessing and a threat. For the receiver it enables more mission to be done but it can also lead to manipulation and bad spending if controlled from the giver in the wrong ways. For the giver, it is always a blessing to be able to help, but it threatens the giver’s own integrity with the temptation to exercise the wrong kind of power over the receiving partner—manipulation, bad judgments, and so on. The giver’s dilemma is two sided: I want my money spent in a responsible way, but my view of what responsible means can be quite unrealistic, based on my ignorance of the local situation and needs, instead driven by my own North American imagination.

LCMS seminary professors felt that theological education is part of developing partner church capacity. The emphasis is not just on providing education, but helping partners provide theological education with

[an] emphasis on helping the partner church to train pastors for that church, strengthen the curricula, upgrade libraries . . . it could mean that one tries to enable

the partner church to assume responsibility in supporting herself . . . helping the partner church [in] reaching a level of interdependency which sees to it that the LCMS finds in the partner church a true partner in jointly cooperating in world-wide missions.

Missionaries were very sensitive to the idea that the Word is translatable into all cultures and languages, and there is a need to make sure “we are respecting our church partners enough that we are seeking to ‘translate the message,’ as Lamin Sanneh says, in an appropriate way and not just forcing an American model upon their church.” One seminary professor believes that when working in foreign lands, “sem profs need cross-cultural sensitivity training.” Missionaries are cognizant of the fact that partners have much to offer the LCMS and that “theological education is not just one way. How are they sending their teachers to our institutions or partnering with us in establishing new institutions where there aren’t any?” We could learn much about what it means to live as follower of Jesus in a culture that is hostile to Christians, and this is one example of what we can learn from others.

One St. Louis mission staff expressed concern that theological education be focused on building the capacity of partner churches to spread the gospel rather than only having a “concern for the purity of Lutheran teaching and doctrine.” A similar sentiment was expressed from the field that “reaching the lost has become secondary.” Another St. Louis staff member stated that theological education is one of the tools the LCMS can give to the partners to be about God’s mission. It “runs the gamut from evangelism training to high academic degrees, but for the goal of expanding capacity to spread the gospel and planting more churches and establishing more schools, and the ripple effect of all that comes.”

There is relative agreement that theological education and building partner church capacity are high value mission tasks, but care needs to be taken to make sure that these tasks are not ends unto themselves, but build toward reaching the lost. In fact, the “spirit of

Augsburg” sets edification and ecumenical witness alongside evangelism as the tasks of the Word-based church. The three are intertwined, and much will not work as well as it could without all three taking place.

Human Care fell in the middle of the band with the majority of stakeholders choosing 4, 5, or 6. A notable exception is found in the partner church responses that showed more balance across the band. U.S. staff rated human care ministries the highest with all responses in the 5–7 range, while missionaries spread the importance of human care over the 3–6 range with 28% of respondents choosing 6. The result is that human care ministries are seen as important, but not the most important.

The category of *Translation* showed some differences between the stakeholder groups. Well over 50% of all groups gave this category a 6 or 7. What is notable is the partner church responses in the chart above where 25% see this as a non-essential missionary task. U.S. staff responses weighted this as a 4, right down the middle, while seminary professors and missionaries tended to rate translation as important. All stakeholder groups except the St. Louis staff rated translation as more important than human care. It must be noted that at the present time, the synodical mission program does not include any translation work. Translation work is being done by two LCMS registered service organizations, Lutheran Bible Translators and Lutheran Heritage Foundation.

In Survey 1, *Pastoral Leadership* had more responses than *Translation* or *Human Care*, but in Survey 2, it was rated least important overall. Forty-eight percent of all stakeholders rated *Pastoral Leadership* 1 or 2. Three of the 39 missionaries and two seminary professors were the only 7 responses for this category. However, a look at the responses on the seminary chart will illustrate that there is a broad difference of opinion on

the role of pastoral leadership as a missionary task, with two respondents also marking this missionary task as having little importance with a 1 rating.

There are strong feelings that surround this mission task. One missionary from the field stated, “We certainly don’t want to be sending expensive and well-trained missionaries to a foreign country just to pastor a church for them. That should not only not be a priority, it should not be a function period.” The sentiment is much the same from North American LCMS leadership where it was stated, “It isn’t our task as the American church body to provide pastors for churches of other church bodies in other lands. The pastoral ministry is when congregations select their spiritual leaders and that needs to grow out of the local churches.” Another St. Louis mission leader wondered about “where the fine line is where we are imposing our values in mission work,” suggesting that sending pastors to serve in foreign parishes may be a high value to the LCMS, but maybe not to the partner churches. This can be due to our traditional way of thinking of mission in the past, and it can grow also from a patronizing attitude: we just do such things better than they can.

The offer of sending church planters to established partner church congregations has been tactfully rejected by partner church leaders. In a meeting with Papua New Guinea bishop Rev. Nicodemus Aiyene, he asked for theological educators, teachers, and medical workers to help with “outing the Good News.” When asked if the Gutnius Lutheran Church needed church planters, the answer was a quick “no,” with an explanation that they have evangelists trained for that. The bishop would appreciate, however, funding to support his 500 evangelists and theological educators to help reopen the Bible schools to train more evangelists.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁸ This conversation took place on the Timothy Lutheran Seminary grounds in Birip, Papua New Guinea, on August 27, 2011, with Timothy Quill, Anton Lutz, Ron Rall, Julie Lutz, and John Mehl.

The role of LCMS missionary pastors serving in local parishes on foreign fields has a long tradition in the LCMS where church planters started congregations and served them until nationals were theologically trained and could begin service. This was true especially in Latin America, where missionaries served as parish pastors in Brazil and Argentina. These congregations formed into districts of the LCMS and finally independent synods. Questions about the role of missionaries serving as pastors on foreign fields are answered by the ability of the partner to supply her own pastors. This topic is directly tied to how the LCMS relates to partners as opposed to doing pioneer work, which is discussed below.

The use of volunteers in mission fell into the middle of the band. While it did rank among the two lowest, it was still seen as weighting overall in the 3–4 range. Partner church responses tended to rate volunteer mission higher than the rest of the stakeholders, with 58% choosing a 5 or 6 for volunteer ministry.

When asked about the volunteer mission opportunities being in the bottom two, stakeholders responded with a variety of answers. One seminary professor stated, that “This strategy has little benefit for either the partner church or the LCMS except for individuals engaged in that opportunity.” Another seminary professor felt that it put too much of a burden on career missionaries to manage volunteers, and “the bang for the buck is relatively low apart from the mission education of North Americans.”

St. Louis mission staff stakeholders were not as blunt as the seminary professors, but also recognized that “volunteer ministries are at best a short-term experience for the volunteers and the recipients of the short-term service. It isn’t core to the planting and formation of a church body.” Another staff member was more positive: “When it is mission tourism it is bad, but when it is requested it can be powerful.”

Missionaries were pragmatic about volunteers. One said, “While volunteer missions may not be able to top other priorities, it is still very very important as a function and must be always taken into consideration and dealt with as best we can.” Another missionary suggests that a lot depends on the infrastructure that is in place to support volunteers and that there are intangibles that profit the effort after volunteers return home. “I think it’s fair to say that we probably get more out of the short-term experience in many ways by identifying workers, helping people get a mission mindset or perspective, [and] identifying potential missionaries for the future.”

As mentioned above, partner church leaders actually rated volunteer mission as higher than the other stakeholders. One partner church president stated:

These [volunteer missionaries] are not low here, but very important and meet a lot of needs. Those who view this as low should consider why they think it is low and reconsider what it is they are trying to accomplish. The GEOs are very powerful for us. Remember that statistics can fool you.

This church leader’s reaction is a reminder that context is king in mission. He has a robust outreach that is greatly enhanced by the presence of short-term and long-term volunteers. Notice that he singles out the GEO (Globally Engaged in Outreach long-term volunteer) program as being “powerful.” What is treated as a necessary evil by some stakeholders is seen as “powerful” to this church leader.

We have not differentiated between short-term and long-term volunteer mission. The majority of the reactions quoted above seem to be directed to short-term, but very little has been said about the value of long-term volunteers and should be further studied. A critical question is: how long do most people need to have a basic level of cultural understanding that enables them to be a significant help.

General Comments about the Role of the LCMS in Foreign Mission

When asked what is presently the focus of the LCMS in foreign mission fields, the stakeholders had a variety of answers. From the mission field there is a feeling that a new emphasis is being placed on “starting local Lutheran churches as in a congregation.” Another missionary states, “It seems to me that the highest priority of the program now is to partner with existing churches to train leaders in good confessional Lutheran doctrine.” A partner church leader says “The LCMS wants to build Lutheran identity by building Lutheran churches worldwide.” In St. Louis, one suggested that the highest priority is presently “building relationships.”

There was very little difference in the responses from stakeholders when asked about what should be the goal of the LCMS in foreign mission. Almost across the board the responses were that proclamation and gospel outreach are a priority, but together with partners. One missionary states:

We have been planting churches for many years. We have church bodies now, and there is a need to nurture those bodies and strengthen them so that they can now take up the baton and carry the work forward in their own and into other countries. One of the greatest needs in that area is training. So that should have the highest priority. Not the only priority, mind you. There are other ways listed here to come alongside these church bodies.

A St. Louis mission staff member notes, “I don’t think the biggest component of our work is where our work is brand new off the ground.” A field missionary agrees:

I think that reaching the unreached ourselves should be the second spearhead in a dual headed program. If we say now that all we do is to strengthen existing churches so that they can reach out, I believe that certain parts of our church body anatomy will begin to atrophy and die. At the same time we are strengthening, I believe that we need to continue to be reaching out ourselves.

Another missionary assumes that there will be both kinds of mission work taking place and that everyone needs to be made aware of the differences in context. He says that in

a closed country “where you don’t have any real access, it [the mission context] will look different from Hong Kong where you have a partner of sixty years that has her own capacity and her own unique means.” From the St. Louis staff we hear:

We don’t need to be afraid to start work in new places. We have so many more partners around the world and there is a desire to keep a commitment with those, but soon we will not be able to enter in any new cultures. We need to keep the balance between mission partners and being mission adventurous . . . and see the levels of passion that come with that kind of work that I don’t want us to forget.

This passion for staying engaged in mission was summed up by the missionary who stated, “If we are not in missions I think our church body will cease to grow.”

Concern for the present direction of the foreign mission effort of the LCMS comes from all stakeholders. One of the most prominent concerns is that the church needs to retain an element of pioneer work. A second worry is a growing colonialism. One partner church leader states, “I kind of get the impression that lately the LCMS is paternalistic in its approach which does concern me. We could work better together if the LCMS would seek advice or counsel from partner churches a bit more.” A seminary professor said,

There seems to be a tinge of a new imperialism, which is hard for Americans not to practice, in more and more instances that I hear about from people overseas. That is not good. We have in the immediate past built up more trust than Synod has ever had before with other churches, partners, and non-partners. If we let that diminish, it will be all the harder to rebuild.

Another seminary professor states, “The LCMS is strong with a biblical doctrine that resonates with our partners world-wide. What is not necessarily valued is our structure and polity, which tend to be disruptive to the work overseas.”

A St. Louis staff member suggests, “We don’t need to be in charge of it all and the big bullies. We need to be careful how we throw around our weight,” while another from St. Louis thinks that we “might be listening through our own filters and provide what we believe

is important.” A field missionary says, “I just believe that we cannot force a one-size-fits-all model onto different cultures. We will not engage the culture where it is and in the process will not be able to effectively show them the worth of a Lutheran understanding of church and mission.”

The last comment bleeds over into the question of what new churches should look like and how much of what the LCMS missionary brings is Lutheran Christian and how much is German-birthered, American-raised, Missouri Synod culture. A missionary raises the example of the emphasis on official registration of a congregation and how that has shaped the concept of a church. He states:

There is so much emphasis on the registration of a church and the identity and the legal entity becomes really critical and is warping our concept of what is a church and it is impacting what is the mission as well. I mean if you think that church only exists when there is a quorum of registered people who identify themselves in a certain way, then what happened to “wherever the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments administered rightly”? I mean that’s church, right?

This question is asked with the full understanding that for a century, LCMS missionaries have been careful to develop structures for the synods that they have planted. There is value in structures, especially when governments demand congregations and synods to be registered. Constitutions are also agreements between members that guide how interaction takes places. In a spiritual sense, however, a legal document does not make church. When Word-based Lutheran ecclesiology is swallowed up by organizational needs bad decisions can be made. The Word needs to remain at the center.

All together, the three surveys gave stakeholders in LCMS foreign mission the opportunity to reflect and give feedback. Missionaries in the field took advantage of this more than other constituencies. There are some surprises. The most notable is that there is more alignment between the four stakeholder groups than originally thought. This will be

addressed in the conclusions in the next chapter. Comments from some stakeholders that they see the LCMS as imperialistic and the perceived need for the LCMS to be involved in pioneer work were also notable discoveries from the surveys.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will draw conclusions from the study and its implications for the LCMS foreign mission effort and mission in the broader context. It will also make recommendations for overcoming any fragmented efforts in mission as well as suggesting areas that need further study. Finally, it will reflect on the impact this study has had on the author.

Building Team and Communication

The goal of this study was to discover points where there was a lack of alignment between four groups of stakeholders involved in the foreign mission efforts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. What was learned is that rather than a lack of agreement on the mission tasks of the LCMS, there was a great degree of agreement across the stakeholder groups. This result then begs the question of why the perception of fragmented mission efforts remains. Are the frictions due to different definitions or conceptions of the tasks? Are there tensions because of politics rather than principle?

While there is agreement on the mission tasks of the LCMS, the stakeholders come from different cultural perceptions that tend to force them into silos. There can be agreement on purpose and goals, but locations and situations shape ideas about how to best pursue objectives. Communication is the most basic bridge between the stakeholder groups.

In the history of LCMS mission activity, the 1960s stand out as a time when there appears to have been better alignment between the stakeholders. The 1960s mark the peak of LCMS mission activity. During this decade, the LCMS had a larger percentage of donations going to foreign mission and the highest number of missionaries in the history of the Synod. This is also a time when missionaries were prepared for mission service by taking graduate classes at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, taught by seminary professors, a world-renowned linguist, and St. Louis mission staff.

Most of these missionaries were going to serve in countries where partner churches had not yet formally organized, so a partner church stakeholder did not exist. The remaining three stakeholders were present from the beginning of the missionary sending process. It is likely that this made the task of building alignment and teams easier than today, when partner churches play more prominent roles as partners in LCMS mission efforts, but are less accessible. In a time when communication and travel are fairly inexpensive, it would seem possible to advance a strategy to include all relevant partners in mission strategy development and missionary training.

Since 1965, Bruce Tuckman's *Forming, Storming, Norming & Performing*²⁶⁹ have been accepted as a way that groups develop into productive teams. Broad team development seems to have taken place more often in previous LCMS mission eras than today. Orientations in the past 10 years have been no longer than two weeks and include mission staff and representatives from the fields, but no partner church leadership and no seminary involvement.

²⁶⁹ Gina Abudi, <http://www.pmhut.com/the-five-stages-of-project-team-development>, accessed February 22, 2012.

An attempt was made at training LCMS missionaries together with partner church leaders and missionaries in Latin America in the summer of 2009 with the Transcultural Mission Program. This was a partnership between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil, Confessional Lutheran Church of Chile, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Paraguay, Lutheran Church of Uruguay, and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The missionary training took place in Paraguay, and feedback from partner church leaders and missionaries was positive. Partner church leaders from Latin America continue to ask when the program will restart, but a lack of funding has prevented an extension of the program.

Missionary preparation is only one slice of the mission process. It is clear from a review of the past 115 years of LCMS mission that the landscape is always shifting. The process of building teams and communicating the doctrine of mission in an ever-changing world is never a finished task if the LCMS is serious about a unified mission effort. All stakeholders need to be involved in the team-building process.

LCMS Mission DNA

There is a pattern of mission activity that has been part of the LCMS efforts from the first work in India 1895. A long view with the goal of establishing sustainable communities of Lutherans or independent synods has always been part of the mission. The mission efforts were concerned about spiritual and physical needs. Churches were always planted, and institutions, including seminaries, schools, and hospitals were established. Besides a well-trained clergy, mission efforts were active in equipping the laity. This was always permeated by Lutheran theology and distinctives. The mission efforts of the LCMS reflect her North

American experience with a powerful parochial school system, world-class seminaries, and one of the most robust social service organizations in the USA.

Mission Is Multigenerational

The history of LCMS foreign mission engagement illustrates St. Paul's statement about the birth of the church in Corinth, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."²⁷⁰ While every generation may like to believe they are doing something significant, mission is always multigenerational. Generations to come will live with both good and bad decisions of today by any and all of the stakeholders. LCMS mission has always been more than simply evangelism or even church planting. It is about planting sustainable communities of faith—synods in our thinking—that will grow to develop their own outreach programs. History shows that it takes at least 50 years for a synod to be able to project missionally. This was the case with the LCMS and has been the same with partners in Hong Kong, Ghana, Korea, and elsewhere.

Mission societies and congregations can and do participate in foreign mission in significant ways, but they will find it difficult to maintain a 50-year perspective. It is possible that Western individualism makes it difficult for North American mission partners to accept the multigenerational aspect of mission. The East thinks in more collective terms. In 2009, China released a 50-year science strategy²⁷¹ while in the U.S., groaning begins at the mention of developing a three-year plan. The value of such a multi-decade strategy might be the long-term view it forces all participants to take. Each stakeholder must realize that it plays only a

²⁷⁰ 1 Corinthians 3:6–7 ESV.

²⁷¹ Peng Kuang, "China issues 50-year science strategy," Science and Development Network, <http://www.scidev.net/en/news/china-issues-50-year-science-strategy-.html>, accessed February 26, 2012.

single role in a long string of tasks needed to accomplish the goal. Better definition of the long-term goal needs to be made so all stakeholders clearly understand their roles.

All stakeholders, as well as mission societies and congregations, need to come to grips with multigenerational mission idea. LCMS leadership needs to recognize that the work of today was built and developed by others. The same will be true of the next generation and all those that follow. The LCMS has had 11 synodical presidents since it began work in India in 1895. What the LCMS does today in God's mission history is likely no more unique than the work of 50 years ago, but also no less important to the Lord's work of salvation. The Synod will continue to be in mission in the future, always building on today's work.

In a presentation of this paper's findings to LCMS mission leaders, the chief mission officer noted that ecclesiology can make long-term goals difficult. Multigenerational planning is difficult in the LCMS, where there is the possibility of a change in synodical administrations and districts due to elections that are held every three years. While the chief mission officer is keen to develop a long-term mission plan for the Synod, he understands the difficulty of developing something significant that can stand the test of time.

The Mission Timeline

As already alluded to, mission work takes time, and different points on the timeline require different interactions by missionaries. This paper shows that there is agreement that theological education and other mission tasks are important. They are important for all stages of mission engagement, but at different levels. Pioneer mission work requires basic theological teaching, while mission engagement with a 50-year-old partner church might demand a high level of theological teaching. Pastoral leadership can mean church planting in

pioneer work, but it might mean helping to train national pastors in a more developed partner church, or even to facilitate advanced degrees for national leaders so they can train their own pastors. How the LCMS engages in each site must be dependent on the needs at the time, which demand regular evaluation and adjustment.

Recommendations

The discoveries drawn from this study point to areas that need attention apart from finding alignment in basic missionary tasks. While further study will be recommended, there are strategies that can be implemented today to help unify the mission effort of the LCMS. As with most things in mission, these recommendations overlap and are not stand-alone.

The first recommendation is that there needs to be an effort to build team between stakeholders. A regular opportunity for the stakeholders to be involved in building mission strategies and missionary training and retraining would be very helpful in sustaining a unified mission strategy. A program like the Transcultural Mission Program mentioned earlier is an example of how part of this can be done. While building team is expensive, it can unify the mission effort and pay dividends in developing resource streams. One seminary professor suggests that the LCMS is missing the opportunity to involve congregations. He stated, “The number of national flags that congregations have up that represent the places that they are working illustrate this. The influence of the LCMS internationally has exploded. The Synod needs to be able to support this and balance this with the ability to say ‘no’ to protect our partner churches.” An effort to build team with stakeholders will help bring alignment.

Along with building team comes developing goals and strategies, which cannot be done in a vacuum, but must be done together with stakeholders if the results of the planning

are expected to last. If the Lutheran Church in Korea has a 50-year plan to plant 500 congregations, it does not serve that LCMS partner church if the LCMS has a different goal. It is always possible that the LCMS and her partners are going to have different priorities. The LCMS can be serious about working with partners and at the same time she can work alone in pioneer mission. A balance of pioneer work with partner work was supported by several stakeholders and assumed by others.

A third recommendation is that a communication system be developed that keeps stakeholders informed, silos broken, and the mission effort unified. Communication needs to be regular, transparent, and not only one-way (from the field in the form of reports and newsletters). A forum for airing stakeholder ideas for mission is needed. Safe feedback loops need to be developed so stakeholders can relate their realities without fear or repercussions. Any politicizing of mission builds silos and hinders communication and transparency. This seems to be an especially sensitive area for partner churches that rely on LCMS funding and missionaries who work for the organization. Transparency implies a level of trust among the partners. Stakeholder comments about a new imperialism from the LCMS suggest that there is work to be done to build trust or rebuild it. A fragmented mission effort will not lead to a unified partner church.

A final recommendation is for the development of a mission education program. Everyone needs to understand what foreign mission involves. This should include examples of past mission efforts, but needs to be focused on the future. Mission timelines need to be developed to show how mission work develops over time, is multigenerational, with illustrations of present-day work. Lutheran distinctives need to be illustrated to show how our

work is different from non-denominational work, with an emphasis on the fact that this is God's work.

For Further Study

A few topics arose from the paper that call for more study. These items could enhance the mission effort of the LCMS. The first is the volunteer program. The short-term and long-term efforts need study to determine their true value for the mission effort. An effort should be made to clarify the role of vocation in the mission of the church and how laity and clergy work together.

A second topic for further study is the point raised by some of the stakeholders that the LCMS mission efforts are colonial or imperialistic. This needs to include a look at how the partners perceive the gospel proclaimed by the LCMS. Is it culturally neutral, or is it overtly American? Several partner churches in Asia use liturgies and music translated into their various languages from the LCMS 1941 hymnal. There is resistance to change because this is what the LCMS brought to them, even though the LCMS is two hymnals away from *The Lutheran Hymnal* of 1941.

There can be a tendency to go from dependence on missionaries to almost no relationship with the LCMS. This has taken place in several of the countries in which the LCMS began mission in the 1940s and 1950s. After a time, partner churches developed a more critical understanding of what was brought by the missionaries, and with that came a maturity to accept or reject ideas and practices apart from whether they were brought by missionaries or not. In this connection, a study of cross-cultural sensitivities and the development of the ability to spend money responsibly deserves study time.

Finally, there needs to be a study of what went on in the LCMS during the 1960s, when there was a peak in synodical membership, the greatest number of career missionaries in foreign fields, and historically high percentages of donations that funded foreign mission. It was a time when the LCMS had the resources to go broad, but went deep instead. Did a cohesive mission vision drive synodical membership or vice versa?

Professional Growth

The highlighting of Lutheran theology in mission was a great exercise that reminded me of the unique contributions that Lutherans bring to mission. They strengthen the work of the LCMS. This will help define the work and teaching I do as a mission leader in Asia. When the history of the LCMS mission efforts are viewed through the lens of Lutheran distinctives, a rich picture of the mission task is painted, helping to inform present and future mission ministries.

It was fascinating to see that the LCMS has been involved with centripetal and centrifugal mission. *Innere Mission im Ausland*, or home mission abroad, was a German to German effort that was truly centripetal, but the mission efforts to India, Nigeria, and so on were centrifugal efforts. Both efforts have led to communities of faith that have been involved in their own mission efforts for generations. This clearly illustrates that all mission belongs to God. We can call it the mission of the LCMS and divide it into all kinds of categories, but in the end, it all belongs to him. This study has shown that we follow the sweep of his hand in mission, remembering “Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.”²⁷²

²⁷² 1 Corinthians 3:7 ESV.

APPENDIX A

Organizational KRA Matrix
Summary of World Area contributions to LCMS World Mission Key Result Areas

World Area: _____ Area Director: _____

	1 year (2002)	3 year (2004) (sum of yrs. 1 - 3)	5 year (2006) (sum of yrs. 1 - 5)
KRA 1: Strategic Alliances formed			
People reached:			
Cost:			
KRA 3: National Church Workers Trained:			
People reached:			
Cost:			
KRA 4: New Congregations Planted:			
People reached:			
Cost:			
KRA 5: New Missionaries Required:			
People reached:			
Cost:			

“Vision” Matrix – projected sum total of people reached and cost per Area

	Year 1 (2002)	Year 3 (2004) Sum of years 1 - 3	Year 5 (2006) Sum of years 1 - 5
Total people reached (all methods)			
Total cost (personnel and project costs)			

Comments:

APPENDIX B

DMIN MAP RESULTS PRESENTATION

ALIGNING MISSION EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICE IN A DENOMINATIONAL CONTEXT

By John Mehl

DMin Ministry Action Plan Results Presentation
For: Greg Williamson, John Fale & David Birner
Date: February 27, 2012

The underlying problem: Mission partners who do not agree on how to accomplish the mission task can frustrate the goal of reaching the lost with the gospel.

Purpose of the project: Identify areas of disagreement between LCMS mission stakeholders and formulate recommendations designed to promote shared expectations and alignment of practice in foreign missionary ministry.

The process:

1. Review past and present LCMS practices and emphases.
2. Survey present missionary stakeholders concerning their mission priorities. The four stakeholder groups are:
 - a. LCMS missionaries.
 - b. LCMS St. Louis based mission support staff.
 - c. LCMS seminary faculty from both seminaries.
 - d. Partner church leadership.
3. Present findings to the CMO and executive director for OIM.

Theological Foundations: The study includes biblical and theological foundations for mission that includes Lutheran distinctives: sola scriptura, the two kinds of righteousness, bondage of the will, conversion, Law & Gospel preaching, the means of grace, the sacraments, vocation, the office of public ministry, the church, the Lutheran doctrine of creation, diakonia, education ministries, and others.

A Historical Perspective:

1. The LCMS chartered with a mission in mind. In April 1847, at a founding convention in Chicago, a first constitution was adopted that included a “commission for heathen missions” and a “correspondent with the Lutheran Church in foreign lands.”²⁷³
2. 11 LCMS presidents have served since the mission program began in 1895.
3. Had two major foreign mission emphases: “home mission abroad” (German to German), and “foreign mission abroad.” In 1910, the “home mission abroad budget”

²⁷³ *Moving Frontiers*, 143.

(Brazil, Berlin, London, etc.) was \$24,000 while the “foreign mission abroad” (India & China) was \$20,000. These finally settled on Brazil and Argentina, which became districts of the LCMS and then partner churches in 1980 and 1986.

4. There are four distinct mission eras of the LCMS:
 - a. 1895–1945: Mainly India, China, and Nigeria.
 - b. 1946–1960: Guatemala, Philippines, PNG, Japan, Lebanon, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Venezuela, Portugal, El Salvador, South Korea, Chile, Uruguay, Ghana, and Honduras (1961). 15 countries in 15 years.
 - c. 1961–1990: LCMS initiated work—Liberia, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Thailand. Partner church initiated work—Macau, Botswana, the Congo-Kinshasa, Eritrea, and South Africa. 9 countries in 30 years.
 - d. 1991–2010: 45 new countries in 20 years. (15 in Africa, 5 in Asia, 15 in Eurasia, and 10 in Latin America).

LCMS Giving Trends Compared to Membership and Foreign Missionaries

Year	LCMS Baptized	Home & At Large LCMS Donations	Foreign Mission Abroad Budget	Mission Budget As % of Total	LCMS Career Missionaries
1900	715,483	²⁷⁴	\$20,256		5
1910	848,905		\$20,705		10
1920	948,298	\$9,429,813	\$88,794	0.94	19
1930	1,135,635	\$15,201,172	\$279,061	1.8	63
1940	1,342,533	\$15,580,427	\$183,557	1.1	67
1950	1,728,472	\$60,531,591	\$728,870	1.2	115
1960	2,369,036	\$149,866,005	\$1,823,042	1.2	201
1970	2,877,291	\$246,945,632	\$10,120,473	4	273
1980	2,719,319	\$469,172,902	\$11,091,221	2.3	101
1990	2,692,607	\$831,581,497	\$12,433,618	1.4	161
2000	2,553,971	\$1,229,244,829	\$24,375,581	1.9	106
2010	2,278,586	\$1,375,784,215	\$22,577,613	1.6	60

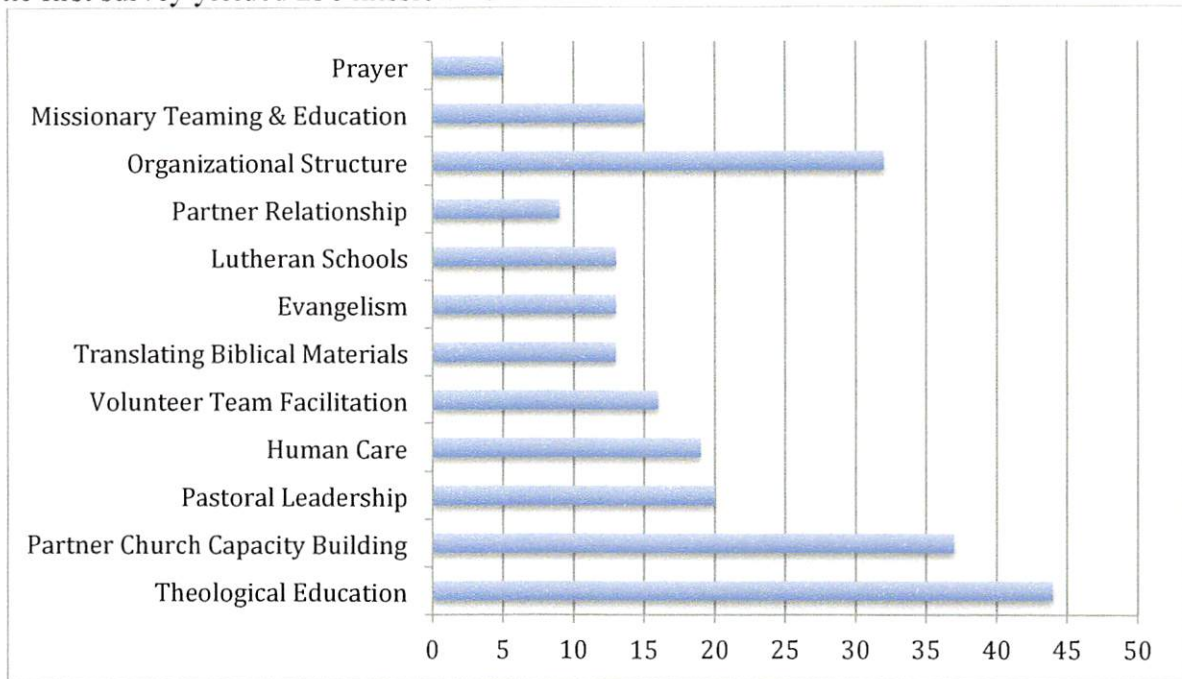
1. The actual high in missionary population was 1969 with 364. Statistics show a drop of 91 between 1969 and 1970. By 1975 there were 157 career units on the fields, a drawdown of 207 missionaries in six years.
2. Calculating for inflation, the \$20,000 from the 1900 foreign mission budget equals about \$585,000 in 2011 dollars.
3. 74% of the mission budget in 1990 came from the collection plate. Today 7%.
4. Missionary training was most robust between 1945 and 1970.
5. Missionary tasks included broad visions of planting synods that included churches, schools, hospitals, etc. (There are 200 Lutheran schools in Asia as a result of this work.)

²⁷⁴ Efforts were made to find these “home and at large” donation numbers from the LCMS accounting department, the LCMS rosters and statistics department, and at the Concordia Historical Institute. No data was found for LCMS gifts given for “at home” congregation work for 1900 and 1910.

6. Mission emphases changed in the 1990s with a recognition of partners. The strategy developed for Russia included working “through Lutheran church structures where these exist and through appropriate mission structures where Lutheran churches do not exist.” With a declining missionary force there came a shift from “church planting and leadership development” to “church planting *through* leadership development.”

Survey Work

Survey 1 was sent to 98 of the stakeholders (missionaries, staff, sem profs, partner church). The first survey yielded 236 mission tasks.



Survey 2 included the top six categories that were sent again to the 98 stakeholders. The results are below:

All Groups Combined (69 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	2.90%	0.00%	1.45%	5.80%	21.74%	27.54%	40.58%
	2	0	1	4	15	19	28
Church Capacity	2.90%	4.35%	5.80%	4.35%	10.14%	28.99%	43.48%
	2	3	4	3	7	20	30
Human Care	4.35%	2.90%	11.59%	18.84%	26.09%	27.54%	8.70%
	3	2	8	13	18	19	6
Translation	4.35%	4.35%	7.25%	15.94%	13.04%	26.09%	28.99%
	3	3	5	11	9	18	20
Pastoral Leadership	27.54%	20.29%	5.80%	10.14%	20.29%	8.70%	7.25%
	19	14	4	7	14	6	5

Volunteers	4.35%	7.25%	27.54%	23.19%	18.84%	13.04%	5.80%
	3	5	19	16	13	9	4

Partner Church Leadership (12 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	8.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	8.33%	50.00%
	1				4	1	6
Church Capacity	8.33%	0.00%	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	33.33%	25.00%
	1		2	1	1	4	3
Human Care	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	8.33%	25.00%	16.67%	16.67%
	2	1	1	1	3	2	2
Translation	25.00%	0.00%	8.33%	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	33.33%
	3		1	2	1	1	4
Pastoral Leadership	41.67%	8.33%	0.00%	0.00%	41.67%	8.33%	0.00%
	5	1			5	1	
Volunteers	8.33%	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	41.67%	16.67%	0.00%
	1	2	1	1	5	2	

Seminary Professors (9 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	22.22%	66.67%
					1	2	6
Church Capacity	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	44.44%	44.44%
					1	4	4
Human Care	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	22.22%	44.44%	0.00%
				3	2	4	
Translation	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	11.11%	22.22%	11.11%	44.44%
			1	1	2	1	4
Pastoral Leadership	22.22%	11.11%	0.00%	22.22%	22.22%	0.00%	22.22%
	2	1		2	2		2
Volunteers	0.00%	11.11%	44.44%	22.22%	22.22%	0.00%	0.00%
		1	4	2	2		

U.S. Mission Staff (7 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	57.14%	42.86%
						4	3
Church Capacity	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	28.57%	57.14%
					1	2	4
Human Care	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	28.57%	28.57%
					3	2	2
Translation	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	14.29%	14.29%	28.57%
				3	1	1	2
Pastoral Leadership	14.29%	28.57%	14.29%	14.29%	28.57%	0.00%	0.00%
	1	2	1	1	2		
Volunteers	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	14.29%	28.57%	14.29%	0.00%
			3	1	2	1	

Field Missionaries (39 responses). Rating (1=lowest; 7=highest).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theological Ed	2.56%	0.00%	0.00%	7.69%	25.64%	30.77%	33.33%
	1			3	10	12	13
Church Capacity	2.56%	5.13%	5.13%	2.56%	10.26%	25.64%	48.72%
	1	2	2	1	4	10	19
Human Care	2.56%	2.56%	15.38%	23.08%	25.64%	28.21%	2.56%
	1	1	6	9	10	11	1
Translation	0.00%	5.13%	10.26%	12.82%	12.82%	33.33%	25.64%
		2	4	5	5	13	10
Pastoral Leadership	25.64%	25.64%	7.69%	10.26%	12.82%	10.26%	7.69%
	10	10	3	4	5	4	3
Volunteers	5.13%	5.13%	33.33%	23.08%	10.26%	15.38%	7.69%
	2	2	13	9	4	6	3

Conclusion

1. There is more alignment than originally thought.
2. This begs the question of why there are frictions between stakeholders.
3. I suggest that:
 - a. The four groups of stakeholders are and working in silos
 - b. There is a need for more trust
 - c. Little is done to build team on a regular basis
 - d. Communication is generally one-way and often on demand
4. LCMS mission goals are multigenerational, 50 years.
5. Few of the stakeholders understand a long-term vision.
6. There is little understanding of where different mission efforts stand on the mission timeline.

Recommendations

1. Teambuilding should begin for stakeholder groups.
2. Mission education needs to be developed for everyone involved in mission, including the church at large.
3. A balanced mission strategy that includes work with partners and pioneer work.
4. The mission timelines need to be developed so stakeholders understand the mission tasks that are unique for different fields. (Hong Kong is different from Cambodia, etc.)
5. A communication strategy that provides opportunity for feedback in a safe environment needs to be developed.

Further Study

1. We need to discover what is behind the feedback concerning a new LCMS imperialism.
2. A study of dependency and proper use of funds is needed to include guidelines.
3. A study of the value of volunteer ministry, especially the difference between the short-term and long-term ministry.
4. An analysis of the LCMS in the 1960s is needed. This is when there was a peak in synodical membership, the greatest number of career missionaries in foreign fields, and historically high percentages of donations that funded foreign mission. This needs to include consideration of ROI vs. centrifugal. Did a cohesive mission vision drive synodical membership or vice versa?

APPENDIX C

SURVEY 1, MISSIONARY TASKS

Theological Education

1. Theological education
2. Theological education.
3. Training of qualified men to serve as pastors of congregations as church planters
4. Leadership development of local Christians.
5. Theological education
6. Theological Education for leaders (basic Bible study & catechesis)
7. Mentoring & discipleship that transforms
8. Training church workers
9. Theological dialogue and cross training
10. Train leaders
11. Theological education
12. Leadership training
13. Equipping ordinary believers
14. Theological education/Pastoral training
15. Pastoral preparation
16. Theological education for pastors and/or pastoral candidates
17. Theological education for lay people
18. Theological Education including: having missionary instructors at seminaries
19. Theo Ed: sending short-term instructors to seminaries
20. Theo Ed: conducting refresher workshops for pastors
21. Theo Ed: providing continuing education for pastors and national seminary instructors
22. Education – Church worker
23. Theological education
24. Theological education for lay persons
25. Theological education for men pursuing the office of public ministry
26. Continuing education for ordained pastors
27. Theological education
28. Theological education – National pastors and evangelists
29. Theological Education
30. Raising and training indigenous leaders
31. Theological training of lay people
32. Training of pastors and evangelists (esp. re: how to care for the flock)
33. Theological education
34. Lay leadership training/TE (an integral part of TE maybe)
35. Leadership training
36. Theological education
37. Layperson Bible training

38. Theological education (lay through professional) for national churches/groups
39. Church worker formation
40. Public lectures
41. Pastoral ministry formation
42. Skills for teaching discipleship not only for theological leadership, but for laity (aim for creating disciples, you get a church; aim for creating a church; you usually fail to get disciples).
43. Theological education
44. Develop theological knowledge/base/balance for Biblical/Lutheran theology (e.g., on doctrine of salvation, the ministry, priesthood of believers, and other issues.)

Capacity Building

1. Capacity building of partner church bodies
2. Capacity building of partner churches
3. Church building fund
4. Encouraging and assisting partner churches
5. Capacity building
6. Modeling
7. Connecting to Music/Art/Culture
8. Empowerment/Independence
9. Integrate partners geographically towards Gospel outreach goals for ex. Japan earthquake supported from Asian & American Congregations
10. Developing local leadership for mission efforts
11. Advising emerging national churches in administration, policies, good governance, etc.
12. Model servant leadership
13. Reproducing mission (cooperating in the sending of indigenous missionaries to new places.)
14. Build capacity of local churches
15. Encouraging local church leaders in their service
16. Training for pastor's wife/family
17. Train Sunday school teachers
18. Life Together: Meeting with national church leaders and seminary leadership to encourage work together and promote faithfulness to God and His =Word n our churches today.
19. Church Administration training
20. Money management training
21. Scripture use training
22. Training in writing their own hymns and liturgy (at least the music part)
23. Training Nationals conferences
24. Encourage the national church to challenge its own members in stewardship and giving
25. Spiritual mentoring – Bible studies etc., for lay and church workers
26. Partner church encouragement

27. Helping churches to become more solid in their communities – new buildings, financial assistance, training workers, etc.
28. Placing LCMS mission personnel into areas of the world to enable and equip people of culture to carry out ministry in their areas.
29. Lutheran Theological training for all
30. Appropriate technological training
31. Christian growth training for all (including questions of morality)
32. Seminars and other workshops in counseling, administration and other subjects to build capacity
33. Conference and other gatherings of youth, professional, etc.
34. Setting up “tent-making employment opportunities for church workers.
35. Christian leadership development (lay and professional) for national churches
36. Lay leadership training
37. Church administration (i.e., build skills on various levels so nationals manage on their own)

Human Care

1. Healing/Health
2. Human Care
3. Disaster relief
4. Various human care projects according to local needs. In Russia these would include home centers for women.
5. Water well projects
6. School uniforms
7. Clothing
8. Micro finance projects
9. Medical Emergency Relief
10. English language teaching as Human Care
11. Agricultural training
12. General health care
13. CHE and other medical programs, including building viable and self sufficient medical institutions
14. Developing micro-credit programs/institutions
15. Developing vocational training courses/institutions
16. Developing capacity and capital for small businesses and enterprises
17. Programs integrating human care and care of soul
18. Connect social help with evangelistic outreach; sometimes one coming first before the other.
19. Human care

Pastoral Leadership

1. Preach the Gospel by called, ordained servants of the Word
2. Catechizing, baptizing, and communing converts by called and ordained servants
3. Establishment and strengthening of local congregations of baptized and catechized

4. Encouragement of new believers.
5. Gospel outreach fund
6. Church planting
7. Participating in a ministry of presence
8. Word and sacrament ministry in underserved areas
9. Word and sacrament ministry, especially in a cross-cultural setting
10. Form worshiping communities
11. Disciple new believers in an almost entirely Muslim context
12. Laying the ground for a national church
13. Worship
14. Catechesis
15. Discipleship
16. Planting Lutheran congregations
17. Catechesis
18. Bible studies
19. Starting new local congregations
20. Building church buildings

Teams Facilitation

1. Connecting US congregations and individuals to mission opportunities on the field
2. Providing ministry opportunities for short and long term volunteers.
3. Developing the future generations of overseas missionaries.
4. Encourage a mission consciousness recruiting short term missionaries to come to Thailand and make it economically possible to do so.
5. Advising short-term visitors so they can avoid pitfalls and maximize impact for good
6. Short Term Team Evangelism & Witness Opportunities
7. Short awareness & relationship building trips
8. Long term individual evangelism and witness opportunities
9. Connecting different parts of the church together – culturally theologically, etc.
10. Acting as cultural interpreter for visiting teams and individuals
11. Tempering the potential damage caused by visiting teams and individuals
12. Opening doors for volunteers to serve Christ and the church by becoming involved in short-term and long-term ministries
13. Networking folks across Asia and the ocean
14. Coordinating/Directing short-term teams and GEO workers
15. Hosting onsite visitors to the mission field
16. Creating volunteer opportunities

Translations

1. Bible translation
2. Translating theological resources
3. Assisting in production of indigenous theological resources
4. Bible and other translations

5. Provide publications in native languages for Bible studies, theology, health, agriculture, etc.
6. Bible translation
7. Jesus Film in local language
8. Scripture translation
9. Teach and integrate Lutheran basics on multimedia platforms using LHM, LHF, and other resources
10. Bible translation/literacy work
11. Translation of Lutheran materials into other languages
12. Writing and publishing (especially by nationals) for appropriate issues/audiences.
13. Supporting translation of scripture, Confessions, and other worthy theological works.

Evangelism

1. Radio/media ministries
2. Public witness
3. Evangelism
4. Direct person-to-person evangelism
5. Building relationships with nationals.
6. Relationship building.
7. Develop and encourage Christian business leader who have access to difficult to reach places for Gospel proclamation
8. Radio/TV ministry
9. Relationship building
10. Direct testimony to others, in word and deed, of God's love in Christ
11. Cross-cultural connections in developing new and creative ways to reach people for Jesus.
12. While maintaining and not compromising on the Biblical theology on which we stand, be prepared to not let that need stand in the way of outreach to people who have not yet been connected to Jesus. The mission task in this world is to be clear of the Christian message of God's love for all through Jesus; and also be creative and open in sharing that foundational truth with others.
13. Activities like teaching ESL or running youth/other programs that involve building relationships that lead to evangelism

Lutheran Schools

1. Lutheran schools
2. Christian Schools
3. Supporting Lutheran education and Lutheran educators.
4. General Education
5. Service learning
6. Get more Lutheran teachers to Thailand to teach in Int' schools, etc.
7. Christian/Lutheran education
8. Christian education
9. Christian education – primary and secondary schools

10. Christian education for children and youth
11. Education
12. Start and run Christian schools
13. Outreach and community building through education

Organizational Structure and Support

1. Governance
2. Financial controls
3. Internal controls
4. Legal compliance
5. Funding the mission
6. Keeping each other accountable in both financial and theological matters
7. Communicating the mission to others
8. Personal support
9. Raising awareness and support
10. Mission education through newsletters, blogs, websites, presentations to congregations and others.
11. Missionary Care
12. Prayer and Financial Support of Missionaries.
13. Educating the sending church
14. Communicating with the church worldwide about how to pray/give for missions
15. Communicating with and encouraging supporters in the United States
16. Fund-raising and stewardship practice
17. Prioritize funding for missionaries to minimalize the need to raise their own funds, which takes a great amount of time from their ministry development.
18. Communicating with supporters (newsletters, Skype, furlough, etc.)
19. Report to sending church
20. Raise support funds
21. Student scholarship fund.
22. Solicit and cultivate donor support
23. Recruiting ordained and commissioned staff for long-term service
24. Mission interpretation for home church, being a key link between the field and home churches.
25. Administration
26. Managing the mission
27. Administration, supervision , active participation in various mission projects
28. Mission strategy and planning
29. Paying local church workers
30. Developing a strategic plan with priorities
31. Making decisions about church organization and polity
32. Building global mission—outreach and human care—coalitions

Missionary Teaming and Education

1. Mission education (how to be in mission rather than a object of mission)
2. In-depth cultural study and research
3. Building strong dynamics within groups of missionaries in the same field
4. Encouraging missionaries to strive towards excellence in their fields of service.
5. Representing missionaries' interests in the field in which they serve
6. Facilitating networks
7. Raise up family care missionaries for regional spiritual support and growth
8. Connecting new churches with established ones
9. Help train leadership for the three areas above: evangelism, church planting, human care.
10. Mission education (Theology of Mission)
11. Thinking collectively to respond to both the spiritual and physical needs all around
12. Language/culture learning
13. Learn language and culture
14. The task is to minimize the necessity for denominational identity as having a priority over Christian mission and ministry.
15. Living out one's vocation using the gifts that God has given

Partner Relationship

1. Facilitating communications between the missionaries and the field partner
2. Listening to leaders of local national churches
3. Listening to local church leaders so that new mission opportunities can be uncovered
4. Partner church edification
5. Partner church advising
6. Guiding the national church in the personnel request and project request process
7. Relationship building/generating trust
8. Church relations
9. Intensifying consultations with indigenous churches

Prayer

1. Pray
2. Prayer on behalf of God's mission
3. Pray
4. Praying (personally and with nationals)
5. Pray

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abudi, Gina. "Five Stages of Project Team Development." <http://www.pmhut.com/the-five-stages-of-project-team-development> (accessed February 22, 2012).
- Aiyene, Nicodemus. Conversation at Birip, Papua New Guinea, August 27, 2011.
- Barry, Alvin. Memo to BFMS Area Directors, July 11, 2000.
- Bayer, Oswald. *Living by Faith: Justification and Sanctification*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Birner, David. *Forging a Multinational Global Missionary Force*. DMin dissertation, Bakke Graduate University, 2010.
- . *LCMS World Mission Harvest News*. (Fall 2011), vol. 11, no. 3.
- Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991.
- Bunkowske, Eugene W. *Educational Methodologies*, Class handout for DMSL 910 Theological Education Across Cultures.
- Campus Crusade for Christ, "Four Spiritual Laws." <http://www.campuscrusade.com/fourlawseng.htm> (accessed December 6, 2011).
- Cerdeñola, James. "LCP President's Report," *The Lutheran Church in the Philippines 21st General Convention Workbook*, October 24–28, 2011.
- Christudas, D. *Tranquebar to Travancore*. Delhi: ISPCK, 2008.
- Commission on Theology and Church Relations. *Evangelism and Church Growth with Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1987.
- Concordia Middle School, Taiwan. <http://www.cms.h.cyc.edu.tw/eng/ministry.php> (accessed December 12, 2011).
- 2010 Constitution, Bylaws, and Articles of Incorporation*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2010.
- Convention Proceedings*. Resolution 1-05A. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2004.
- Convention Workbook Reports and Overtures 2010*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2010.

Department of Stewardship, Mission Education, and Promotion. *Mission Digest*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1959.

Engel, James, and William Dyrness. *Changing the Mind of Missions*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Estes, Charles Sumner. *Christian Missions in China*. PhD dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1895.

Forde, Gerhard O. *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther's Heidelberg Disputation, 1518*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

———. *Theology Is for Proclamation*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990.

“Funding the Mission.” *The Lutheran Witness* (February 2003): 26–27.

Guder, Darrell L. ed. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Handbook of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2007.

Hintze, Otto. E-mail, August 22, 2007.

———. Presentation at Timothy Lutheran Church, St. Louis, July 29, 2011.

India Evangelical Lutheran Church. <http://www.ielc.in/statistics.htm> (accessed December 8, 2011).

Ipatas, Peter. Presentation at Timothy Lutheran Church, St. Louis, July 30, 2011. Video transcript from Dan Kunert, December 2, 2011.

Isenhower, Joe, Jr. “Third ‘Igniting’ event looks at worship attendance.” *The Reporter Online*, January 2004. <http://reporter.lcms.org/pages/rpage.asp?NavID=3805> (accessed January 21, 2012).

Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Ji, Won Yong. *A History of Lutheranism in Korea: A Personal Account*. St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1988.

Kolb, Robert, and Timothy Wengert, eds. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2000.

- Kolb, Robert, and Charles P. Arand. *The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Kolb, Robert. *Making Disciples, Baptizing: God's Gift of New Life and Christian Witness*. St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Publications, 1997.
- . "Luther's Theology as a Foundation for Twenty-first Century Missiology." Unpublished article.
- Krull, Kim Plummer. "Mission Heritage Sets Stage for Global Reach." *The Lutheran Witness* (May 2011): 7.
- Kuang, Peng. "China issues 50-year science strategy," *Science and Development Network*. <http://www.scidev.net/en/news/china-issues-50-year-science-strategy-.html> (accessed February 26, 2012).
- Lueking, F. Dean. *Mission in the Making: The Missionary Enterprise Among Missouri Synod Lutherans 1846–1963*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964.
- Luther, Martin. *Luther's Works*. 56 vols. Edited by Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, Helmut T. Lehmann. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House and Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955–86.
- . *A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943.
- LCMS website, <http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=406> (accessed December 8, 2011).
- LCMS World Mission "At a Glance." Handout updated September 2011, <http://lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=294> (accessed February 27, 2012).
- LCMS World Mission. "BFMS—LLL Strategy Statement on Russia, Draft of 920925."
- LCMS World Mission. "Strategic Plan: Concepts and Definitions," draft May 5, 2001.
- LCMS World Mission Report. *Convention Workbook: Reports and Overtures*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2001.
- Lutheran Church—Canada. <http://www.lutheranchurch-canada.ca/history.php> (accessed January 21, 2012).
- Macau Tourism Board. http://hk.macautourism.gov.mo/en/discovering/sightseeing_detail.php?catid=54#178 (accessed January 15, 2012).
- Mattson, Daniel L. "Church Planting through Leadership Formation." *Missio Apostolica* (November 1995): 79–84.

- Mehl, John. "Mission Perspectives." Unpublished article.
- Meinzen, Luther. E-mail, August 22, 2007.
- Meyer, Carl S. ed., *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964.
- Micklethwait, John, and Adrian Wooldridge. *God Is Back: How the Global Revival of Faith Is Changing the World*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2009.
- Nacpil, Emerito. "Whom Does the Missionary Serve and What Does He Do?" *Missionary Service in Asia Today*. Hong Kong: Chinese Christian Literature Council, 1971.
- Oregon State University, conversion factors, <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/sahr/sahr> (accessed January 20, 2012).
- O'Shoney, Glenn. E-mail to missionaries, "Waking the Sleeping Giant." March 2000.
- Pieper, Francis. *Christian Dogmatics*. Vol. 2. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951.
- . *Christian Dogmatics*. Vol. 3. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953.
- Preus, Klemet. "Pietism in Missouri's Mission: From Mission Affirmations to *Ablaze!*" Edited by John Maxfield. *Mission Accomplished? Challenges to and Opportunities for Lutheran Missions in the 21st Century*. St. Louis: The Luther Academy, 2008.
- Reiner, Ken. E-mail, August 16, 2007.
- Rodewald, Michael. Presentation in Raleigh, NC, to LCMS mission directors, November 15, 2011.
- Roegner, Robert. Letters to LCMS missionaries, December 2 and 13, 2002.
- Ronsvalle, John L., and Sylvia Ronsvalle. *The State of Church Giving Through 2003*. Champaign, IL: empty tomb, inc., 2005.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2009.
- . *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Schmidt, Allan. Presentation at Concordia International School Shanghai, April 8, 2006.
- Smith, Brent. E-mail, February 27, 2012.
- Steffen, Tom A. *Passing the Baton: Church Planting That Empowers*. La Habra, CA: Center for Organizational and Ministry Development, 1997.

- Spitz, Lewis W. "The Universal Priesthood of Believers." In vol. 1 of *The Abiding Word*. Edited by Theodore Laetsch. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946.
- Stroh, Ross. Conversation, February 26, 2012.
- Statistisches Jarbuch der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staten fur das Jahr 1900*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1901.
- Statistisches Jarbuch der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staten fur das Jahr 1910*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1911.
- Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1920*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921.
- Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1930*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931.
- Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1940*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941.
- 1960 Statistical Yearbook*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1961.
- 1975 Statistical Yearbook*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1976.
- 1977 Statistical Yearbook*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1978.
- 1979 Statistical Yearbook*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1980.
- 1980 Statistical Yearbook*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1981.
- 1986 Statistical Yearbook*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1987.
- 1990 Statistical Yearbook*. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1991.
- Taylor, William D. ed. *Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions*. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1994.
- Turner, Tom. *City as Landscape: A Post-postmodern View of Design and Planning*. London: Taylor and Francis, 1995.
- Vehling, James. E-mail, August 17, 2007.
- Vicedom, Georg F. *The Mission of God: An Introduction to a Theology of Mission*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965.
- Walls, Andrew. *The Cross-cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002.

Walther, C. F. W. "Arise, Let the Light Shine," *The Word of His Grace, Occasional and Festival Sermons*. Translated and edited by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Translation Committee. Lake Mills, IA: Graphic Publishing Company, Inc., 1978.

———. *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1929.

Yung, Allan. Conversation at the Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod office, February 6, 2012.