Musings from the Mission Society

**Highlights from the May Board of Directors' Meeting**

Newly elected members chosen at synod gathered for their first meeting. They are:

Sarah Brent    Jeff Coppage    Alina Ricardo Cukiernik

Mike Hastings  Sarah Jennings  Cindi Jones   Jim Newsome

Bob Peterson  Angelica Regalado  Donna Tesh  Cindy Williams  Mary Winters

Joe Jarvis and Hilda Regalado (from the Board of World Mission), and Kay Vance (representing the Provincial Women's Board) are also serving.

Following introductions, Donna Hurt, out-going president, convened the meeting with a devotional reading and comments. She then spent considerable time reviewing what members might expect over the next four years, talking about the board's areas of responsibility and qualities that board members should exemplify. Reading from the by-laws, Donna also pointed out vital information about membership and attendance at meetings every other month.

Next Donna explained the work of the five committees, including Lovefeast, Awareness Dinner, Partners in Mission, Onward Newsletter, and Finance. Since every board member serves on one of the committees, each person present wrote down and handed in his or her first and second choice, which will allow the new board president to assign people where they have the most interest.

Fliers were distributed about the June 3rd Mission Awareness Dinner, and everyone was strongly encouraged to make their reservations. Finally came the election of officers to lead the new board. Those chosen were Bob Peterson as President, Joe Jarvis as Vice-President, Donna Tesh as Secretary, and Alina Ricardo Cukiernik as representative to BWM. It was decided that meetings going forward would be held at the fellowship building of Christ Moravian.

Donna Hurt, Out-going President
Anya would have grown up in a Buddhist home. Anya would have never heard about a God who loves her and sent his Son to die for her. Anya would have lived her life wondering what her purpose was and if there is any bigger story she is living for.

Instead, Anya was recently baptized by her dad, Nai, along with 9 Thai college students. This is because over 10 years ago at university, Anya’s dad rejected Buddhism and started following Christ. How is Anya's life different because over 10 years ago her father met a leader who shared Jesus with him? She is growing up with loving Christian parents who are teaching her about Jesus who gave his life for hers. She is learning about her purpose and her part in God's story.

This is the "downline power" of the gospel. When you impact one person's life, you don't only touch that one person, but you influence everyone "down-the-line" who that one person goes on to impact.

Because of your partnership, people all around the world are experiencing the "downline impact" of your investment in this ministry. Thank you.

30 New Staff Being Sent

What could you accomplish with 30 more workers? Between last week and next week, 30 new staff are receiving missionary training and will soon be deploying to the following 9 locations:

- Monterrey, Mexico
- Belo Horizonte, Brazil
- Birmingham, UK
- Johannesburg, South Africa
- Chiang Mai, Thailand
- Khon Kaen, Thailand
- Manila, Philippines
- Brisbane, Australia
- Dunedin, New Zealand

These 30 staff will serve under the indigenous leadership of the CO International teams, significantly expanding the capacity of those ministry teams.

Over the next 5 years, we will grow towards sending 150 staff per year into 2-year leadership internships.

Phil and Ashley Sineath,
Lunch & Learn

June 20th, Noon—1:30 pm

Come visit the Community First Center at 633 West 4th St. in downtown Winston-Salem, enjoy lunch and learn more about City with Dwellings’ work to build community and end homelessness in our city. The CFC is a place of welcome and hospitality where we build community with overflow shelter guests and individuals experiencing the crisis of homelessness.

Join us on June 20th RSVP to: cwdcommunityfirst@gmail.com

City with Dwellings, an ecumenical collaborative, works to end the crisis of homelessness in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County by building supportive, consistent community with individuals struggling with the crisis of homelessness. As a low-barrier agency, CwD understands the unique circumstances homeless persons must overcome to successfully access housing, health, and employment resources. By building relationships of trust and accountability with homeless individuals and by engaging the wider community in our work, CwD is able to facilitate a coordinated community response to help house individuals and reduce recidivism.

Learn more about homelessness in our community and City with Dwellings at:

www.citywithdwellings.org or cwdcommunityfirst@gmail.com or phone 336-790-9766.
May in Honduran Mosquitia is the end of the dry season, when the grass is generally brown and fires burn across the pine savannah, lighting up the night sky and spreading smoke over the horizon. Yellow and red cashew fruit ripen on abundant trees. Cumulus clouds, formed by the high heat and resulting updrafts are everywhere. People continuously search the skies, wondering if this is finally the day that rain and thunderstorms will bring relief from the oppressive heat and humidity. They wait for the rains of late May and early June like those of us from more northern latitudes wait for the first snowfall of Winter. The yellow/green *picpic* or tree frogs croak at this time of the year sounding like a much larger creature, impatient it would seem, that there is no water.

At the hospital in Ahuas, the wells are running dry, though we had our first few heavy showers over the last ten days. Meanwhile, the Rotary/Moravian improvement projects move toward completion while the main construction of the new lab is nearly finished. Final phases of that project are set to start in early June on the concrete floor, stucco work and wooden door and window trim. Dr. Ratli, the lab techs and Ted Riven (a microbiologist trained in part with Moravian scholarships and now a member of the Medical Board) will be finalizing a list of equipment to be purchased for the new lab. The tension that accompanied the early May layoffs of roughly one third of the hospital staff (in an effort to cut costs and address the chronic financial deficit), have subsided but are still present.

In addition to two work crews, an auditing team and members of the Trujillo Rotary Club are scheduled to visit over the next three weeks, but more routine activities also continue with the Infant Feeding Program, regular outpatient visits, surgeries, and inpatients.

June 16th marks the 72nd anniversary of the founding of the Clínica Evangélica Morava in 1946. Clinic staff, headed by Doctors Ratli Bendles and Kenneth Serapio, carry on the decades old task of curing illnesses and saving lives while winning souls for the Lamb in an area where other options for medical care are nearly nonexistent.

Last week Dr. Kenneth, preparing for his monthly visit to family in Nicaragua (where political violence in the cities has forced his two university-age children to come back to Puerto Cabezas until things calm down), had decided to postpone all but emergency surgical cases until after he returns later this week. Fortunately, Kenneth had not yet traveled last Monday.

At about 9:00 p.m. that evening, after a routine day at the hospital, the on-duty nurse came knocking at our door. Kenneth followed him back to the hospital where he found a young couple that had walked all the way from Warunta with their five year old son. Although it was late in the dry season, there had been a few heavy showers already and not only the parents, but also the little boy, were soaking wet after the all day journey on foot.

The parents had come to the only place where they knew they could get help for their sick son. Both family and hospital staff wondered if they had waited too long. The child had a distended belly, extreme pain, yellow eyes, and a 102 degree fever. Kenneth ordered lab tests, an x-ray, and an ultrasound. The small patient had a hematocrit of 23, though thankfully the test for hepatitis came back negative. On the ultrasound done by Dr. Ratli, there appeared to be problems associated with the little patient’s liver. When Kenneth told the parents to search for a unit of blood so that he could operate as soon as possible, they replied that they did not have money, but would donate it themselves. (Typically, in the absence of a blood bank in Ahuas, patients’ family members have to pay someone with compatible blood in order for it to be donated and ready for surgery.)

Kenneth worried through the night that the young boy would not survive, but was pleased on Tuesday morning when the patient seemed strong enough to undergo surgery. In the operating room, as he expected, Kenneth found a liver abscess. As it turned out, there were two abscesses, one of which had already burst. After removing the un-ruptured abscess and thoroughly cleaning the abdominal cavity of blood and puss, a drain was inserted to remove any additional infection from the abdomen. By Wednesday, the little boy’s temperature had dropped and although there was still pain associated with the incision, the debilitating aching associated with the abscesses had ended. Kenneth was happy when on rounds that morning, the child said that he was hungry and wanted something to eat.

Tuesday turned out to be a busy day for Dr. Kenneth in the OR. A fractured femur on another five year old boy – this one from a village several hours up the Patuca River – had been reduced and a steel pin inserted to stabilize the break. A man who had been told that he would have to wait three weeks to have his prostate removed in an urban Honduran hospital, could not stand the pain and underwent surgery with Dr. Kenneth on Tuesday afternoon. Then, later that same day, a young mother of four children (the youngest under two months old and still breast feeding) came by boat to Ahuas from Brus Laguna. A very large ovarian cyst (containing, Kenneth estimated, up to two units of blood) was removed from a particularly painful abdomen. Had the cyst burst before arriving at the hospital, the patient might have bled to death. She was pleased following surgery when Dr. Kenneth told her that she could again nurse her smallest child.
In less than 24 hours last Tuesday, Kenneth, Ratli, OR staff, lab techs, xray people, and the whole hospital saved the lives of two people while easing the discomfort of two others. Had the hospital not been there, four children from Brus Laguna might have found themselves without a mother. A young family from Warunta would have had to deal with the almost certain death of their young son. A small child from upriver would have at best been forced to deal with a poorly healed leg. An older man would have had to wait at least several weeks for prostate surgery.

The layoffs mentioned above have saddled the hospital with another large financial obligation as Honduran law requires the payment of a hefty severance package to all persons dismissed by an employer. This exacerbates an already difficult financial situation, but will, as we pay off these “prestaciones” over the next two years, ultimately result in lower operating costs for the hospital. This financial burden is complicated by the plight of families now without income or employment.

At the same time, we are hopeful that this part of the Lord’s work will continue to save little boys from Warunta and young mothers from Brus Laguna. If you are interested in helping, contact the Moravian Board of World Mission. If you would like to see more about the work in Ahuas, see several Sturgeon Bay Rotary Club videos at:

https://www.youtube.com/ channel/ UCc7FRa7U5W5qjavVzFj6hMQ

I have also just posted some photographs on Facebook.

Blessings, Rick Nelson Ahuas, Gracias A Dios, Honduras

Palmer Township Moravian volunteers helped with the Infant Feeding Program in Ahuas; ceilings and a new well-part of the Rotary/Moravian Project; Drainage ditch with help from the S. Province Mission Society; Sand for well liners, lab and water tower; chickens and chicken class with the help from N. Dakota, Michigan, and others!
I have received an increasing number of requests from staff, volunteers, and partners for access to my Bible teaching. So, here we go! On April 26, we launched the weekly podcast series: Interpreting Romans!

I describe the podcasts as a mix between teaching and preaching. I take time to follow the flow of the text, according to the design of the Biblical author, and to explain how the parts fit together as a whole.

The goal of the podcasts follows Paul’s aim in Romans, to being about the glory of God through the transformation of believers who are established by a solid understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Join in the study of Romans here:

On itunes go to itunes podcasts and search on Michael Brent.

On youtube search on observe the word.

At observe the word.com listen directly from the website and also download resources, including an overview chart of Romans and the text of each lesson with reflection questions.

Bible Teaching Opportunities

Ministry this Spring and Summer has a strong focus on equipping believers in solid Bible knowledge.

Old Testament: Thursday evenings I am teaching an accredited college course hosted at a partner church for an international group of students: 1 Croatian, 1 Syrian, 1 American, and 2 Iranians.

Isaiah: On Thursday mornings I am conducting an experiment with our Persian discipleship group. When I began meeting Iranians, I discovered that their most famous authors are poets. I wondered if they would respond to the poetry of the Old Testament prophets. So far, so good!

James: My pastor and I are preaching through James.

Philippians: This will be our book focus for Leadership Lab International this summer. Preparation is under way.

Happy Birthday Brenda!

This is a very special birthday for Brenda! I am not allowed to announce her age. Let’s just say that Brenda is very nifty, sometimes thrifty and never shifty.

Croatians throw their own birthday party. Brenda fits in well. For our staff gathering on Friday, she prepared sausage, eggs, cheese puffs, mozzarella-tomato-sausage hors d’oeuvres, fresh strawberries and pineapple, strawberries in chocolate, and cheesecake. And to fully line up with Croatian culture, she worried that it was not enough!

Michael Brent
2. You are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. Pray for Brian (pilot) & Heather Marx serving with MAF.
3. Sunday. I delight to do your will, oh my God your law is within my heart. Pray for Mission Awareness Dinner.
4. The Lord said, “those who love me, I will deliver.” Pray for Saffatu and Mohamed Braima in Sierra Leone.
5. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. Pray for Rob & Anne Thiessen (MX) and summer travels.
6. The Lord is my strength. Pray for Ed Dehnert and Barb Weide, Alaska Bible Seminary, Bethel AK.
8. The good Shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. Pray for Steve & Ann Marx with MAF and Peru Mission Team.
9. The Lord searches every mind, and understands every plan and thought. Pray for Drs. Bill and Peggy Hoffman with HIV/AIDS ministry
11. The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. Pray for Michael and Brenda Brent serving with Campus Crusade in Croatia and Honduras Mission Team.
12. In Jesus Christ you are all children of God through faith. Pray for Kevin & Charity in the Middle East.
13. If God is for us, who can be against us? Pray for Dr. Louis and Susan Sutton serving with WEC.
14. God has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure. Pray for Ruth Snyder, Claire Wilson with “Changed Choices” and Albania Mission Trip.
15. He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities. Pray for Adopt-a-Village program in TZ.
16. Surely it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness. Pray for the Likewise Aids Ministry and Nepal Mission Team.
18. Thus says the Lord,” I will rejoice in doing good to them.” Pray for the Mission Areas of Sierra Leone and Peru, Mission Province of Cuba, and the families of the recent plane crash victims in Cuba.
19. He who observes my ordinances, and follows my statutes; he shall not die for his father’s iniquity. Pray for the Marshall Mission Outreach of the Alaska Moravian church.
20. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. Pray for the construction of a radio tower that will allow the Word of God to be broadcast into Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea.
21. Oh Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trust in you. Pray for Allen and Deedee Iobst in Spain in campus ministry.
22. God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. Pray for the BWM, Justin Rabbach Ex. Dir.
23. The Lord will not cast away his people, for his great name sake. Pray for Phil & Eunice Raiford with the Mixe in Mexico.
24. Sunday. Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Pray for Joe Jarvis and the work with Cuban Moravian Church, Laurel Ridge Mission Team, and Lumberton Mission Team.
25. Do not spurn us, for your namesake; do not dishonor your glorious throne. Pray for the Medical Clinic, the church in Ahuas, Honduras, and Cuba Mission Team.
26. Our father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Pray for R and B in the Sudan.
27. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. Pray for the advisory board of the Unity Women’s Desk.
28. Let the unrighteous forsake their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them. Pray for Annie B. Mission with Star Mountain in Palestine.
29. Paul wrote: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the foremost. Pray for the peace of Israel and the Jewish people.
30. Paul wrote: The Lord stood by me and gave me strength. Pray for those who minister in diverse settings such as provincial offices, counseling centers, ecumenical agencies, prisons, hospitals, schools and colleges, and the armed services.
New Philadelphia Moravian Church hosted a fundraising dinner on April 13th. Over 170 people attended and enjoyed a delicious dinner along with music from the New Philadelphia Beracah Choir and the Cherry Street Ensemble Inmate Choir. Over $17,000 was raised to support the Moravian Chaplain position within the Forsyth Jail and Prison Ministry!

One highlight of the evening was a testimony from Lamonte, a man who just earlier that day had been released from the Cherry Street Prison. He knew about the upcoming fundraiser, so he went home and then made the hour-long trip back to Winston-Salem just so he could perform with the inmate choir and share a few words with us about what the prison ministry, and in particular Robert Wolfe, had meant to him during his incarceration. Prior to his release, Lamonte completed the Transition to Work Program offered at the McGee Hedgley Chapel, and he as a graduate of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People class, Financial Peace University, and the job skills class.

Moravians lead worship at Forsyth Jail and Prison Ministry

Friends of Moravian Prison Ministry Newsletter

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