

Global missions in the Indiana-Kentucky Synod

The Indiana-Kentucky Synod is spreading the good news of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior through the ELCA's global mission philosophy of accompaniment. **Accompaniment** is when companions walk alongside one another in respect and mutuality, together discerning future directions for shared mission.



The Companion Synod Program establishes relationships between the ELCA's 65 synods and its international companion churches around the world. This program is an expression of the communion fellowship among member churches of the Lutheran World Federation.

Accompaniment has enabled the I-K Synod to experience the gifts and witness offered by church bodies in Latin America and Asia. It also has offered us the privilege of mutually participating in the life of another church through prayer, study, communication and exchange of clergy, lay leaders and resources.

The I-K Synod has two companion relationships, one with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH), and the other with District Five of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP, pronounced ha-ka-bay-pay), one of several Lutheran church bodies in Indonesia. These relationships are facilitated by the synod's Global Mission Committee.

During these relationships, IELCH Bishop Gloria Rojas and the former HKBP Praeses Plasthon Simanjuntak have each visited I-K Synod assemblies and various ministries of our synod. I-K Synod leadership, clergy and lay leaders have most recently traveled to Chile in 2007 and Indonesia in 2008. □



Chile

Our relationship with the IELCH began several years ago with an official covenant signing in May 2001. The IELCH has approximately 3,000 members, eight congregations, five additional points for mission and 10 pastors.

The church sees its mission focus as standing with and advocating for the poor and marginalized. It also is a prophetic voice, announcing the good news of Christ and denouncing those forces that tear down and destroy people's dignity and self-esteem.

The 2007 delegation to Chile experienced firsthand the ministries of the IELCH. This vibrant church spans almost the entire length of the country. Its congregations engage in many community ministries throughout Chile.

Pictured above with the La Paz church council of Osorno are I-K members Linda Doerge, Lexington, Ky.; Ruth Ann Hendrix, Seymour, Ind.; Karen Dunlap; Evansville, Ind.; Kate Lawler, ELCA regional representative; and Jean Eisen, Louisville, Ky.

Indiana-Kentucky



Rallies against domestic abuse are held countrywide.

A story of courage

The IELCH is committed to work for social justice in Chile. By bringing women's issues to the forefront, several shelters and safe houses for abused women have been established to help the victims of domestic violence. These shelters provide programs that emphasize women's rights, re-empowerment, personal growth, and healing and wellness.

The IELCH's preschools include these values in their curriculum so young girls are taught that they have worth. The young boys are taught values that may prevent them from becoming aggressors.

A story of community

At all levels, the church participates in political processes and in educational programs for the community. The church established a health organization called EPES (staff shown at left) that advocates for and provides educational information on environmental and health issues, such as acute respiratory infections and HIV/AIDS. EPES is now an independent agency whose materials are being used in 32 countries.

A story of hope

A major part of the IELCH's ministry is among children. The I-K Synod has worked with the IELCH by funding Buen Samaritano Preschool in Santiago for three years (photo at left). Buen Samaritano typically serves a lower-middle income population where both parents must work and may not qualify for government-subsidized free preschool. The children learn Christian values that might not be taught in public school, such as their rights as citizens and the importance of treating others with dignity and respect.





Indonesia

The I-K Synod's relationship with the HKBP began several years ago when the bishops signed a covenant in 2004. The HKBP has 3.75 million members throughout Indonesia, with the greatest concentration residing on the island of Sumatra. The HKBP is the largest Lutheran church body in Asia.

The presiding Ephorus (bishop) Bonar Napitupulu was re-elected in November 2008. The Praeses presides over District Five; Piter Hutapea is newly elected to this position.

In response to requests for English language training, the synod's global mission committee designed and conducted a workshop used in 2006 and 2008 titled "S.A.L.T. – Speaking as Lutherans Together." ELCA churchwide

staff praised this workshop design and encourages its use by other synods.

The 2008 S.A.L.T. 2 team members—(shown above) Eristha and Plasthon Simanjuntak, Mary Beth Foster and Will Peugeot, Lafayette, Ind.; Lowell Anderson, Crawfordsville Ind.; Gloria Sheneman, North Liberty, Ind.; Jean Eisen, Louisville, Ky.; Angela Shannon, Ft. Wayne, Ind.; and seminarian Natalie Gessert and Paul Harder, Valparaiso, Ind.—heard of the good work that was being done through the HKBP.

Disasters in Sumatra such as the December 2004 tsunami and the April 2005 earthquake provided opportunities for outreach through "love offerings." The HKBP determined that funds be spent where the need was the greatest and the effect was sustainable. □



Bridge on the road to Olora Village

A story of rebuilding

The devastation caused by the tsunami that hit the west coast of Sumatra and the further damage resulting from the powerful earthquake destroyed much of the island's infrastructure. The Muslim villages of Olora and Idanoi Siwalubanu are on the coast, which took the brunt of the tsunami. Although some areas and most homes have been rebuilt, many roads still lack bridges and need further repair. □

A story of independence

Many widows who have no means of support live in Olora. Village women recently bought treadle sewing machines with money from the I-K Synod Love Offering. The funds provided training that resulted in the establishment of a sewing co-op. This embroidery business provides a steady income for these formerly poor widows who now also have their own credit union, a step forward since Muslim culture doesn't allow women to sign checks.



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Villagers build a fishing platform that since completion has been moved out to sea.

A story of the future

Idanoi Siwalubania is a Muslim fishing village whose residents lost boats, nets and all fishing equipment in the tsunami. Not a single building was left standing after the earthquake. At one time these fishermen provided the primary protein for a third of the island's 650,000 residents.

Love Offering funds purchased boats, nets and other supplies. Villagers can now purchase food, afford schooling for their children and feed the hungry in their part of the island.

Christians are familiar with the Great Commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations." We hear the mandate to go to the ends of the earth with the good news of Jesus Christ. However, participants in companion synod travel programs discover that companion synod members have heard the same command and are also responding. In accompaniment we mutually share the good news of Jesus Christ. □

How can you be part of global mission in our synod?

- Pray for our companion brothers and sisters.
- Observe a dedicated Mission Sunday.
- Collect a monthly "shaky offering" (loose change) for missions.
- Encourage young adults to participate in the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission Program.
- Support a missionary.
- Participate in a mission trip.
- Become active on the synod's Global Mission Committee.
- Attend an ELCA Global Mission Event.
- Share your congregation's mission plans through the weekly synod e-mail.

For more information on global mission or accompaniment, contact: Indiana-Kentucky Synod at 317-253-3522 or iksynod@iksynod.org. Other Web sites include:

www.elca.org

www.elca.org/globalmission

Indiana-Kentucky Synod missionaries:

- David Wunsch and Kate Lawler—ELCA regional representatives in South America.
- Richard Sarker and Phil Baker—ELCA regional representatives in Asia.
- Jeffrey Truscott, serving in Singapore.