

December 2018

Mission Central Prayer Calendar



- 1... Pray for the Christmas activities at Concordia Middle School, that they will help students to know Christ's love. JJ – Taiwan
- 2... Pray that we have a smooth transition and adjustment to our new area of service in Tanzania. JC - Kenya
- 3... Continued prayers for our efforts against Sanguma and Sorcery Accusation Related Violence in Papua New Guinea. There are reports that our statement 23 Theses Against False Sanguma Beliefs has already made some impact (see pages 3+). MD - Papua New Guinea
- 4... Pray for the Highland International Lutheran School as it recovers from a fire on October 16 that destroyed three classrooms, the library, and administration offices. Thank God that an October 24th arson attempt on the main dormitory was thwarted. MD - Papua New Guinea
- 5... Pray for the families of 8 young men who were killed in a tragic car accident early on the morning of November 10. Pray for peace in the midst of this tragedy and that the families do not abandon their faith in Jesus Christ and resort to blaming spirits and ghosts as is done in the traditional way of thinking. MD - Papua New Guinea
- 6... Pray for discernment in deciding whether or not to request an extension of my call. Hoem - Spain
- 7... Pray for the Cambodia Lutheran Church (CLC), a collection of Lutheran churches throughout the country, that they would be faithful in stewarding the good news of Jesus Christ and diligent in loving and serving their neighbors so that they might know Jesus' love, too.
- 8... Pray for the Cambodia Lutheran Church (CLC) as they discern a way forward to recruit someone to focus time and effort on developing the CLC's reach and capacity. SE Asia
- 9... Pray for Christ Lutheran Church in Phnom Penh, that God would grant continued growth. Specifically, pray for a solution to the problem of having a small meeting location. SE Asia
- 10... Pray for the Garuna Foundation's mission in Cambodia, including 1) six Christian schools throughout the country and a seventh under construction, and 2) the Luther Institute of Southeast Asia, a program that trains lay and professional church workers for local ministry. SE Asia
- 11... Pray for Cambodia Christian Ministry Center, the outreach of Lutheran Hour Ministries, that their programs would touch many with the Gospel. Pray, too, that they meet their target of \$10,000 in local income generation. This would be a big step for them in self-sustainability. SE Asia
- 12... Pray for the translation projects of Lutheran Heritage Foundation in Cambodia. SE Asia
- 13... Pray for the humanitarian projects of Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation in Cambodia. SE Asia
- 14... Pray for the Lutheran Church--Canada and its leaders, as they continue to engage the Cambodia Lutheran Church as a partner. SE Asia
- 15... Pray for other Lutheran missions and missionaries, specifically those serving with Global Lutheran Outreach and Mission of Christ Network.
- 16... Pray for all Christian missionaries, that they would be bold in announcing and demonstrating the love of Christ. SE Asia
- 17... Pray for political peace in Cambodia, as there has been unrest during the recent election cycle. SE Asia
- 18... Pray for J.P. and A.C. along with their three children, as they adjust to life in Cambodia. They moved to Cambodia in July after serving in Vietnam for 10 years. SE Asia
- 19... On **December 19**, 2018, Wednesday, we are having a Christmas event for the community of

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Havířov-Šumbark and my English Talk Group. Pray that God will bring those who have not yet heard the Good News of the Savior's birth. Helge - Eurasia

- 20...** Pray for J.P. and A's relationship building, especially with 1) the Cambodia Lutheran Church, 2) their neighborhood, and 3) the wider missionary community. Please pray that J.P. and A. would be salt and light, taking every opportunity to share Jesus. SE Asia
- 21...** Pray for J.P. and A's Khmer language study. SE Asia
- 22...** Pray for A, as she returns to work after a time away to take care of our son. Please pray for her to quickly find a good balance between her work and home vocations. SE Asia
- 23...** Pray for J.P., as he prepares to teach a course on Christian Stewardship in Mission for B.Th. students in Cambodia. Give thanks for Concordia Theological Seminary in Hong Kong for offering this program to students in Cambodia. SE Asia
- 24...** Pray for Dr. Steve Oliver, LCMS Theological educator in Taiwan, who will also be teaching a course for the Cambodian B.Th. students in December. SE Asia
- 25...** Pray for peace as we pause to remember Christ's birth on this special day.
- 26...** Pray for J.P.'s coursework through Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Pray especially for his upcoming intensive courses in January, which will require him to be away from the family for almost 3 weeks.
- 27...** Pray for A, especially, as she stays home with the children while J.P. is away. SE Asia
- 28...** Pray for J.P.'s father, John, and A's mother, Jan, as they both battle cancer. SE Asia
- 29...** Pray that the work in Papua New Guinea continues amidst division, false doctrine, competing churches and the challenges of modernism. One day we want to gather around the throne in heaven with our brothers and sisters from PNG and all over the world and sing, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Rev 7:10) LM – Papua New Guinea
- 30...** Pray for the continued work of the Gospel here in PNG among the Enga people and surrounding communities. LM – Papua New Guinea
- 31...** Pray for God's blessings on all who serve our Lord through Mission Central; the missionaries and their families, volunteers, sponsor churches, individual donors, Brent and Gary and their families. May God bless you all as we begin a new year.

The Theses referred to on December 3rd is shown on the next few pages.

Note to print the calendar- print pages 1 and 2 only.

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Against False *Sanguma* Beliefs

23 Theses and a Statement of Faith for Christians

Concordia Lutheran Professional Mission Services

There is an ongoing crisis of violence in Papua New Guinea, including an increase in accusations of “sanguma” or “witchcraft” where women, men, and now even children are falsely accused of possessing spiritual powers and are then tortured and often killed. False beliefs about ‘sanguma’ and the violent actions taken by some in Papua New Guinea do not follow the Word of God, are in complete opposition to the Christian faith and fail to reflect how Jesus wants us to live. We invite all Papua New Guineans and Christians everywhere to join us in rejecting these false beliefs and the violence associated with them. We pray that God would lead all to repentance and that these actions would cease.

What Does the Bible Say About Sorcery-Accusation Related Violence?

As a member of the Holy Christian Church and a follower of Jesus Christ, I stand upon and believe His Holy Word. I therefore confess and believe that:

1. God created this entire world (Colossians 1:15-16). God made men, women, and children “in His image” (Genesis 1:26-27). God loves His people and rejoices over each of them (Zephaniah 3:17). God loves and cares for all, even those who do not love Him (Romans 5:10).
2. God told us to love and care for one another (John 13:34), our spouses (Ephesians 5:21-33), our parents (Exodus 20:12), our neighbors (Luke 10:25-37), strangers and outsiders (Psalm 146:9), those in need (James 1:27) and even our enemies (Matthew 5:43-45).
3. Those who hurt, maim, torture, or murder another person for any reason break God’s Commandment that says: “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13).
4. God expects us to help those in need and not ignore them when they are hurt, or in danger (Luke 10:25-37). If we don’t help people who are in need, this too is a sin (Matthew 25:41-45).
5. There are some in Papua New Guinea who still believe that by practicing witchcraft, sorcery, *sanguma*, *vada*, *posin*, and divination, people can learn things, acquire wealth, heal or injure others, fly through the air or travel under water, change into the shape of an animal or other creature, or even kill others. Those who attempt to do these things are sinning (Deuteronomy 18:10-14). Those who believe that people can do these things are not trusting God and hearing His Word but rather remain trapped in the worldviews in which they were raised. They are paranoid and superstitious, listening to gossip, and believing the lies of Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).
6. The Bible never says that it is possible for a man, woman, or child to inherit or otherwise obtain and use special or magical powers that allow them to ‘spiritually’ kill or injure other people. Such beliefs are not Christian beliefs but are false and heathen beliefs. When the Bible talks about evil spirits, it does not say that these spirits can eat other people’s hearts or turn that person into a witch or sorcerer.

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7. It is God alone who gives life (1 Samuel 2:6). Death came into the world because of sin (Genesis 3, Romans 5:12). There are many reasons why people die, but having their heart eaten by a *sanguma* spirit is not one of them. That is a false belief and is impossible. Man may kill the body, but God alone has the power to kill the soul (Matthew 10:28). Sorcery and demons do not have that power.
8. Christians are to love and care for the people who others say are ugly, act strangely or unnaturally, are mentally or physically disabled and even those who have been brainwashed and now believe they have been infected by a so-called *sanguma* spirit.
9. False prophets known as *glasman* or witch-finders, who many think can identify a *sanguma* witch, lead many people astray with lies and false accusations (Colossians 2:8, Matthew 24:11).
10. In the Hebrew language, the original language of the Old Testament, the word Satan means "Accuser" (Revelation 12:7-10, Job 1:6). Those who falsely accuse other people and attack them without mercy follow the lies of Satan, and do not follow God.
11. *Sanguma* accusations often arise when health services are broken down and people get sick and die. Accusations also arise when there are hidden motives, such as land disputes or problems in marriage. People then look for an excuse, such as *sanguma*, to take advantage of one another. False accusations are against God's Law and will (Deuteronomy 19:16-19). It is against the law in Papua New Guinea to accuse anyone of being a *sanguma*, even if they themselves have been brainwashed or tortured and thereby admit or claim to be *sanguma*.
12. Some who profess to be Christians, and even some pastors, agree with and participate in evil activities harming men, women, and children whom they believe are *sanguma*. These actions include calling someone *sanguma*, destruction of property, separation from family, exclusion from community and clan, denial of health care or other rights, exile, assault, torture, and even murder. All these actions break the 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-21) and are against the law in Papua New Guinea.
13. God places a special responsibility upon sons to care for and protect their mothers when He says: "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12).
14. Similarly, God expects husbands not to abuse their wives, but rather to love them so much that they would be willing to die for them just as Jesus died in order to save us (Ephesians 5:25).
15. Some people claim that we are now in the Last Days and that Satan's power will therefore increase. They say that Christians must therefore take violent action against the so-called agents of Satan. This is a false excuse and is just another lie of Satan. Jesus has already defeated Satan by rising from the dead (1 John 3:8). Because Jesus reigns as the Lord of All, we do not need to fear all that will take place in the Last Days or the 'power' of Satan (Ephesians 1:20-23, Colossians 2:15).
16. Jesus and his apostles did no harm to those who were possessed by evil spirits (Luke 4:35), but instead cast out demons by the power of His Word and through prayer (Mark 9:14-29).
17. Those who say they are helping God by hurting and murdering others take God's name in vain and break the Commandment that says: "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God." They are actually doing evil in God's name (Exodus 20:7, John 16:2-3).
18. People being tortured say and "confess" anything at all in the hope that their torturers will be satisfied with their answers and stop torturing them. Information received from people under torture is not reliable

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because people being tortured do not tell the truth. People who are being tortured should not be believed, even if they confess to being a *sanguma* or if they accuse others of practicing *sanguma*.

19. Anyone who acts to hurt others breaks the Law of God (Exodus 20:13) and stands outside the Christian faith (1 John 2:4, 1 John 3:15). They must repent and face the law for any crimes that they have committed.
20. God uses governments of countries to restrain evil and secure justice (Romans 13:1-5). In keeping with God's will, the Constitution and the Laws of Papua New Guinea make it illegal to murder, torture and abuse men, women, and children for any reason, including *sanguma* accusations. Those who are accused of any crime must be given a fair trial in an official court.
21. Through Jesus Christ, God's mercy is available to all who repent and confess their sins (John 3:15-17), however God's mercy does not necessarily reduce any earthly penalty that must be paid for any crimes that have been committed (2 Samuel 12:1-19).
22. Jesus's command that we love one another is an eternal command and is exactly the same now as it always has been (John 13:34).
23. God our heavenly Father loves all people and desires that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they repent and know God's love and grace given to the world through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:1-6). May God transform all people by the renewing of their minds that they may know the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2). God grant this for Jesus's sake. Amen.

I Believe and Confess:

Below is a Statement of Faith that we urge all Papua New Guineans and Christians everywhere to pray and confess regularly with us.

I confess that:

1. God is God, the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He alone is God. He created. He defends and protects us. He provides for us. When we have a need, we are to ask Him. When we feel pain or sorrow, we turn to Him for comfort. There is no other God. Therefore...
 - a. I will fear, love, and trust in God above all things.
2. God is love. God loves even His enemies. Through Jesus, He makes us His own. We love others because of His love. Therefore...
 - a. I will love my wife and protect her as part of myself.
 - b. I will love and honor my parents and not allow harm to come to them.
 - c. I will love my neighbors and do all I can to help them.
 - d. I will love my enemies and do no harm to them.
3. Life and death are God's business. He has not given authority to *sanguma* to take life or to give it back. Only God can give life back to someone who has died. When people unlawfully take life, it is murder. Therefore...
 - a. I will not murder.
 - b. I will not torture those accused of *sanguma*, thinking it will bring life back to a dead person or health back to someone who is sick.
 - c. I will not stand by while others torture or murder. I will do all I can to protect those accused of *sanguma*.

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- d. At the time of death, I will not look to blame anyone. I will not accuse others of *sanguma*. Instead, I will remind others of God's promise of eternal life, through the work of Jesus Christ.
4. Sin and Satan tempt each of us. We desire power, good things, and a life without pain or sorrow. God in His love will provide what we need. Sorcery does not have the power to give these things. Therefore...
 - a. I will not use curses, turn to diviners, those practicing sorcery, *glasman*, or in any other way try to use false power to gain what I want.
 - b. I will not believe lies such as: 1) torture will reveal true things; 2) *sanguma* can be inherited; 3) *sanguma* eat hearts; 4) *sanguma* can bring life back.
5. God has given authority to governments to protect and care for people, providing benefits such as health, education, and other benefits for the community. The PNG government has laws against killing and abusing others. Using the excuse that you are protecting the community from *sanguma* is not an excuse the court will accept. Therefore...
 - a. I will assist the police, courts, and others who are trying to uphold human dignity and rights.
 - b. I will do what I can to help agencies of health and education to provide services to help others.
6. Jesus is our Savior, our teacher, our friend. In love, Jesus cast out spirits which were troubling the person possessed. He was a friend to the outcast. He forgave sinners. He died on the cross to forgive our sins so that we could be in God's family forever. By God's grace we try to live as Jesus did. Therefore...
 - a. By the power of the Holy Spirit, I will love my neighbor as myself.
 - b. When I fall short and do not love my neighbor as myself, I will repent and confess my sin.
 - c. I will trust in God's mercy to forgive my sins and cleanse me, raising me up to walk His paths again.

Conclusion

May my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ clothe me in His armour (Ephesians 6:10-20), giving me the wisdom and the strength to stand firm in love and hear and obey Him. May God use me to defeat the false ideas about *sanguma* that cause some to think it is acceptable to accuse, hurt, torture, and murder any sister, brother, mother, family, clan member, or anyone who is my neighbor (Luke 10:25-37).

Concordia Lutheran Professional Mission Services (LCMS)

27 August 2018

PNG National Day of Repentance

PO Box 803

Mt Hagen, 281

Papua New Guinea

Sanguma Emergency Numbers:

If you are in danger because of sorcery-accusations or know about someone who is, please call:

- Enga Rural Police Station Commander Epenes Nili at 7000 6751
- Stop Sorcery Violence at 7150 8000.

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For more information, please visit www.StopSorceryViolence.org.

“You are to open their eyes and turn them from the darkness to the light and from the power of Satan to God, so that through their faith in me they will have their sins forgiven and receive their place among God’s chosen people.”

Acts 26:18

Some Facts on *Sanguma*

Sanguma is not an English word. It is a strange word that came into Tok Pisin from the Monumbo language in the Madang Province. In the Monumbo language, the word *sanguma* referred to warriors stalking, ambushing, and ritualistically killing people from enemy tribes. The word did not refer to sorcery, witchcraft or the torture of women and children.

Today, this word has been given many different and confusing meanings. Some people use the word *sanguma* to talk about witchcraft accusations or about people having evil, invisible creatures living inside them. These accusations result in abuse, violence, and death.

Prayer During a Time of Trouble

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Stronger Man who defeated Satan taking back Your Holy Church by Your death and resurrection. Bless us so that we may believe Your Word and live according to Your will. May Satan be frustrated and flee when he sees You working in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Mifila, a mother who was accused and murdered in 2015.