

SERVING THE LORD IN

# THE PHILIPPINES

REV. ROGER & AMY JAMES



Eastertide  
May 2020



Rev. Roger James serves as LCMS theological educator. He and his wife Amy live and teach at Lutheran Theological Seminary and Training Center (LTS), the seminary of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP).

## “Who heals all your diseases...” Psalm 103:3



Sunday Service of the Word continues at LTS, even during the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020.

### ALVARO A. CARIÑO

was the first LCMS missionary to the Philippines. “Al” was actually Philippino. He had traveled to the USA in the 1920s, serving as a butler to a wealthy family in St. Louis. While there he came into contact with LCMS Lutherans and was catechized and ultimately ordained. While plans for mission work in the Philippines began in the 1930s, World War II prevented any action until after the surrender of Japan. In 1946 Rev. Cariño returned as a missionary to war-devastated Manila, leaving his pregnant wife and three daughters in the US until he could find adequate housing. The second LCMS missionary was also Philippino. Henrique D. Aradanas had worked in the USA for 20 years, but desired to return to the Philippines to bring the Gospel. Completing his seminary training, Rev. Aradanas was called to serve in his native country.

**P**salm 103 has been one of my favorites for many years, but the words quoted above are more poignant now than ever. I admit that there have been times in my ministry when I felt uncomfortable praying for healing for someone deathly ill. I could always tag a “Thy will be done” to the end to ease my discomfort. That really betrayed a misunderstanding of the promises of God on my part. Notice the psalm verse again. It does not say that God heals some of your diseases some of the time. The passage asserts that the LORD heals all your diseases. This was truly an eye-opener for me. It made sense of so much of what I had only partially understood for so long. Forgiveness of sins—the main topic of Psalm 103—also results in the utter defeat of death and all those things that accompany death, including illness. It is indeed God’s will that all who trust in

Him for the forgiveness of their sins also receive healing from all their diseases. The cross of Jesus is not just for “spiritual” salvation, but for salvation in every aspect of the term. This is, of course, one of the promises of Easter. The cross and resurrection are inseparable. Forgiveness bought by the suffering and death of Christ necessarily—logically, if you will—results in the resurrection of the body. Since sickness and death came because of sin, if sin is dealt a death blow, then so is sickness. So now when I pray for a Christian to recover from illness, I have no qualms or discomfort. Most certainly God desires this person to be healed of all his or her diseases. God grant there there might be a temporary healing here and now, but God most certainly promises that there will be a complete and eternal healing through the cross and resurrection of Jesus.



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**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

- Roger's complete recovery from his illness.
- That Amy and others of the LTS community would not get sick.
- That this pandemic would not negatively impact the training of our church workers and that we will be able to begin anew with new students in August or September.
- Safe delivery of our newest grandchildren. Rachel and Eli James' baby boy due in June and Kezia and Aaron Nielsen's little one due the end of September.

**GIVE THANKS FOR:**

- The protection and healing we have received from our Father in heaven.

**PRAISE GOD FOR:**

- All those who support us and other LCMS missionaries throughout Asia and the world.



*It is Quarantine Day 47 as I write* these words. Only one member per household is allowed to leave home to get groceries or meds during specific hours. For our n or neighborhood or barangay, those times are Mondays 11:00—2:00 and Thursdays 6:00—11:00. Several weeks ago we decided to start having limited classes again. Each prof would take one day a week and conduct all of his classes. I was to have my three classes on Fridays, only meeting for an hour per class. Instead of three hours per week per class it would only be one hour, but that was better than nothing. I did my three classes on 17 April. I conducted Service of the Word on Sunday, 19 April (see picture).

Then, that very Sunday, I got sick—various stages of sore throat, fever, cough, head ache, sinus congestion, general weariness for the next two weeks. Is it *you-know-what?* We don't know. Doctors are pretty much unavailable, except at the emergency room. There was no way we were going to the emergency room unless I started having trouble breathing—which did not happen. Thanks be to God! Amy has not gotten sick. Again, Thanks be to God! I am much better now. AGAIN! Thanks be to God!

Sadly, I missed chapel and church and was not able to teach my class, being restricted to our apartment. I also had been asked to act as Asia region chaplain during this pandemic time, keeping in touch with each of our Asia missionaries. Unfortunately, I have not been able to meet those responsibilities, except to remember our missionaries in personal prayer.



Thankfully, I was able to make it to church yesterday and I hope to attend our regular chapel services again.



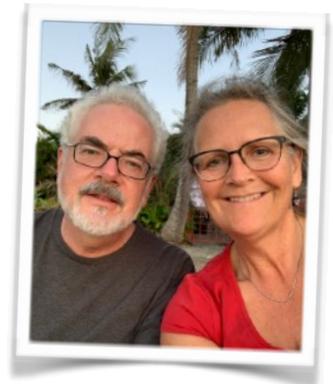
Like many of you, we are concerned about our future. Of course, we know and believe that our future is in the good hands of our heavenly Father. Indeed, throughout my entire life, I have NEVER lacked. I have always been safe and well-provided for. Nevertheless, times like this could cause significant changes for all of us, synod, congregations, families. Change is almost always unsettling. We hope and pray that you and your congregations will continue to support us and other missionaries of Synod—not so we can keep our jobs! God will provide; rather, so that the proclamation of God's Word in the world continue uninterrupted. Our Lord has blessed the LCMS with His saving Word in a remarkable way. We Christians of the LCMS have much to give for the comfort, joy, healing, and salvation of the world. We pray we can continue to be your servants in this mission.

Allow me to end where I began:

*Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless his holy name!  
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,  
who forgives all your iniquity,  
who heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the pit,  
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
who satisfies you with good so that your youth is  
renewed like the eagle's. (Psalm 103:1-5)*

Thank you, and  
Peace in Christ,

*Roger B. James*



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](http://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

To support the LCMS through the work of Roger & Amy James, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
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