



The Nelson Family serving in Indonesia & Southeast Asia <http://partners-apart.org>

November in Nepal

WARNING!!!!

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Did You Know?

- Christians make up less than 2% of Nepal's population
- However by some estimates Christianity is growing by over 10% a year
- Meanwhile elsewhere...a single district of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines has commissioned over 100 deaconesses!

For more regular updates and images of our life in Medan, Indonesia please visit our blog:
<http://partners-apart.org>

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Last month I was privileged to journey to Nepal with Rev. Dr. Michael Lockwood, an LCMS Alliance Missionary from the Lutheran Church of Australia. This was Rev. Lockwood's fourth visit to Nepal in the last six years or so, and he has built a relationship with an organization called Livingstone Ministries that works to equip Christian congregations in Nepal with solid Biblical teaching. We were able to teach in two separate areas of Nepal while transiting in and out of the capital, Kathmandu.

Nepal's largest religion is Hinduism, somewhat ironic for the birthplace of the Buddha! Over 80% of the population identify as Hindu. The traditional greeting is *Namaste*, which translates roughly to *I bow to you*, a reflection of Hindu teaching of each person encompassing an element of divinity. I was taught my second day in the country that Christians have a slightly different greeting, which sounds very similar—*Jai Mashi*—which translates roughly as *Victory to Jesus*.

The phrase accompanies an identical placing of the palms together, fingers upright, in front of your chest with a slight bow. But the different greeting is a way for Christians to identify one another, and offers a faithful alternative to *Namaste* in a culture where greeting one another is a vital and vibrant ritual.



Left—gathering with refugees displaced by earthquakes. With funding from local municipalities and churches, they are building a new permanent village.

Bottom Left—early morning in Lalbandi, Nepal, about 30 minutes from the border with India

Below—Lunchtime glimpsed through the church window. Daily meals of rice, lentils, greens, potatoes, and sometimes chicken or pork were provided to church workers attending trainings.



Prayers and Thanksgivings

- Prayers for Nepali people displaced by earthquakes last month
- Prayers as we begin planning our first Home Service next year



*He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."
Mark 16:15*

Mission Central provides incredible financial support to LCMS workers around the world—including us! Contact Mission Central for more information!

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lcms.org/service.

Deaconess Training in the Philippines

My second big trip of the month was to the Philippines. In Manila I connected with Deaconess Sandra Rhein and together we journeyed north on a 5-hour bus ride to Baguio. There we conducted a review training for 20 deaconesses of the Highlands District of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP).

Frankly, Deaconess Sandra did the bulk of the teaching—and did a great job! Her topic was male and female identity in Christ, and for five days we engaged in Scriptural study of our equality rooted in our unique creation by God the Father and restored in the death and resurrection of the Son of God. An equality that defies shallow modern insistence on equality based on function in favor of a deeper and richer definition of equality based on creation. In other words, it is who we are as creations of God that make us equal, not what we do. Men and women are created distinct and intricately compatible and mutually dependent. I provided review teaching & discussions on Luther's Small Catechism and field-ed questions as a pastor and a man. Excellent discussions!

What a blessing to work with Deaconess Sandra and to witness the faithfulness of these Filipina Deaconesses. If all goes well we'll be back in July to teach the session again for another 80 of the Highland District deaconesses. We also hope to hold a first-ever global deaconess summit in London this coming August to work towards a standardized deaconess training curriculum for all four LCMS Office of International Mission regions!

Right—sitting in the Manila airport waiting to check in for my flight home!

Below—Deaconess Sandra Rhein in action teaching Filipina Deaconesses.

Below Right—a typical street in Baguio, Philippines



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The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
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