



MEET THE WOOD FAMILY

Matthew, Kali, Laurel, Eleanor, Caroline, and Kermit serve in Medan, Indonesia with LCMS International. Matthew supports *The Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church (GKLI)*, by mentoring pastors, providing continuing education, and managing mercy and translation projects.

**GIVE NOW &
KEEP US IN INDONESIA!**
SCAN BELOW



OR TEXT

'LCMSWOOD' TO 41-444

OR MAIL IN A CHECK

Payable to:

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
Saint Louis, MO 63166-6861
On the memo line include:
Wood-Indonesia



To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter write to:

Matthew.Wood@lcms.org
with ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

LCMS WORKERS IN ASIA VISIT MEDAN!



LCMS Workers and their families gather on Thursday January 4 with GKLI leadership after worship according to the traditional GKLI Pattern.

Each January OIM workers in Asia and their families meet together for the All Asia Family Retreat. This provides us an invaluable opportunity for support, fellowship, pastoral care, Bible study, worship, theological conversations, advice, and the list could go on. Kali and I were overjoyed to host the team in Medan, Indonesia for this year's gathering.

Study and Worship at the Center

The retreat each year centers around study and worship with unstructured time in the afternoon for workers to seek edification in personally effective ways. Pastor Roger James led a study of Colossians, morning and evening worship, and officiated Epiphany Divine Service. Pastor Kevin Robson LCMS CMO came all the way from Saint Louis to be with us and offer the opportunity to communicate in a frank and face to face way.

The significance of this annual event for the support and endurance of OIM workers in Asia is difficult to overstate. Important moments created here help us to remain steadfast in the field God has called us with energy, joy, and zeal.

One important moment was inviting the GKLI leadership to worship with us Thursday morning. We worshiped in English and Indonesian following the GKLI Agenda. So the GKLI and LCMS folks could follow along in their own language.

Introducing GKLI Traditions and Leadership to OIM Workers in Asia

The GKLI has one order of worship. They do not change it for Pastor Conferences, feast days, or anything else. If they worship together they worship according to this pattern. It is part of their core identity. It is unique in Indonesia because explicitly forgives sins after the confession. It also incorporates a reading of the Small Catechism or Augsburg Confession.

After the service Bishop Siragih had the opportunity to address our group. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation that the LCMS used the GKLI service. For him it was affirming that the work and development of this service over the last generation has not been in vain. Many people commented afterward that the importance of the moment for our relationship with the GKLI was apparent.



Pastor Wood Interprets as Bishop Siragih addresses OIM Asia workers and family. From Left to Right: Bishop Emeritus Aladin Siteo, Rev. Matthew Wood, Bishop Jon Albert Siragih, Sekjend Rev. Lamris Malau.



PRAYERS

SUPPLICATION

- Pastor Eben Ezer and Bishop Jon Albert Siragih who are in Fort Wayne attending Theological Symposium at Concordia Theological Seminary.
- For Indonesia as they approach their national elections in February.
- For passport renewals in the coming months and patience with our next visa renewal process.
- For continued work with the GKLI and to identify ways to expand our reach in Indonesia.
- For an upcoming workshop in Pekanbaru. It will be my first time visiting the city.
- For motivation, energy, and time management skills as Matthew's PhD program starts up again in January.

THANKSGIVING

- For a successful family retreat in Indonesia.
- For a joyous Christmas celebration .
- For the amazing financial and prayer support received in 2023!

FAMILY UPDATE



The annual gathering of OIM Asia workers is also a time to bring pastoral and spiritual care to their families and children. This year a group of volunteers from Good Shepherd Lutheran in Roanoke, VA took the long—and it is *long*—trip to Medan in order to provide VBS style study to our younger kids and young adult study to the older kids in our group.



This is something our kids look forward to every year. They came back from the study singing songs and talking about what they learned. They provided a special musical piece during the Epiphany Divine Service and Laurel still sings it as she works on her chores or finishes up school work during the day.

ULOS WEAVING PROGRAM

How many t-shirts do you have from events, camps, retreats, and the like? They are a common way to commemorate time and activity together. This year for the OIM Asia retreat Kali and I decided that it would be better to support the GKLI Ulos weaving ministry and gift each family an Ulos to remember their time in Indonesia. We also commissioned a special gold and white Ulos to use as an Altar parament which was used throughout the retreat. These Ulos were hand made and their sale supports Batak women and families.

In the future we hope to offer some leadership training for the GKLI and the women involved in this program. The goal is to train the leadership to make this ministry not only self-sustaining, but beyond that to ministry supporting.

