

ASIA LUTHERAN NEWS

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E D I T O R I A L

Dear Readers

We have received only several of the ALN survey forms sent out together with the last issue of the newsletter. Our sincere appreciations to those of you who had returned the form together with your good suggestions and gracious comments. It gives us great motivation to know that ALN is fulfilling its main purpose and that there is still much room for improvement. Please be assured that every suggestion is being taken into consideration for possible implementation at a suitable time.

The Asia Lutheran News is a newsletter produced for the Lutheran communion in Asia though our readers also covers those from Bible seminaries, ecumenical churches and organizations, universities and mission agencies from the north that are involved in Asia. With this issue, I would like to encourage our readers, Lutherans or otherwise, to write and contribute articles to the ALN. We welcome articles on any areas or issues that will benefit, encourage or challenge our readers from the different age groups and ministries - viewpoints or theological reflection, features, devotions, poems, cultural highlights on important festivals of your ethnic group, write up on current issues in your region, etc.

Under certain topics or write-ups, a suitable pseudonym or pen-name may also be used though basic information of the writers should still be furnished. The editorial team, however, reserves the right to edit all work for publication and cannot guarantee that all articles received will be published.

ALN has received the names of news liaisons from only several member churches (details on last page of ALN) and hope to hear from the rest of the member churches who have still not provided us with a contact. We would like to encourage all news liaisons in the various sub-regions to be more active in writing and sending us brief news on what's happening in your churches and region so that we could hear from all member churches regularly.

It's our goal that through the newsletter there could be a continuous exchange of information that will enhance the communion and fellowship of member churches and related institutions, the sharing and exchange of resources, expertise and experiences. We look forward to receiving your articles and write-ups, and of course, to have more of you return the survey forms!

God's blessings be upon all of you during this Lenten season.

Sally Lim
Editor

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INFORMATION SHARING

LATEST STATISTIC RELEASE - JANUARY 2004

Membership among Lutheran churches in the last two years increased by 570,000 putting the number of Lutherans worldwide up to nearly 66 million by the end of 2003. Regular statistics produced by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) indicate an average 0.9 percent growth from the 65,387,677 Lutherans registered in 2001 to the 65,957,685 recorded by the end of last year. In 2000, Lutheran churches worldwide included nearly 64 million people. The LWF did not publish membership figures for the year ending 2002.

The 136 LWF member churches, including eleven recognized congregations and one recognized council, totaled nearly 62.3 million (62,297,025) people by the end of 2003, compared to nearly 61.7 million in 2001. The number of LWF member churches increased from 133 in 2002 to the current 136. This figure includes 133 churches with full membership in the LWF and three associate member churches. Membership in Lutheran churches that do not belong to the LWF decreased by around 22,400 to the current 3,660,660 worldwide.

Increased Membership in Asian Lutheran Churches

The number of Lutheran Christians in Asia increased by 2.5 percent in the last two years. Of the total 7,323,736 Lutherans there, 7,200,069 belong to LWF member churches. Membership in the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church in India increased by 100,000

members to reach 107,997 by the end of last year. Membership in the Chinese Rhenish Church Hong Kong Synod rose by 2,000 to the current 14,000 while the Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore increased by 865 pushing the membership up to 6,865. The Lutheran Church in Singapore had 929 new members, increasing the total to 3,929.

LWF 2003 Membership Figures



Lutherans in the African Churches has increased by more than 1 million which now standing at 13,068,209. Europe with 36,001,617 Lutherans is downed by 640,000 and North American also recorded a slight decrease in membership with 8,435,788. Latin America has maintained a stable membership of 1,128,335 in the past two years.

to the current 800,000, while that in the Gutnius Lutheran Church - Papua New Guinea rose by nearly 50 percent to reach 138,000 by the end of 2003. An increase of 15,885 in Indonesia's Protestant Christian Church in Mentawai pushed the membership up to 38,211.

The Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church in India recorded 4,403 new

The statistics on membership are based on information received from the LWF member churches, the recognized council and recognized congregations, as well as from other Lutheran churches, organizations, mission bodies and congregations. The figures recorded for the year ending 2001 were used for churches that did not indicate any change in statistics by the end of January 2004.

**Source: LWI 2004-018
February 17, 2004**

LWF YOUTH IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY (YICAS)

There is a need for the Lutheran communion to be actively engaged in transforming economic globalization. This was the affirmation by participants in a three-year Lutheran World Federation (LWF) leadership program involving young people from LWF member churches worldwide.

The group of young adults from 16 countries worldwide met November 23-28 on Batam Island near

Singapore, to formally conclude the International Youth Program-Transformation through Participation (IYP-TTP), an initiative aimed at equipping young people for leadership in church and society. The IYP-TTP process began in 2001 and concluded with a consultation on the theme "Toward the Fullness of Life: Renewing Hope in Transforming Economic Globalization." The meeting was coordinated by the LWF

Youth in Church and Society (YICAS) desk, Department for Mission and Development (DMD).

Is there a chance for a better life for all people in today's world economic order? Yes, according to this international group of Lutheran youth. But it will probably not result from current forms of economic globalization or 'free trade'. There are signs of hope, the youth affirmed, but

negative factors generally outweigh the positive.

During the 15-month internships in their own congregations, the IYP - TTP participants not only focused on the negative effects of economic globalization, but also "found ways to challenge and oppose them," by using language and stories that are relevant to their contexts. They identified, participated in and led local and global actions to overcome an increasingly homogenized global culture that negatively affects the dignity and well-being of workers and communities.

Indonesia, with a population more than 200 million, is the world's fourth largest country and has the largest population of Muslims worldwide. The IYP - TTP participants' experience in the context of Batam Island was equally important. Thirty years ago the island had a population of 6,000 people. Today over 500,000 residents, mostly industrial, service and tourism sector workers from every corner of Indonesia - an archipelago of 17,000 islands - make Batam one of the country's busiest and most densely populated manufacturing centers.

Perspectives on the island and other areas of Indonesia were provided by Ms Benny Sinaga of the Protestant Christian Batak Church (HKBP) and Imelda Sirkmangusong, who also helped interpret local culture and context in visits to workers' dormitories, churches, Christian and Muslim families, and a mosque.

How does economic globalization present itself on Batam Island? A summary of the situation was given by the IYP - TTP Indonesian hosts: The workforce is made up of mainly young single women who migrated from other parts of Indonesia, looking for employment and a better living standard. They are paid low wages, work long hours, have little personal time and will probably lose both health and livelihood benefits before "retirement age" as understood in the global labor market. Many of them are afraid to ask for higher wages, as they would probably lose their jobs. And if wages become too high, the employer will probably move the

factory to another country where labor is cheaper.

From the discussions that followed it was evident that economic globalization takes on a different appearance in each country and community context, but with similar results: "We notice a global trend whereby those who are rich are becoming richer, and those who are poor are becoming poorer," participants in the IYP - TTP final meeting noted.

A dialogue with Bishop Dr. Edison Munthe, Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS) in North Sumatra, focused on youth decision-making processes and provided cross-cultural perspectives on power, gender and culture, and how a global culture is currently influencing changes that have repercussions worldwide. "As young leaders of the church," participants said, they are concerned about the "worship of material goods" and "the export of a homogenized global culture."

At the end of the November 23-28 meeting, the IYP - TTP participants adopted ten recommendations addressed to the LWF member churches and the wider Lutheran communion. They underlined issues such as the right to safe drinking water, adequate nutrition, shelter, health care and education for all. They also raised concern about their fear of private and



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Bishop Munthe getting a point across ...

public violence, and about the need for participatory decision-making processes on issues that especially affect young people. In a separate message addressed to young people in the wider communion, they identified so-called "signs of hope."

The young men and women called on the LWF to prioritize the YICAS focus on economic globalization and help member churches to implement the program. They emphasized the need to involve religious, social and political leaders worldwide in the search for "a better life for all people." Future YICAS programs, they said, should include ecumenical and inter-faith participants.

***LWI correspondent
Lance Woodruff, Thailand***



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"... young people ... not the church of tomorrow but of today"

LWF youth network comprises mainly of youth liaisons from each member church and regional coordinators selected by their respective sub-regions. These are key people who stay connected with each other in order to accomplish prioritized goals and assist each other in their respective youth ministry. Indeed, they embody a fellowship of young people working and praying together as members of the Lutheran World Federation-A Communion of Churches.

YOUTH LIAISONS

The LWF Council made a resolution in 1999 to request each member church to appoint a youth liaison who will be directly in contact with the LWF youth desk for better communication and inclusion of youth in decision making processes. This decision was made to address the problem of communication and follow up with and among the youth regionally and globally. The first batch of youth liaisons had served from 2000 to 2003. The following information is intended for further understanding of their functions and responsibilities in order to utilize this structure to the fullest.

Objectives

- ★ to ensure direct contact between LWF Youth Desk and youth organization of each member church
- ★ to effectively facilitate exchange of information regarding youth events and programs (locally, regionally, globally), needs and challenges, hopes and visions.
- ★ to increase youth representation and strengthen participation from each established youth organization of member churches and established or in establishing regional and/or sub-regional networks
- ★ to encourage establishment of national and regional youth networks where there is a need.
- ★ to maintain an updated database including the list of liaison youth person to be shared with member churches.

Tasks of a youth liaison

- ★ Facilitate communication between LWF youth Desk and

member church with copies furnished to the respective church headquarters;

- ★ Introduce and promote YICAS' work to young people in congregations;
- ★ Disseminate information from the youth desk to the youth and church leaders;
- ★ Deputize for YICAS in events in their national church and region;
- ★ Regularly inform YICAS about the needs of youth in their national church and in the society at large with and through regional network;
- ★ Assist in solicitation of material from their national church for use in the publication of YOUTH;
- ★ Assist in identification of youth representatives at LWF-sponsored events
- ★ Assist in preparing youth delegates or representatives to any YICAS or other LWF related events;
- ★ Assist in exchange of resources, updated information and reports of the member churches' youth programs and projects;
- ★ Follow up the promotion and implementation of Regional Consultation commitments and/or projects
- ★ Communicate and coordinate with the regional or sub-regional network Coordinator/s especially in planning and implementing regional work.

Term of the position

Three years (starting 2004). This could be renewed only if he/she is 27 years old or younger. Please take note that the gathering of their names have started since August 2003.

Recommended Qualifications

- ★ Age must be between 18-27
- ★ Endorsed by the national church and the national youth organization (if there is one). The latter's endorsement is very helpful in ensuring that information gets to the grassroots level.
- ★ Active participant in youth programs and/or has worked in and for youth leadership development in church and society.

- ★ Preferably could communicate (speak, write and understand) in English. In case there is a difficulty in finding one in the community, please make sure that the young person could communicate using the other three of the four official language of the LWF (German, Spanish and French). However, in order to facilitate communication with other youth liaisons, English would be very helpful.
- ★ Willingness and strong commitment to ecumenism through regular communication and active participation and contribution to achieve common goals and address global concerns.

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

The need for LWF's regional and sub-regional youth/young adults' networks has emerged from regional consultations. This need was felt as the young people got tired of producing messages rather than concrete action plans and commitments in their respective communities. As a result, consultations have become more action oriented and the importance of ownership of these action plans and commitment, regional and sub-regional were elected or selected during consultations or sub-regional gatherings. Until the beginning of year 2003 there are 12 sub-regional and one regional Lutheran Youth Networks established, which are as follows:

Africa

- ★ Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCWA)
- ★ Lutheran Communion in Central and Eastern Africa (LUCCEA)
- ★ Lutheran Communion in Western Africa (LUCSA)

Asia

- ★ South East Asian Lutheran Communion (SEALUC)
- ★ North East Asian Lutheran Communion (NEALUC)
- ★ West and South Asian Lutheran Communion (WeSALUC)

Latin America

- ★ South Cone and Brazil
- ★ Central America
- ★ Andean
- ★ Caribbean (no formal network as there are only two member churches in this sub-region)

Europe

- ★ Central Eastern Europe
- ★ Central Western Europe
- ★ Nordic (no formal network)

Tasks of a Regional (Sub-regional) Coordinator

- ★ To follow up the region and/or sub-regional consultation commitments
- ★ To facilitate communication between/among member churches' youth liaison in the region
- ★ To assist YICAS and youth liaisons the region/sub-region in gathering regional/sub-regional challenges for common tasks and action plan and implementation.
- ★ To assist YICAS in ensuring that information/news from YICAS are widely disseminated through the youth liaisons in the member churches.

- ★ To represent the region/sub-region when requested in relevant conferences and gatherings.

Term of Office

The term of office depends on the sub-region or region's decision. However, as the election (or selection in the case of NA) happens during a regional consultation, there is a common understanding that the term, generally is from consultation to consultation or sub-regional gathering to another. As for Asia, the regional coordinators were elected for the first time at the Asian Youth Consultation in 2001, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The elected regional coordinators are the following:

West South (WeSALUC)

- ★ James Philip Nag, Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church (India)
- ★ Rajabai Gustav Peter, Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church (India)

South East (SEALUC)

- ★ Steven Lawrence, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia
- ★ Emelda Nasution, Christian Protestant Angkola Church (Indonesia)

North East (NEALUC)

- ★ Thomas Itsushi Gamoh, Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church
- ★ Man Hei Yip, Tsung Tsin Mission Church of Hong Kong

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Since 1990, 20% percent of the LWF council is youth. At the recent 10th Assembly, 10 young people were elected and two of them came from Asia. They are Sophia Judika Hutagalung of Indonesia and Kazihiro of Japan.

We encourage you to check with your national youth organization or national office regarding the youth liaison's name proposed to YICAS. A YICAS' network directory will be published later on. Get involved in our global communion, grow in faith and be empowered to serve.

LWF Youth in Church & Society Desk (YICAS)

INTERNET WORKSHOP BY UELCI, INDIA

The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in India (UELCI) organised a national-level Internet Workshop for Lutheran pastors and lay leaders from January 29 to 31, 2004, in Chennai. Secular topics were discussed with an undercurrent of spirituality.

Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, Executive Secretary, UELCI, inaugurating the workshop, wanted Christians to take advantage of new technologies such as the Internet for promoting the God's mission. Dr. Evangeline Anderson of the United Theological College, Bangalore, spoke on Feminist Biblical Hermeneutics and called upon women to take to communication too.

Dr. Rosario Gomez, Professor of Communication of Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Chennai, discussed the role of communication

in mission. He explained how effective communication could be achieved through various areas of technology such as digital communication, electronic publishing, voice processing, data processing and computer-aided instruction.

Dr. I Arul Aram, Chief Sub-Editor with The Hindu newspaper, discussed the influence of the Internet on journalism. He argued that the Internet could redefine journalism. No more, marginalised groups would be led to "a spiral of silence" by the dominant views promoted by the media, with the Internet serving as an alternative medium.

Mr. Kiruba Shanker, a software professional from Chennai, gave an inspiring talk on how the Internet could help in networking among

groups with similar interests. He showed different illustrations of Internet use in everyday life.

Rev Timo Reuhkala, Executive Secretary of the LWF DMD Communication Consultancy Desk, Geneva, guided us through the workshop in all the three days. He gave a very clear and interesting explanation of the Internet and its usage. Interaction with him was an eye-opener for many of the delegates who earlier had little knowledge about the Internet and its use to the church. He started with the basics and gradually took the delegates to the futuristic options such as sending messages directly to the brain with the help of a microchip implanted on the body. He also dealt with digital divide and ethical dimensions.

Rachel Rajeeva K

REGIONAL HEADLINES

NEW PRESIDENT



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Dr. Professor Il-Young Park

Luther University/Seminary (LTU), South Korea, has a new President! He is none other than the Dr. Professor Il-Young PARK - a favorite among student, faculty and staff of LTU! Following the departure of Dr. Hilbert (George) Riemer, current president of LTU, to the States in late February 2004, the Board

of Regents had selected Dr. Young to take over the presidency of the seminary.

Dr. Park was originally from a Methodist background and ordained into the ministry of the Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) in 1984. With a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology, Dr. Park has served as Pastor, Dean of Students, Academic Dean. He currently serves a combined position of Dean of Students and Academic Dean. Elected as English secretary of LCK at its most recent convention in October 2003, Dr. Park also lectures regularly at Bethel Bible Series seminars throughout Korea. Fluent in English, he is also very much involved in translation work and had most recently translated the autobiography of Dr. Won Yong Ji.

Dr. Park is also a member of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Advisory Committee for Theological Education in Asia (ACTEAS).

Installation of the new LTU President will take place at the opening worship service



© LTU

the Riemers

of the LTU 2004 school year on 2 March. CHUKAHAMNIDA! (Congratulation)

Dr. Hilbert and Joan Riemer will be returning to the States after 42 years of faithful service in Korea! Annunghilkaeshipshio!

Source: LTU News, Volume 6, Issue 1, Winter 2004

FAREWELL I

With my term as the LWF Secretary for Youth in Church and Society (YICAS) coming to an end in February 2004, I believe it was not a mere coincidence that I was able to attend the last two events held in Batam Island, Indonesia at the end of year 2003. At the culminating event of the three-year International Youth Program: Transformation through Participation (IYP-TTP), we experienced and shared about leadership formation in the communion within the context of addressing a common challenge: neo-liberal economic globalization.

Following this event, we were confronted with the threat of a "ticking time bomb" on HIV/AIDS at the Asian Church Leadership Consultation on the pandemic. Apart from these, the 2001 Asian Youth Consultation's had also prioritized issues for the next few years on issues such as violence against women and children, addressing the human trafficking for sex industry and slave labor, participating in interfaith endeavors toward reconciliation and peace amidst conflict and violence.



© YICAS

Tita

Born and raised in Asia, I have strong passion to participate and contribute in the mission and ministry of Asian churches. My time as YICAS Secretary has strengthened my faith and passion to work more for justice and peace. This is not an overnight transformation. Being raised in a predominantly Roman Catholic country (the Philippines), the expression of my being a Lutheran

Christian only means "bringing" someone to Christ through evangelism with little concern for poverty, violence, and corruption that are reigning in the country I grew up in. My encounter with Lutherans from other countries, Protestant and non-denominational communities, Roman Catholic neighbors and people of other faiths has taught me that I belong to a global community that is boldly living out a mission that is holistic. Proclamation of the Gospel, indeed, cannot be done without diaconia, advocacy and being a fellowship that is alive.

The churches in Asia have so much to contribute to the Christian community worldwide - with our diverse gifts and even with our weaknesses. The churches in Asia, especially the young people who are not the church of tomorrow but of today, have been and will continue to be my teachers/mentors.

"We thirst for true peace," I remembered the testimony of Anna Liza Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan

during the Youth Open Hearing before the participants at the LWF Assembly in July 2003. She said this with genuine longing and confidence that true peace will come in the near future as she was joined by young people from all over the world experiencing similar conflict and unrest and by those who had expressed their solidarity to work towards peace. As I continue my Christian journey, Ann Liza's voice continues to speak and challenge me "What do I thirst for?" How about you, what do you thirst for?

I deeply thank you for the ministry we had shared together these past four years and I look forward to our continued SLAMing (S for sharing, L for learning, A for action and M for multiply). The young

people themselves had said that they would no longer repeat the mistake of not putting into action what they have heard and seen. May the commitments from all these Asian events (not only among the young people) and the experience of being a part of the body of Christ, locally and globally, be put into action and transform our lives together, in Batam Island or in Kuala Lumpur or wherever God calls us to be.

"...and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8

Teresita Valeriano (Rev.)

FAREWELL II



Tony (c) & Margrethe (3rd left) with several participants of the 1st Mekong Consultation

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...

During the past five years I have been privileged to meet and work with many of the finest leaders and theologians, male and female, lay and ordained, of the global church. I've been humbled by your wisdom, inspired by your courage, and moved by your commitment to God's mission in the world. All of you have made my time of service with the ELCA (America) Division for Global Mission rich beyond description.

It is time, however, for me to move on. As many of you know, my husband is a diplomat and must live and work overseas. After five years of maintaining two households, one in Chicago and one elsewhere in the world, my husband and I have decided it is time for us to have

one home. We want to enjoy life together.

I will be resigning my call with the Division for Global Mission. My last day in the office will be January 30, 2004. Please rejoice with Tony and me as we look forward to a life together. Please also keep the staff of the Division for Global Mission and me in your prayers during this time of transition.

Thank you for enriching my life these past five years. Thank you for honoring me with your hospitality and friendship. You have encouraged and inspired me more than you will ever know. In gratitude,

***The Rev. Margrethe S. C. Kleiber
ELCA Program Director for South Asia
and the Pacific, Asia Pacific Continental
Desk Director
December 31, 2003***

NEW NAME

From year 2004 onward, **Luther Seminary** (Australia) will have a new name – **Australian Lutheran College (ALC)**. The new name for the seminary was accepted at the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) 2003 General Assembly in October.

With more teachers than pastors now being trained at the LCA's tertiary training institution, and a growing number of lay people undertaking a wide range of courses, this change of name was deemed necessary in order to reflect the broader training areas offered by the seminary.

'While the name has been change, the work of LCA's tertiary training institution will continue, under God, for the benefit of the church, and in the world, through the church.'

*Source: The Lutheran,
10 Nov. 2003, Vol. 37 No. 11 &
9 February 2004, Vol. 38 No. 1*

OBITUARY

The Moderator of Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church (GELC) in Chotanagpur & Assam, India, Bishop Belas Lakra passed away on 13/01/2004 leaving behind his wife, three daughters and a son. He was 64 years old.

In October 1995 he was elected as Bishop of the North West Diocese as the GELC. In November 2, 1995 he was consecrated as Bishop along with three other Bishop of GELC. He was elected to be the Deputy Moderator of the Church for the term of 1995 to 2001. In November 1 he took over as the Moderator of the Church. He breathed his last on January 13, 2004, at 9.15 in the morning.

The GELC Bishop Council and the Executive Committee of the Central Council has resolved in its meeting held on 21/01/2004 that the Deputy Moderator, Bishop Hemant Hansda will act as Moderator for the period till the next election.

SEASON OF LENT

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days. Lent has been observed in the church since apostolic times.

Holy Week

During Holy Week, Christians follow the footsteps of Jesus from his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, through the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday to his death on Good Friday. Holy Week is the last week of Lent. At the end of Holy Week, Easter marks Christ's resurrection.

MEDITATION ON MAUNDY THURSDAY

Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday, the last night before the death of Jesus, was an action filled day of the Holy week which started with the festival of Passover or unleavened bread. The word 'Maundy' is derived from the Latin word '*mandatum*' meaning 'commandment.' It was the day on which Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples, sharing a meal with them which we call the Last Supper. Though not all the events that took place that night is mentioned sequentially in all the four Gospels, each event is significant and has a unique message to ponder in our journey towards the way of the Cross, such as the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-29), the washing of the disciples' feet (John 13:5-15), the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:39-46), and the arrest of Jesus (Matthew 26:46-50) in obedience to His Father's will and to fulfill His command to love one another as He has loved us.

The Passover festival or the festival of unleavened bread is also called the bread of affliction - a reminder to the Israelites of their affliction (Deut. 16:3) during the Egyptian bondage. Jesus compared his Body to the unleavened bread as the bread of affliction, and He said, "Take this bread and eat, for this is my body which is broken for you..." Each word in this event is so significant for our meditation, "The bread" and "the Wine", as "My Body — broken for you" and "My Blood — shed for you". Receiving them in Faith, His love and His mercy as a gift, which was freely given to us, we are

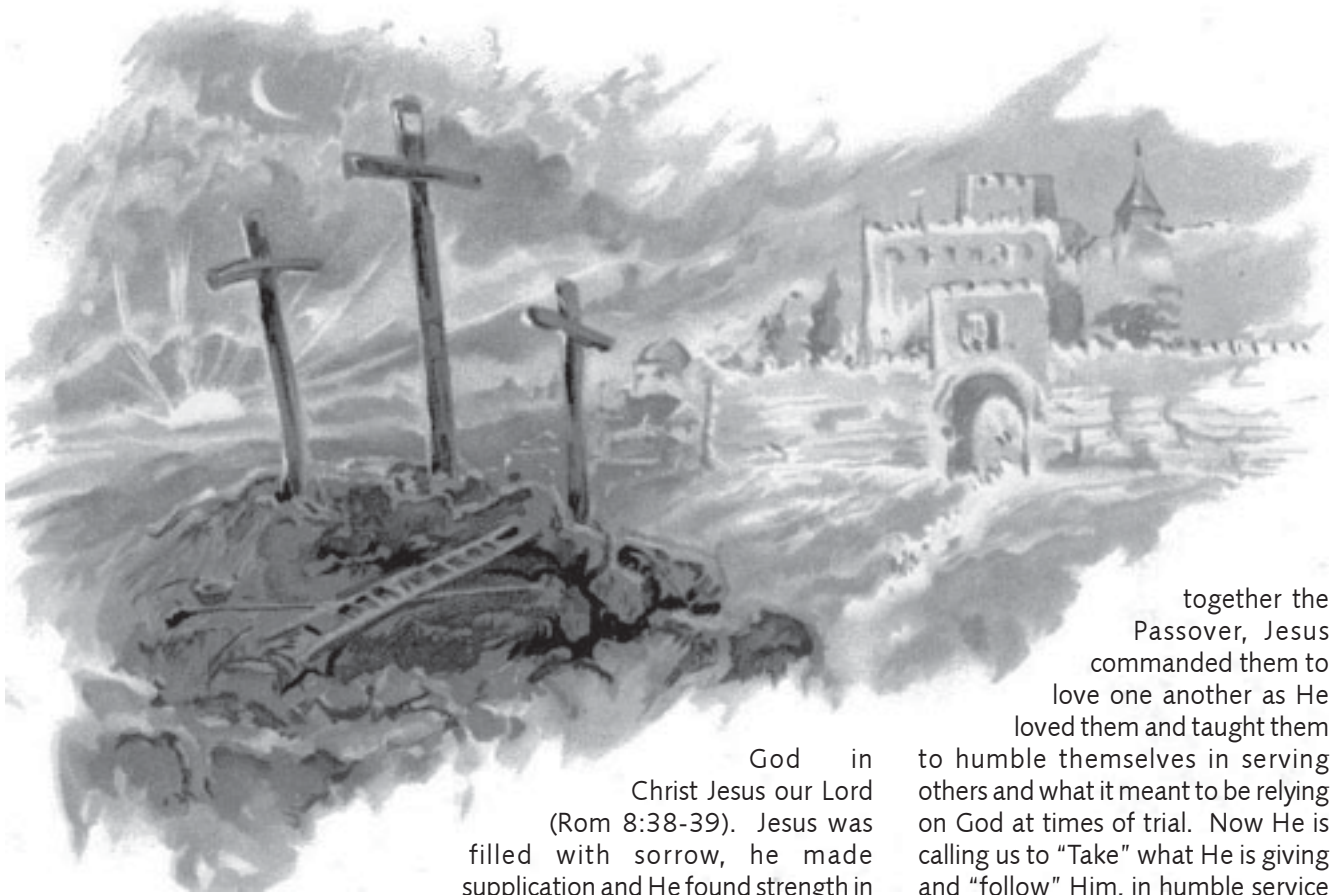
receiving the real body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, "**in, with and under**" the substance. This is what we call, the Holy Sacrament – the means of grace, through which we receive God's grace in Jesus Christ. We receive them in faith and remember the event that Jesus gave his life as a ransom on our behalf for the forgiveness of our sins.

The next significant event was Jesus washing His disciples' feet (John 13: 3-16). Again and again, Jesus taught them the lessons of humility and service but now He acted out what it meant to be a servant. In those days it was usual for a servant to wash the guest's feet on arrival. On this occasion there was no servant present and none of the disciples volunteered to do the menial task. Instead they were arguing who should be the greatest among them (Luke 22:24-27). Jesus got up and washed their feet, giving them an object lesson in humility and service, saying, "... so if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you." (Jn.13: 14-15). Jesus gave His disciples a vivid reminder, a living parable for the servant life He was calling them to.

Maundy Thursday is a time to come to church asking: What can we give? By washing His disciples' feet, Jesus is telling us that to be His disciple we should serve more than being served. Jesus said, "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to

give his life a ransom for many." (Mk.10:45). This is the new command what Jesus taught his disciples.

The Gospel writer Mark says, "When they had sung the hymn, they went to the Mount of Olives. The words of institution also says, "He blessed it, and He gave thanks" and now, "after they sung the hymn". Placing these words in the context of His agony and preparation for His death, reminds us to rejoice and trust because a faithful heart can never be defeated. The world may take away our body, our wealth and health, but they cannot separate us from the Love of God. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus asked His disciples to pray that they may not come into the time of trial (Lk. 22:40). He took with Him Peter, James and John and sought their companionship to pray in His time of trial and he threw himself on the ground and prayed three times: "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me." This prayer shows us the incredible agony that Jesus was in, yet He did not turn His back on the plan of salvation of His Father. He ended his prayer with the words, "yet, not what I want, but what you want." Jesus was seeking God's help and strength to face the hour of trial, throwing himself, surrendering completely to His Father's will. Jesus teaches us to pour all our hopes, dreams and fears about ourselves, families, churches and nations; not just to change the things as we want, but give us the strength to face the challenges and overcome them with God's strength.



St. Paul also reminds, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of

God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8:38-39). Jesus was filled with sorrow, he made supplication and He found strength in God. He was strengthened by God to face His betrayer and the time of trial that led Him to death on the Cross.

The Holy Thursday or Maundy Thursday, whether you call it a memorable night or a mysterious night, when Jesus and His disciples ate

together the Passover, Jesus commanded them to love one another as He loved them and taught them to humble themselves in serving others and what it meant to be relying on God at times of trial. Now He is calling us to "Take" what He is giving and "follow" Him, in humble service in obedience and even in loving our enemies. Surely, Christian life involves our efforts to imitate Christ and commit to follow Him on the way of the Cross in humility and service. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Samuel Meshack

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

I must be careful not to let my service for Christ become an extension of myself. Do I enjoy preaching because I am the center of attention for an hour? Do I enjoy teaching because I hold the class in my power for a brief span? Do I enjoy winning souls because the result bolster my ego?

I can see how subtle the flesh really is. It does not mind being dressed in religious clothing as long as it does not have to die. The heart of the matter is: Who is on the cross and who is on the throne? The great historical switch has taken place: Christ was on the cross and is now on the throne; self was on the throne and must now be impaled upon the cross. If I ever switch the two and reverse history, I am in trouble!

Self's great, eternal ambition is to escape the cross and sneak back on the throne. Often I have looked at the cross where self hung and said, "There, crucified once and for all!" Yet, a second look reveals an empty cross and an escaped self, very much alive and demanding recognition.

Crucifying self is not negation. Negation says, "You are dead." But true Christian living says, "You are dead to self, but alive to Christ" (see Galatians 2:20). Even more, Christianity says that before I can become alive to Christ, not afterward, I must die. It is not the person who dies, only the tendency to deify the person, Jesus did not consider "equality with God as thing to be grasped" (Philippians 2:6). If Jesus, who was

God, refused to grasp His deity, how much more must I, a sinner, refuse to deify myself? The answer is not a once-for-all crucifixion, but a daily thing. The sweetest song a disciple can sing is Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; ... but Christ lives in me." After death comes life, and after crucifixion, victory.

"Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin" (Romans 6:6)

*Daily with the King (pg 96)
by W. Glyn Evans*

BOOK REVIEW

CHARISMATIC FOLK CHRISTIANITY

Title : CHARISMATIC FOLK CHRISTIANITY - Reflections on Post Charismatic Trends
Author : Dr. Wilfred John Samuel
Publisher : Sabah Theological Seminary (STS), Malaysia

The Charismatic Movement has made a great impact in the life of all Churches. Presently, it is the Charismatic Movement that often sets the agenda with regard to worship life

of the Church. The Movement has also brought in certain ways of doing things, which has crystallized into a new tradition. Thus there needs to be a critical review of the impact and provide an appropriate response. This has to be done theologically in order to examine its relevance for the modern Church context. Dr. Wilfred John Samuel has taken up this task by providing an appropriate review and response not only to the Charismatic Movement but also in relation to the post-charismatic trends. Dr. Wilfred John Samuel has had varied

experiences as a pastor, youth worker and seminary lecturer. Currently he is teaching Systematic Theology and Asian Theology at the Sabah Theological Seminary.

Review by the Rt. Rev. Julius Paul (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia)

Order could be placed through Dr. Samuel at wilber@tm.net.my. Price at Malaysian Ringgit 39,90 (excluding postage)

MANGOES OR BANANAS?

Title : MANGOES OR BANANAS? The Quest for an Authentic Asian Christian Theology
Author : Dr. Hwa Yung, Malaysia Theological Seminary

Since War War II, many efforts towards contextual Asian Christian theologies have been made. But how truly contextual are these? Theology and mission are inseparable, and a truly contextual theology is one which empowers the church in mission. This study applies four criteria to representative examples of Protestant Asian theology to assess their adequacy or otherwise as contextual and missiological theologies. These criteria are: relevance to sociopolitical context, enhancing the churches' evangelistic and pastoral ministries, inculturation and faithfulness to the Christian tradition.

This study reveals certain discernible trends in Asian ecumenical and

conservative theologies respectively, as well as their respective strengths and weaknesses. But the greatest problem with most present-day Asians Protestant theologies appears to be that, at heart, they have been dominated by western dualism and Enlightenment thought. Authentic Asian Christian theologies will only emerge when there is a dual recover of confidence, in culture and in the gospel, within Asian Christianity.

"This book should have been written long ago! The author has lived and struggled with his theme for more than 20 years. That authentic theology must be grounded in mission and pastoral practice is absolutely vital. By a judicious handling of the different views discussed, Hwa Yung has produced a book which will help Asian church, and others as well, forward in mission, pastoral care and theologising."

The Rt. Rev. Dr. John Chew Hiang Chea, Bishop of Singapore (Anglican) Formerly Principal, Trinity Theological College, Singapore

"The contribution of Hwa Yung's excellent work is to suggest that we have as yet hardly seen the beginning of an authentic Christian theology for Asia. He shows with great clarity how both radical and conservative Asian theologians have so far failed to break out of Western captivity, and points the way to a fresh and powerful recovery of authentic Christianity in a genuinely Asian mode. This book is a hugely welcome contribution to a discussion on method in Asian theology, which is rapidly becoming more and more sophisticated and interesting."

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Wales Formerly Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, University of Oxford

Order could be placed through Glad Sounds Bookstore at gladsnds@streamyx.com. Price M\$39,90 (excluding postage)

THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

CALENDAR 2004

DATE	UNIT	VENUE	EVENT
January 22-25	DTS	Geneva/Switzerland	Economic Globalization Consultation: Reclaiming the Vocation of Government
February 21-23	GS	Geneva/Switzerland	LWF Executive Committee
March 03-06 03-07 19-20 22-26 30/03-02/04	DMD OEA OEA / OFA / DTS DWS DMD	Moshi/Tanzania Rome/Italy Strasbourg/France South Mombasa/Kenya Sao Leopoldo/Brazil	Consultation on the Use of FM Radio Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission in Unity, Drafting Meeting Board of the Institute for Ecumenical Research North, East & West Africa Regional Consultation Conference of Bishops and Presidents in Latin America
April 21-25 23-24 25-28 26-27 28-29	DMD DMD DMD DWS DWS	Odessa/Ukraine Cape Town/South Africa Cape Town/South Montreux/Switzerland Montreux/Switzerland	HIV/AIDS Consultation, Europe Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Theological Education in Africa - ACTEA Africa Lutheran Consultation on Mission under ACTEA DWS Annual Forum Standing Committee for World Service
May 13-16 17-22 24 25-28 Undetermined	DTS DWS OEA / GS DMD DTS	Geneva/Switzerland Albury/Australia Geneva/Switzerland Geneva/Switzerland Germany	Consultation on Vocation and Responsibility under Economic Globalization Asia Regional Consultation Preparatory Meeting – Conference of secretaries of Christian World Communions Project Committee Meeting of Study Team on “Authority of the Bible”
June 01-03 04-07 05-12 19-22	DMD DMD DTS DMD	Kuala Lumpur/Malaysia Kuala Lumpur/Malaysia Indonesia Sao Leopoldo/Brazil	Meeting of the Advisory Committee for Theological Education in Asia – ACTEAS Meeting of the Advisory Committee for Coordination of Regional Expression in Asia – ACCREA Asian Church Leadership Conference Case Study – Lutheran-Muslim Dialogue on Conflict & Peace Core Group Meeting on Engendering Theological Education
July 09-17 18-23 Undetermined	OEA DTS DWS	Baltimore/USA Erlangen/Germany Cambodia	Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, Plenary Study Team on Intercultural Ethical Deliberations Regional Finance Workshop
August 31 Undetermined	DGS DWS	Geneva/Switzerland Africa	LWF Executive Committee Meeting Regional Finance Workshop
September 01-08 07-11	GS DMD	Geneva/Switzerland Geneva/Switzerland	LWF Council Meeting Consultation on Water

25-29	DMD	Arusha/Tanzania	Development Program Consultation
27-30	DTS	South Africa	Study Seminary on 'Spiritual Movements as a Challenge for Churches in Africa'
30/09-04/10	DMD	Reykjavik/Iceland	European Church Leaders Consultation
October			
03-11	DTS	Abuja, Yola, Jos/Nigeria	Case Study: Lutheran-Muslim Dialogue on Conflict and Peace
04-09	DMD	El Salvador/Honduras	Round Table: Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras and Salvadoran Lutheran Synod
07-15	OEA	Iasi/Romania	Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission
12-16	DWS	Geneva/Switzerland	Field Directors' Meeting
25-28	GS	Buenos Aires/Argentina	Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions
29/10-01/11	GS	South Africa	Celebration of the Fifth Anniversary of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification
Undetermined	DMD	North America	Regional Consultation on Communion
Undetermined	DMD	Cairo/Egypt	African Inter-faith Women's Meeting for Peace
November			
Early Nov.	DMD / OCS	Geneva/Switzerland	Youth Leadership on Communication (tentative title)
08-10	DTS	USA/Canada	Study Seminar on 'Spiritualistic Movements as a Challenge for Churches in North America'
15-19	DWS	Montreux/Switzerland	Standing Committee for World Service
16-18	DTS	Bangkok/Thailand	Study Seminar on 'Spiritualistic Movements as a Challenge for Churches in Asia'
22-27	DMD	Geneva/Switzerland	Overcoming Violence Against Women – Theological Reflections

DMD-Department for Mission & Development; **DTS**-Department for Theology & Studies; **DWS**-Department for World Service; **GS**-General Secretariat; **OCS**-Office for Communication Service; **OEA**-Office for Ecumenical Affairs; **OFA**-Office for Finance and Administration; **OIAHR**-Office for International Affairs & Human Rights; **ACT**-Action by Churches Together (ACT) International; **WCC**-World Council of Churches

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