



MISSION NEWS & HELPING HANDS

Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Sharing the Gospel in South America and Asia

MARCH 2019

Chile

Chile

A Great Mission Project

From the Editor—

Rev. Thomas Heyn, Board for World Outreach Administrator

The November 2018 issue of *Mission News & Helping Hands* focused on the work in Chile and a building project in Santiago, the capital city. The building project is complete, thanks in part to help from the mission offerings of ELS members. Pastor Mario Gálvez, pastor of the La Cisterna congregation, asked to write an article expressing his deep appreciation for your help in building this new chapel. We hope you enjoy his story about the transformation of a pool hall into a new chapel for his congregation.

A New Chapel for Proclaiming Salvation in Christ

—Pastor Mario Gálvez

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! is heard in the heavens when we give glory to God with our lives and Christian works of love. For He loved us first and, being assured that we have eternal life in Him, we also want to reach others with His love.

In Chile, we have so much to be thankful for. To list it all would require me to write many pages. We are mindful of all the blessings and our Lord and Savior knows them all as well. Today, I especially want to thank God, our Evangelical Lutheran Synod and all of our brothers in Christ who have worked with us, supporting us with their prayers and their offerings which helped us construct our chapel in La Cisterna, Santiago, Chile. Those prayers and offerings were truly a fragrant offering, responding to the love of Him who first loved us.

Our congregation is called Family of God Lutheran Church. And I have the honor of being the pastor of our congregation. This congregation was founded with the arrival of the first ELS missionaries to Chile in 1992. Excellent pastors and missionaries were in charge. For fifteen years we were led by Pastor Timothy Erickson, the last missionary to Chile. It was a time during which God, through Pastor Erickson's evangelical shepherding, provided "a time of refreshing" (Acts 3:19) and blessed the growth of our national church. Pastor Erickson served our national seminary, which prepared and ultimately called two vicars and a pastor for the strengthening of the national church.



1 Congregation in house of Pastor Galvez

The Family of God congregation was initially located at a very large, old and unmaintainable site since this mission congregation needed to be self-sufficient as part of a newly forming national church. But later we decided to sell that property, and in February 2016, our congregation left those premises. We were able to continue our national seminary and our worship services on a regular basis in a large room in the house of Pastor Mario Gálvez. There also was an area set aside for storage where all the furniture and equipment of our church was kept. For three years it served us well, but with limited space, we could not open the doors wide to future members. Nonetheless, by the grace of God, the congregation grew and stabilized here much more than it had in the previous location. Photo 1.



2 Front of old pool hall

It seems nothing is ever easy. The Enemy, like a prowling lion, is always roaring and seeking to devour, but Christ has already won the battle! We were able, after many ups and downs, to buy a new property. This property was a former locale that served as a game room and pool hall, with a gloomy, dark, time-worn look, but after repairs, God willing, this place would make possible the reestablishment of our Family of God congregation in La Cisterna. Photos 2, 3.

Fam
of G
Lutheran
today is a
radiant, an
Christian chur
preach Chri
and make
baptizing

The property was purchased, on June 28, 2018, in the name of our national church (Christian Church of the Lutheran Reformation of the Republic of Chile). The former pool hall began to be transformed and remodeled into a Christian church—our church. A good friend and experienced pastor told me that most pastors want to be in charge of a church building project only once in their ministry. After much sweat and fatigue, I learned the reason for his comment. I am thankful for the help of my family and the strength Christ gives us that we might rest in Him.



3 Dark, gloomy interior



4 Repairs on earthquake damage

Family of God
Church
beautiful,
and strong
church where we
are crucified
disciples,
them....

Construction began by repairing the damage caused by the last great earthquake in Chile, February 27, 2010, (magnitude 8.8) and strengthening the structure so that, if God allows another earthquake, the next one does not produce so much damage. Photo 4.

To use a good Christian analogy, it was necessary to destroy much of the old, the gloomy, the dark, just as we must drown the sin and corruption of the old Adam in our baptism, so that the new man is born. Likewise we broke the brittle and damaged floor, and laid new flooring on the bedrock, just as we are built on Christ, the Eternal Bedrock for our faith, finding forgiveness and eternal life. Photos 5, 6.

Family of God Lutheran Church today is a beautiful, radiant, and strong Christian church where we preach Christ crucified and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that Jesus has commanded, trusting in his promise that he will be with us (and with you) every day, until the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Photos 7, 8.

Family of God today has a new church home because God loved all of you first and you have loved your neighbors in Chile as yourselves. In Christ, we give thanks and will follow your example of love, God willing, because this is what God wants for His children.

Pastor Mario Gálvez

President

Christian Church of the Lutheran Reformation of the Republic of Chile



News from Other Mission Fields

■ **INDIA**—Pastor Thomas Heyn (BWO Administrator) and Pastor Bradley Kerkow (Asia Committee chairman) recently completed a visit to this mission field. We appreciate the dedication and faithful service of the Indian pastors. Seminary students are enthusiastic in their studies. The orphanages, with funds received from ELS mission societies and others, have been able to increase the protein provided in the orphanage food programs.

■ **SOUTH KOREA**—BWO representatives will visit this field in May. We especially look forward to seeing how the Seoul congregation is doing under the new leadership of Rev. Sam Choi and how the new mission outreach in Song Do is progressing under Rev. Young Ha Kim.

■ **PERU**—Leadership training continues among the Shawi Indians in the jungle regions of Peru. After a recent visit uncovered the need for clean water in this area, Kingdom Workers will be visiting to see how they might help to provide a solution. Worship services are being “live-streamed” via internet from the church in Chimbote to regions of Peru and elsewhere in South America. A new mission outreach project is being considered.

■ **LATVIA**—Pastor Ugis Sildegis continues his work on a Latvian hymnal with a strong emphasis on Lutheran doctrine. Faithful pastors continue to proclaim the Gospel in a country that lost its appreciation for its Lutheran heritage and needs to be evangelized once again.

■ **CZECH REPUBLIC**—Martin Luther School in Plzen is in session. Pastors Krakora and Vršický continue to share the Gospel in the congregations and school. Pray for outreach opportunities in this field.

■ **UKRAINE**—The teams are wrapping up their winter clinic services in the bus garage and in a few short months will once again be on the road. The counselors continue their important work in the pregnancy crisis centers.

■ **KENYA**—Several ELS pastors continue teaching a number of Kenyan seminary students via online classes. Later this year, talks will resume with pastors and leaders of this group to help them deepen their understanding of biblical, confessional Lutheranism and to further work toward doctrinal agreement.

What can you do to help?

■ Pray for each of the mission fields in this newsletter. Pray for the national pastors of these churches as well as for the members of their congregations, that they might remain faithful in their homelands that often do not welcome the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

■ Please—prayerfully consider a gift or regular donation to the work in the various fields. You may designate a gift to a particular field or project on the memo line of a check. You may also go to els.org and click on “Donate” in the top banner on the right-hand side.

■ If you have questions, please contact us in the following ways:

Board for World Outreach
6 Browns Ct.

Mankato, MN 56001

website: els.org

Rev. Thomas Heyn

BWO Administrator

