

September 2022

# Mission News &

Helping Hands

Evangelical Lutheran Synod  
Board for World Outreach

Sharing the Gospel in  
South America and Asia



## A Hidden Treasure

by Timothy Bartels, South America Committee

**If you search** for programming on Peru you might come across a documentary called "Peru: A Hidden Treasure". Geographically, Peru is a hidden treasure. Traveling into the mountains you come across breathtaking vistas of snow peaks reaching to the heavens and down in the valleys, quaint picturesque towns nestled against the snowy mountain peaks. Traveling into the jungle, thick green vegetation surrounds you on every side and vibrant brilliant flowers catch your eyes as you walk a dirt path to a jungle community with open air thatched roof homes dotting an open space in the thick jungle. Traveling into the city of Lima the streets are jammed with cars and buses jockeying for position moving men and women trying to get to work and make just enough to survive for the day. Traveling to Lima's western edge, you come to a municipal park dotted with soccer fields, lined with bicycle paths as the ocean's waves crash onto the shore.

There's yet another treasure; a greater treasure in Peru. "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field" (Matt 13:44).

Jesus found his hidden treasure in Peru—the church. He went and sold all he had and paid for it with his blood. Then he sent missionaries from the ELS more than 50 years ago to bring the Gospel to his people there. Through preaching and teaching of the Gospel, his treasure is our Peruvian brothers and sisters of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Peru.

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### From the Editor

Rev. Thomas Heyn  
Board for World  
Outreach  
Administrator



Pastor Timothy Bartels and I visited Peru in the summer of 2021 before travel became more difficult due to Covid restrictions. In this issue, Pastor Bartels writes about the manifold work taking place in Peru from the Amazon jungle region to the cities to the high mountain villages in the Andes. We hope you share his excitement about the opportunities the Lord has laid before us. We appreciate your prayers for the work in our world fields and your financial support that makes this work possible.

"Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples" (1 Chr 16:23,24).



# Peru continued

Consider  
some of their  
blessings,  
challenges,  
and needs.

► The Peruvian synod has some dozen pastors and vicars. They have been on their own since we in the ELS brought our last missionary home five years ago. They are still young in the ministry and deeply desire ongoing online meetings and in-person visits with the Board for World Outreach for encouragement and counsel.

► The Peruvian church has a half dozen active churches in Lima, another four in the mountain villages (like Chiquián) served by near-retirement age, Pastor Fidel Convercio, another in the coastal city of Chimbote, another in the World Heritage Inca city of Cajamarca, and four churches in the jungle communities. They are faithfully served by pastors and vicars, some of whom must support themselves with full-time secular work in order to be able to serve their flocks.

► The church has three schools, two in Lima and one in the jungle. Two of them, Jesús Redentor in Lima and Louis Terry in the jungle, have had to shut down this school year to meet increasing government regulations. The two schools plan to reopen next year after making the required updates. The school that remains open, Martín Lutero in Lima, has grown to the point that it needs to expand its classroom space.

► The eight jungle seminary students continue to grow under the seminary professors, Pastors Segundo Gutiérrez, and Andres Robles. The jungle students make an arduous trip by foot and rustic riverboat to the river city of Yurimaguas and then by crowded bus to the jungle city of Tarapoto for classes. In order to provide a less arduous journey for the jungle students, a new property and building is being sought in the river city of Yurimaguas.

We thank God for the treasure of our sister church which Jesus has unearthed in Peru by the preaching and teaching of the Gospel. Your prayers and your continued support are greatly appreciated by our Peruvian brothers and sisters.

*Pastor Timothy Bartels*



Louis Terry villagers



New site for Chimbote congregation



Returning from Taiwan village



Martin Lutero school



Church workers in Lima



## News From Other Mission Fields

**Chile** In-person worship and visits to homes have resumed. Nonetheless, some still stay at home for fear of Covid. The training of two men for ministry continues through online instruction.

**India** The pastors continue their work of reaching out to the villages. Several building projects are ready to be completed that will provide homes for worship and will help in the training of future workers. Although severe flooding has occurred, especially in the eastern part of the nation, it appears that none of our contacts has been injured and property damage has not been severe.

**Korea** The Korean pastors continue to seek new locations for outreach and work with the leaders of their churches to develop programs to better serve the people.

**Latvia** Three men continue their seminary studies. Work continues with a new evangelism and apologetics center in a historic part of Old Town Riga. The pastors continue to seek ways to serve displaced persons from Ukraine who have settled in the area.

**Czechia** Summer activities are wrapping up for Martin Luther School. A Vacation Bible Study took place in July. Other outreach opportunities are being explored.

**Ukraine** Administrators Nick and Kerry Laper are helping the workers in the Gift of Life program to serve the needs of persons displaced by the war. At least two of the counseling centers are open and providing services and relief to displaced persons. The medical and dental mobile clinics continue looking for ways of offering their services. The Ukraine Crisis Fund continues to provide humanitarian aid and continues to receive your gifts and offerings.

## How Can You Help?

**Pray** for each of the mission fields, for the national pastors of these churches as well as for the members of their congregations to remain faithful in their homelands that often do not welcome the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray for these Christian brothers and sisters who often do not have the kind of medical care and government help that is available to most of us in the United States. May the Lord continue to care for them and strengthen their faith. May God work all these challenges for the good of his people, as he has promised.

**Prayerfully consider a gift** or regular donation for the work in the various fields. Every field, and some more than others, have many needs where God's people can provide much needed assistance. 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](http://els.org) and click on "Donate" in the top banner on the right-hand side.

**For more information,** please contact us in any of the following ways:

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