

MAY 2023 Mission News & Helping Hands

Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Board for World Outreach
Sharing the Gospel in
South America and Asia



From the Editor

Rev. Thomas Heyn
Board for World
Outreach Administrator



In February, Dan Browning and I visited South Korea. There were exciting happenings on this visit and Dan shares his experiences and impressions. We hope you share his excitement about the possibilities and 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.

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15).



Joyful Happenings in South Korea

by Dan Browning
Chairman, ELS Board for World Outreach

In this post-pandemic period, members of the ELS Board for World Outreach (BWO) can get back on schedule with our annual mission field visits around the world. In mid-February, BWO Administrator Thomas Heyn and I were able to visit the ELS mission field in Seoul, South Korea.

This was an especially productive and uniquely joyful visit to Seoul. The visit was timed to coincide with the marriage service of our newest ELS missionary, **Pastor David Choi** (Jinfeng Cui) to **Miss Ashley Mozak (Photos 1 and 2)**. David and Ashley met through mutual friends while Ashley was working in mainland China with the Friends of China network. This informal WELS-affiliated outreach ministry is now called the Friends Network. Ashley's hometown is Calgary, Alberta, Canada, where she and her family are members of the WELS congregation there.

The wedding was held at Seoul Lutheran Church (SLC) (**Photo 3**) on February 15, 2023, with Pastor Heyn performing the ceremony in English with the Reverend Samuel Choi, the senior pastor of SLC (no relation to David), translating into Korean. The service was attended by nearly 90 SLC members, friends, and family. The excellent SLC Senior Choir and a professional cellist member enriched the memorable ceremony.

A reception followed in a nearby banquet hall. It was especially wonderful to observe how welcoming the members of SLC have been to Pastor David, and now Ashley (**Photo 4**). The normally quiet and somewhat reserved Koreans showed a whole other side of their personalities when

continued on next page

A key BWO focus on this trip was to make plans with Pastor Samuel Choi, Pastor David Choi, and the leaders of SLC for David's new outreach ministry.

guest after guest took to the karaoke machine to sing popular selections for the festive and joyful occasion!

After graduating from Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary (BLTS) in May 2021, Pastor David Choi is now starting his second year of making plans to expand the footprint of Confessional Lutheran ministry in the Seoul metro area. A strategic focus of the BWO for Pastor David is to bring the Gospel message to the large population of Chinese-Korean people who have emigrated to Seoul for jobs and a new life of freedom outside of China. While Christianity is prominent in South Korea, Lutheranism is not. The central message of confessional Lutherans, we are saved by grace, needs to be heard by the South Korean people. That puts the ELS efforts there front and center in our outreach strategy. "Open your eyes and look at the fields, because they are already ripe for harvest" (John 4:35).

A key BWO focus on this trip was to make plans with Pastor Samuel Choi and Pastor David Choi and the leaders of SLC for David's new outreach ministry. One idea came to the forefront by another member of the Friends Network (FN) who has become active with the SLC congregation as he carries out his FN efforts in Seoul.

Doug Tabor is a retired WELS member from Michigan who has the opportunity to "make friends + tell them about Jesus" among the South Koreans. Doug is an outgoing and engaging fellow perfectly suited to this style of evangelism outreach. He has become friends with the SLC pastors by his active involvement with the congregation.

Doug advised the BWO visitors about his discovery of a unique business model he found in Seoul—a "Language Cafe" (Photos 5,6,7,8). South Koreans, young and old, learn textbook English and grammar in the classroom but quickly falter in truly learning to use the language because they find it hard to practice speaking



English outside the classroom. The Language Cafe is a perfect business model to allow practicing the new language, and Doug has learned that it will occasionally offer the opportunity to witness to the person he has engaged in casual English conversation. The cafe charges monthly membership fees to those who wish to access the cafe to practice their English conversational skills.

Although the cafe is in western Seoul, we were intrigued with the possibilities of replicating the model closer to SLC in eastern Seoul. This would allow the pastors more ready access to making contacts for eventual witnessing and drawing them to SLC.

Pastor David has begun researching location possibilities for trying this outreach model in the SLC neighborhood. Start-up costs could be substantial, even as a "trial" effort. We invite our *Mission News* readers to support this effort as they might choose, in order to gain the financial resources to get started.

Note! The Seoul Lutheran Church body also is preparing for the triennial convention of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference to take place in Seoul the first week of June. As many as 34 Lutheran church bodies from around the world—all of them in doctrinal agreement with the ELS—may be represented.



News From Other Mission Fields



How Can You Help?

PERU—The Peruvian pastors are teaching in the jungle seminary. Pastor Gutiérrez regularly visits the congregation in Cajamarca. The third story addition to Martín Lutero School is underway. We continue to monitor the political unrest in Peru.

CHILE—The congregation in Santiago confirmed a new member on Easter Sunday. The training of one man for ministry continues through online instruction. Pastor Mario Gálvez will present a paper on equipping lay members for evangelism at the June international convention of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference in Seoul, South Korea.

INDIA—The pastors continue their work in reaching out to the villages. The seminary students are in their final year of studies. Several building projects are ready to be completed that will provide homes for worship and will help in the training of future workers.

Note! The above building projects require over \$160,000. One congregation recently gave \$80,000 for these projects as a “challenge gift”. Can you help provide for the remaining \$80,000 to complete these projects? Your gift of \$50, \$500, \$1,000 or more will help in this effort.

AUSTRALIA—On a recent visit to Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Brisbane, Australia, the congregation asked to be made an official field under the BWO. Their request will be considered at this year’s synod convention in June.

LATVIA—Four men are now enrolled in seminary studies. The pastors continue their congregational work. Pastor Ugis Sildegis will present a doctrinal paper on civil government at the June international convention of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference in Seoul, South Korea.

CZECHIA—The end of the school year is rapidly approaching at Martin Luther School in Pilsen.

UKRAINE—Administrators Nick and Kerry Laper returned to Ukraine in March. Their work this year will focus on finding an administrator to replace the Lapers when they retire within the next twelve months. All counseling centers are open and providing services. The medical and dental mobile clinics offer their services from the winter garage. Although the war with Russia is a challenge for the work of Gift of Life, the Lord continues to bless this work for his glory and the blessing of many.

Pray for each of the mission fields, for the national pastors of these churches as well as for the members of their congregations who live where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not always welcome. May God work all these challenges for the good of his people, as he has promised.

Please—prayerfully consider a gift or regular donation for the work in the various fields. Every field, and some more than others, has 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 and click on “Donate” in the top banner on the right-hand side or simply **scan the QR code below which will take you to the donation page.**



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

Board for World Outreach
6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

website: els.org/our-work-together/world-outreach/

Rev. Thomas A. Heyn, Administrator
(608) 335-4612
theyn@blc.edu