



Annual Update ELS World Mission Fields

January 2025
**Mission
News**

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



Chile

Mario Gálvez, president

We rejoice in Chile because Christ has heard our prayers. In 2024, four of our students completed a year of advanced studies, receiving a certificate of encouragement for their completed elective modules. Three women evangelists and one man completed a year of advanced

biblical studies, and if God allows, next year we will have a vicar. Our prayers were heard. The growth of a church is generated by members capable of bringing the strength and power of the Word of God to others, in love. We will welcome 2025 with the Great Commission in our minds and hearts. Pray for results for the harvest. ■



workers in Chile



Hyderabad, India

Solomon Mamidi, president of LMSH

As we prepare our hearts and minds to look forward to 2025, the Lutheran Mission of Salvation-Hyderabad (LMSH) was tremendously blessed in 2024 by your prayers and support. We were able to inaugurate and dedicate a new facility, the Agape Centre, which will be the central office for the Hyderabad region in Telangana State. A little work is pending, and we look forward to moving the seminary program soon to this building. It was a great blessing to have ordained six pastors this year. Also, this year, we were able to send a pastor for the summer quarter classes held at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, WI.

We pray and hope that the Lord shall open many opportunities to serve Him dearly in 2025. Blessed New Year! ■

new pastors, Hyderabad



From the Editor

*Rev. Thomas Heyn
Administrator
Board for World Outreach*

As we begin 2025, we thank the Lord for giving us safe travel to our ELS mission fields. We happily report that the pastors and congregations in these fields are doing well despite the difficulties they face. As always, we appreciate your prayers for the work in our world fields and your financial support that makes this work possible. May the Lord grant us a blessed 2025.

*"Oh, give thanks to the
LORD, for He is good! For
His mercy endures forever"
(1 Chr 16:34).*



Rajahmundry, India

Kalyan K. Gollapalli, president of LMSI Rajahmundry

The Lord has richly blessed the Lutheran Mission of Salvation-India (LMSI) in 2024. Seven dedicated men after eight years of rigorous seminary training were ordained and installed as pastors at the beginning of the year. LMSI now has 11 pastors serving our 120 congregations. In April, ten eager young men began their theological education, aspiring to shepherd God's flock in the years to come.



new pastors, Rajahmundry

We are thrilled to announce the release of a Christmas audio-video album on our YouTube channel. This project combines contemporary music styles to engage the youth while maintaining Christ-centered, Gospel-rich lyrics. We pray this endeavor will inspire many to reflect on the wonder of our Savior's birth and carry the joy of the Christ Child into the new year.

We pray for God's continued guidance and blessings in 2025. Your prayers, support, and contributions have been invaluable, not merely as donations but as seeds of hope and love, bearing fruit in the lives of those we serve. May the Lord richly bless you with His grace, peace, and joy in the new year. ■



South Korea

*Great Light Lutheran Church
David Choi, pastor and missionary*

On June 2nd, 2024 we had the first worship service at Great Light Lutheran Church in Seoul, South Korea, near Seoul Station. There were around twenty people at the first service!

Great Light Lutheran Church will focus on people who want to learn and improve English as a second language by providing them Sunday worship services, Bible studies, and an English language training program, etc.

In the new year we want to continue our outreach to more unbelievers, nurture believers in God's Word, and train Christian leaders.

Our church name is based on Matthew 4:16, "The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the land and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned." May God help Great Light Lutheran Church be a light for those who need to hear the good news of our Savior! ■



*Great Light
Lutheran
Church
members*



South Korea

*Seoul Lutheran Church
Samuel Choi, pastor*

Last October, Seoul Lutheran Church (SLC) held the installation ceremony for two elders, four deaconesses, and one anointed deacon. The event included congratulatory video messages from Rev. Obenberger, ELS President, and Rev. Heyn, the BWO Administrator. There was also a special cello performance and celebratory song by the youth group, making it a memorable event filled with celebrations from families and church members.

In 2025, as SLC approaches its 20th anniversary, we hope to grow stronger in our faith, like a young man reaching maturity. Please continue to pray for SLC as we move forward with renewed vitality. ■



Seoul Lutheran honorees



Latvia

Ilars Plume, pastor

Although the past year was full of various events in the church and my personal life, the most significant one seems to have been my return to school at the age of 65. Together with two other Latvian theologians, I attended summer theology courses at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

I must say that the seminary more than surprised me in a positive way: great teachers, friendly staff, a great library and dormitories. By the way, the food was excellent as well. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who made this trip possible and I hope to return to the seminary in 2026. ■



Latvian pastors in U.S. for seminary courses



Czech Republic

Martin Vrsecky, pastor

In 2024, important staff changes happened at Martin Luther School in Pilsen. Two teachers retired and were replaced by two others. After the one-year training, Mr. Jiri (George) was named as the "Building manager" or "Chief janitor" and will continue on keeping the whole property in good shape for generations to come, like his predecessor Jaroslav C., who retired after 31 years of devoted work. Former pastor Petr K. with his wife, withdrew from our church on Good Friday this last spring, joining a local Reformed congregation. Children's weekly worship and religion curriculum, including the singing program, continue for the benefit of their spiritual growth. ■



Martin Luther School



Ukraine – Gift of Life

Dmytro Maksymenko, director

In October 2024, I joined Gift of Life in Ukraine as its new director. Nicholas and Kerry Laper concluded their dedicated service in Ukraine and returned to the United States. We are deeply grateful for their years of service, during which they faithfully fulfilled the Great Commission, comforted the brokenhearted, supported the needy, and built a strong foundation for our ministry.

Despite the ongoing war, our four Life Centers and mobile clinics remain beacons of hope, providing free medical and dental care to those in need. In response to increasing humanitarian needs, our Life Centers now also serve as hubs where displaced individuals and families receive clothing, food, hygiene supplies, psychological and spiritual support. Many from war-affected regions join our Bible classes, seeking solace and renewal in God's Word. This year, we conducted more than 200 Bible classes, reaching 1,814 individuals, including 1,121 new participants.



MCOW doctor and young patient

Through our "Medical Clinics on Wheels" program, nearly 5,000 people in 13 cities and remote villages across Ukraine received free medical assistance this year.

In addition to humanitarian aid, we continue to focus actively on pro-life initiatives. Through 128 presentations at schools, colleges, and Life Centers, we reached 3,308 individuals with the message of the sanctity of life. Our Life Center programs, including the School of Motherhood, Physical Exercises, School of Father, and Partnership Delivery, supported 2,144 participants. Counseling services were provided to 1,455 individuals, emphasizing family support, abortion prevention, and the value of every unborn life.

The challenges grow as missile and drone attacks now reach previously safe regions of western Ukraine, and the humanitarian and economic crisis deepens. The destruction of energy infrastructure means we sometimes have electricity for only two hours a day, requiring significant resources to maintain uninterrupted operations. Yet, we hold to God's promise: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1).

Looking ahead, we prepare for new challenges, trusting in God's guidance. Your prayers and support sustain us in this mission, reminding us of His call: "Do not grow weary in doing good" (Gal 6:9). Together, we press on with faith and hope. ■

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. And thank the Lord for their faithful service.

Please—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 either www.els.org or tof.org and click on "Donate" in the top banner on the right-hand side. Or, simply scan the QR code to take you to the donation page.



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

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