



**Latin American Lutheran Mission**

# CLARION

Vol. 74, No.1

"You shall be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Fall 2010



LALM  
ANNUAL  
MEETING

MONDAY  
SEPTEMBER 20, 2010

***"Discerning and redeeming the times in Missions"*** is the theme for the 74th annual meeting of the Latin American Lutheran Mission which will be held Monday, September 20, 2010 at Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, 5212 - 41st Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The evening will begin with dinner at 6 p.m. and the Annual Meeting will be followed with testimonies and music of our Mexican brothers. Please note that our annual meeting is not in October this year.

# Four Valiant Men

In spite of State Department warnings about travel to Mexico, four valiant men from Redeemer of Austin, TX made a short trip to Philadelphia Lutheran in Saltillo, Coahuila Mexico to bring donated items and complete unfinished projects. They installed a hot water heater (they old one had exploded in their face one too many times), laid ceramic tile, installed doors, and had brought in their trailer scaffolding for Mexican workers to complete exterior stucco and weather-proofing. They also took a day to deliver a new pulpit, altar, hot water heater, chairs, and other items to Nazareth Lutheran in Matehuala. It was a brief but memorable visit. God bless the valiant men of Redeemer who completed their mission without incident. (See photos of Louie, Chuck, Dave and Jim.)



Scaffolding goes up at Philadelphia Lutheran.



Chuck makes an altar and pulpit from oak pew remnants.



Louie the tile guy.



Dave installs the water heater.

## Latin American Lutheran Mission ELC-M Partners Who Help Proclaim the Gospel

Incorporated in 1936, LALM is a faith mission depending entirely upon God for the supplying of its needs through the prayer and freewill offerings of His people as the Holy Spirit moves them. LALM is an independent Lutheran organization, having members on its Board of Directors from various Lutheran bodies. To learn more about LALM, please feel free to contact the board member nearest you.

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Rev. Dick Erickson, Director 3519 Salinas Ave., Laredo, TX 78041 e-mail: bderick@usfamily.net	956-722-4047 O 956-727-0890 H
V. Gary Olson, Retired 162 Paintbrush Trl., Lockhart, TX 78644 vgocmo@hotmail.com	512-488-2299 H
LALM Guest House 3517 Salinas Ave., Laredo, TX 78041	

### Publisher

Carol Dumonceaux - DxDesign, Clarion Editor  
Contact: dxdesign@prairierosegoldens.com  
17747 County Hwy 5, Clitherall, MN 56524

### Latin American Lutheran Mission Clarion

The Clarion is published quarterly by LALM for friends of the Mission and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mexico. If you wish to be a prayer helper in this Mission for Mexico and would like to receive the Clarion, please contact the Editor at the address listed under "Publisher." There is no specific subscription price for the Clarion, but for those who wish to and have the means to help LALM with its cost, it is about \$3.00 per year for each mailing address. Please send contributions to our Treasurer at the address listed below.

**Donations for LALM should be mailed to:**  
**PO Box 17385**  
**Minneapolis, MN 55417-7385**

# What is the Lord Saying?

This is a call to prayer for those of us who love this mission and the work in Mexico. Six years ago when we accepted the call to the LALM, part of our assignment was to work with over twenty short term groups who came to share their witness in word and deed to the Gospel of Jesus among the Lutheran Churches of Northern Mexico. Each Summer we have seen that number of mission teams decline. This Summer 2010 all scheduled teams but one have cancelled. The most visible reason is the rise of Stateside awareness of drug related violence in Mexico. With the U.S. State Department posting a warning against citizens traveling to Mexico, and the television rehearsing on a regular basis gruesome stories of shootouts and lives lost, churches and individuals have been reluctant to take the apparent risks. We thank God that in these six years neither we as directors, nor any of the more than one hundred service groups have experienced any violence or danger. We continue to need the prayers of all as we come and go in service to the brothers in Mexico who obviously are more present to these dangers on a continual basis.

Understand that the short term volunteer groups have left a financial blessing with the mission that has carried us through many months of each year. Nevertheless the mission's ministry went on for years before the short term mission phenomenon.

God has been faithful and will continue to provide. We are humbled by the love, generosity, and encouragement of God's people.

On another level, perhaps God has been saying something else through all of this, namely, that most of the brick and mortar projects in the churches of Mexico are near completion. Perhaps the season of construction, in God's timing, is over and God is aiming us in a new direction. Except for the completion of the chapel in Villa Mainero, few urgent projects remain to be done.

It's time to begin praying for a new vision, a new strategy for a new season. That vision needs to be birthed in the pastors and leaders of the Lutheran Church in Mexico first. With the vision comes the Holy Spirit's passion, that passion will find a way to make the vision become a reality through them. What role will the LALM play in that? It remains to be seen, but there will be a change that God will be in charge of.

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## ***Getting Ready to Celebrate 75 Years!***

Did you know that the Latin American Lutheran Mission will celebrate 75 years of ministry in 2011? That's right, Myrtle Nordin and Eileen Lindahl obeyed God's call to Latin America seventy-five years ago. The mission has changed its role, its strategies, and its leadership over the years but it has not changed its mission to bring the Good News of salvation by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ to Latin America.

We invite you to send us your photos and your stories of your involvement and experiences with the LALM over the years. Maybe you visited the work in Mexico during the pioneer years of Myrtle and the Huerta family. Perhaps your connection has been through Claire and Norma Hobart's music ministry or with the blind school in Nuevo Laredo. Many found out about the LALM through Sanford and Florence Haugen's ministry with the migrants in the Red River Valley or their decades of ministry here on the border and in Mexico. We would like to assemble an updated history of the mission with your anecdotes and photos to be presented at the Annual Meeting and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in September of 2011 so dig out those photo albums and do some prayerful reminiscing.

## **Lutheran Pastors of Mexico Focus on Missions**

One of our prayers has continually been that God would raise up cross cultural missionaries from among our churches in Mexico.

The documents of the LALM reveal that the first generation of leaders in the ELCM were called 'missionaries' rather than pastors.

Perhaps this was because the fledgling church had no buildings and met in homes and rented buildings. These 'missionaries' itinerated continually and there were Lutheran groups in far flung places of Mexico.

But, while other denominations have multiplied remarkably across Latin America the Lutheran work has not grown as much.

For these reasons and many more, and in response to the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, the thematic for the October 13-15 conference of our Lutheran Pastors in Mexico will be "Cross Cultural Mission: The History of the Christian Movement, the role of Hispanics in World Missions, and the Challenges yet before us." Pray for our conference speaker, Dr. Moises Lopez of Comimex, an organization which represents the Lausanne movement in Christian mission.



Dr. Moises Lopez

# Is Building Houses for the Poor Evangelistic?

Last year the Central American Lutheran Mission Society (C.A.L.M.S.) approached L.A.L.M. about developing a strategic partnership. Several years ago C.A.L.M.S. began building houses for the poor in Guatemala in cooperation with the Lutheran Churches of Guatemala. To date they have built over thirty. Their long-range goal is to build 70% of these homes for non-churched needy families.

C.A.L.M.S. networks with many stateside Lutheran churches that have taken up this challenge. In Guatemala as in Mexico there are thousands of families who can't afford even the simplest home and suffer because of it.

Here's how the ministry works : A congregation in Indiana (or Kansas, etc.) provides funds for construction materials for the home (\$5,000.) The home is then built mostly through local labor but the finishing touches (interior floors and roof, etc.) are put on by a group from that sponsoring congregation. They travel to the site and get to participate in the dedication of the building by a local pastor before the keys are turned over to the new owners.

Here's where the LALM comes in. Some of these C.A.L.M.S. churches have asked for a closer location that doesn't require the expenses of air travel to Guatemala. The Director of C.A.L.M.S. through his knowledge of the LALM enquired about working through LALM with the Lutheran Churches in the border area. Pr. Antonio Tirado of Calvary Lutheran in Nuevo Laredo gave the green light to do a pilot project in November of 2010.

Part of our preparation for this new initiative involved selecting a Mexican site supervisor and for the two of us to visit the C.A.L.M.S. projects in Guatemala to see from the ground up how the entire program works. This we did in May.

A Mexican missionary friend from outside the Lutheran church confided in me their decision to begin a similar program. So many have been evangelized over and over but little tangible care for their families and physical needs has been evidenced by the Evangelical community. The witness has been unconvincing to the unbeliever. That's why C.A.L.M.S.' commitment to building 70 % of these homes favoring non-evangelical families, single mothers, etc. has a definite evangelistic purpose. And the local church is involved from start to finish with the family and has the chance to make a meaningful relationship with them in the process. It is also a wonderful way to get the local church to look beyond its walls and consider how to make a difference in their own neighborhood. Pray for us as we move forward with the pilot project in Nuevo Laredo in November.



The donation of the home is honored with a plaque.



A happy homemaker in front of her new digs.



The local site supervisor stands alongside his Mexican counterpart.



The Lutheran pastor (left) builds his relationship with the new home owner.

## Quilters Corner



Zion Lutheran Church, Buffalo, MN.

*Thank you to Roger Ose Ministries for channeling these quilts to the LALM.*



Trinity Lutheran Church, Truman, MN.

*If your church has a quilters ministry that provides quilts/blankets to our ministry in Mexico we would like to get a picture of your group. Digital pictures can be sent to [lalmelcm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lalmelcm@sbcglobal.net) or snapshots can be sent to: LALM 3519 Salinas Ave., Laredo, TX 78041*



# Hurricane Alex Impacts Mexico

**When** Hurricane Alex came on shore the evening of June 30, 2010 the media focused mainly on it's impact on the Texas gulf coast, which was minimal though there was minor damage from several tornadoes, seven inches of rain, and some power outages in the Brownsville-McAllen area. In Laredo, only rain.

The eye of Alex came on shore over a hundred miles down the coast, on target to dump its torrential rains on many of the churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mexico located in the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico. Our churches in Rio Bravo, Villa Mainero, and Tula, Tamaulipas and farther inland in Apodaca, Monterrey, Atongo in the state of Nuevo Leon received the brunt of the hurricane which rapidly degraded into a tropical depression. One example: We were in telephone contact with our pastors in Villa and Atongo, we know that nine inches of rain fell in one hour in Atongo, the stream that runs only fifty feet from the church overflowed its banks and came as an uninvited guest to flood the church, traffic was paralyzed as bridges were closed because of flooding, but everyone is safe.

Then a week later, to top things off, normally dry and hot Laredo began to hear warning in the evening news that rains from Alex and a second tropical depression had made it necessary to open the gates of dams in Mexico and at Lake Amistad and that this would cause flooding along the Rio Grande River including the Laredo area and points South. The usually shallow Rio Grande that you can throw a stone across five minutes from the LALM Border Station began to rise and by July 8 was over its banks flooding low lying areas. At its' height it had swollen to hundreds of yards across. Many communities were evacuated, including the home of Rosy Montemayor our bookstore manager. She loaded her furniture and belongings, in the rain, in a big enclosed truck and headed for higher ground, but in God's mercy her home was spared, though her mother's was not. The brother of another of our bookstore staff lost his home and belongings, as well.

Believe it or not the water reached the pavement on Bridge # 1 which is usually forty feet from the water's surface. This is the highest the river has been since 1965 ! You probably saw images of the flood on your television. We encourage your prayers for many whose belongings were swept away. To this point we haven't heard of any loss of life. ***Thanks be to God.***

## The Homegoing Of Former LALM Director Gary Olson



Gary, Carol, and grand-daughter Daniela  
February 2010

On Saturday, July 17, 2010 Former LALM Director, Gary Olson passed away after a long struggle with many health issues. Gary and Carol served LALM from 1990-2004, having served also in Uruguay, Peru, and as home staff of the World Mission Prayer League. We praise God for Gary's life of service to Jesus Christ, and to the ministry of the LALM with the Lutheran Church in Mexico. Even in retirement Gary volunteered doing bookkeeping for the mission. We will miss him greatly."...the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness..." II Timothy 4:6-8. Let us all continue to uphold Carol and the family in prayer for this great loss.

# A note from the LALM Treasurer....

A special word of thanks is extended to all who made an extra gift for the Mission's transportation needs. Approximately \$8500 was received specifically designated for the van fund. This was more than adequate for the purchase of a Ford Econoline van that was graciously offered by Redeemer Lutheran in Austin, TX. Again thanks to God's people who respond to the Missions needs!

The Thrivent Giving Choice Program is now up and running and as I explained in the Spring Clarion it is totally different than the previous Thrivent Giving Plus Program. Thrivent will inform those Thrivent members who qualify for directing Thrivent funds to Lutheran Organizations of the members choice. There is no action that the Mission can take in the process; only you as Thrivent members can direct your Thrivent allocated funds to LALM. Your eligibility to direct Thrivent Choice funds will depend on your level of investment in Thrivent products and could vary each year. For those of you who are Thrivent members I would encourage you to be aware of any correspondence you receive from Thrivent that gives you the opportunity to direct Thrivent funds to LALM. LALM is approved by Thrivent to receive funds from this program.

Thanks again and God's Blessings to all who faithfully support LALM in these tough economic times!

**Bob Myller, LALM Treasurer**

## Preparing for the Women's Conference

By Barb Erickson



At the Pastor's Conference in March, the women decided to turn the Youth Center in San Rafael into this years Conference Center. Realizing that they would have to sleep on the floor, I suggested that we make cots and bring down quilts for each cot. The Mexicans have a canvas cot that many use. It is fairly easy to construct and folds lengthwise for shortage. Most canvas cost between \$8.50 and \$12 a yard. We needed two yards for each cot. When in Minnesota we looked for canvas. The Lord lead us to a warehouse at a time they were selling all their materials at half price. I asked them about their canvas which at first glance would be five dollars a yard on sale. The man I talked with said he had

the heaviest canvas in the back and led me to see large rolls of orange canvas. I told him what it was for and that I'd take the whole roll of 80 yards. He then told me it was less expensive than the other canvas up front and he'd sell it for two dollars and 50 cents a yard.

What does joy feel like? I had a joy flooding that day. How good is God to lead us in such a specific way! We ended up with enough canvas to make 72 cots. We delivered the canvas, with nuts and bolts to Pastor Homero Cortez in La Boca, which is just up the mountain from San Rafael. Homero has a woodworking shop for his support.

Thank you to so many who have helped the Women's Conference with funds to see it go forward for another year. Your financial help has built these cots not only for this women's conference but for many retreats, camps, and conferences for the church to use in the future.

In mid July several of the churches gathered to make repairs, paint and prepare the rooms for the conference. All is ready to go. The Conference was held August 11-13. The theme of the conference was "Seeking Your Presence".

This theme came out of the women's mediations in the March meetings. A hunger for God's presence was their reoccurring theme. We were challenged to pray for this. Thank you for your part in praying for this conference as well. A full report on this will be given at the Annual meeting in September.





# Gifts of Love



The following persons and organizations provided gifts, donations, or bequests to the Latin American Lutheran Mission in March, April, May, June, 2010. The LALM Board of Directors and Staff are grateful for all these gifts as well as those gifts of time and talents. (If you do not want to be recognized by the Clarion for your gift, please send a note along with your contribution to the Treasurer/Financial Secretary stating your desire for anonymity.) We apologize for any errors or omissions.

## Individuals

Beverly Aalgaard, Thompson, IA  
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# LALM Prayer Warriors

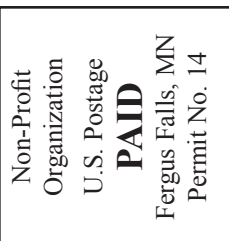
## Fall 2010

### Thank you, Lord:

- ▶ For the love and committed faithfulness of individuals and churches in the U.S.A. who pray, care, and give to your churches in Mexico.
- ▶ For God's faithful provision for the LALM in spite of the cancellation of all but two Summer mission groups.
- ▶ For the continued ministry and viability of the Gospel Bookstore.
- ▶ For the leadership, hard work, and Christian friendship of our bookstore staff and the Amador family helping at the border station.
- ▶ For the Ford Van purchased from Redeemer Lutheran in Austin, TX.

### Jesus we seek your face:

- ▶ For the health and recovery of your servant Gary Olson after surgery in June for a brain abscess and blood infection.
- ▶ For the ANNUAL SPIRITUAL RENEWAL CONFERENCE OF THE WOMEN OF THE ELCM August 12-14 in San Rafael, Nuevo Leon, MX.
- ▶ For LALM board meeting, and annual association meeting on Monday, September 20, 2010 and the congregations we will visit on the Iron Range September 22-26.
- ▶ For the ELCM Pastors and Leaders Conference October 13-15, 2010 on the theme of "The Call to Cross Cultural Missions". Pray for the Holy Spirit to raise up a missionary from the ELCM.



Latin American Lutheran Mission  
PO Box 17385  
Minneapolis MN 55417-7385

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

- ▶ For Barb Erickson and Pilar as they teach the children's club every Wednesday and for Pr. Dick in his pastoring at Bethel Lutheran Mission in Laredo.
- ▶ For all the families in Laredo, and in Mexico affected by Hurricane Alex and the flooding associated with the tropical depression in July.

