



Latin American Lutheran Mission CLARION

Vol. 69, No. 2

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

April 2004

A Day of Celebration!

The pleasantly warm South Texas sun shone brightly in Laredo on Sunday, February 15. People had come together from various places in Texas, the upper Midwest and one man came from as far as Hull, England, all enjoying a day of fellowship and celebration that was as warm as the Texas sun itself.

In fact the day brought a double celebration, first, the installation of Ricardo Dominguez as pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church and then the dedication of LALM's new “Hobart/Pfluger Hall”. Bethel Church is the congregation that gathers at the mission site, technically a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mexico and, while the pastor is called by the congregation, the pastor is installed by the President of the Board of LALM. Hobart/Pfluger Hall is the two-story dormitory, on which construction was begun four years ago and now is complete.

At the 11:00 a.m. worship service a full congregation was present to rejoice with Pastor Ricardo and affirm the Lord's call upon him to serve as Bethel's pastor. The installation service was conducted by Pastor Byron Meline, President of the LALM Board, and included a time of prayer for Ricardo by the elders of the congregation. Special music was provided by the daughters of Carmen and the late Howard Haugen and also by a choir composed of visitors to the mission, including a large group from Trinity Lutheran,, Minnehaha Falls of Minneapolis, Minnesota. A wonderful pot-luck dinner followed the service.

Bethel Lutheran Church was filled to capacity once again at 3:30 p.m. for the joyful service of dedication of Hobart/



Pfluger Hall. Special guests in attendance included Joyce Pfluger and Jan Scott, wife and daughter of the late James Pfluger and Dale, Brian and Gary Hardin, nephews of the late Claire and Norma Hobart. Other guests included people who had contributed much volunteer time and materials towards the new building. Special music consisted of songs composed by Claire Hobart.

Pastor Byron Meline spoke on the story from Luke 19:35-43 about Jesus restoring sight to the blind man, emphasizing the blind man's request, “Lord, I want to see”. We called to mind the tremendous “vision” of the beloved blind musician, Claire Hobart, and his wife, Norma, as well as the architectural “vision” and commitment of Jim Pfluger and how their vision will be continued through the gift of Hobart/Pfluger Hall. We pray for God to continue to answer the prayer, “Lord, I want to see,” that comes from hearts of people in both the United States and Mexico who are touched by the ministry of the Latin American Lutheran Mission.

The Dedication Service concluded with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and Prayer of Dedication outside the new building. The group then entered Hobart/Pfluger Hall for a time of enjoying refreshments and visiting together. As the afternoon drew to a close, a sense of appreciation for the goodness and faithfulness of God filled the hearts of all those who were able to take part in this special occasion. In the years to come may God bless all who find shelter and fellowship in this special place, Hobart/Pfluger Hall.



Pastor Dick and Barb Erickson Called to Direct the Latin American Lutheran Mission



Pastor Dick and Barb Erickson have accepted the call to serve as directors of the Latin American Lutheran Mission beginning June 1, 2004 as Gary and Carol Olson retire from that position.

Dick and Barb served nine years with World Mission Prayer League in Ecuador, South America and come to the LALM with significant mission experience. They are graduates of the Lutheran Bible Institute in California. Dick earned a B.A. in Education from Seattle Pacific University before going overseas. After two terms of service in Ecuador, Dick worked with Lutheran Evangelistic Movement and Lay Ministry Training Center. During that time he finished his theological training at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. Dick was ordained in 1992 and they come to LALM having served two ELCA congregations, Brooklyn Park Lutheran and North Heights Lutheran in the Twin Cities.

The Ericksons have four children, three of whom currently reside in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Their oldest daughter was killed in a traffic accident in 1990. They also have four beautiful grandchildren.

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. Terrance Stratton, 1st Vice President (06) 2024 West Third Street, Duluth, MN 55806 e-mail: Tstratton7C@aol.com | 218-727-5897 O |
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| Rev. B. Steve Hughey 1287 Lombez Drive, Manchester, MO 63021 e-mail: ventexmo@msn.com | 636-225-1497 H |
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| John Sirjord (06) 317 Deronda St, Amery, WI 54001 | 715-268-9337 H 651-628-0156 H |
| Dan Sollie (04) 1322 Canson Ave. Arden Hills, MN 55112 | |
| Philip Spaulding (05) 4605 175th Ave NW, Andover, MN 55304-1723 | 763-323-7865 H |
| Christine Thornborrow (04) 38485 Tamworth Ave., North Branch, MN 55056 e-mail: col154@aol.com | 651-237-1120 H |

Border Missionaries

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| V. Gary Olson, Director 3519 Salinas Ave., Laredo, TX 78041 e-mail: vgolalm@aol.com | 956-727-4015 H 956-722-4047 O |
| Ricardo Dominguez LALM Guest House 3517 Salinas Ave., Laredo, TX 78041 | 956-722-2427 H |
| H. Sanford Haugen, Director Emeritus, Retired 3519 Salmas Ave. Laredo, TX 78041 | |

Our *NEW* web site: www.lalm-elcm.org

Mission Staff

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Bob Myller, Treasurer 104 Hidden Meadow Ct Apple Valley, MN 55124 e-mail: bobmyller@msn.com | 952-454-4683 H |
| Faith & Fellowship Press, Clarion Editor Contact: Milo Scott 1020 Alcott Ave. W., Fergus Falls, MN 56537 | 800-332-9232 O |

Latin American Lutheran Mission Clarion

The Clarion is published bimonthly 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 "Mission Staff." 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 under "Mission Staff."

Publication deadline for the next Clarion issue is May 7, 2004.

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

Dick's Report on the Pastor's Conference in Monterrey, Mexico

It was rainy and cool in Northeastern Mexico January 21-23, 2004 for the trimestral pastor's conference held at Gethsemane Lutheran in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. The mountain that stands as a sentinel overlooking the city was shrouded in clouds for the duration of the conference but the smile of the Heavenly Father was nevertheless wonderfully upon His servant leaders in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mexico!

Though I had been privileged to teach at previous conferences, this time my wife Barb and I were able to experience the "confraternidad" together. The theme we selected for the conference was "The Purpose Driven Life" using the powerful devotional material in Rick Warren's best selling book by that name. I discovered that the book had been translated into Spanish and with a little foot work we tracked down enough copies for each of the pastors. Special thanks to the saints at North Heights Lutheran, their generosity made this gift to the pastors possible.

Among the highlights of the conference was the opportunity to hear each one share how they had come to know the Lord and received their call to ministry. Many commented they had never heard in such detail each other's experiences of God's working in their lives. The older pastors' stories brought us all back to the historical roots of the work in Mexico. Sharing their victories and struggles, there was much laughter and many tears. Such sharing made us feel very close.

Gethsemane Lutheran is located in Sierra Ventanas, a "colonia" of Monterrey, Mexico's third largest city. This area of the city is characterized by much violence and gang activity. It was amazing to hear the story of one of the

neighboring pastors who with his family had had to hide beneath the pews in the church on one occasion when bullets from gangs fighting outside were shattering the windows of the church. It was a reminder that each congregation is called to the challenge of doing effective ministry in their own neighborhood. Pray for Gethsemane and other evangelical churches in Sierra Ventanas as they worship and witness in Mexico.



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Impressions from the Weekend

It was early on a Friday morning in February at MSP, the airport in Minneapolis, and we were finally on our way to Laredo, to see more closely what goes on at LALM headquarters. Many times we've said we should go, and finally we were on our way. It was to be a special weekend, the time of dedication of the Hobart/Pfluger Hall, a facility to house groups on their way to and from trips into Mexico to work in behalf of LALM, and to have their lives changed by the experience.

Ours was a short trip, only Friday to Monday, but our lives would be changed as well. The impressions were many, far more than we can explain in detail, but here's a shorthand account.

- Stewardship
 - The space at the campus is well used, with no wasted spaces.
 - The buildings are continually being improved with excellent maintenance.
 - Bookstore materials are very affordable for those who need it the most.
 - A Nuevo Laredo congregation has been constructing a new facility for themselves for 3 years so far, but at the same time they have built 2 more churches, planting congregations in needy areas.
 - Pastors are willing to serve the Nuevo Laredo congregations while working full-time as attorneys to support themselves.
- LALM is remembering it's roots, dedicating the new

building to the memory of the Hobarts and the Pflugers who have been benefactors in their own special ways.

- God's providing in many ways:
 - We saw many volunteers from Minneapolis and Rochester, addressing the needs of the group.
 - The beautiful Hobart/Pfluger building was provided almost entirely with volunteer labor.
 - Ricardo Dominguez installed as a new pastor at Bethel, just as the need arose because of the sudden passing of Howard Haugen.
 - Outstanding leadership in the Olsons, Gary (quiet power) and Carol (joyful enthusiasm), and now the prospect of Rev. Richard Erickson's arrival, right on God's schedule.
 - Outstanding fellowship with others there at the guest house.
 - God's constant love and guidance, many years to this time, and assurance of His guidance in the future.

We're truly grateful for the evidence of God's love that we saw and felt. We will be back, and in the future we plan to do more than simply visit. When Monday evening arrived, and we were back in the airport in Minneapolis, it was hard to believe we had seen and experienced so much. LALM is God's work, being done by God's people, reaching out to many more of God's people who need to learn of His love.

—Norm and Rose Marie Anderson,
Minnetonka, MN

In Memory of Howard Nathaniel Haugen



Howard Nathaniel Haugen

Obituary

Howard Nathaniel Haugen, 55, went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, January 15, 2004 at a San Antonio Hospital.

Mr. Haugen was born in Crookston, Minnesota and spent many years of his life in Laredo, Texas. Mr. Haugen served faithfully as a Lutheran pastor of 26 years and also worked as an I.N.S. officer for the past several years.

He loved the Lord and shared the love of Jesus Christ with his family and all he knew. In his integrity, love for God's Word, and dedication to his family and ministry, he was an inspiration and a blessing to many.

His family and friends take comfort in the knowledge that he is in God's presence and that they will see him again soon. One of his favorite Bible verses was Proverbs 3:5,6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

He was preceded in death by his mother Mrs. Florence A. Haugen.

He is survived by his wife Carmen M. (Guerra) Haugen. DAUGHTERS: Adrienne, Rachel, and Valerie Haugen. FATHER: H. Sanford Haugen. SISTER: Naomi (Rick) Edwards. BROTHER: Daniel (Kandy) Haugen. BROTHERS-IN-LAW: Joel Guerra, Mark (Tere) Guerra and David (Sherri) Guerra. SISTERS-IN-LAW: Miriam (Stan) Yuraitis, Laura (Arturo) Molina, Clare (James) Earhart and Otila (Armando) Molina. Also, numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and many, many friends.

Visitation will be held on Saturday, January 17, 2004 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and a prayer service will be held at 7 p.m. in the Hernandez, Lopez and Sons Northside Chapels, 800 Boston St. Funeral services will begin with visitation from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Sunday, January 18, 2004 at Bethel Lutheran Church, located at 3520 Salinas Ave., followed by a religious service at 10 a.m. at the church. Interment will immediately follow the service in the Laredo City Cemetery.

Howard was so blessed to have had the heritage and legacy of a godly Christian family. I believe that was one of the greatest factors in determining who he became as a man. The example of loving parents who were dedicated to the Lord, to ministry and to the family impacted him his whole life long. The practice of starting and ending each day with Bible reading and prayer developed in him a solid foundation in the Word and devotion to the Lord Jesus. Together, he and I kept this practice with our daughters ever since they were very young. It was always a special time of togetherness and blessing.

Howard loved the Word of God. His Bible went everywhere he went and showed its wear and tear. Its pages were marked with highlights and dates. He kept a notebook where he wrote down passages that were especially meaningful to him. Sunday sermons were a blessing to hear because they were so biblical, the result of hours of thoughtful study. He believed in the truth of the Bible and its importance in the lives of believers for personal growth and guidance. He put its teachings into practice and lived it before us. He was a man of honesty and integrity who taught us that it was important to do the right thing in every circumstance. We depended on his godly wisdom and advice.

Howard loved the Lord Jesus Christ. His chief desire was to know Him better and to make Him known. Whenever he had the chance, he would tell others about the Savior that meant so much to him. His deep personal relationship with the Lord was the source of his strength and joy. Trust in the Lord and the promises of Scripture got him through the difficulties of life and he was never disappointed. He was a man of faith, and our own faith grew as a result. He was a man of prayer, and taught us to pray about everything and to give thanks in everything. As he grew weaker with his heart condition he told us all at church at Christmas, "We don't always understand why God allows certain things, but we know He can be trusted. Let's not let anything take away our confidence in the Lord."

Howard loved people and people loved him in return. He was always genuinely interested in others and tried to be of help whenever he could. We all knew we could count on him. It was such a comfort to us at his funeral services to hear people tell how much he had meant to them. Our daughters and I always felt so loved and cared for.

Howard loved to fix things and he had a tool for any and every job. He always tried to do his best at anything he worked on. He was a carpenter, painter, roofer, electrician, plumber, and general handyman. Projects with him were fun because he had such joy in his work. He also took pride in a neat yard with nicely trimmed edges, although it took me 26 years to finally convince him to prune a little less off the trees.

We loved Howard so much. His wonderful calm temperament and happy disposition helped make our home such a happy place. We always quoted the line, "A happy home is but an earlier heaven." That's the way it was for us. We knew we were blessed. Being together was what we enjoyed whether it was a walk at the lake to skip rocks on the water or a drive to some back road where we could see deer and rabbits coming out in the early evening. We would always stop on the way home to marvel at the stars overhead. God gave us many beautiful years together. We miss him terribly, but the Lord is giving us grace to be patient until we are happily reunited in heaven. That will be a special day.

—Carmen Haugen



St. Andrew Mission Society Visits Rio Bravo, Mexico



Twenty-one individuals from across North Dakota and 11 from the Janesville, Minnesota area traveled to Rio Bravo, Mexico for the annual St. Andrew Mission Society (SAMS) mission trip to Mexico. The individuals from North Dakota were Dean and Shirley Schiller, Kirk and Judy Rosin, Ron and Ginny Leon, Cindy Hansen, Sara Moreland, Tony Schenilec, and Brandon Reber from St. Andrew Lutheran Church, West Fargo; Stephanie Simonson of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Fargo; David Beck of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Fargo; Reverend L. Jay Reinke of Concordia Lutheran Church, Williston; Judy Juergens of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Minot; Merlyn Mindeman of Peace Lutheran Church, Barney; Robert



Schaefer of St. John Lutheran Church, Oakes; Bill Rahif of Zion Lutheran Church, Binford; Violet Podenski Zion Lutheran Church, Edgeley; Robert and Janet Bauer of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Dickinson; and Cheryl Ness of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (ELCA), Edgeley. The participants from Minnesota included Dave and Cindi Jo Trahms and LuAnn Guse of Trinity Lutheran Church, Janesville; David Trahms, Drew Trahms, Carissa Guse, and Ashley Miller of Trinity Lutheran School, Janesville; and Maita Trahms, Ross Taylor, Fawn Benson, and Beth Lamont, of Cannon Valley Lutheran High School, Morristown. The group from North Dakota left West Fargo early on the morning of January 24. The individuals from Minnesota joined the group at Sioux Falls, SD. They returned on February 1st.

The host for the servant event was Temple "El Sembrador" and Pastor Carlos De Leon of Rio Bravo.

The main emphasis of SAMS on this trip was to provide a Bible class for the children at the mission. The group conducted 7 sessions of Bible class and assisted at the regular Saturday morning class. The first session on Tuesday had over 50 children attending. The rest of the week there were 2 sessions daily with over 100 children attending each day. The Saturday morning session also had over 100 participants.

Labor was provided at Temple "El Sembrador" to paint the Sanctuary, place the rebar for a roof and pour concrete. This area will provide additional education rooms for the church.

SAMS provided the congregation in Rio Bravo with 100



Bibles, 200 New Testaments, 20 hymnals, 20 catechisms, 4000 tracts, and financial assistance that will be used in their congregation and the new mission. They also provided medical supplies that will be used at the children's clinic at the mission. Materials were provided to paint the Sanctuary of Temple "El Sembrador" and construct the roof for the fellowship hall. SAMS also made a contribution to LALM for work in other missions in Mexico.

After the Bible school was over on Saturday morning SAMS provided lunch for the children and distributed school kits, health kits, layettes, clothing, shoes, and quilts. There were some of the items left after the distribution at the mission. These items were left with Pastor De Leon for distribution at a later date. It is because of the generosity of congregations and individuals in the North Dakota District that these distributions were possible.

On this trip the group had a new experience. For the first time the individuals had the opportunity to live with host



families. Even though few could speak Spanish, by the end of the week communication with the host families was getting pretty good.

The group had the opportunity to worship with the congregation at Temple "El Sembrador" twice during the stay in Rio Bravo. Also, the women of Sembrador congregation provided a homemade Mexican meal for the group on Saturday before they departed Rio Bravo.

—Lutheran Witness
April 2004

PASTORS' RETIREMENT FUND

The LALM Board has opened a special account called the "Pastors' Retirement Fund".

It is the Board's intent that when the fund grows substantially the earned interest would help our ELCM Mexican Pastors during their retirement years. The principle would not be used; only the earned interest. To provide "seed" money the Board decided to allocate 2% of recent past and future undesignated estates to establish the retirement account. To date there is only \$3,700 in the fund but it will grow as estates

and gifts are received. Donors are encouraged to designate gifts over and above what will come in from estates to help it grow.

We believe God has used our Mexican Pastors so effectively over the years that we will want to continue to honor them with our assistance during their retirement years.

Please Note:

We have a new PO Box address for contributions.
We also have a new e-mail address.

New mailing address:

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

New e-mail address:

lalmelcm@aol.com

LALM Prayer Warriors April 2004

"Give thanks to the Lord for he is good; his love endures forever." Psalm 107:1

How many times do we pause and thank God? We receive so much each day and I do not take time to say thank you Lord. My prayer is, teach me Lord to be more thankful. Thanks again for your faithfulness. God is working in Mexico and on the border.

Items of Praise:

- Installation of Ricardo Dominguez as pastor at Bethel Lutheran
- Winter volunteers who have helped the ministry in so many ways
- Safe travel into Mexico
- Godly Board of LALM
- Faithful prayer warriors
- Ministry of groups going into Mexico
- Outreach ministry at Rio Bravo
- Financial support for the radio ministry of Rev. Carlos De Leon
- New opportunities for ministry in Mexico
- Dedication of Hobart-Pfluger Hall
- Rev. Dick & Barb Erickson as new Director

Please continue to uphold:

- Unity in the ELCM
- Prison ministry of Rev. Bulmaro Velasquez
- Healing for wife of Rev. Jesus Velasquez
- Revival in our hearts and into Mexico
- Safe travel in Mexico
- Healing for V. Gary
- New ministry center in Monterrey
- Summer youth teams
- Summer youth volunteers
- Radio ministry of Rev. Carlos De Leon
- ELCM Leadership
- Healing for wife of Bulmaro
- ELCM youth retreat in April
- Ministry of Gospel Bookstore
- Summer VBS
- Work in Nuevo Laredo
- Family of Howard Haugen
- Change of leadership of LALM
- Wisdom for Rev. Dick Erickson as he directs LALM

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