

Lenten Season, 2013

Dear Partners and Friends of Lutherans in Medical Missions,

Spiritually and physically healthy men and women build spiritually and physically healthy families. Spiritually and physically healthy families, empowered by the Gospel and encouraged by one another, help build spiritually healthy communities. That, in a nutshell, is what Community Health Education (CHE) is all about. All over the world, including here at home, CHE plays an active role in spreading the Gospel. L IMM, through your ongoing contributions, and with the generous contribution of Concordia Lutheran Ministries (CLM) of Cabot, Pa., is able to continue support for CHE projects in Chile, Cambodia, Thailand, Hong Kong and Eurasia, as well as with Lutheran Parish Nurse International (LPNI) here and abroad. We will be sharing stories from each of these harvest fields this year, so that you can meet some of the men and women who are the hands and feet to your hearts.

Some of these men and women live in the former Soviet Union, in the small country of Kyrgyzstan. A new 2013 L IMM grant provides \$2000 for spring and summer CHE work in remote areas of that land. Three Kyrgyz Community Health Educators, all members of the national Lutheran Church, will travel to villages in which sharing the Gospel is extremely difficult because of strong opposition from local leaders. In spite of the opposition, pastors and members of the small Lutheran churches in the area are determined to reach their neighbors with the Gospel. CHE workers will make three trips from the capital city of Bishkek, presenting seminars and workshops in women's health issues to the women of the villages. They will work side by side with the large medical trailer, brought to the country in 1999 by the Schwan Foundation, with ongoing funding from the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and operating as part of the national church by providing free dental and medical care to children and free medical care to women of childbearing age. Relationships will be forged and bridges to the Gospel will be established. Local pastors and evangelists will cross those bridges, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, souls will be snatched from the fire.

Would you like to experience firsthand the mission activity of CHE? In September, LCMS Mercy Medical Teams (MMT) will travel to Kyrgyzstan, to work alongside local pastors, evangelists, church members, CHE workers, community leaders and medical professionals. Work there will include well child exams, teaching stations in a large local orphanage, mentoring and sharing with trailer /local hospital staff, pastors and church workers, as well as other capacity building opportunities in the capital city of Bishkek, where we will be staying. Pastors and medical professionals involved in Pediatrics, OB/GYN, Dentistry and Health Education would be perfect for this trip, but any medical professional with a desire to serve and share God's love would be both blessed and a blessing on this team. L IMM is most certainly blessed to share in this trip with LCMS MMT, and this MMT team will be led by yours truly and my husband will be serving as team chaplain! Please go to www.lcms.org/mercyteams to learn more and then pray about joining us.

L IMM would not be here if not for each of you. Your prayers and financial support make possible all we do and hope to do. We thank God for you and for your gifts. If you would like to contact L IMM with questions or comments, please send an email to me at timritanickel@gmail.com or call me at 904-806-8679.