

LCC helps flooding victims in southern Brazil

BRAZIL – Over the past two months the area of Santa Catarina in southern Brazil has experienced heavy rainfall resulting in severe landslides and record water levels. Approximately 1.5 million people are reported affected in approximately 60 cities. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (IELB), a partner of Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) says 118 people lost their lives and 33,000 are homeless.

As part of its commitment to support partner churches, LCC forward C\$10,000 to help with the long-term relief efforts. Synod will also forward any additional funds collected by congregations to the Brazilian church.

IELB's pastors living in the region say the civil defense agencies are providing food and shelter in the cities. One of the most affected cities was Itajaí where 97 percent of the streets are under water. All IELB congregations of the state of Santa Catarina are engaged taking food and clothes to the people who live in that circuit. Pastor Martinho Sonntag, of Florianópolis, reports: "When I arrived there, I was moved with the situation and the dedication of the local pastor, his family and members of the congregation in helping the victims of the flood, and at the same time with the joy and gratitude of those who were receiving aid."



Heavy rains in southern Brazil have caused extensive flooding. The disaster displaced hundreds of Lutherans and also provided an opportunity for the Brazilian church to provide emergency assistance throughout the area.

Many in the city of Brusque abandoned their houses due to the risk of mudslides. In Navegantes, besides the flood, agricultural workers cannot work the land due to the rain. "One of the saddest things is to see pieces of furniture, sofas and mattresses in the sidewalk, to be taken by the garbage truck," laments Pastor Brehm.

Pastor Éverson Gass from Blumenau reports that "this Christmas season will be different." Some families of the congregation had to abandon their houses indefinitely. According to Pastor Wanderley Lange, in Balneário Camboriú, the



church helped 27 families of the congregation and some have already returned home. Congregations which receive donations share among Lutherans in nearby cities.

To help support the reconstruction by the IELB, go to www.lutheranchurch.ca/donate or send a donation to 3074 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3K 0Y2.

Christian persecution continues

In the last three months, about 500 Christians have been martyred for their faith in India, mostly in the state of Orissa, with nearly 200 churches and 5,000 homes of Christians destroyed, and 70,000 driven from their villages into refugee camps with hardly any sanitation and provisions.

This continuing wave of persecution was sparked by the murder of an arch enemy of Christians. Although Marxists

admitted to the murder, the ardent Hinduist's followers immediately began attacking Christians, trying to force some to convert to Hinduism, and now offering rewards for killing Christians, especially pastors.

Please pray that they will be affirmed in their saving faith through God's Word and Christ's presence, and provided with life's necessities, and that this trial shall soon cease.

Rev. Dr. John Wilch

New call for Krey

VENEZUELA-Canadian missionary Rev. Ted Krey has accepted a call to serve to serve as a church planter/theological educator with LCMS World Mission in the Dominican Republic beginning January 2009. Pastor Krey was originally seconded to LCMS in 2001 to serve in Venezuela. For the past three years he has worked in the area of theological education, training Venezuelan pastors to serve the country's 19 congregations.

Nicaragua missionary resigns

WINNIPEG - The Board of Directors of Lutheran Church-Canada has received the resignation of LCC missionary Rev. Sandor Arguello. The pastor has served in his native Nicaragua since 1997.

In his letter, Pastor Arguello noted that the nature of LCC's mission activity in Nicaragua has changed with the founding of Iglesia Luterana Sínodo de Nicaragua and he believes this is an appropriate time to ask for release from his call. He also cited personal and family reasons for submitting his resignation.

"We thank our gracious God for the service of Pastor Arguello and his passion for proclaiming the Gospel," said LCC president, Rev. Robert Bugbee. "We pray God's continued blessing on him and his family."

The board's Committee for Mission and Social Ministry Services, in consultation with President Bugbee and interim mission executive Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan will assess the needs in the Central America mission field and bring its recommendations to the Board of Directors. "Our commitment remains to our mission work in Costa Rica and Honduras as well as nurturing the growth of ILSN in Nicaragua," the president assured. "The Lord supplied the initial worker for Nicaragua, and I am convinced He will direct our next steps in this exciting mission work."

Pastor Arguello and his family will return to Canada in the new year.

Dr. Mayan will spend three months in Nicaragua beginning in January to assist ILSN through this transition period.



Rev. Sandor Arguello translates for ILSN Vice-president Claudio Rivas at LCC's June convention in Winnipeg.

50th Anniversary gift to LCC

EDMONTON - Amid the 20th anniversary of Lutheran Church-Canada's founding convention as an autonomous church body, a new book highlights an earlier historic date and figure in our history. At time when pastors sometimes gave each other nicknames, Pastor Albert Schwermann of Mellowdale, then Wetaskiwin, Alberta, and later Concordia College (CUCA) in Edmonton and first president of LCC as a federation of Canadian LCMS districts was known as "Red" in honour of his hair colour.

In the book *They Called Him Red, the Life and Times of Albert Schwermann*, Canadian Lutheran historian Dr. Norman Threinen traces the life and times of this "LCC giant."

Through an engaging biography, with many quotes from letters and

speeches, the author captures the essence of this servant of Christ Jesus. He rounds out the picture of this fascinating man by

including two of Schwermann's theological essays.

Of interest to readers will be a portrait of the early days of pastoral work in Canada, the founding and sustaining of Concordia College-Edmonton, the dreams of Canadian seminary training, and the "just-at-the-right-

time" moments in planning and launching Lutheran Church-Canada as a federation of Canadian LCMS districts.

At President Schwermann's funeral, Dr. Edwin Lehman's sermon pondered "the large footprint left by this man of God." This book explains the essence of that footprint.



As a youth and adult who knew Dr. Albert Schwermann and his life of service to the Lord, I recommend *They Called Him Red*. It provides an important, interesting and insightful picture of this humble giant of our Synod. Copies may be ordered by e-mail (include your name and address) at threinen@shaw.ca, by phone: 250-494-9457, or by mail 6108 Austin St., Summerland, B.C., V0H 1Z1. The cost is \$30 including shipping.

This is the second book of the Lutheran Historical Institute Monograph Series.

Pastor Mark Lobitz
Canmore, Alberta

DATES TO REMEMBER

**Vocations
January 18**

Keep in your prayers those whom God may be calling to serve Him in church work vocations