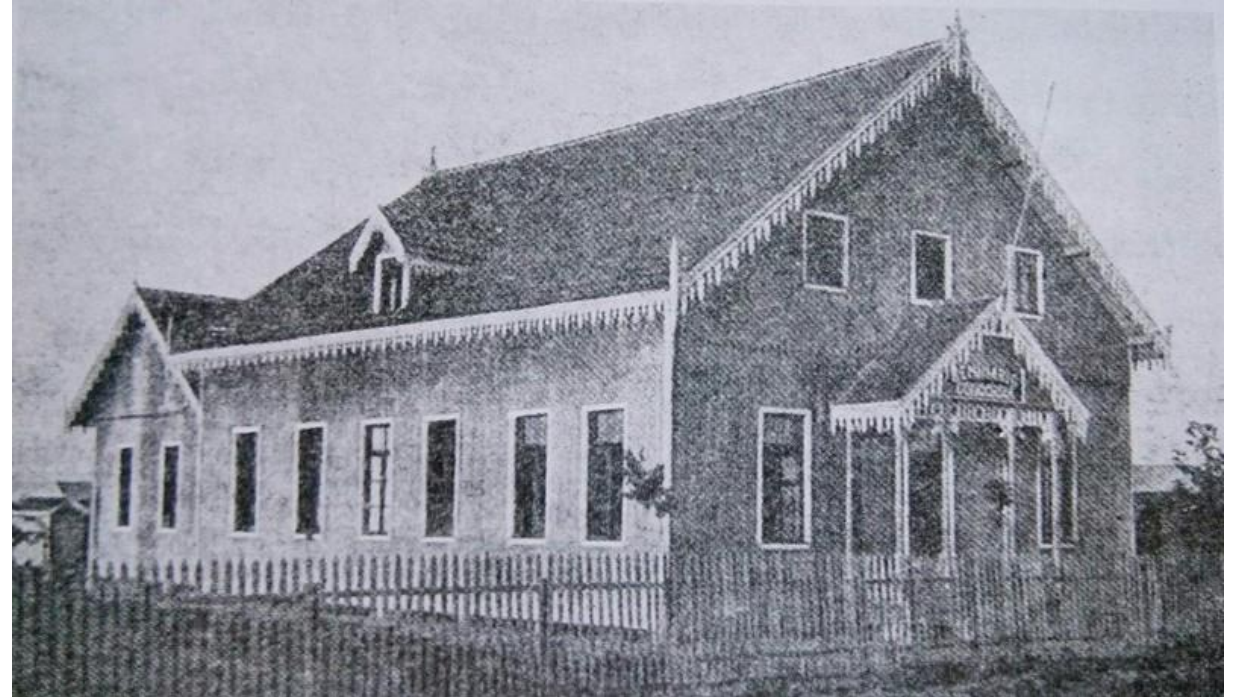


Why OIM?

The Sending of Church and Lay People in Sustained Multigenerational Ministries

April 2025

Pastor Arthur Rickman



*Spread the Gospel
Plant Lutheran Churches
Show Mercy*

Why Are We Here?

Think long term....

- ❖ LCMS mission presence in Latin America.
- ❖ Why multigenerational mission work is *vital* for church planting, growth, and sustainability.



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Scriptural Considerations:

- ❖ **Matthew 28:18-20** – The Great Commission is a multigenerational mandate.
- ❖ **Psalm 78:4-7** – Teaching future generations the faith “to tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord”



- ❖ **Paul's Missionary Journeys** – Paul did not simply “convert and leave” but established churches with trained leaders (Acts 14:21-23).
- ❖ **2 Timothy 2:2** – Paul's model of passing on the faith to multiple generations “entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also”



- ❖ **John 17:20-21** – Jesus prays for future generations of believers “for those who will believe in me through their word”
- ❖ **Ephesians 4:11-13** – The necessity of ongoing teaching and equipping ...apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers...for “building up the body of Christ.”
- ❖ **Psalms 145:4** – “One generation shall commend Your works to another.”



Remember, Repent, Rejoice

- ❖ **Remember** – The history and faithfulness of LCMS mission work.
- ❖ **Repent** – Recognizing past shortcomings in one-generation missions.
- ❖ **Rejoice** – Celebrating the fruits of sustained mission engagement.



Mexico -1950

Augsburg Seminary: 1964-1981

2013:

3 Pastors

Breakdown of communication

No formal training programs

Lost properties

2025:

12 Pastors

30 Deaconesses

11 churches

CMSCR Partnership, Martin Luther Institute



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I. Remember, Repent, Rejoice:
*Remember: A History of Lutheran
Missions and the Importance of
Longevity*

Early LCMS Mission Work

- ❖ 19th-century mission to Native American and German immigrant communities.
- ❖ Expansion into international missions (India 1895, China 1913 (1917 officially), Brazil 1900, Argentina 1905).



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Long-Term Missions That Bore Fruit

A Long Way from Wittenberg!

- ❖ **Brazil 1900 (1980) (*earlier efforts opposed*)** – 125 years of LCMS presence has led to the strong Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (IELB), with seminaries, national pastors, and church plants. 1,505 congregations, 862 pastors, 245,000 members.
- ❖ **Argentina 1905 (1986)** – Early German immigrant missions evolved into an independent Lutheran church body. 236 congregations, 70 + pastors, 28,000 members.



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Long-Term Missions That Bore Fruit (Cont.)

- ❖ **Hong Kong 1949** – Sustained LCMS missionary efforts led to Lutheran schools, social services, schools for the deaf, senior living communities, seminary and trained native church leaders, despite political challenges.



9000 members; 36 churches, 9 mission stations; 40 schools with over 1000 staff and more than 22,000 students; 43 social service units.



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Typical 20-Year Passion vs. Multigenerational Commitment

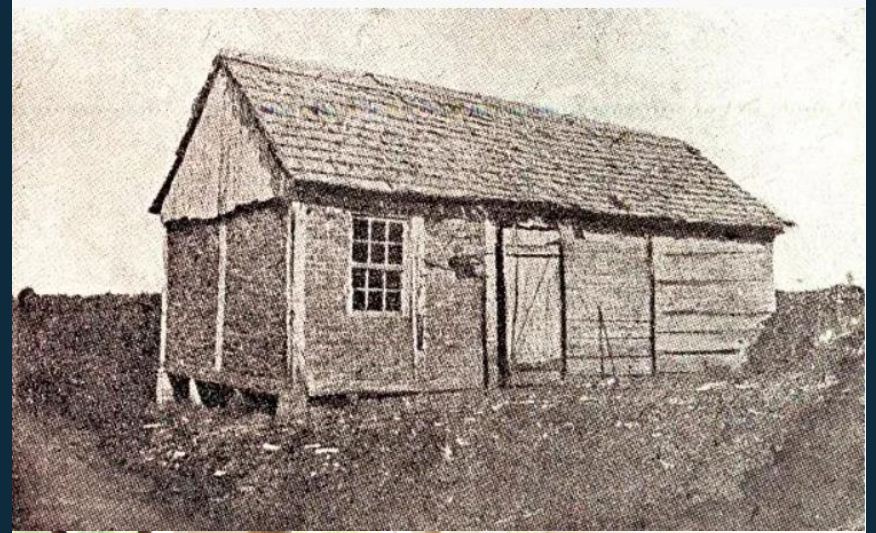
- ❖ **Short-term:** Many well-meaning mission efforts last one generation (20 years) and fade away.
- ❖ **Multigenerational:** The LCMS has invested 75 years in Venezuela, 80 years in Brazil, leading to sustained Gospel proclamation and thriving Lutheran churches.



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Lutheran Missions Lead to Lutheran Church Plants

- ❖ Our commitment to confessional teaching and practice means LCMS missions don't just convert people; they plant Lutheran churches.
- ❖ **Example: Brazil** – LCMS mission work in the early 1900s led to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (IELB), a church body with 1,505 congregations.



From Church Plant to Global Partner

- ❖ A multigenerational mission raises up mature churches that now plant others and show mercy:
 - ❖ **Brazil** now sends missionaries to Angola and Mozambique.
 - ❖ **Argentina** trains pastors who now serve beyond their borders.
 - ❖ **Hong Kong** when dealing with the aftermath of super typhoon and damage to their headquarters, declined help from LCMS and instead sent \$25K to help LCMS following Hurricane Harvey
 - ❖ **Panama** and other churches throughout Latin American while they don't have funds to sustain themselves, still give to partners in need--Chile following fires, Brazil following flooding.



The first eight pastors of Concordia Lutheran Church in Mozambique pose after their Aug. 9 ordination. Behind them, from left, are two of their professors: the Rev. Dr. Carlos Walter Winterle and the Rev. André Buchweitz Plamer. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil)

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❖ II. Repent: The Dangers of Short-Term Missions and the Need for Long-Term Accountability

❖ 1. Challenges of Short-Term, One-Generation Missions

- ❖ The risk of *dependency*: When missionaries leave after 20 years, the church often collapses.
- ❖ **The Danger of One-Generation Mission Efforts**
 - ❖ The failure of short-term, one-generation efforts to establish independent, self-sustaining churches.
 - ❖ Example: Many Protestant mission fields where the church collapsed once missionaries left.
- ❖ Lack of local leadership and theological depth.
- ❖ Mission enthusiasm often wanes without long-term commitment.



2. The Role of LCMS International Mission (OIM) in Accountability & Sustainability

- ❖ Missionaries live in community, develop relationships, and understand context.
- ❖ **Transparency & oversight:** OIM ensures financial integrity and strategic long-term planning.
- ❖ **FOROs (Mission Partnerships):** Latin America's twice-yearly meetings ensure sustained engagement.

WHAT IS A FORO?

AN OPPORTUNITY TO PLUG INTO MISSION TWICE A YEAR
TO EXTEND THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN A PARTICULAR PLACE

WITH YOUR

PRAYER SUPPORT
SHORT-TERM TEAMS
VOCATIONAL SKILLS
FUNDING



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3. Our Commitment to a Place, Not Just a Person

- ❖ **Example: Cuba** – Our mission is to the country, not just one missionary.
- ❖ Unlike other organizations that fund individuals, the LCMS commits to sustained ministry in a location.



III. Rejoice: The Fruits of Multigenerational Mission Work

LCMS Global Partners as a Testimony to Long-Term Mission Success

❖ Lutheran Church Partners in Latin America

- ❖ Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (IELB) – 125 years of mission work.
- ❖ Lutheran Church of Argentina – Now a strong independent church body.
- ❖ Lutheran Church of Chile – Developing local leadership and theological education.

❖ The Role of LCMS Seminaries and Theological Education

- ❖ Concordia the Reformer Seminary (Dominican Republic) – Training pastors for all of Latin America.
- ❖ The importance of seminaries in developing indigenous, confessional Lutheran leadership.



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Lay Involvement & Sustainable Mission Structures

- ❖ Examples of LCMS lay people participating in long-term mission work: teaching, construction, medical missions, and disaster relief.
- ❖ How sustained missions prevent dependency while promoting accountability.



Seminarians and LCMS mission partners in Latin America gather for a group photo at a new church plant's building in the Cienfuegos neighborhood.

1. Sustained Gospel Preaching Leads to Millions Hearing the Gospel

- ❖ LCMS seminaries worldwide train pastors who serve for decades, ensuring long-term Gospel presence.
- ❖ Africa Example: LCMS supports 15 seminaries, preparing pastors who serve for 40+ years, leading to generational church planting.



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2. Expanding Lutheran Reach in Almost 40 Countries

- ❖ Through sustained partnerships, our Lutheran community now spans nearly 40 countries.
- ❖ Some churches have matured into self-sustaining partner churches, while others continue to grow with LCMS support.



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3. FOROs: Connecting Congregations for *Long-Term* Engagement

- ❖ FOROs allow LCMS districts, congregations, and individuals to plug into a specific mission field for the long haul.
- ❖ This fosters relationships, accountability, and financial sustainability.



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Our Pastors Are Vetted & Held Accountable

- ❖ Every LCMS missionary and pastor takes ordination vows to preach Christ crucified for the forgiveness of sins.
- ❖ Regular reporting ensures mission integrity.



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Financial Transparency and Sustainability in Mission Work

1. The Challenge of Financial Accountability in Missions

- ❖ Dangers of short-term, unsustainable funding.
- ❖ Ensuring transparency and wise stewardship through multigenerational partnerships.

2. The LCMS Model of Sustainable Mission Funding

- ❖ FOROs
- ❖ Direct congregational partnerships (e.g., Together in Mission).
- ❖ Oversight from the LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM).
- ❖ The role of national churches in contributing to their own mission efforts.



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3. How Long-Term Missions Creates Efficiency & Increases Accountability

- ❖ Example: LCMS and IELB working together for church planting in new regions.
- ❖ How sustained presence allows for real evaluation and long-term planning.



The Alliance missionaries from IELB and leaders Rev. Joel Muller and Rev. Heder Gumz

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Moving Forward: What Can We Do?

- ❖ Short-term mission efforts, while valuable, cannot replace long-term, sustained mission engagement.
- ❖ LCMS missions bear generational fruit, as seen in Latin America and around the world.
- ❖ Financial sustainability and transparency are best achieved through long-term partnerships.



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How Visiting Church Leaders Can Help

- ❖ Encourage their congregations to support long-term mission efforts.
- ❖ Consider partnering with an existing LCMS mission in Latin America.
- ❖ Support seminary education for new pastors in the region.



1. Support a Mission Field Through LCMS Foros

- ❖ Encourage districts and congregations to commit long-term to a single mission area.

2. Support Seminary Education for Long-Term Church Growth

- ❖ Partner with Concordia the Reformer Seminary (Dominican Republic).

3. Encourage the Next Generation of Missionaries

- ❖ Share stories of long-term mission success to inspire new pastors and church workers.



Remember, Repent, Rejoice

1. **Remember** – The faithfulness of past LCMS missionaries who laid the foundation.
2. **Repent** – From thinking short-term and neglecting accountability in mission work.
3. **Rejoice** – In what God is doing today through long-term, sustainable mission efforts.





Gracias