

Global Vision



A newsletter for friends of the Global Mission Institute, Luther Seminary

Fall 2010

Celebrating Edinburgh 1910: The Call to Global Mission Remains

By Kirk Sandvig, '07;
Laura Kaslow, Communication Specialist

One hundred years ago missionaries, church leaders and theologians worldwide gathered in Edinburgh, Scotland at the World Mission Conference to discuss issues facing Christian witness in the world. This June marked the centenary celebration of this historic gathering.

The focus remained on global mission, but the means of sharing information was vastly different. The conference, which took place June 2-6, showed tell-tale signs of changing times in the way technology was used. The 2010 global mission leaders planned for the conference through events, consultations and conversations for several months prior, most of which took place on the Web using social networking tools such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

Luther Seminary alum Kirk Sandvig, '07, a delegate at the Edinburgh 2010 World Mission Conference, took on a prominent role by serving as the youth and mission coordinator. Sandvig is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Edinburgh, New College, Center for the Study of World Christianity.

"On paper, my task as the youth and mission coordinator was really quite simple— to ensure that the voices of

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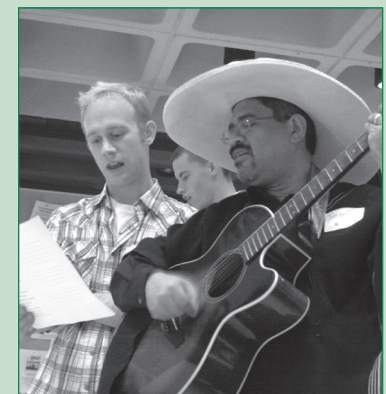
From Sweden to St. Paul: A formal exchange begins

By Tracy Behrendt, Correspondent

When Johannelund Theological Seminary in Uppsala, Sweden announced an exchange program with Luther Seminary in fall 2008, Christoffer Ahlbäck immediately thought it would be a great opportunity—for someone else.

"When I first heard it, I thought, 'That would be really cool. Someone will have a great year, learn a ton of things, grow and (meet) great friends. But it isn't going to be me,'" Ahlbäck said.

After a little encouragement from a professor, Ahlbäck gave the program a second look and applied. Now, having recently completed his year at Luther and returned to Sweden, he is thankful for his time abroad.



Christoffer Ahlbäck pictured with Jesus Purisaca, M.Div. student, at the 2009 Global Agape Feast

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THE GMI MISSION:

The Global Mission Institute (GMI) fosters understanding and experience of Christian life and witness throughout the world for Luther Seminary students and faculty and in area congregations.

Director's Corner

This academic year, the Global Mission Institute (GMI) and the Cross-Cultural Education (CCE) office have been joined under the interim directorship of Rev. Orin Cummings, '03. In this role, Orin will work to develop the network of congregations and individuals who support the GMI, while also providing oversight for the Cross-Cultural Education program. (Please take a moment to read a Q&A with Orin on page three.) The GMI also welcomed former student worker Elizabeth Flomo, '10, as the GMI/CCE project coordinator.

Luther Seminary remains committed to global mission, and the GMI is the shepherd for that work. There is a missional dimension to cross-cultural awareness at Luther. Indeed, we find it hard to leave the campus without being aware of what God is doing in the world. This is most evident in the 60 international students studying at Luther this year (see statistics below)!

As the GMI transitions into an expanded role at Luther Seminary, we have found ourselves reflecting upon the strong roots of the GMI and how that gives our work the wings upon which to go forward.

Roots

The roots laid down by the early founders of the GMI have been validated over the years and have made an impact on students. The founders understood how important it was for local church leaders to have a global awareness of what God was doing in the world. That idea has been reinforced again and again.

Wings

While the initial vision was shaped by a one-directional understanding of "mission," we are now challenged to view global mission in a new way, and for the GMI to continue to play a role in this. There is a "new type of missionary;" one who comes to the U.S. from another country and engages in cross-cultural work by translating the gospel into U.S. culture. We recognize this with the new immigrant congregations in the ELCA.

We also see new types of missionaries in Luther Seminary graduates engaging, with their congregations, increasingly diverse communities. And while the ELCA continues to send missionaries to other countries, they do so embracing the value of accompaniment, walking alongside one another as partners in mission.

We ask for your continued prayers and support of the GMI as we look toward the future!



Richard H. Bliese
President, Luther Seminary



Orin W. Cummings
Interim Director of the Global Mission
Institute and Cross-Cultural Education

Global Vision

Fall 2010

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Phone: 651-641-3487, E-mail: gmi@luthersem.edu

Online: www.luthersem.edu/gmi

Global Mission Institute

Interim Director: Orin W. Cummings

Program and Relations Coordinator: Chenar E.E. Howard

GMI/CCE Project Coordinator: Elizabeth A. Flomo

Development Associate: Lisa Cohen

Global Vision

Managing Editor: Chenar E.E. Howard

Contributing Writers: Grace Alworth, Tracy Behrendt, Angela Busch, Elizabeth Flomo, Laura Kaslow, Katya Ouchakof, Kirk Sandvig

Layout and Design: Jenni Lathrop

Luther Welcomes 60 International Students

This fall 60 international students from 22 countries are studying at Luther.

Brazil	India	Peru
Cameroon	Kenya	Rwanda
Canada	Madagascar	South Africa
China	Malawi	South Korea
Ethiopia	Mexico	Sweden
Ghana	Myanmar	Tanzania
Guyana	Nigeria	Turkey
	Norway	

Four students are pursuing a Master of Divinity degree, 11 are in the Master of Arts program, 13 are pursuing a Master of Theology degree, 21 are Ph.D. students, eight are Doctor of Ministry students and three are non-degree.

Meet Rev. Orin W. Cummings,

Interim Director of the Global Mission Institute and Cross-Cultural Education

Orin Cummings is a Ph.D. candidate at Luther Seminary from Guyana, South America. He received a Master of Arts from Luther in 2003. He is serving as interim director of the GMI and Cross-Cultural Education through this academic year.

How has being a member of the international community at Luther Seminary impacted your view of the global church?

Luther Seminary is like Jerusalem (the city on a hill) for many international students. We make our pilgrimage here with the intention to better equip ourselves for leadership roles in our churches.

Upon arriving, new international students are often very surprised at the number of foreign students. The benefit of this is far reaching. I am acquainted with Christian sisters and brothers around the world because we gathered as a community at Luther Seminary.



Rev. Orin W. Cummings

What are your goals/hopes for your time as interim director of the GMI/CCE?

This year, we would like to maintain the excellent record of cross-cultural education experiences. It is also my hope that the close relationship between the GMI and CCE will promote greater awareness of the glocal (global and local) nature of the church to the seminary community. We hope to make congregations aware of how the seminary is the embodiment of the global church and that their support of the seminary makes this possible.

Why is congregational support important to the GMI?

It is important to support the GMI precisely for the reasons Luther Seminary teaches. The whole world is a mission field and it is essential for the local church to have global church leaders.

What does the partnership mean going forward?

Historically, the GMI and CCE have had a close relationship. The GMI is committed to the partnership. It is exciting and will be an interesting adventure. The GMI's work has a cross-cultural component; it is a welcome change for the GMI to be the face of cross-cultural education on campus. ☺

Read the entire interview in Global Vision Online, www.luthersem.edu/gmi/globalvision.

Graduate Preaching Fellows Embrace Year of Travel

By Grace Alworth, M.Div. Middler

The most recent recipients of the Graduate Preaching Fellowship will each have several stamps added to their passports. The 2009 Graduate Preaching Fellowship recipient Jennifer Grangaard recently returned from a year traveling to Kenya, Tanzania, Israel, Turkey, Greece, Italy and other European countries. She and her husband Colin, also a 2009 graduate, encountered God's story as experienced by the people they met throughout the year. To see a recap of their ministry travels, read their blog at www.storieslivedforward.com.

After marrying in August, Amber (Marten) Bergeson, the 2010 recipient, departed in September for a year abroad with husband, Kevin Bergeson, '07. The newlyweds will travel to Hong Kong, Jerusalem, London and Stockholm, where they will explore "visual preaching, how people interpret biblical texts based on what they see around them." You can follow their travels at www.visualpreacher.com.

For more than 10 consecutive years, The Church of the Pioneers Foundation, Menlo Park, Calif., has awarded the Graduate Preaching Fellowship to a graduating M.Div. student. The fellowship was established by an anonymous couple who wanted to improve the quality of pastors' preaching. Luther Seminary is one of a select few seminaries nationwide that receive the fellowship, and it is the only Lutheran one. ☺

Dynna Castillo Portugal

By Katya Ouchakof, M.Th. '10

Dynna Castillo Portugal had planned to spend her career working with computers. Though Christian faith is a way of life for Portugal, and ordained ministry is the vocation of both her father and grandfather, she did not plan to work professionally in the church. But, while Portugal had already begun a successful career in computer engineering, God had other plans for her.

“It’s just amazing how God works in your life,” Portugal said of her decision to follow the call to ministry.

Portugal’s exploration of ministry studies ultimately led her from Mexico to Minnesota. In 2002, she left her home in Mexico City and enrolled at Bethel Seminary, where she studied pastoral care and counseling. At Bethel, Portugal learned about domestic violence and how systems of abuse can influence faith communities. Through these studies, she recognized that the culture of machismo, extreme male chauvinism common throughout much of Latin America, was closely tied to issues of domestic violence that she had seen in her home congregation.

Portugal graduated from Bethel in 2005 with a master’s degree in theological studies and a concentration in pastoral care and counseling. However, she still yearned for more knowledge. So, at the encouragement of her mother,

“Luther Seminary has been a special blessing in my life,” Portugal says, and the people there “have been angels for me.”



Dynna Castillo Portugal preaches at her congregation in Mexico.

Portugal spent an additional year in St. Paul gaining hands-on pastoral care experience through a chaplaincy residency program at a local hospital.

The following year, Portugal returned to Mexico City and was ordained as a Free Methodist minister at her home congregation, Gethsemane Evangelical Church. After working at Gethsemane for two years, she found herself again longing for further learning in pastoral care and

counseling. So she enrolled in another year-long chaplaincy residency program, bringing her back to St. Paul in the fall of 2008.

It was during that residency that she learned of Luther Seminary’s Ph.D. program in pastoral care and counseling from a colleague who was a student at Luther. At the time, she did not

know that such a program even existed, yet the following school year she found herself enrolled and beginning classes at Luther.

Through her pastoral care studies at Luther, Portugal is able to further her research in domestic violence and faith communities, knowledge she will bring home to Mexico when she completes the program.

And though her friends and family all remain in the Mexico City area, Portugal does not feel lonely in St. Paul. She enjoys living on campus and appreciates the Christian community she has found at Luther. “Luther Seminary has been a special blessing in my life,” Portugal says, and the people there “have been angels for me.” ©



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youth (those ages 18-30) were heard through their increased participation at Edinburgh 2010,” Sandvig said. “The unfortunate reality is that, in my experiences, youth are often overlooked at many mission conferences, as (the conferences) tend to be dominated by retired missionaries. As a result, young missionaries and missiologists have been reluctant to openly express their thoughts.”

Recognizing this, the organizers of Edinburgh 2010 made a committed effort to incorporate youth in the process.

Led by Sandvig, Edinburgh 2010 Youth were active for months prior to the event. Their work included:

- An Online Consultation—Held through a Facebook page, the consultation addressed each of the nine study themes of the conference.

- A Youth Writing Contest—Young people were given a creative opportunity to share their thoughts on issues of Christian witness. The top ten papers were published in *Edinburgh 2010: Youth Perspectives*, which Sandvig edited.
- A Youth Multimedia Contest—This contest challenged younger people to think creatively about “The Changing Face of Mission.” Submitted projects incorporated diverse forms of art and multimedia. A panel of theologians specialized in incorporating media and theology evaluated which submissions best illustrated the theme.

The winners of each contest received sponsored invitations to participate in the Edinburgh conference.

Throughout the conference, young delegates contributed through presentations and discussions relating to issues facing Christian witness in the various contexts of today’s world. Many delegates also shared their voice through the use of social media. YouTube videos and Facebook and Twitter updates were posted regularly throughout the conference, sharing the events of Edinburgh 2010 worldwide.

“Everyone had their own perspective and opinions that were shared and listened to by other delegates,” Sandvig said. “It was clear that there is no such thing as a ‘youth voice,’ but many voices and each were considered thoughtfully during the discussions.”

For more information about Edinburgh 2010 and to find publications relating the conference, visit www.edinburgh2010.org. ©

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“It was hard to leave and go back to Sweden,” said Ahlbäck, who returned to Johannelund this fall. “All the classes I took have made an impression on me...being in another country, and a different continent, has been very valuable.”

Now Ahlbäck plans to bring what he learned at Luther back to Sweden to better his home seminary. For one, he hopes that Johannelund, though smaller than Luther with about 130 students, will start a program similar to Luther’s Congregational Mission and Leadership program.

Most of all, Ahlbäck returns with a fresh perspective on his own culture and call to ministry. And that, according to Luther Seminary Professor of Old Testament Mark Throntveit, is most important.

“The greatest benefit is surely the marvelous critical appreciation of one’s own context and culture that arises as one struggles to understand a new environment with its inevitable questioning of what we hold dear and take for granted,” said Throntveit, who spent part of a past sabbatical year teaching at Johannelund and helping to establish

the exchange program.

Gaining an understanding of the ELCA and its mission will be invaluable to Ahlbäck as he enters the Swedish church, said Arland Hultgren, associate dean for first theological degrees at Luther Seminary.

“I think Christoffer learned a lot about a church that is planted in a multi-ethnic, multi-denominational, and multi-religious society—which Sweden is becoming more and more,” said Hultgren, who, with Throntveit, serves as a point person for the program.

It was through Ahlbäck’s immersion in the life of both Luther and the ELCA that he learned the most.

“New perspectives help you see your own culture with new eyes—both good and bad things,” he said. “They also help you to extend your imagination to imagine new ways to do things in your own culture.” ©

Read about Luther Seminary Master of Divinity student Antonio Spargo’s experience in Sweden through this exchange in Global Vision Online, www.luthersem.edu/gmi/globalvision.

Central Lutheran, a GMI supporter for 23 years

By Angela Busch, M.Div. Junior

Ninety-one years ago, 12 Minneapolis businessmen founded one of the city's first English-speaking Lutheran churches. They founded it on a principle: that this new church would not be an ethnic parish but would be open to everyone who lived in the surrounding area.

Five years later, Central Lutheran Church was bursting at its seams with more than 1,500 members. Five years after that, a new cathedral had been built, an imposing Gothic structure that still stands today at 333 South Twelfth Street in Minneapolis.

What also still stands today at Central is that founding mission: a principle that this church would not be an ethnic parish but would look beyond its immediate congregation to serve the world, members and nonmembers alike.

"Those original businessmen created a ministry that existed to give itself away for the sake of the world from its inception," said Senior Pastor Rick Nelson, '80.

Hence, it is not surprising that Central Lutheran has been one of the most dedicated and loyal congregations to the Global Mission Institute, as well as Luther Seminary more broadly, for the past 23 years.

At a time when many churches are struggling financially, Nelson said Central has seen no downturn in general giving but rather a steady increase, allowing the church to continue its commitment to the GMI, something Nelson said is important in helping Central adapt to changes in global mission over the past two decades.

"The GMI provides a continual push for looking at and discussing global issues," Nelson said. "We want to be a part of that discussion in today's world. That's why we support the GMI—we want to encourage members and friends of Central to do the same thing: get involved and participate and learn."

Nelson added that Central's congregation, sometimes



Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

through events such as global mission forums, has always responded with generosity to global mission concerns. Currently, foreign mission represents about 16 to 20 percent of Central's total benevolence; an amount Nelson said is "certainly the highest I've ever experienced."

In addition to a strong congregational partnership, the GMI has had a strong membership base from Central Lutheran since its founding. The Rev. Dr. Arne Sovik, for example, has been a member at Central Lutheran since 1992. Around that same time, through his membership at Central, he became a supporter and friend of the GMI.

"As a member of the Central Lutheran global mission committee since 1992, I have been active in assigning funds to various causes, including the GMI," Sovik said, adding that through his contributions to the GMI and his work on the committee, he "endorses and tries to expand the thought and action of Central Lutheran in world missions."

Central also holds regular Global Mission Forums and an annual Global Mission Festival, complete with music, liturgy and speakers from around the world. Knowing the GMI will bring great value, each year Central Lutheran invites them to participate as an exhibitor at the Global Mission Festival. Members of the Luther Seminary

international student community are also invited as special guests to the celebration.

One of Program and Relations Coordinator Chenar Howard's first congregational events as a member of the GMI staff was the Global Mission Festival at Central.

"I was so impressed by the entire event, specifically the service celebrating global mission," Howard said.

"It is a special treat to introduce the international students to Central Lutheran, especially when I explain that it is one of the GMI's supporting congregations. At the end of the day, the students understand why." ☺

Is your congregation passionate about global mission? Contact Orin Cummings at 651-641-3228 or orin@luther.edu to learn more about congregational partnership opportunities.

News Notes



☺ Lutheran World Federation Assembly

A group of Luther Seminary alums from around the world connected at the Lutheran World Federation Assembly held in Stuttgart, Germany, in July.

Pictured (left to right): Dr. Mariette Razivelo, '94; Bishop Thomas Nyiwe, '98; The Rev. Mark Brown, '92; Allison Schmitt, '07; The Rev. Dr. J.P. Bvumbwe, '05; Mary Steeber, Luther Seminary staff; Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, '97; The Rev. Dr. Elieshi Mungure, '07; The Rev. Dr. Musa Filibus, '98; The Rev. Laura Susianty Hindrianto, '08; and Bishop Dr. Thomas Tsen, '07.

☺ Nina Joy, '10, Explores Servant Leadership

Nina Joy, '10, is this year's recipient of the Preus Servant Leadership Award at Luther Seminary. Joy will learn about the role of servant leadership in the church of South Africa as it came out of apartheid, went through a process of reconciliation, and as it is today. She hopes to learn about how church leaders are transforming communities in and around Cape Town, South Africa.



Follow her blog at <http://explodingjoy.wordpress.com>.

GLOBAL VISION ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

- Profile of Luther Seminary Master of Divinity student Antonio Spargo's experience in Sweden at Johannelund Theological Seminary.
- Extended interview with GMI/CCE Interim Director Orin Cummings.

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Upcoming Events

Wed., Oct. 13—Burgess Lecture in Global Mission

11 a.m., Chapel of the Incarnation, Olson Campus Center

“Mission, Culture and Reign of God”

Stephen Bevans, S.V.D., Louis J. Luzbatek, S.V.D. Professor of Mission and Culture, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Ill.

Live webcast/archived video at:
www.luthersem.edu/lectures/burgess

Sat., Nov. 6—Global Agape Feast

6-8 p.m., Northwestern Hall Atrium

Foods from around the world are shared in a special community meal hosted by the GMI. Attendees are asked to bring a dish to share. Come and enjoy the global feast and fellowship.

Tues.-Thurs., Nov. 30-Dec. 2—Global Fair Trade Fair

9 a.m.-2 p.m., Olson Campus Center Narthex

Purchase fair trade hand crafts with proceeds going directly to the artisans who produced them. Fair trade affirms human dignity by promoting fair wages, children's rights, women's rights, the right to organize, environmental rights and indigenous rights. What better way to Christmas shop for yourself, family, and friends?

Mission and Ministry Forums

Held most Thursdays 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Olson Campus Center

Bring your lunch for conversation about cross-cultural ministry, missiology, the global church, and peace and social justice issues. Forums typically include a presentation followed by discussion. Check the GMI web site or call 651-641-3487 for specific topics.

Thurs., Feb. 17—Church in Public Life Lecture

12:30 p.m., Chapel of the Incarnation, Olson Campus Center

Linda Hartke, President & CEO, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

www.luthersem.edu/gmi/activities.asp

Prayer Offerings

✠ God of wisdom, we ask for your Spirit and power to strengthen the minds, hearts and bodies of our new international students as they begin their time at Luther Seminary. May you also be with their families around the world.

✠ As we begin this new academic year, we pray that through the movement of the Holy Spirit, a creative vision of mission and ministry in the world infuses the hearts and minds of students, faculty and staff at Luther Seminary. May your Spirit continue to move in new ways across the United States, especially with the “new missionaries” and their congregations.

✠ God of communion, we thank you for faithful worshipping communities around the world. We pray that your proclaimed Word continues to draw people together and create reconciled communities. We thank you especially for the GMI's supporting congregations, who see the whole church through a global lens.

✠ Lord of new directions, we lift up the GMI's expanded role with Cross-Cultural Education. We pray for vision and discernment for these offices over the coming year and we thank you for the fruit that has already come of this relationship.

✠ Lord of wholeness, we lift up Charles Amjad-Ali as he heals from a recent surgery. We pray for ongoing health and wholeness in his life and all those who live with ongoing illness.