



“What love the Lord has for me!” A Pentecost story

“And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?” (Acts 2:8)

The hot African sun was setting behind the mountains as I walked through the campus of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon’s Bible School in Tcholliré. As I approached the steps of student housing, I saw two young men sitting on the steps with a large book in their lap. After the traditional greetings and hand shakes they told me they were reading from the Gospel of Luke. With a big smile on his face, the younger man explained that his “big brother” was helping him learn to read God’s word. It was then that I realized that both of the young men were blind; they were reading the raised dots of Braille.

Hand in hand, the older of the two helped the younger move a finger over the dots. The younger man paused, turned to me and exclaimed, “It is so wonderful to read God’s word. I can now see what love the Lord has for me!” He went on to say, “Maybe someday I’ll be able to read from the whole Bible.”

There was no rushing wind nor tongues of fire that afternoon, but I could clearly see the Spirit resting on these two young men as they experienced the presence of the Lord through the word.

A note: Because of the efforts and gifts of many, the young man’s “maybe someday” hope was fulfilled. A Bible in Braille arrived at the school. It weighed 150 pounds and needed 13 feet of shelf space.

Jim Noss and his wife, Karen, served for 35 years as ELCA/ALC missionaries in Cameroon. Having retired in 2008, Jim and Karen now live in Eagan, Minn. They enjoy giving presentations about their experiences as missionaries in central Africa.



Seven suggestions to help when your YAGM returns home

1. Don’t ask the question, “So how was it?” Returning Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGMs) cannot sum up their entire year’s experience in one word. Do ask specific questions, such as “Who was your closest friend?” and “Tell me about your typical day.”

2. Asking to see photos of your YAGM’s year in service is highly recommended, provided you have a full day to do so. If you don’t, then take a cue from #1 and ask to see a category of photos (e.g., holiday pictures).



Katie Nelson is one of the YAGMs serving in Mexico.

3. For the first few months your YAGM will begin many sentences referring to their country of service (“In *South Africa*...”). This will get annoying, but it’s best not to say so. Instead, keep listening and asking questions.

4. On the other hand, speak up when you need to! Be assertive enough to share what has happened in your life during the last year.

5. Recognize that living with few material belongings changes people. Don’t take it personally if your YAGM seems horrified by aspects of how you live (e.g., showering every day). A good number of YAGMs make permanent changes toward a simpler lifestyle. Appreciate this as a good thing.

6. Assume that your YAGM’s life aspirations and long-term goals have changed. Regardless of the direction your YAGM takes when they return, rejoice! This year hasn’t changed who they are; it has simply made them better at discerning God’s call.

7. Go easy on yourself (you are in transition, too!) and go easy on your YAGM. Reverse culture shock manifests itself differently in each person. Expect good days and bad days. Pray. Laugh. Cry. Don’t be afraid to ask for help.

The Rev. Andrea Roske-Metcalf, former YAGM and current ELCA missionary, serves as the country coordinator for the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Mexico. Visit www.elca.org/yagm to learn more.



“And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind” (Acts 2:2)



The Rev. Twila Schock is director for ELCA Global Mission Support.

As a student pilot, I take interest in what keeps airplanes (and pilots) aloft. The rush of air above the wings gives a plane lift and allows the plane to fly. Necessary for safe flight is the ground team: mechanics, the fuel crew, meteorologists and air traffic control.

Like the rush of a violent wind, the Holy Spirit calls and sustains ELCA missionaries and global companions for service in 50 countries around the world. That same Spirit calls and sustains sponsors for service on the “missionary ground team.”

Sponsor communication and prayer are like the wind above a plane’s wings, offering missionaries needed spiritual and emotional lift. The spirit-filled and generous financial support of sponsors flows over and about our missionaries, providing them with what it takes to land in a new country of service and work hand in hand with new neighbors.

As I give thanks for that great rush of air which birthed the church on Pentecost, I also give thanks for you and for the lift and grounding you offer for global ministry.

Twila



The 2009–2010 Young Adults in Global Mission return home this summer after a year of volunteer service. Learn more at www.elca.org/yagm.

Welcome back, Dr. Goehle

A former missionary physician and international health consultant, **Dr. Ruth Goehle** returns to service to assist the Lutheran Churches of Southern Africa (LUCSA) provide health programs in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Sponsors are needed for Dr. Goehle from these companion synods: **Arkansas-Oklahoma (4C)**, **Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (5H)** and **Upstate New York (7D)**. Contact the Global Mission Support team to learn how you and your congregation can become missionary sponsors. Covenant sponsors are matched with a specific missionary and commit to offer that missionary prayer, communication and financial support.



Sarah Stadlander, ELCA missionary serving in Senegal, shares this picture of women in a Fulani village near Linguère, Senegal, pounding millet to make couscous for their evening meal.

HOW TO GIVE

1. Give through your congregation. Write “ELCA Missionary Sponsorship” on the check’s memo line.
2. With a credit card, give online (www.elca.org/giving) or call 800-638-3522.
3. Make your check out to “ELCA Missionary Sponsorship” and mail to:
ELCA Global Mission Support, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631-4101

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