

# District Newsletter

## Around the District

**Installation Service: Mr. Paul Bounyong** was installed on June 27 as the new Pastor of the Lao Christian Church in Milwaukee. Paul's journey began years ago when his family fled Laos. During their years in a Thai refugee camp, he came to faith and learned English from international workers serving with CAMA Services. He arrived in Wisconsin as a teenager, completed high school, and attended both Taccoa Falls and Crown College. Additionally, Paul holds a degree in Business Administration from Lakesland College. This past May Paul completed his ministry licensing interview with the District LO&CC. Paul and his wife Jongdee (goes by Judy or "Dee") have two children. Participants in the Installation Service included Rev. Prasert Duangmala, President of

the C&MA Lao Association of Churches, and Rev. Lee Nanfelt from the LO&CC.

**Team Building:** Rev. John Teschan, Senior Pastor at Southside Alliance in Sheboygan, will be announcing to his congregation the filling of a strategic position on the pastoral staff. **Mr. Jesse Doughty** has accepted the Board's call to become their Assistant Pastor for Family Life starting August 16. Jesse is a Crown graduate and has most recently served on the staff at Watermark Community Church in Watertown, Minnesota. He and his wife Angela have four children.

**Staff Shuffle:** With the late-winter resignation of Pastor Jack, the Board at Menomonie Alliance has completed an extensive assessment of the kinds of gifting and natural talents

most desired in their next lead pastor. Much to their delight, the person who best matched their search criteria was already on staff. The Board has extended a call to **Pastor Doug Stolhand**, who currently serves as Associate Pastor for Spiritual Development, to become their new Senior Pastor. His acceptance was recently announced to the congregation and received with great enthusiasm. Doug and his wife Debbie are California natives and have three adult daughters. The Stolhands have lived in Menomonie for the past eight years and attended MAC while working in the area of Missions Mobilization with another ministry. Doug is a runner and a cycling enthusiast. The exact start date for his new role is yet to be determined.

### Pastoral Placement

**Process:** Two of our District churches are actively engaging their search processes for new Senior Pastors. **Oconto Gospel Chapel** has completed reference checks and initial phone interviews. They plan to bring selected candidates to Oconto for on-site interviews in mid-July. It is an-

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anticipated that their next pastor is in the current pool of candidates. **Maple Valley Community Church** in Suring has taken a step of faith and is seeking to secure a full-time pastor. They have most recently been served by Rev. Kevin Kuhn who has pastored the Suring and Oconto Falls congregations. Both congregations value our prayers during this season.

**Our Growing Family:** Among our guests at District Conference were a ministry couple and a key layman who are part of a newly developing church in the Spooner area. Conference gave them a good opportunity to meet



*Bounyong Installation*

## Around the District *(Cont.)*

national office leaders, catch the Alliance vision, and interact with WGL pastors and lay leaders. Later this spring their fellowship voted to affiliate with our District. They are currently completing several legal filings and will incorporate as **Hope Fellowship**. Concurrently with the completion of organizational documents, **Pastor John Hendry** is finalizing his Application for Ministry and will meet with the LO&CC to become an Official Worker later this fall.

**New Worship Center:** On Sunday, July 4, the congregation of **Alliance Church of the Valley** met for the first time in the new worship center on their St. Croix Falls campus. Despite the holiday weekend, 465 worshippers enjoyed their first experience with stadium



*St. Croix Falls Dedication*

seating. The pastoral staff is once again united in a central office suite. The main floor of the facility is fully functional, and lower-level classrooms will be readied by the start of fall ministries. Their dedication service is set for August 22.

**Farewell Reception:** Following 18 years of fruitful ministry, the congregation of Menomonie Alliance will host a reception for **Pastor Jack and**

**Diana** on Sunday, July 25, from 1:00–4:00 p.m. During their tenure, the church has gone through several stages of growth and completed a major building addition. The church invites ministry colleagues from nearby Alliance Churches to join in the celebration event.

**Administrative Assistant:** Since early May, your call to the District office may have been greeted by the voice of **Kristin Koenig**.



Kristin has enthusiastically engaged the enormous challenge of learning the operation and function of the District Office. Later this month, she will spend a few days at the National Office for additional orientation and training with the administrative team in the Division of Church Ministries. She has enjoyed a thorough introduction to the office from Jeannie who has planned and prepared for this transition for several months. Jeannie plans to conclude her support role in late July. She and Fred give possession of their home to its new owners at the end of the month and have secured a short-term apartment in Menasha. Construction is underway on their new home in Minnesota, and they anticipate occupancy sometime in November.

## District Family Camp

**“Extreme Home Makeover”:** Families from across the District will again gather at Lake Lundgren near Pembine during the week of August 9–14. A limited number of cabin and camping accommodations are still available. We are anticipating the return of **Pastor Tom Lundeen** as our Bible teacher. Tom has chosen to devote this year’s teaching to contemporary marriage and family challenges. Information regarding camp can be secured through the District website, [www.wglcma.org](http://www.wglcma.org), or by calling Fred at the District Office.



## LIFE 2010

By the time you receive this newsletter, Life 2010 will be concluding in Louisville. With more than 6,000 students preregistered, Life is the largest single event hosted by The Alliance. Nearly 200 teens from 13 District churches have made the trek to Life. As is always the case, it will be a life-changing experience.

## Everyone Has a Story

Recently I was with one of our District colleagues. In the course of conversation, I shared with him something someone once told me: “Jonathan, remember...everyone has a story.” That piece of advice has served me well through many ministry years. “Everyone has a story.” Not all life-stories have a straight-up trajectory. In fact, most life-stories have a series of ups and downs. Sometimes I have observed people acting as if God were blessing them all the time—life is easy; sorrow doesn’t touch me! “God is good!” flows easily from their lips. Yet when trouble, trial, or even devastation hits, the same mouths shout out, “Where is God in all of this?!” Friend, God is with us during each extreme and in the midst as well!

I once worked with a colleague in another district who said incessantly, “If God doesn’t show up, we’re done here”...or “We need God to show up or we’re through”...or “If God doesn’t show up, I don’t know how we can continue.” I must admit, I didn’t like his way of thinking. It actually bothered me a lot. I think I understand a little bit of what he was trying to say in the context of his ministry, but I finally said to him, “Do you believe that God isn’t showing up or doing anything in this situation *right now*?” As you can imagine, he didn’t really like that. I think my colleague was

equating something good happening in his ministry context as “God showing up” and when, from his perspective good things did not happen, then “God was not showing up.” I just couldn’t buy that. I know there are hard times—when trusted people fail you, when disease and illness attack someone close to you, when things happen through no fault of your own that rock you to your core, when our own actions bring about bad results—yet I still cling to the belief that whether life or ministry are in the tank or going straight up, God is with us! He may eagerly desire to teach us lessons “in the tank,” as it were, that we otherwise would not learn on the way up!

The Scriptures are replete with stories of men and women of God who went through great trouble, trial and devastation which God used to perfect in them His amazing plan for their lives. Isaiah 55:8–9 record God saying, “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,*’ declares the Lord. *‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.’*” If we slow down long enough to listen, we can hear the stories of people, how God has used hard things (how God may currently be using hard things!) to shape, mold and craft His character in people’s lives. In doing so, our

lives will be significantly changed as well!

A few weeks back I had the privilege of hearing my good friend John Stumbo speak at a small gathering in a church his dad had pastored and where John spent some time growing up, eventually serving as youth pastor. His story of pastoring a very large C&MA church in Oregon where his body was attacked virtually to the point of death by an unknown virus (now called “Stumbo Syndrome” by some in the medical community) has been well chronicled. In his talk with the people gathered that night—speaking of what he has learned through this incredibly difficult time of testing—John said that, on this side of glory, “God is not fully knowable, but He is fully follow-able.”

I don’t know if right now you are experiencing a time of blessing from your perspective or a time of challenge. Remember that God continues to shape, mold and craft you and me into what He desires for us to be. This is true for the people we minister with and to as well. May we say with the Psalmist, “*The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my Savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the strength of my salvation and my stronghold*” Psalm 18:2 (NLT).

— Jonathan

Dear WGL District Family,

Thank you for welcoming me into the WGLD family! Everywhere I go, people stop me and tell me they are praying for me. You are such a blessing to me, and your prayers are VERY appreciated.

Thanks also for the generous gift for my Outfit Fund. This money comes in a timely manner as I am preparing to return to the field. Thanks again for your prayers and support!

Blessings,  
“M”  
Creative Access Worker

*NOTE: “M” has now returned overseas for a new term of service.*

Thank  
You!

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## For Your E-Calendar

August 6	District IM Committee, Wausau
August 9–14	District Family Camp, Lake Lundgren Bible Camp
August 12	Youth Pastors' Disc Golf, Lunch & Prayer, Wausau
August 15	Campbellsport Alliance Church - 25th Anniversary
August 22	St. Croix Falls Dedication Service
August 23–26	New Official Workers' Forum, Colorado Springs
August 29	Doug Stolhand Installation Service, Menomonie
August 31	Church Development Team, District Office
September 6	Labor Day, Office Closed
September 10–11	Youth Leaders' Training/Team Building, Spencer Lake
September 12	First Anniversary, LaCrosse
September 13	DEXCOM, District Office
September 14	LO&CC, District Office

## Fall International Ministries Conferences

During the month of May, congregations participating in the District-sponsored fall tours received the names and contact information for the international workers coming to their church. Our guests are arriving from Spain, Mongolia, Asia, and the Middle East. They will appreciate the opportunity to interact with you well in advance of your conference. Over the next few days, you will be receiving a tube of promotional posters introducing this year's theme "**Open Doors.**" A DVD with video segments, children's curriculum, bulletin covers, and other resources will arrive in a separate shipment later this summer.



## On the Move!



The annual fall **WGL District Alliance Women Ministries Retreat** will be held once again at Green Lake Conference Center October 8–10 with well-known author and speaker, Linda Dillow. In the main sessions, we will be *On the Move* to discover how to become women of contentment, gratitude, worship and forgiveness!



Your church will soon be receiving a packet with brochures, registration forms, and other important retreat information. Please make every effort to begin promoting this retreat early since the **Saturday, September 15, registration deadline** comes very soon after Labor Day!!! The ladies of our District churches will need to receive brochures with registration information ASAP to give them adequate time to make arrangements for childcare, time off work, and other scheduling adjustments so that they can attend this annual women's weekend getaway! Retreat questions may be directed to Sheri Rens, Retreat Planning Chair, at [sheri@mycrosswalk.net](mailto:sheri@mycrosswalk.net) or 262.706.3152.

The 2010–2011 National Project goal of \$350,000 is designated to help The Alliance reach Creative Access countries. We are *On the Move* to bring the light of Christ into very dark places!