

LUNCHEON INTEREST SESSIONS – SAT. APRIL 23, 2016

THE LWML ENGLISH DISTRICT 37TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION – April 22 – 24, 2016

The Luncheon Interest Sessions will take place on Saturday, April 23, 2016 at 12 noon. Please rank in order of preference on the registration form.

PHILADELPHIA LUTHERAN MINISTRIES (PLM)

Rev. Adam DeGroot - Missionary Pastor to PLM

Congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in New Jersey and Pennsylvania have long histories of outreach and generosity toward the needs of the people of Philadelphia. That concern for the city led a group of people *over fifteen years ago* to begin talking about ways to deliberately reach the people of Philadelphia with the Gospel of Christ. In September of 2012, PLM purchased a property in Northeast Philadelphia which included a church building and two houses along a full city block. The church was named [Shepherd of the City](#) and began monthly services and regular outreach to the community.

PLM called [Rev Adam DeGroot](#) as its missionary pastor to the city in 2014. Rev. DeGroot and his family reside in one of the houses on Shepherd of the City's campus so that he can maintain daily relationships with the people in the neighborhood. Pastor DeGroot and his wife Deaconess Melissa DeGroot have been blessed with a son Knox. Pastor enjoys mountain biking, rock climbing, fishing and hunting, and all kinds of sports.

Pastor DeGroot hopes to meet and work with any and all who have a desire to spread the Gospel to the city of Philadelphia through Christ's gracious Word and Sacraments. *PLM website:* www.phillyministries.org

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN (OGT)

Rob Hall - Assistant Branch Manager of OGT Mid-Atlantic Branch

Orphan Grain Train is a Nonprofit Christian volunteer network that shares personal and material resources with needy people in America and around the world. Grain Train volunteers gather donations of clothing, medical supplies, food, Christian literature, and other aid to meet real needs. The Orphan Grain Train movement is a loving response to Jesus Christ's example as a servant and His love for us.

Since 1992, Orphan Grain Train's 22 regional locations have delivered more than 10 million meals and 2,505 shipments of humanitarian aid to needy people in 25 states and 64 countries on 5 continents. An additional 330 semi-loads of hay and forage products were delivered in 2002-03 to drought-stricken farmers in the Midwest during Operation Hay and Grain Lift. In 2014, Orphan Grain Train built a mobile chapel with help from a grant funded by LCMS Disaster Relief division for St. John's Lutheran Church in Pilger, NE after their church was demolished by a F4 tornado. The mission of Orphan Grain Train is uniquely dependent upon dedicated volunteers, many of whom have given numerous years of service for the sake of others. Since 1992, more than 3.5 million hours have been volunteered!

Rob has been active in the LCMS since he and his wife were married in 1971. They have two grown sons and two grandchildren, all of whom live near them in southeast Pennsylvania. He is active in his community and congregation. Rob is an IT Consultant specializing in migrating data centers. *OGT website:* www.ogt.org

LUTHERAN BIBLE TRANSLATORS (LBT)

Rev. Nathan Esala – Translation Coordinator for LBT

Nathan has served the Likɔɔnl (or Komba) Bible project in Ghana, West Africa beginning in 2003. His role as a translation advisor presented new experiences such as:

- Developing partnerships with the Komba church and community leaders;
- Analyzing / documenting the linguistic features of the language;
- Checking translated drafts for quality;
- Driving a hard bargain; and
- Controlling water run-off.

Currently, Nathan is serving as the Translation Coordinator for LBT. He desires to discover and facilitate excellent practices in Bible translation and missiology for Lutheran Bible Translators in partnership with African colleagues. To help accomplish that goal, he is enrolled as a Ph.D. student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. Nathan has an incredible wife, Sarah, and five children—Karissa, Annaka, Aili, Isaac, and Eliot. After 10 years living in a rural African village, the Esala family is trying to make heads or tails of life in the U.S. Sarah continues to homeschool Karissa, Annaka, and Aili while Isaac attends Lutheran preschool. They are happy to live next to and participate in the life of St. John Lutheran Church in Dublin, Ohio. *LBT website:* www.us.lbt.org

LWML REPRESENTATIVE

Ginger Starrett – Recording Secretary Lutheran Women’s Missionary League

Ginger enjoys sharing the gifts God has given her to serve Him through the LWML. Her vision for the LWML includes equipping and encouraging each woman of the LCMS to use their gifts to further the Lord’s Kingdom.

As a young mother, Ginger became involved in the LWML by attending her local society meetings. Members encouraged her to become the secretary, and she later became president of her local society. She repeated that cycle at the zone level serving first as secretary and then as president of her zone. The support and encouragement she received serving at the zone level inspired her to run for district office. She served the LWML New Jersey District as Vice President of Human Care and as President and currently serves as the district’s convention planner. Throughout her involvement with the LWML she bonded with a sisterhood united in Christ that comes together to do His Kingdom work by serving others.

Ginger and her husband Robert have five adult children, three of whom are married, and two grandchildren with another due in March. Ginger cherishes time with her family and enjoys vacationing with Robert where there is a warm ocean breeze. They attend Gethsemane Lutheran Church, a small close-knit congregation of approximately 100 worshippers, in Hackettstown, New Jersey. *LWML website:* www.lwml.org