

The Christian Fellowship Banner



FALL 2020 & WINTER 2021

Volume 4 & VOLUME 1

The official end of summer may be several weeks into September according to the calendar, but for many, the Hauge Foreign Mission Labor Day Family Retreat is the bridge between summer vacation and the new school year. It's a refreshing weekend of no cooking, no cleaning, great fellowship, games, water slides, golfing, crafts, swimming, singing, outdoor play, and solid teaching from God's Word. And in spite of COVID-19, this year was no different. Only slightly down in attendance from previous years, more than 110 people attended this year's family retreat, a number of them from families attending for the first time.

Because of travel restrictions, the couple that was originally slated to speak at the retreat on behalf of EKE, the Hungarian organization dedicated to spreading the Gospel in Hungary, was unable to attend. Two other presenters filled their slots. Pastor Jonathan Unverzagt, pastor of Christ Is Lord Free Lutheran Church in Onalaska, WI, shared about the work of Hope Centers for Children of Africa (HCCA), the ministry he now directs. The organization has work in both the D. R. Congo and Uganda and focuses on helping widows start small businesses in order to support themselves and the orphans they have taken in. In countries where disease and war are constant threats, many children are left homeless, so HCCA has obeyed the biblical command to "help widows and orphans in their distress." Most of the women have a number of children of their own besides the ones they have offered to care for, so the micro-loans provided by HCCA have been a huge blessing to them in helping them get on their feet again after the loss of their husbands.

Pastor Jim Johnson, director of the AFLC Home Missions, was the evangelist and adult Bible class speaker and filled the other mission hour slot with a fascinating presentation titled, "Hauge's Best and Worst Years in Missions." Not only did those of us attending end up richer in our knowledge of history, but we ended up challenged to live out our own faith as Hans Nielsen Hauge did in Norway back in the 1770s-1800s. After a dramatic conversion experience, Hauge launched into his goal of attempting to visit every city and town in Norway. He logged around 1500 miles/year, jogging between villages and knitting while he jogged. (He was not one to waste time and would sell his knitted creations to help fund his travels.) During his lifetime, he covered approximately 10,000 miles on foot, and the areas he visited are still reaping the benefits of his having been there, not only spiritually but economically since he helped start many businesses as he went.

Hauge Foreign Mission, Inc..

"Work for the night is coming"

Serving Christ in: Hungary - Mongolia - Ethiopia - Japan - Peru - Bolivia -
Kenya - Tanzania - ***In Partnership with NLM & EKE***

Interestingly, due to the French Revolution going on at that time, there were non-travel laws (one couldn't leave his home county without a passport) and government mandates that restricted gatherings of more than 20 people (however, the mandate didn't seem to be enforced for dances, parties, and pub talks, primarily just for religious groups). It wasn't legal to start congregations, so Hauge started "societies of friends." He was eventually imprisoned, but not before he had completed eight mission trips. He wrote, memorized scripture voraciously, revitalized the whole Norwegian economy, and energized the younger generations in their walks with Christ, challenging them to share the Gospel.

In our evangelistic services, Pastor Jim Johnson presented three ways to respond to the call of God. The first is being "All In" (Luke 8:1-2)--playing offense for Jesus, not defense. Being a warrior! The second way is being "Halfway There" (Luke 8:5-8&10)--saved, but not part of the adventure. These people live with guilt and are the most miserable Christians of all. When hearing the parables of Jesus, they don't fully understand, unlike the "All In" Christians to whom God gives the full picture (Luke 8:11+, 14, 15). The last group is the "Just Getting Started" group. This group includes The Lost--those who don't know Christ, The Hitchhikers--those who come for a short time and drop out, The "McChristians"--those who are in it for the fun (consumers, not givers), and The Disciple-makers--those who are excited about volunteering for the church. So what are some of the reasons for people saying NO to Jesus Christ? 1. They are unwilling. 2. They are too busy. 3. They are opposed. 4. They won't change. But the real question is...what is YOUR response to God? Is there stuff in your life that's just clutter sitting around? Are you sitting on time? Money? Talents? 6,000 churches in America close their doors every year while only 4,500 new ones start up; that's a deficit of 1,500. How will we respond? Are we in the All In group, ready and willing to make a difference for the Lord? Or are we sitting back and coasting, waiting for someone else to do something? Let's pray that we will be people of action, warriors for the kingdom in a time that seems a little too uncomfortably similar to the days that Hauge lived in. God's Word is still as fresh and active today as it has always been. And God is able to use us wherever we are and with whatever we have. See you at the 2021 Labor Day Family Retreat!

- Hope Unverzagt

Would you like to support HAUGE FOREIGN MISSIONS!

Donating to the work of Hauge Foreign Mission is now even easier!

We have added a Donation button to our web page at

www.haugemissions.org If you click on the tab you will be able to select any of the missions that HFM supports and have your donation given immediately.



**Family Retreat
photos Labor Day
weekend 2020**







Oslo, 05.05.2020

To our mission partners and churches worldwide

Dear friends and co-workers in Christ,

We hope this letter will find you all in good spirits, courageously fulfilling the Great Commission confided to us all, trusting Him who entrusted us the Calling. These are interesting and challenging times, and we hope to encourage you with a short letter with some updates from NLM.

We have been busy handling the effects of the corona-virus attack lately and assume the same goes for you. About half of our missionaries have now returned to Norway. Some because their assignments will end this summer anyway, others because their continuing work abroad has been virtually annulated by the corona virus challenges. Others because the health situation, or other reasons, indicated that repatriating was the best solution now.

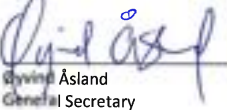
The hardest thing to undertake has, without doubt, been to lay-off nearly 200 of our employees in Norway. As ordinary gatherings and activities have been closed, NLM's income has dropped substantially. Our workers have met this situation with admirable understanding, for which we are very grateful. Our international regional directors have recently been in contact with all our missionaries, both those who have returned to Norway and those who are still abroad, to follow-up with them in this situation. The talks have been well received and appreciated.

We are sad this situation hinders us from doing what we are supposed to do as a mission, but at the same time, we are encouraged and excited to see new ideas popping-up and creativity flourishing. Even though we are not able to gather physically to share the Word of God and enjoy the fellowship, we are still gathering in the Spirit, helped by Teams or other computer programs. Meeting online has been a far better substitute than we could imagine. We are thrilled to see that this to a great extent is also taking place in our sister churches in many countries.

We are grateful for having a good group of newly recruited missionaries, preparing for going abroad this year or next. We would like to ask you to join us in prayer that it will be possible for them to go to their work abroad as planned. Wisdom is needed, and courage. Not seldomly these days, we feel in short of both.

Nevertheless, we find support in these words from Paul, where he is encouraging the young congregation in Thessalonica: 1Thess 5,24: *The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.* That is still true and reliable, both for our young, coming missionaries, as well as for us all. We therefore stand together, even though not physically for the time being, in the Lord's work. He will fulfill his plan of salvation. We all want to be a part of it, still.

With all God's good blessings greetings from



Gyving Åsland
General Secretary



Hans Arne Sanna
International Director

NEWS FROM EKE
(Lutherans for the Gospel)
in Hungary

Sowing seed through a week-end

When this year began, I felt it very important again to participate the weekend youth retreat of EKE between February 14 and 16, 2020, together with members of the youth group of the church of Balatonfüred. A week-end camp like this is a gift just by itself, because on my own, living my weeks full of rush with no limits, I would never allocate a full week-end to come to God. The Word of God, preached on mornings and evenings, talking and praying in groups help me a lot in strengthening my faith, for the Lord always tells me something through His Word, the preacher, or a participant. I came to this event with great expectations, looking forward to meeting brothers and sisters, and being silently in God's presence, waiting for Him to strengthen me or to rebuke me.

The central passage of the event was the parable of the farmer who sows seed. Hearing the first sermon on the seed falling along the path (Luke 8:5; 11-12), which means we hear the Word, but the devil takes it away immediately, we were challenged with the question, "what is your heart like?" Have you ever received a heart of flesh in place of your heart of stone? Did your old self die, and were you born again? It is hard for the Word to grow roots in a person with a heart of stone; the devil will soon take it away. I had experienced this in my own life, too. As a child of a pastor, I have often heard the Word of God since my childhood, but it took long for it to have roots in me, turning my heart of stone to a heart of flesh. However, a heart of flesh can grow hard, too. I noticed myself that on listening to the Word of God, my attention is often drawn to unimportant things. It was funny to hear the examples, such as "look at that spider on the wall, it's going to climb on you," "that car in front of the church was a nice one," but it made me sad to remember how often I fell into this myself; for instance, while listening to a preaching, I started to think of how I could repair the flaw on the wall of the church. Apart from that, I never liked the attitude of knowing everything, and yet I had to find that it was me. It was sad to recall hearing a devotion and finding that all I remembered were what the pastor ought to have said differently. I had talked to myself about this during the devotion, but I did not get the message. *(Continued)*

These thoughts really closed the door before the Word of God. On the other side, I had to examine if I was not an instrument used to take the seed away. Good humor is a thing we need, but I was reminded again that, among others, in youth groups, I can be very sneering and offending, though joking.

The message of the seed falling on rocky ground (Matthew 13:5-6; 20-21) is about superficiality, caused by my existing sins preventing me from being strengthened in my faith and from getting closer to God. I was reminded that in most cases, I can be very patient and kind to strangers and to my colleagues... to those who are not so close to me in everyday life. Contrarily, in my family, who are with me from day to day, I am often morose and offending. This mirrors my current spiritual condition very well, for as soon as I neglect my relationship with God, my basket with the fruits of the Spirit is getting empty, which impacts my family at first.

Another kind of superficiality is the inability to witness to God; when others blaspheme Him, I often stay silent, though I know I ought to speak. I had often wondered how the Apostle Peter could deny Jesus three times. I realized I had done the same daily. Each time of staying silent is a little step back. I pray for faith, courage, wisdom, because testimony is a blessing.

The part of the parable about the seed falling among thorns (Luke 8:7; 14) conveyed the message of being strengthened in grace. "You choose thorns because you do not understand the matter of the cross." It is so easy to forget what Jesus Christ suffered for me on the cross; that He died for my sins, and rose from the dead to give eternal life to me and to all of us. To Him, nothing is impossible; there is no one He does not love, in spite of my/our many sins. The wrath and love of God together make us regret our sins and turn to Him. Ambition, fearing for money, false love, adulterous thoughts, and many other thorns in our lives... all can be solved as it was preached – through obedience without conditions, and through strengthening in grace. I would like to live a fruitful life, to be strengthened, and to help others be strengthened in Christ. How can I do it? The following example was a good illustration. "Even a pearl fisher breathes more than three times per day." I was encouraged to pray and read the Word of God continuously. And it is true that the more I listen to His Holy Spirit, the more fruits will appear, and the more I can stay still and in peace on Jesus Christ's side in trials, and in witnessing by the Spirit.

Balatonfüred, Mar 1 2020

News from the Halversons
in Papua, New Guinea
with Wycliffe Bible Translators

Halverson Happenings

Volume 12, Issue 5
October 2020

We hope so! And think so!

"Are you able to return to PNG?" is a common question these days. And well, let's just say international air travel is difficult right now. We do have tickets to leave on Nov 8th from Seattle, Washington. Please pray for us as we make all of the preparations for the flight, and that the flights will go smoothly with no hiccups.

Ziah's passport

We received Ziah's new passport in mid-September. Thank you for praying for that. Now Ziah's passport is at the Papua New Guinean embassy in Washington DC awaiting a new visa. Please pray that it will be returned to us soon so that we will be able to travel in November.



100%

God has provided full financial partnership with Wycliffe Bible translators for our return to Papua New Guinea. Thank you for your prayers for us to reach this goal. Thank you to all of you who have just recently become financial partners or increased your giving. And thank you to all of you who have so faithfully continued your financial partnership. THANK YOU!!!

Magnetic Prayer Card

Do you have our current prayer card? (see picture at right) If not, or you want another one, please let us know and we can mail one to you. Make sure to let us know the best address to mail it to.

Jamie & Lisa Halverson Thad, Thea, Zeke, & Ziah

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in Papua New Guinea*

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Halverson Happenings

Volume 12, Issue 6
November 2020

If at first you don't succeed...

Try. Try again. We plan to 'try again' to depart for Papua New Guinea (PNG) November 29, 2020. That's right, **this coming weekend!** With all of our visa-stamped passports and lots of suitcases, we hope to depart from SEA-TAC airport early in the morning on Sunday...arriving at our home in Ukarumpa at about 9pm Tuesday night, Pacific Standard Time.

The main unknown right now is our COVID-19 tests—we have to get tested within 7 days of arriving in PNG, and since our travel time is over 60 hours, that means that we need to get the results within 3 days of taking the test...over the Thanksgiving holiday. We think that the lab we found will be helpful—but your prayers are welcome!

Ziah's PNG visa

Thank you for praying for Ziah's visa. It was issued the day after we had hoped to leave. The other family got theirs in time and were able to return to PNG.

We are glad to have Ziah's visa-stamped passport in our hot little hands 😊



Jamie & Lisa Halverson Thad, Thea, Zeke, & Ziah

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Requests and Praises

- Praise that we have Ziah's visa-stamped passport!
- Prayer for three safe trips over the snowy Cascade mountains as we travel to Seattle area and back again for Covid tests, and again three days later for our flight heading toward PNG.
- Prayer that our six Covid tests results come back in time, are 'Negative,' and meet airline requirements
- Continue to the 'back page' for some extra "Praises/ Thanks be to God."



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We're thankful for...



JULY 2020

G. Fund.	400.00
NLM	200.00

AUGUST 2020

G. Fund.	200.00
Retreat Sch.	400.00

SEPT. 2020

G. Fund.	3,041.25
NLM	200.00

JULY '20 Total	600.00	AUG. '20 Total.	600.00	SEPT.'20 Total	3,241.25
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Totals for Fiscal year 2020(ending Sept. 30, 2020)

	Total Fiscal Year 2020
Mission Gifts	
General Fund	5,891.25
Retreat Scholarships	1,200.00
NLM	<u>1,300.00</u>
	8,391.25

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