

# January 21, 2017 Newsletter

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**KOINONEO  
Independent  
Mission Agency**

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Hey! Where have you been? Have you heard anything about what's happening with our brothers and sisters in Christ that are working so diligently down in Mexico? Probably not since I have not communicated with you for the last several months. Well, just because you haven't heard anything doesn't mean that nothing has been happening.

I need to apologize for not keeping in touch with all of you. On November 15, I had back surgery, a lumbar laminectomy on L 3,4, and 5. I thought I would be home by Thursday of that week and then would have to undergo rehabilitation for a while. Well, I was dismissed from the hospital on Thursday, but not to go home. Instead, I was released to Baylor Institute of Rehabilitation, a fantastic hospital with some of the best people I have ever met. I would highly recommend this facility to anyone who needs rehab.

Five weeks later, on December 23, I was released to come home and begin home care. I'm not where I need to be yet, but I have had the privilege of staying in contact with what has been happening with the churches, missions, and seminary students in Mexico.



Many of you have been a blessing to KIMA through your prayers (you do ask your church to include this ministry in its corporate prayers, don't you?) and your financial gifts. Because of your participation in this way, we were able to send a Christmas gift to each of the pastors of the SLM, the lay-pastors, the 4 Seminary students, and two of the LCMS missionaries helping out the SLM. Thank you for your generosity.

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On Saturday, November 12, the Koinoneo Independent Mission Agency Board of Directors met. At that meeting, a concern was raised regarding the availability of the Lord's Supper to the people who are being served by the dedicated lay-pastors of the SLM. It was our understanding that only ordained pastors of the SLM were permitted to administer the Sacraments. There were only four ordained pastors in the Synod, and one of those was out of the country in Argentina. Logistically, two of the remaining were located in the northeast, one in Mexico City, with two LCMS missionaries helping out in Mexico City. This left a vast amount of Mexico without the services of an ordained pastor, or more importantly, access to the Sacraments on





a regular basis. The feelings were expressed that if the Lord's Supper is not offered on a regular basis that the people were being robbed of the benefits offered so generously by our Lord Jesus Christ. We, as a Board, certainly understand that we are not in any position to dictate or determine SLM policy. KIMA has expressed its concerns and, it is my understanding, the steps are underway to help alleviate this problem.

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Another, maybe related problem, has been in the training of new pastors. To us, going off to Argentina, or now the Dominican Republic, for this training is not the best use of time and talent. There are the beginnings of a program, under the direction of Rev. Daniel Conrad/ LCMS missionary, to train men for the pastoral ministry while they are in ministry in the various parts of Mexico. Classes can be taken via the computer or by attending mini classes under Rev. Conrad's direction. We would like to see this program expanded to bring more men into a deeper theological understanding of the Scriptures and the role of the church. It would be hoped that those who have those special God given gifts of teaching and administration and feel the need to be instructors could continue the further development of those gifts at recognized Lutheran Seminaries in other countries.



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The need is now! We do not know the hour or time when our Lord is coming. So, we feel, that the first priority is to get the Word of God and Sacraments out to as many people as soon as possible. So, what do we want to see? Let's raise up young men, educate them, and support them as they are in ministry. Let's encourage those with the necessary God given talents to get advanced training so they can in turn train others. Who knows? Maybe someday the SLM will have their own Seminary right there in Mexico City. Why think small? Is that the Lord's way?

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I don't know if all of you know it, but the four students who were at the Seminary in Argentina the last two years have returned to Mexico. They are all in the process of being assigned to churches, most as vicars, or being sent to open or reopen missions in the northwestern part of Mexico. Benjamin Quezada will be serving at San Pedro in Mexico City with Rev. Daniel Conrad, LCMS missionary. Guillermo Leyva Cruz and Nefta Garcia Guevara will



either vicar in Mexico City or open up new missions. Rev. Samuel Perez Herrera is looking into reestablishing two missions in the far northwestern part of Mexico.

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In the coming weeks, the SLM is going to send a team of pastors to northwest Mexico. With joyful hearts, seeking the direction from our LORD, they plan to visit the cities of Tijuana, Mexicali, and San Luis Rio Colorado. At this point, I believe that the three pastors going will be president Rev. Isaac Guadalupe Garcia, Vice-president Rev. Samuel Perez Gaona, and seminarian Rev. Samuel Perez Herrera.

Some years ago, the SLM had a church in Tijuana. The pastor died and soon there was only some property and a few buildings. The hope is that this seemingly dormant ministry could be transformed into an up and coming mission in Tijuana reaching out to the lost, strengthening the believers, and sending them out into their communities to share the love of Jesus.

Also, at their last meeting in Mexico City, there were men from the San Diego area who represented a group of Lutheran pastors from the northwestern part of Mexico that expressed some interest in becoming a part of the Lutheran Synod of Mexico (SLM). It is hoped that talks can be initiated that might further explore this possibility.

In Mexicali, there is a somewhat similar situation to that which existed in Tijuana. San Juan Lutheran Church was functioning well under the leadership of Rev. Juan Rosas Aguilar. Pastor Rosas died and controversy arose and the church ceased to function as a loving, caring, outreach congregation to the community. The church has been vandalized and is in need of major repairs. It is hoped that either through loving conversations with former members who feel the urgency to join Jesus on His mission of spreading the good news of God's love or by opening a new mission in Mexicali such a ministry can be initiated and maintained.

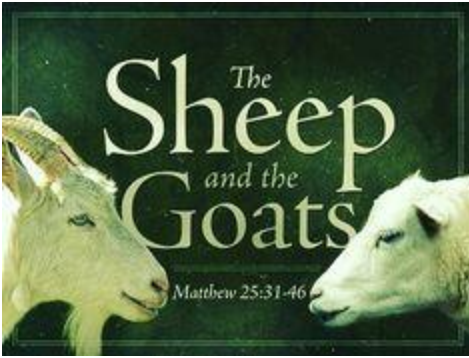
Thirdly, it is hoped that time can be spent in San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora. In this area, ministry is being done. Lay-pastor Saul Silva heads up worship at San Mateo Lutheran Church. Josafat Basto leads the programs at the three desert missions in that area. These are good men and the plan is to meet with them, encourage them, and get a better feel as to what their needs are.

It is also hoped that while they are there that they might be able to get together with Job Jimenez, former lay-pastor and seminarian. Job was doing a lot in ministry that would have made his father Rev. Filiberto Jimenez very proud. It is the prayer of the SLM and we here at KIMA that Job will be able to shake off the disappointment of last year and see how God wants to use him even today.

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I hope that all makes some sense. There must be some reason why the medical people won't let me drive yet or tell me not to make any major decisions by myself. At least this is the gist of what I think has been happening with the ministry since November. After reading that you may be a little unsure of what I was trying to say. I want to assure you that my intentions were all good. I would suggest that if anyone has any questions about any of the above, that you write them down and send them to me and I will go to the source and get an answer for you that will hopefully alleviate the misunderstanding.

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<sup>31</sup> “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

<sup>34</sup> “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, <sup>36</sup> I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you

looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

<sup>37</sup> “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

<sup>40</sup> “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

<sup>41</sup> “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. <sup>42</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

<sup>44</sup> “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

<sup>45</sup> “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

<sup>46</sup> “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

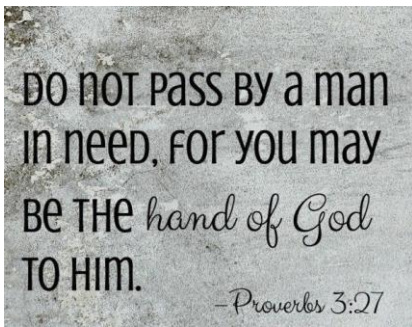
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I have a friend who used to go around and tell people about God’s missions. Somewhere in the beginning of his talk with the people he would attach a warning as to what he was about to say. He would quote from the words of Matthew 25, the part about the sheep and the goats. He would tell the people that before they heard what he was going to say, they might have some kind of excuse. But after hearing what he was going to tell them about what was happening in Mexico and how they needed our help they would be like those on the Son of Man’s left who stood there without excuse.

I don’t know whether the words I wrote above were any great new revelation to you about what is going on in Mexico, especially in this day and age of television, computers, the Internet, Facebook, etc. But I do know that you are aware of what is being done to strengthen the Lord’s church in the mission fields of Mexico. I am pretty sure you are aware of the fact that the majority of the people served by the SLM are not on the upper end of the economic totem pole. We certainly do not want them to become so totally dependent on us that they won’t do anything for themselves. But there is a difference between not wanting to do something and not being able to do something.



Your love, prayers, and financial gifts can go a long way in making it possible for our Mexican brothers and sisters in Christ to take some bigger steps rather than the tiny ones they have had to take because of financial restraints. KIMA has sent funding to the SLM to help finance the trip to the northwestern part of Mexico. We have made a commitment to financially assist in the theological training of future pastors for the SLM. We have committed \$6,000 to help get a new mission up and going. This is above and beyond the subsidies we send to seven lay-pastors and pastors each month, the VBS materials for the churches that need help with their VBS programs, plus supplies and maintenance for some of the smaller missions.



KIMA's commitments aren't worth a hill of beans if we do not have the blessings of our Lord and the support of people like yourself. I would ask that you prayerfully consider what your role might consist of as you consider what God meant when He said, **"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."** God promises to be with us always. God loves us. God cares for us. Sometimes instead of doing it Himself, He uses people like you and me to do it with Him.

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**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!**



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**We can be contacted at 109 Noel, Waxahachie 75165 or by phone at 972-935-8017**

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