



News and Notes from the...

Lakeland Association

networking to motivate and multiply healthy, mission-minded believers

March
2007

Grace Point Community Church launches Hmong 1st and Brown Deer partnering in venture

Questions of faith and culture, family ties, worship styles, and missiology are all in the mix with a congregation launched recently by the Hmong First Baptist Church of Milwaukee. Church planters Khoua and Palia Lee seem uniquely qualified to lead the Grace Point Community Church, meeting in the facilities of the Brown Deer church.

When Khoua entered the first grade in Milwaukee the only two English words with which he was comfortable were “yes” and “no.” Given that a “yes” more often than not evoked a positive response, the word was his first choice in most circumstances. The Hmong First Baptist Church of Milwaukee, then meeting in the facilities of the Northwest church, was a haven of familiarity, belonging, and security for the young immigrant and his family. At church he could be at “home” far away from Southeast Asia.

Although born in the United States, Palia experienced the Hmong congregation in a similar fashion. She was spared the distress of being thrust into a whole new world as a child, and yet the extended “clan” orientation of Hmong culture and her Sunday experiences were a contrast from the kind of life she lived the other six days at school.

In the years since his initial period of culture shock and adjustment, Khoua has become accomplished in his English language skills and acclimated in other ways to the dominant culture. He and Palia, while proud of their heritage and committed to remaining loyal to it, recognize that their church and other Hmong congregations must adapt ministries for second and third generation immigrants. Many, if not most, of these young adults are more conversant in English than in



Tong Zong Vang, director of the Hmong Baptist National Association, presents Khoua Lee with a Certificate of License for ministry during a special service on January 28 at the Hmong First Baptist Church of Milwaukee

Hmong; some are as “western” as they are Asian in their outlook and values, with a few having married outside their race. Neng May Vang, the founding pastor of the Hmong First Baptist Church, and his successor, current pastor, Tongber Vang, are concerned by the increasing number of this group who grow up in the church with a faith commitment, but in early adulthood become erratic in their attendance or drop out altogether (*as seems true among any group, italics mine*). Both note that this challenge is not uncommon among immigrant churches. They point out that Korean and Chinese congregations recognized long ago the need for English-language components to their ministries and outreach efforts.

For some Hmong Christians, however, the idea of an English-speaking church plant raises fears that young people are being encouraged to renounce their heritage. Both pastors disagree and heartily embrace the efforts of the Lees in reaching out to young adults. “Growing pains,” says Tongber Vang

Standing before an excellent number of worshippers at the first service, Khoua greeted the group and began making announcements, inexplicably, in the Hmong language. Catching himself, he wondered aloud, “Why am I doing this in Hmong?” Palia and the praise team were also somewhat awkward in applying English words to hymns and choruses they’ve sung since childhood in their mother tongue.

New Hmong church plant (continued from p. 1)

Standing before an excellent number of worshippers (40-50) at the first service, Khoua greeted the group and began making announcements, inexplicably, in the Hmong language. Catching himself, he wondered aloud, "Why am I doing this in Hmong?" Palia and the praise team were also somewhat awkward in applying English words to hymns and choruses they've sung since childhood in their mother tongue.

The irony of their challenge with language and cultural issues is not lost upon either of them. Says Khoua: "If I had to choose between Hmong culture and Christianity, I'd take Christianity. But I want both."



Palia and Khoua Lee, both of whom have been members of the Hmong First Baptist Church since early childhood, are church planters for the Grace Point Community Church, meeting in the facilities of the Brown Deer Church.

Volunteers from numerous LBA churches assisted both the Graceland and Mount Horeb churches earlier this fall. In the months that followed, several volunteers continued to work at both construction sites on Saturdays. Pastors Clyde Hamer and Roy Hopgood deeply appreciate the support of sister churches.

This summer volunteers will again be needed for construction assistance with a major project at the Korean Baptist Church of Milwaukee. Watch for more information.

Women's Retreat set for April 27-28

Women and young ladies age 12 and older are invited to participate in this year's prayer and spiritual renewal retreat coordinated by the Lakeland Association's WMU ministry. "Live the Call" will be held at the Holiday Inn, 4601 Calumet Avenue in Manitowoc. Check-in begins at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, with worship at 7:30. The retreat concludes at lunch on Saturday. The cost is \$65 with a \$35 registration fee due by April 3. Send registrations to Diann Dill, 4003 11th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140. Each participant is asked to bring a jar of peanut butter and jelly for a mission project. For further information, contact Diann Dill at 262-652-0489 or via email at pdill@wi.rr.com.



Creative Ministry & Stewardship

Last March the Graceland Community Church broke ground for a project that combines creative ministry and an

excellent stewardship of resources. Although construction has proven quite challenging at times for Pastor Clyde Hamer, who formerly was a professional builder and now works full-time for the City of Milwaukee, the project is nearing completion with assistance from association volunteers. The senior adult housing units, located across the street from the church, will be a focus of the congregation's ministry with Bible studies and other activities held in the community rooms on the first floor. The largest open space is equipped with a commercial-grade kitchen and will double as the church's fellowship hall. This area will also be available for churches, other organizations, and individuals to rent for events. Hamer is currently looking for a Christian couple or single who would be willing to live in the building at a considerably reduced rent in exchange for managing and maintaining the complex. For further information call 414-531-3163 or email gracelandchurch@sbcglobal.net.



The Graceland Manor Apartments, 6859 N. 43rd St. in Milwaukee, offer adult living for those 55 and older. All apartments are furnished with ceiling fans, refrigerator, stove, dishwasher, and garbage disposal. For safety, each unit is equipped with a fire alarm and a sprinkler system. Rates begin at \$645/month.

Demonstrate and share the love of Christ

EQUIPPING DISCIPLES FOR MISSION & MINISTRY



Sponsored by the
Lakeland Baptist
Association and
the MW Baptist
Convention



English as a Second Language Training Event, March 22-24

Employment, adequate health care, relationships, helping children with school, the store—people who struggle with English face hardships in all of these areas. Churches have a strategic opportunity to help meet the increasing need in communities for language training, and to share a Christian witness through an ESL ministry (English as a second language). Sarah Williamson, who has led and trained others in ESL for more than thirty years, will be in the Lakeland Association area to offer a workshop.

What's included in the workshop?

- How to organize an ESL ministry
- Dealing with cultural communication issues
- Planning lessons and teaching techniques
- Using biblical material and sharing one's faith

Those who attend the entire workshop can gain a thorough understanding how this ministry affects people's lives, not only with the gift of language, but also with the love of Christ shared with a personal touch.

The cost is \$25, which covers materials and lunch on Saturday. The schedule is as follows:

Thursday, March 25, 6:30-9:30

Friday, March 26, 6:30-9:30

Saturday, March 27, 8:30-4:00 p.m. (lunch provided)

All sessions will be held at Brown Deer Baptist Church, 7908 N. 51st St. in Brown Deer. Those traveling from Kenosha or Racine may contact the association for Friday evening hotel accommodations. For questions and to register, contact the association (414-481-4944) or lbgeneral@tds.net.

MISCELLANY

This year's MWBC Mission Trip to Brazil is coming much earlier, April 22-May 1. The focus of ministry will be the Ribeirinho people who live on the banks of the Amazon River. Information, including application forms, is available through the convention website, www.mwbc.org, or by contacting the trip coordinator, Pastor Larry Creamer (920) 733-8823 or pastorlarry@new.rr.com.

Rachel Krome of the **Brown Deer** church was chosen this winter as a "Top Teen" for the national Acteens organization, a program of the Southern Baptist **Woman's Missionary Union** which encourages teenage girls to be involved in mission activities. Her parents are Rob and Mary Krome.

Blume is scheduled for July 10-13, in Kansas City. Formerly known as the "National Acteens Convention," the event is an opportunity for teenage girls and college women to recognize their giftedness and roles in God's mission in the world. For more information click on www.blumeforgirls.com and contact Mary Krome (920) 564-3843 or wind-dancer04@juno.com.



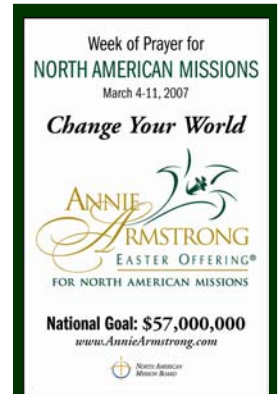
The Spring/Summer Lakeland Association meeting will be held on **Tuesday, June 6, at 6:30 p.m.** in the beautiful new facilities of the **Mt. Horeb** church, 530-534 W. Center Street, in Milwaukee. On that evening the association will be honoring Pastor **Fred Boyd** of the **Jeremiah** church who is retiring in the coming months.

The **2007 Kenosha Touched Twice Clinica Gratis (Free Clinic)** will be held on **Saturday, April 21, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at the Edward Bain School, 2600 50th Street in Kenosha. Volunteers are needed for this ministry and outreach of compassionate care to the community. Medical, dental, and visual screening will be offered, as well as hair cuts, a hot meal, and groceries. If you're interested in donating items or volunteering, you may contact Pastor David Florez for more information 262-694-4939 or click on <http://www.kttfc.org>. This ministry is sponsored by the **Fellowship** and **Centro** Bautista churches.



Mark your calendars for these events

- Mar. 15-17 EMPOWER at Green Lake Conference Center
- Mar. 22-24 ESL Training
- Apr. 14 VBS Workshop
- Apr. 26-27 Gospel Choir Workshop
- Apr. 27-29 WMU Retreat
- Apr. 27-30 Proclaimer's Place



Churches should have received a DVD and packet of resources to promote this year's prayer and offering emphasis. If you need these items, you may visit namb.net or contact the association office (414-481-4944) or lbagen-eral@tds.net

DON'T CONFIRM... LBA Children's Camp, July 2-6 Montello, WI Registration information coming

BY TRAVIS CRUMP
ROMANS 12: 1-2

News and Notes from the...

Lakeland Association

News and Notes is published by the Lakeland Baptist Assn, 3195 S. Superior St., Suite 313, Milwaukee, WI 53207 414-481-4944; Dr. Keith L. Cogburn, Director E-mail: LBAgeneral@tds.net or LBAkic@tds.net www.lbaonline.org

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Paid Postage
Milwaukee, WI
Permit No. 5460

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Will your church be on board this summer for camp? Information packets will be mailed to all LBA churches in March. The program is for children who have completed the 3rd grade to 6th grade. Ask your pastor or children's ministry director for more information.