

Theologians Without Borders

North American Lutheran Church
Great Commission Society



One of the greatest resources that is needed today is not what you would expect. While it's true that financial help is needed by many of our mission partners throughout the world, one of the greatest needs is you...

Though we in the United States continue to send missionaries all over the world to share the Gospel, what we have failed to recognize is that the percentage of Christians in the countries we are sending missionaries to, is arguably a higher percentage than what is in the United States. In fact, many of these countries are now sending missionaries to the United States. The theology of mission is an important topic to be discussed, but what we hear from our partners across the world is that there are millions of Christians. Thousands of young men and women, grandparents, children, bankers, teachers, accountants, lawyers, CEO's, maintenance workers, musicians, professional plumbers and more that long for training in Scripture and theology. There are many, many people who would like to receive education or seminary training to be pastors, but there are not enough teachers to teach them. Theologians Without Borders recognizes that in the United States we are rich with education, training, and degrees. As we continue to build relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ all over the world, we recognize this is a resource that we can easily share. As we strive to live out the Great Commission, are you willing to be sent out? To share your education and gifts? To begin a

relationship with another part of the body of Christ in a different place where you will also have the ability to learn and grow in your faith?

Most of our Theologians Without Borders will travel for a week to ten days and will teach on a specific topic, as well as spend time building relationships with local congregations and leaders. It is important for home congregations and mission districts to understand that participating in the larger body of Christ is a gift to the whole. The pastors and leaders who give of their time are not on "vacation." As the leader gives of his or her time, we ask that the congregation would consider giving the gift of additional paid leave. More resources are available on this topic at: www.alban.org. Upon request, a conference call can be arranged for congregational leadership with the NALC's Executive Staff or experienced representative to empower congregational leadership to make this informed decision and gift.

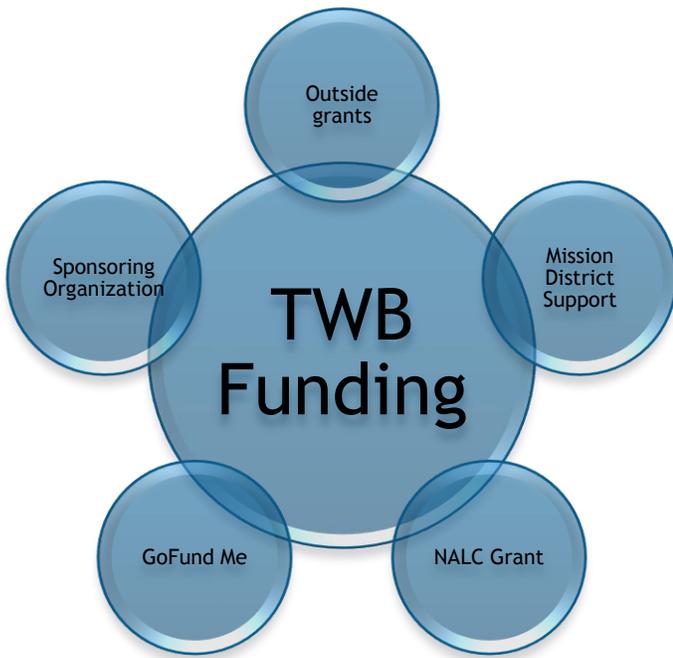
There is a possibility to travel individually or on one of the group trips that is planned for 2016-2017. For more information, please contact Jenny Brockman at jbrockman@thenalc.org.



Theologians Without Borders

The NALC Missions office will help these Theologians Without Borders by connecting the individual with:

- An overseas contact person
- Initial contact & planning assistance
- Connection to a travel agent
- Cultural training and information
- Fundraising Options
- Providing information and assistance to his/her congregation to understand this mission
- Resources to debrief the experience upon return
- An outlet to share experiences to help encourage others in this particular ministry (blog, newsletter, etc.)



In the past, funding has been one of the largest challenges for Theologians Without Borders. This multi-faceted approach should help resolve that issue.

Theologians Without Borders currently has group trips planned for:

- India - October 2016 with India Transformed
- China - October 2016 with CSV
- Haiti - February 2017 with SMI Haiti
- Ethiopia - June 2017
- Denmark - July 2017

Other places where individuals are needed include (but are not limited to):

- Denmark
- Slovakia
- Germany
- Ukraine
- Tanzania

Theologians Without Borders - Blessed to be a Blessing Testimonies & Stories



The NALC and **China Service Ventures** partnered to send Jim and Carolyn Nestingen to Wuhan, in Hubei Province (next to Hunan), China, as part of the Theologians Without Borders

program. These two provinces are where Lutherans started work more than 100 years ago, and they are among the poorest areas of the whole country of China.

Jim taught an intensive two-week course on Luther's Small Catechism as a document for mission, "to give an account of the hope that is within us." Carolyn taught English both in and outside of the classroom. Both were involved at in coursework at the seminary in Wuhan, an industrial center of 10 million people on the Yangtze River. Classes are held in the building where Paul Martinson went to school, and where he and his family endured the first years of World War II. After such an amazing experience, they are looking forward to future possibilities. To hear stories of faith and kingdom moments, please do not hesitate to visit their blog: <http://www.chinaforcarolyn.blogspot.com>.

From Texas to Ethiopia – A Story of Grace

Almost everywhere Pastor Mark Braaten went in Ethiopia, he had followers. Maybe it was his light-colored skin that stood out in the African country or the fact that he came from the United States to this country.

Whatever the reason, the children seemed enthralled with the Tyler, Texas, pastor, and the adults expressed much appreciation for his time there. For Pastor Braaten, though, the appreciation went both ways.

“It’s really a nice reciprocal relationship,” he said. “In our country we have some finances and we have teaching opportunities we can share with the Ethiopians. Their church is exploding with growth. They cannot keep up with the growth. ... They can’t keep up with buildings. They have something like one pastor for every 30,000 members, and so when I was there I was clear, ‘I am here to teach you. I’m also a student. Tell me how to do evangelism and outreach because you folks obviously know how to do something we don’t.’”

Pastor Braaten, senior pastor at Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church in Tyler, spent two weeks in Ethiopia last month.

During his time there, he conducted seminars about the Biblical book of Revelation for pastors and church leaders in two cities, Gimbichu and Dessie.

In addition to the full-day seminars, he preached about Revelation on two Sundays at a church in each city. The response, he said, was incredible.

“No one is teaching Revelation over there,” said Braaten, who studied the book extensively while earning a doctorate. “They said they haven’t had a Revelation scholar for 20 years.”

He said Revelation is God’s word of grace and deliverance found in the cross. Revelation shows that God will deliver His creation and destroy the destroyers of the Earth.

“Primarily it’s a book of hope and promise,” he said. “And to help people see that is great fun.”

Written by Emily Guevara and originally published in the *Tyler Morning Telegraph*.

