



Hmong Mission Proposal

History of Hmong:

The Hmong are an Asian ethnic group from the mountainous regions of China, Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand. Since 1975, the City of St. Paul has found itself home to over 40,000 Hmong. Many were sponsored by churches and families of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS).

The Hmong belief system is strongly rooted in animism and ancestral worship. Animism is the belief that spirits and forces inhabit the natural universe. Ancestor worship is the belief that there is interdependence between the deceased ancestors and their living descendants.

Demographics: The Hmong live mainly in three states: 1) California (38%); 2) Minnesota (27%); and 3) Wisconsin (23%).

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is located in one of the largest Hmong populated counties in the country - Ramsey!

Partners

Expanding the work of Hmong ministry at Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church and starting two new congregations is exciting, but will take the prayers and financial assistance of partner churches. Our partnership includes the following:

1. Bethlehem Lutheran Church
2. Minnesota South District
3. Churches of the Minnesota South District
4. Churches of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
5. Auxiliary groups and individuals within the LCMS.

"Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples!" (Psalm 96:3)

For an opportunity to see and hear the presentation, receive materials related to the mission proposal, or discuss the proposal including any additional questions, please call:

Rev. Nathan Raddatz at 651.925.6125 or email him at pastor.bethlehem@yahoo.com.

Robert Van Gundy at 651.738.1961 or email him at vangurk@juno.com.



Lutheran Mission
leads to Lutheran Congregations.

Challenges

- There are only two congregations (Hmong Lutheran and Bethlehem Lutheran) of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in the Twin Cities who have stable Hmong ministries.
- There is no Hmong pastor at either congregation. Unfortunately, both congregations continue to lose Hmong members as their spiritual needs lay unmet.
- There is an interest by Hmong people to be part of a more established Lutheran Church Missouri Synod congregation versus smaller groups at various locations.
- The language and cultural barriers make it nearly impossible for an Anglo pastor to connect with unchurched Hmong and encourage them to worship or attend Bible study.

Opportunities

- Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church is well positioned to reach out to Hmong and also to plant two new churches in nearby suburbs for the following reasons:
- Bethlehem already has a Hmong speaking Divine Service and we have approximately 90 Hmong members.
- Bethlehem has Hmong leaders who are well trained and hold key positions in the church such as elder, director of the school board and church president.
- The mission ground around Bethlehem is very fertile right now considering that a high rate of Hmong are entrenched in animism, a younger generation that is seeking the truth, and an older generation that is willing to listen.
- Bethlehem is receiving support from the Minnesota South District and numerous churches.

Proposal:

The Hmong Mission Proposal has, at its roots, the pure Word of God taught and preached by a well-trained, ordained pastor. The proposal addresses the opportunity to reach those living in animism or who remain “neutral.” It takes a uniquely Lutheran approach in which the Word and Sacraments are held high and the way in which worship is done falls in line with the historic Christian Church.

Bethlehem’s Hmong mission proposal is centered around the joy of strengthening the existing church and starting a Hmong mission congregation in the Maplewood/Oakdale area and potentially a second Hmong congregation in the Woodbury/Cottage Grove area.

Plan:

1. Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church will call a Hmong pastor who has gone through the seminary, has proven to be faithful to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and has experience in planting churches.
2. The Hmong pastor needs to be bilingual and bicultural, and have experience working with Hmong who are rooted in animism.
3. In the first two years, the Hmong pastor will split time equally between the ministry at Bethlehem and in reaching out to Hmong in the Maplewood/Oakdale area.
4. By the end of year two, God willing, a Hmong mission congregation will be established in the Maplewood/Oakdale area.
5. By the fourth year the Hmong mission planter will begin reaching out to Hmong in the Woodbury/Cottage Grove area with the intent of starting a second mission.
6. As the Lord continues to bless this outreach program and as the Hmong congregations experience growth, there may be a need for an additional Hmong pastor.

Budget

Budgeting this mission effort exceeds the funding capability of Bethlehem. With the aid of our MNS District and partner churches, we are building a program that is faithful to our Lord while reaching out to an ethnic group in need of hearing the clear message of salvation found only in Jesus Christ.

