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## Christmas

Each year, Lutherans congregations join together in several combined services to celebrate Christmas. This year, was no different. I had the privilege of preaching for one service up in the mountains on a tea estate. I also preached at one in a town called Yatiyantota near several rubber tree estates. There the congregation from Colombo joined. We praise God for the encouragement he gives this small church body when they join together around our Savior Jesus Christ.

After each of the services, there is a cultural program. It like a variety show for Tamil culture. There is a lot of dancing, some singing, sometimes there are skits and speeches as well. Finally, Santa Claus comes out dancing with the children and giving them candy.



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## The Kingdom Ours Remaineth



Praying between sessions

Teaching at the Telugu Pastors Conference in Andhra Pradesh India

“The Kingdom Ours Remaineth” from Martin Luther’s hymn, “A Mighty Fortress,” was the title of the paper I presented in India in January. The Bible Faith Lutheran Church invited me teach at their Telugu Pastors Symposium. I think there were as many as 600 people who attended. The topic was answering the claims of the “prosperity gospel.”

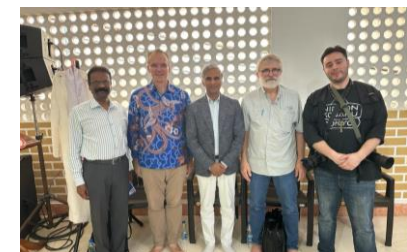
Luther’s hymn expresses that even if the everything is taken away from us, even our lives, we still have the kingdom of God. Jesus tells us that a servant is not above his master, so I looked at Jesus’ life. Then I compared the lives of those who did lose their lives from Christ’s sake to the type of the lives those who preach the “prosperity gospel” live.

After the conference, I had the joy of attending a church dedication in a remote fishing village. A huge crowd attended. Loudspeakers carried the proceedings to the entire village. These people were a witness for Jesus to the community.

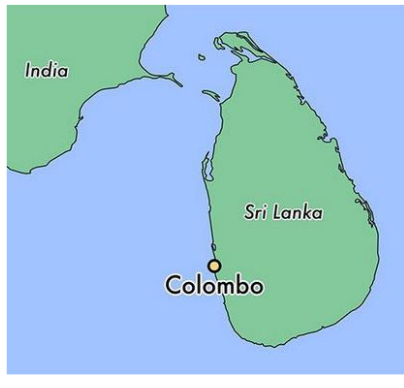
This was my first trip to Andhra Pradesh in India and my first time to meet our brothers and sisters in Christ from the Bible Faith Lutheran Church (BFLC). They gave me a warm welcome, and I pray that a good relationship between BFLC and LCMS will flourish.



Church Dedication



Guests to the symposium



## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- God's guidance for the ministry of the CELC
- Opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- CELC hymnal project
- To grant Autumn a good result for her thyroid treatment

## GIVE THANKS FOR:

- Autumn's thyroid treatment
- Good health for Rev. Nadaraja
- A successful trip to teach in India

## PRAISE GOD FOR:

- His work through the Bible Faith Lutheran Church
- His work through the Ceylon Evangelical Lutheran Church
- His work through the India Evangelical Lutheran Church

# Mahlburg Moments



Martha with her cake and presents

It is also the month when we joyfully welcomed Skye and Rose back for their Christmas break.



Enjoying the sights in Indonesia

December is a busy month in any household and ours is no different. In addition to all of the activity surrounding Christmas there is one last birthday of the year, Martha's.



Everyone gathered around the Christmas tree

At the beginning of January the whole Asia region got together for a family retreat in Indonesia. Sadly Rose and Skye could not join us.

January always ends with a big bang. We celebrated Steven's birthday this year with a cake that had one of his favorite spaceships on it. He loves all things science fiction so this year's cake had the Enterprise on top of it. He was truly surprised by it.



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](https://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

Prayerfully consider partnering with the LCMS to support the work of Steven & Martha Mahlburg. Make checks payable to:

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