



FRIENDS of MADAGASCAR MISSION

Vol 10:2

Fall 2021

“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...”

In many places in both the Old and New Testament, we read about the “RIGHT TIME”. When is the right time in your or my life regarding our faith, our vocation, our family life, our church community life, our stewardship/giving of our time-treasurers-talents, etc.? When is the “**Right Time**” is an important question for each of us to answer.

This past summer I received an email from the President of the Betroka Synod giving me a report on a recent health insurance program FOMM began this year for the 54 evangelists we support. Each evangelist is given a credit of \$100 of medical costs for the year. The dollar amount doesn't seem like much, but it amounts to a big benefit to the evangelists and families. The medical costs are very limited and not very expensive. The President also told me of two stories where the program has saved lives. One was about an evangelist family who all had Malaria and because of the medical insurance program were able to purchase medication. As a result, no one died. Malaria is the leading cause of death in Madagascar. It was “...**AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...**” moment.

Another story was about an evangelist who was diagnosed with prostate cancer. His name is Evangelist TODIARIVO Pierre, sponsored by Peace Lutheran Church in Northwood, Iowa. (They sponsor 3 evangelists) He was informed that the operation would cost \$162.00. He had only \$100 of that through our insurance program and thus he did not have enough money for the operation. Something within me caused me to mention this to my wife, Diane. I said, “This man needs surgery right now, not 6 months later.” I probably felt this urgency because my father and grandfather both died from prostate cancer. So we sent an extra \$100 for his insurance account. The evangelist had the surgery. The good news was that it wasn't prostate cancer, but it was a huge tumor that was blocking many functions within his body. The doctor stated that in another week he would have died from the fast growing tumor. It was “...**AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...**” moment.

As I review the many programs FOMM supports in Madagascar, there are many “...**AT JUST THE RIGHT**” moments. Funding is needed to serve the spiritual and physical needs of more prisoners, more food needs to feed the hungry, more evangelists to share the Gospel, more funds to print Bibles, more resources to fund the Nofy i Androy (program to keep girls in school), to provide care and education for the blind, to train evangelists, to provide equipment for drip irrigation programs, and so very many more needs.

I invite you to ask yourself: “When is the right time for me to step forward and provide financial resources for these programs of Christian love “...**AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...**”

PEACE IN CHRIST!

The Rev. David P. Lerseth

Evangelist Todiario Pierre
recovering from his life saving
surgery.



“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...” THE SECOND PRINTING OF THE TANDROY BIBLE

Romans 10:17 “... Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God”.



Tandroy Bible and Song Books

Steve Lellelid has been working for nearly 20 years to translate the Word of God into the Tandroy dialect. As a result, in 2018, 20,000 Bibles and 37,000 song books in the Tandroy dialect were printed at a cost of \$111,000.00 from gifts from FOMM donors. The Bibles and song books were eagerly received by the Tandroy people. Now there is a need to print more Bibles!

FOMM is now seeking funds to print **20,000 Tandroy Bibles** (no song books this time) at a cost of **\$61,000.00**. This project is blessed by having donors, **Nathan and Jenny Carlson** to provide matching funds for the cost of the printing and shipping the Bibles. **In other words, every dollar you donate will be doubled by their gift.**

Nathan writes: “This matching gift is in memory of my parents, Oliver and Gene Carlson, whose life passion was to bring the Word of God and salvation to the beloved people of Madagascar and in particular to the Tandroy people whom they served so many years. For the first time, this Bible translation communicates God’s Word to the 750,000 Tandroy people in a Malagasy dialect that they can understand.” (See an article on page 4 about Oliver and Gene Carlson.)

A word of encouragement from **John Toso**: “I spent my first six years of life in Bekily—truly rocky ground in Androy. My second language at that time was Tandroy. Both my parents and in-laws worked for years in Androy. However, nothing has moved the Holy Spirit in these people as having receiving God’s word in their own vernacular as has been done with Steven Lellelid’s translation of the Holy Scriptures into Tandroy. The first printing of 20,000 Bibles was snatched up eagerly. However, in a tribe of several million, there is a thirst for more. Please prayerfully contribute to the second printing of the Tandroy Bible.”

The support for the Tandroy Bible was begun under the leadership of **Pastor Morris Vaagenes** who encourages your support: “Bringing the Gospel to the people of Madagascar has been a part of my life and mission since the days of growing up in Madagascar. After college and seminary, my wife Bonnie and I, returned to Madagascar as missionaries. Our term was cut short because of an illness in our family. We returned to the USA and serving as pastor of Heights Lutheran Church in Roseville and Arden Hills, MN. Through the work of an organization I founded, Renewal International that recently merged with Friends of Madagascar Mission; I have worked to raise the funds for the first printing of the Tandroy Bible. Now, I am so thankful that a second printing is needed and encourage you to give generously so the Word of God may continue to bring the Tandroy people to faith in Jesus Christ.”

Please send your gifts of support to: Friends of Madagascar Mission, PO Box 46381, Eden Prairie, MN 55344 or go to our web site and pay through PayPal at www.MadagascarMission.org

“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...”

THE BUILDING OF A NEW CAMPUS FOR THE MANASOA BILBE SCHOOL



Student housing building

Friends of Madagascar Mission supports three Bible Schools in the Malagasy Lutheran church. They are important schools because they train the evangelists and catechists for the church. The schools are located in rural areas and the student and their family live on the campus for two years. They have an intense course of study that includes: Old and New Testament, Church History, Lutheran Doctrine, Christian Ethics, Stewardship, Leadership Development, Malagasy Natural Religion and How to Witness to the Christian Faith. They also are taught how to teach reading to children and adults. Many

areas where the students will serve as evangelists are illiterate and so teaching them how to read will allow them to read the Bible. The average enrollment at Manasoa Bible School is 30-35 students.

The campus at the Manasoa Bible School has fallen into a state of disrepair and need to be replaced. (See the photos of the building conditions.) There are three phases to the reconstruction: Phase 1) Student housing buildings, Phase 2) Administration building and staff housing, and Phase 3) School building. The cost of rebuilding the campus is estimated to be \$75,000.00. This is not very expensive to us, but we need to remember that Madagascar is one of the poorest nations in the world and the cost of rebuilding the campus for them is an almost impossible task.

This project is ideal for a congregation or a family that is looking for a global mission project to support. Plans may even be made to send a delegation to the school to help with the construction of the building(s).

Please send your gifts of support to: Friends of Madagascar Mission, PO Box 46381, Eden Prairie, MN 55344 or go to our web site and pay through PayPal at www.MadagascrMission.org



Faculty housing



Manasoa school building

“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...”

HONORING THE LEGACY OF FORMER MISSIONARIES

The Lutheran mission presence in Madagascar began in 1866 by the Norwegian Mission Society. In 1888 the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America began sending missionaries to Madagascar. The first missionaries were Pastor John and Mrs. Oline Hogstad. He was a graduate of Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis, MN. He was ordained at Hauk Creek Lutheran church near Sacred Heart, Minnesota.

Since that time 366 American Missionaries have served in Madagascar for an accumulative 5,445 years of service. The average time of service for one of these missionaries was 14.88 years. The longest term of service was for 46 years.

Recently, at a youth conference at the Manatantely Bible School, the students were reminded that the American Lutheran missionaries are a precious heritage for them to honor and remember. They know that these former missionaries gave of themselves to bring the Gospel to their region and that the Mantantely Bible School is a symbol of that heritage.

Two of these former missionaries have died within the past year, Oliver and Gene Carlson. They served as missionaries in Madagascar from 1955 – 1967 and again from 1983 – 1988 or a total of 17 years. (See page 2 about the gift given in their memory to print the Tandroy Bible.)



Gene Carlson

October 5, 1924 – June 17, 2021



Oliver Carlson

January 27, 2021 – July 15, 2020

“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...”

FOMM Selects Our Director of Development



The Rev. Lee Laaveg has been selected as the fourth staff member in FOMM's new organizational model. He recently retired after years of faithfully serving as a parish pastor and also serving a short time as a development director. FOMM is so pleased to bring his talents, pastoral heart and commitment to global mission to our leadership team. He will basically work with building our donor base of support from congregations and individuals.

“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...”

FOMM OPPORTUNITIES

An Endowment Gift to Support Evangelists!

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Boardman, Oregon voted last September, due to a number of factors, voted to end the church's ministry. At their last congregational meeting the members voted unanimously to give a portion of the church's assets to support evangelists through FOMM. They had been supporting an evangelist through FOMM for the past 7 years and so their mission support will continue for many years into the future, approximately 4-6 evangelists a year. It is always sad when a congregation closes its doors, but great when they leave a legacy of mission support. Thank you!

Have You Thought of a Legacy Gift to FOMM?

There are many wonderful nonprofit organizations that are doing mission work around the globe. Friends of Madagascar Mission is one of these organizations, supported by donors (individuals and congregations) that believe in our mission, our management and our guarantee that every dollar given goes to the project designated by them. Each year we are growing in contributions because we say what we are doing and do what we are saying! We provide informative newsletters and annual reports to inform our donors how the programs are doing. So, we invite you to think about leaving a legacy gift to FOMM that will continue our mission work through your gift. So far in FOMM's eleven year history we have been blessed with two large endowment gifts, \$100,000.00 from a woman in England and recently \$60,000.00 from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Boardman, Oregon (details in article above); plus many other generous gifts. The total of our endowment fund is now near \$200,000.00. To create an endowed gift, please contact FOMM with any questions you may have regarding how to designate the gift, if you so choose.

Do you shop on Amazon? Then for no extra cost to you, you can make a donation to FOMM!



Follow these steps:

1. Start your shopping session at smile.amazon.com (instead of amazon.com)
2. On your first visit to AmazonSmile select your charity
 - A. In the large area on the right, type in Friends of Madagascar Mission
 - B. Then click on [Search]
 - C. Select Friends of Madagascar Mission
 - D. Bookmark
3. Shop!

PayPal is a quick, electronic way to send gifts to FOMM



FOMM is experiencing an increase in donations coming through bank transfers, PayPal and other electronic means. Soon a new program called DonorView will allow donors to go onto our web pages that describe each program and be able to click on a button and make a specific donation to FOMM. It is a new world and way for supporting, but we work to make it easy for all to support our mission.

“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...”

FOMM UPDATES

EVANGELISTS

Currently we are support 54 evangelists, an increase of 4 in 2021. Our goal is to reach 60 evangelists by the end of the year. We encourage you to participate in supporting an evangelist. You will receive a bio and a photo of the evangelist/family. The evangelists carry out an amazing mission. During this past year most of the areas where FOMM supports evangelists they have been suffering from severe draught and much illness and hunger. In the midst of these conditions, let me share a summary of their work in the three synods where they work during the months of April to June, 2021. These 54 evangelists visited 1,979 families to share the Gospel with them which resulted in 608 children and 300 adults being baptized. As a board member recently said when we were reviewing the evangelist reports, “What would happen if in the USA we reached out these many homes in a three month period of time?” Support of an evangelist is \$700 a year and if possible, another \$100 for medical insurance.

BIBLE SCHOOLS

Recently we received a report from the **Manatantely Bible School** that they hosted a Lutheran youth program. The program consisted in worship, study of Scripture, games and 170 youth choirs. There was a total of 1,200 youth in addition to other children and parents who attended the event.



One of the youth choirs at the youth program at Manatantely Bible School

The **Manasoa Bible School** has developed an internship program at their school. Each year the students return to their home communities for a month and are involved in evangelist work, under the guidance of their home pastor, to prepare them for the work of an evangelist. FOMM supports this program financially. The school is also seeking funding from FOMM to rebuild their campus. (See more information on page 3).

FOMM's WEBSITE

Our website has been totally updated and has a new, fresh look. Please go to the site often at: www.MadagascarMission.org to keep up with program updates and news.

“...AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME...”

SPECIAL GIVING TO SUPPORT THE MISSION OF FOMM

(June through September 15th)

1. Manasoa Bible School Rebuilding Fund	\$ 1,000.00
2. PayPal	
3. Endowment Gifts	\$60,000.00
	\$ 2,500.00
4. Church Roofs	\$ 6,000.00
5. Spell Family Foundation (Nofy i Androy)	\$ 3,000.00
6. Bible Schools	\$ 1,000.00

7. Remembrance Gifts

In Memory of

Jim Noss

Viggo Dahle

Gene Carlson

Given By

Chuck and Penny Eidem

David and Diane Lerseth

Gary Dahle

Larry and Mary Ehrlich

David and Diane Lerseth

Paul and Naomi Hanson

Kurt Carlson & Rhona Baron

Delores Berkas

Peter and Judith Dyrud

Ann and Merland Severson

John and Kristi Carlson

Jean Larson

Carl and Ruth Vaagenes

John and Sandra Trump

Miriam Dakutak

Mark and Nan Johnson

Reed and Amy Carlson

Ann Larson

Arlene Lellelid

Paul and Naomi Hanson

Morris and Bonnie Vaagenes

David and Diane Lerseth

John and Diana Hetzler

David and Diane Lerseth

James and Carolyn Peterson

Marian Vaughn

Arlene Lellelid

Pam and Naomi Hanson

Delores Berkas

Christopher and Kim Carlson

Delores Berkas

Bob Anderson

Lester Schmidt

Gary Norman

Pastor John Lundin

Ed Mittenness

Bob Vaughn

Ron Klug

Arndt F. Braaten

Piere Larson

John Simonson

Total memorial gift listed (June through September 15th): \$ 2,100.00

TOTAL Special GIFTS: June – August 2021: \$



FRIENDS of
**MADAGASCAR
MISSION**

P. O. Box 46381
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

WHO ARE WE?

We are a Christian mission organization, incorporated as a nonprofit with approval by the IRS, with a nine-member board of directors consisting of Lutheran pastors and laypersons. All financial gifts are tax deductible, and donors will receive regular reports on the progress of the project you support.

Welcome to our mission!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rev. Tim P. Larson, President
Rev. David P. Lerseth, Vice-President
Catherine Marks, Secretary
Kirsten Schlicht, Treasurer
Charles Eidem
Rev. Lee Laaveg
Loren Morschen
Craig T. Norenberg

Fall 2021

NOFY i ANDROY (the dream of the Androy girls)



This program, located in the south-western part of Madagascar, is in one of the poorest regions in the country. The region suffers from periodic drought, famine and harmful cultural practices. The local tribe has been a male dominated culture which has limited the value of women and girls to baby production and raising a family. Thus there is an alarming high rate of child marriages and child pregnancies which causes the girls to drop out of school. This program works to educate the families and girls that they may have a better future if they continue their education. The program tutors students from the public school by offering scholarships to support them through middle, high school and onto advance education opportunities.

You may support a girl for \$200.00 a year. You will receive 1) A photo, 2) A biography and 3) a letter from the student about their progress twice a year.

Send \$200 by check, automatic bank payment, PayPal (a monthly payment plan may also be set up)

To: Friends of Madagascar Mission, PO box 46381, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

Questions: 847-445-8177 or FriendsOfMadagascarMission@gmail.com or website:

www.MadagascarMission.org