

**Call To Be Family (dba Lutheran Marriage Encounter)
North American Region (NAR)
Report on outreach to India May 7-24, 2018**

BY:
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An applied ministry outreach approved by NAR (Phase-1) July 2017

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ABSTRACT

In early 2017 a clergy from India, Rev Dr Stanish Stanley and his wife Beena attended a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience in the St. Louis area. They in turn discussed with Pastor Dan & Judy Teuscher the potential value for bringing this Experience to India. They especially saw the value of this Experience for Lutheran clergy in India. In discussions they included Pastor Subin Raj who was an Indian doctoral student at Concordia Seminary. Pastor Subin subsequently "audited" a Marriage Encounter weekend and saw the value for both lay and clergy's marriages and families in India. Each night of the Weekend, he skyped with his wife Nissy sharing what he was learning.

Working together, Dan & Judy Teuscher, Pastor Subin Raj, and Pastor Stanish and his wife Beena developed a proposal for an outreach to India. The proposal was submitted to the NAR Board in July 2017 with two phases.

- Phase-1 was to send a team of one clergy and one lay couple to India in 2018 to present a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience for up to eight Indian couples. Phase-1 of this project was completed in May, 2018 and is the subject of this report.
- Phase-2 which was to be a follow-up team of one clergy and one lay couple to India for the purpose of final workshops for Indian presenters and to assist an all-Indian team to present their first Experience was not approved, but was put on hold for future consideration based on the outcome of Phase-1.

The original budget for Phase-1 of \$12,400 was amended by two directed donations totaling \$1,920 for Pr Subin's wife, Nissy to travel to America to attend an Experience in St. Louis. Unfortunately, Nissy's travel visa was not approved and her tickets and travel agent fee were non-refundable with a cost of \$1,975.96 and a net impact on the budget of -\$55.96. Non-directed donations for the budget were \$538.99 above the estimate of \$6,200. Expenditures for Phase-1 were \$8,287.42. This leaves a balance of \$4,595.61 of unspent funds for Phase-1 of the India Outreach.

The questions to be answered through this ministry outreach and the results are:

Question #1: Can a team effectively conduct a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience in a culturally different environment with an unfamiliar language? **Although challenges existed the presenting team found that they could effectively present a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience.**

Question #2: Will the receiving Indian couples experience the objectives of a Marriage Encounter Experience within cultural and language differences between presenters and themselves? **Through most of the presentation it was not clear to the presenting team if attending couples were achieving the objectives for a Marriage Encounter Experience. However, through open sharing toward the end of the program it**

became clear that the couples were experiencing the objectives of the Experience.

Question #3: Is it feasible for Indian couples both lay and clergy to assimilate the Lutheran Marriage Encounter program, to write presentations from English outlines, Present the Program in Malayam language, and to effectively provide administration and oversight for continuation of the Lutheran Marriage Encounter Program in an on-going basis? **During several follow up workshops the presenting team became confident that Indian couples, both lay and clergy were fully committed to the process of writing presentations and to present their own experience in about one year. The organizational results of the phase-1 project strongly indicate the capability of Indian leadership to organize and present their own program.**

INTRODUCTION

This Report is prepared by Dean & Marcia Redman and Pastor Dan & Judy Teuscher for official presentation to the North American Region Executive Board for Lutheran Marriage Encounter at a meeting June 24-26, 2018. The intent is to provide documentation of an outreach effort to offer the opportunity for couples in India to have a Lutheran Marriage Encounter experience. This is considered to be an action based outreach project to determine if presenting couples from North America can effectively present a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience in India. And, secondly, to determine if Indian clergy and lay couples can effectively assimilate the process of writing presentations, prepare and organize to present their own Experience. Three questions to be answered by this research project are listed below.

Question #1: Can a team effectively conduct a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience in a culturally different environment with an unfamiliar language?

Question #2: Will the receiving Indian couples experience the objectives of a Marriage Encounter Experience within cultural and language differences between presenters and themselves?

Question #3: Is it feasible for Indian couples both lay and clergy to assimilate the Lutheran Marriage Encounter program, to write presentations from English outlines, Present the Program in Malayam language, and to effectively provide administration and oversight for continuation of the Lutheran Marriage Encounter Program in an on-going basis?

To undertake a task like this it takes dreamers, visionaries, organizers, planners. The initial planning involved Pastor Stanish Stanley with his wife Beena, Stanish's cousin Pastor Subin Raj and Pastor Dan & Judy Teuscher of the St. Louis Lutheran Marriage Encounter community. They completed a document titled "Information regarding L.M.E. in Trivandrum" dated 6-5-17 (Appendix a). This proposal addressed all those categories as we began this venture and traveled to India.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Lutheran Marriage Encounter is a organization licensed by World Wide Marriage Encounter to present World Wide Marriage Encounter Experiences in the Lutheran Faith Expression. Lutheran Marriage Encounter is incorporated in the State of Washington under the name "Call to Be Family dba Lutheran Marriage Encounter". This organization is designated as a public charity by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

Since the inception of Lutheran Marriage Encounter in the mid 1970's the North American Region Board (NAR) has been involved in several outreach programs to offer this experience outside of North America. Notable examples are in Northern Europe where various countries received outreach efforts and in turn established their own

Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experiences. Active European countries are Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland. European Lutheran Marriage Encounter countries co-ordinate activities through their European Board (EU) and through the International Lutheran Marriage Encounter Board (ILME). Other outreach programs sponsored by NAR included Brazil, Australia, and Bermuda. Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experiences were presented independently in Brazil and Australia but we are not aware of any currently active experiences in those countries. The local couples in Bermuda have not completed steps to present their own Lutheran Marriage Experiences.

This outreach to India would be significant if the local couples in India could complete the steps to provide their own Lutheran Marriage Encounter events.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review was not a significant part of this outreach project as this is an action based research.

Summary

This mission project was intended to identify funding sources to send a team of one clergy couple and one lay couple to Trivandrum in Kerala state in India to conduct a Lutheran Marriage Encounter experience for local couples. The NAR funding for Phase-1 was authorized at \$12,400 with no more than half coming from the NAR DREAM Fund and the remaining half to come from unsecured pledges. In addition the Indian planners made commitments of \$950 to come from local donations. Phase-1 to occur in the Spring of 2018. The NAR funding budget was increased by \$1,920 by directed donations to cover the cost to bring Pastor Subin's wife Nissy to attend a LME-Experience in St. Louis in the Fall of 2017.

PROCEDURES

This report reflects an Action based research project. The project was to send two presenting couples to southern India in the city of Trivandrum and the state of Kerala near the southern tip of India. The team was to present a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience to up to eight couples from the Trivandrum area. At least four of the couples were to be Lutheran pastors and their wives.

In early 2017 a clergy from India, Rev Dr Stannish Stanley and his wife-Beena Stanley attended a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience in the St. Louis area. They in turn discussed with Pastor Dan & Judy Teuscher the potential value for bringing this Experience to India. They especially saw the value of this Experience for Lutheran clergy in India. In discussions they included Pastor Subin Raj who was an Indian doctoral student at Concordia Seminary. Pastor Subin subsequently "audited" a Marriage Encounter weekend and saw the value for both lay and clergy's marriages and families in India.

Working together, Dan & Judy Teuscher, Pastor Subin Raj, and Pastor Stanish and his wife Beena developed a proposal for an outreach to India. The proposal was submitted to the NAR Board in July 2017 with two phases. Phase-1 was to send a team of one clergy and one lay couple to India in 2018 to present a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience to up to eight Indian couples. A proposed timeline was Mid-May of 2018..

The Board indicated excitement about the prospect of spreading Lutheran Marriage Encounter to a new country. At the same time there were expressions of concern regarding the scope of cultural differences and whether the western experience of Marriage Encounter could translate to a different culture. After an informal poll of Board members to determine if financial support for the proposal would be available the result was that at least 50% of the budget (Phase-1) proposed could be anticipated from new donations of support. The resulting NAR Board action was to approve Phase-1 of the Proposal with no more than \$6,200 coming from the DREAM Fund and the balance to be funded from future contributions. Phase-2 of the Proposal (Budgeted request \$11,500) was put on hold for future consideration depending on the outcomes from Phase-1.

The NAR Board approved a team consisting of Pastor Dan and Judy Teuscher and Dean and Marcia Redman to conduct delivery of Phase-1 of the proposal. An additional oversight committee including the Team and Pastor Ed and Emily Kast and Pastor Ted and Marty Hartman was set.

RESULTS

A proposed timeline was Mid-May of 2018. The NAR Board approved Phase-1 of the proposal with no more than 50% of the \$12,400 budget to come from the NAR DREAM Fund and an informal commitment of at least 50% of the funds as indicated by informal and anonymous pledges for support given by the NAR Board at the July 2017 meeting. The informal pledges indicated that as much as \$8,400 could be anticipated. . The NAR Board approved a team consisting of Pastor Dan and Judy Teuscher and Dean and Marcia Redman to conduct delivery of Phase-1 of the proposal. An additional oversight committee including the Team and Pastor Ed and Emily Kast and Pastor Ted and Marty Hartman was set.

Project budget.

We do not know details of Indian expenditures so only budget amount shown

	NAR Funds		India Funds
	Budget	Actual	Budget
Housing, meals, transportation presenting team	\$750	\$850	0
Airfare Presenting team+ trip insurance	\$10,000	4,754.59	0
Visa Application fees	0	\$307.52	0
Rental of presenting room			\$300
Sound system, projector			\$200
Meals during the Experience	\$300	\$346 (est)	\$200
Printing 10,000 brochures	\$ 0	\$461	0
Printing 100 workbooks	\$900	\$1,022	0
Lodging during Experience	\$450	\$461 (est)	\$250
Adjust for exchange rate actuals/ Misc expenses	NA	\$85.31	NA
Added for Nissy ticket	\$1,920	\$1,975.76	NA
TOTALS	\$14,320	\$10,263.18	\$950

NAR expenditures \$4,056.62 under budget

NAR Revenues were 538.99 above budget

Net finances \$4,595.61 unspent surplus from Phase-1

DREAM Fund Phase-1 financial status June 18, 2018 India Outreach			
7/15/2018	\$ 6,200.00	Budget	Budget allocation for INDIA from DREAM General
8/28/2017	\$ 6,738.99	Donations	\$6,738.99 non directed donations received
9/19/2017	\$ 1,500.00	Add-budget	Extra donation for Nissy ticket
9/21/2017	\$ (35.00)	DEBIT	DEBIT Nissy ticket to St. Weekend
9/22/2017	\$ (1,940.96)	DEBIT	DEBIT Nissy ticket to St. Weekend
12/31/2017	\$ 420.00	Add-budget	Extra donation for Nissy ticket
1/29/2018	\$ (3,838.44)	Ck 1259	Emirates Airfare reimburse Redmans
1/29/2018	\$ (685.92)	Ck 1259	Southwest airfare Reimburse Redmans
1/29/2018	\$ (230.13)	Ck 1259	Trip insurance Redman + Teuscher
2/22/2018	\$ (461.00)	DEBIT	\$450 + \$11 brochure printing
3/21/2018	\$ (307.52)	Ck 1273	Reimburse Redmans Indian visas (4 X \$76.88)
5/4/2018	\$ (1,022.00)	DEBIT	Workbook \$1,000 Printing \$22 West Union fee
5/8/2018	\$ (3,000.00)	withdrawl	DREAM-INDIA Cash for trip see deposit 5-24-18
5/24/2018	\$ 2,110.00	Deposit	Re-deposit unused cash funds
5/24/2018	\$ (334.24)	Ck 1285	Redmans ATM cash withdrawl in Rupees.
5/25/2018	\$ (518.17)	Ck 1284	Teuscher ATM cash withdrawl in Rupees.
surplus	\$ 4,595.61		Balance of revenues and expenses
We are not aware of any outstanding revenue or expenses for Phase-1 of this outreach. Remaining balance could be closed out and returned to the DREAM General fund balance. Or, it could be allocated to fund Phase-2 to assist Indians in presenting their own Experience			

The Team made the trip and presented a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience with eight couples and several pastors without spouses auditing the Experience for informational purposes. Six couples completed the Experience, three clergy and three lay couples. Due to various commitments three of the completing couples missed one or more presentations and the presenting team did workshops with each of these couples so they had all presentations completed. All six couples attended a Kick-Off-1 and each couple committed to the process of writing presentations and presenting their own Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience in May 2019. In order to move forward quickly the three clergy couples will divide the presentations they write as the lay couples will do.

The original budget for Phase-1 of \$12,400 (NAR portion) was amended by two directed donations totaling \$1,920 for Pr Subin's wife, Nissy to travel to America to attend an Experience in St. Louis. Unfortunately, Nissy's travel visa was not approved and her tickets and travel agent fee were non-refundable with a cost of \$1,975.96 and a net impact on the budget of -\$55.96. Non-directed donations for the budget were \$538.99 above the estimate of \$6,200. Expenditures for Phase-1 were \$8,287.42. This leaves a balance of \$4,595.61 of unspent funds for Phase-1 of the India Outreach.

The experience proved to be far more than we could have hoped. The Indian community, led by Pastor Subin Raj, had secured a facility, organized food, ordered weekend banners, and arranged transportation for those who needed it. Workbooks and brochures for distribution/inviting had been translated and ordered far ahead of the event.

Results Summary

Day 2 of our arrival in India we began meeting with Rev. Subin Raj to plan, organize and learn what had been accomplished thus far. Pastor Subin was instrumental in setting everything up in India because of his concern for clergy couples and for marriages of their congregants also. The stress for clergy and for the clergy's marriages was a prime concern.

This experience for the couples of India was different than anything they had ever known. Expressing their feelings was completely a new concept for them. With most being arranged marriages, they just accept the marriage and do not know it is possible to have a great, loving relationship. They rarely write - and certainly not a love letter to their spouse. In reality, there is not much "communication" in the relationship. They do not have any public display of affection or appear to have couple/family closeness. Whether lay or clergy, the man is the lead of the family and appeared to be the decision maker and definite head of the household. The clergy are expected to make the church their main concern with little concern for family. There is not any mingling at church as

a couple - the men sit on one side of the church and women sit on the other. The men go up for communion first and the women next.

This experience was Monday to Wednesday to avoid clergy being absent from their churches. There were a few "surprises" for the presenters - dinner the first evening and children present; and the biggest surprise - all did NOT speak English as we had been told, and there was concern as to how much they could actually understand of the talks.

The evening's supper was done with much confusion about money, purchasing the food to cook and the cooking which created a delay in beginning, (although supper was eventually served at 10PM).

The first evening began with a power outage - no electricity which meant no lights and no fans. The lights from cell phones and flash lights provided a little light for the presenters to begin and additional delay was created as candles were sought, lit, and passed out. Because of the language issue, the translated workbooks were to help explain the concepts, but in the dark they could not read their books.

Tuesday morning began with breakfast and a very slow gathering of the couples and the single Pastors who were present. Tea time at 11:00 took precedent and additional a delay in the schedule. The first writing to the spouse was met with much confusion and "laughter" as it was completely unfamiliar to them. Fortunately, Pastor Subin was able to translate and, although, there was much banter in the beginning, they did settle to quietly write for a very few minutes. Meeting with the spouse in their rooms appeared to be so very different for them that they couldn't accept it, however, the presenters made efforts to model the acceptable behavior. We did discover that with their "limited" writing and no prior knowledge about sharing feelings that we would shorten the writing time and dialogue time to 10/10 which we prayed would set the model of the 10/10 for the future.

Setting a time to return to the conference room presented another challenge as they are slow to return amid much conversation amongst themselves. When the time schedule was so far off we made a decision to shorten some of the stories in the talks and to focus more on the concept. Much of this "shortening was done "on-the-fly" to fit the information into the times available.

In the afternoon during what was to be a 40 minute break, most of the couples left the premise and went to the beach. It was a total surprise when we went to the conference room to present and realized the situation. Pastor Subin was very upset and concerned and left to retrieve them. Three hours later they returned. We then made a determination that we would need to rearrange some talks to get them all in in the allotted time of the experience (and our check-out time). With the help of Pastor Subin's

translation we were able to complete the evening talks and then met to decide on the next day's arrangement.

We made a decision to shorten the writing and dialogue time for the extended based on their lack of experience in writing and sharing, and the time schedule. It was the right decision as the couple's appeared to be more familiar with the procedure and not burdened by a long writing/sharing time.

Every talk was given so that the concepts were covered, however, many of the stories/examples were cut. We had finally realized that extended talk on our parts could be very taxing when your language is limited. On key points Pastor Subin translated and shared some of our stories in their language.

It wasn't until an open sharing time that we realized they were "getting" it. Pastor Subin began the sharing by translating and then calling on a couple different people to share. That opened the floodgates and the 7 minute sharing turned into 20 minutes or more of great sharing, soul searching and revelation for the couples. The clergy shared that they now understood the value of their marriage and family. It was a definite high for the whole experience!

There was no finance talk as each couple had been charged money ahead of time to help defray the costs and had also donated funds for different parts of the experience (i.e. renting the fans, sound system, food, etc) The journey talk was to inform them of the "journey group" that would be meeting and forming the next week. (It was well attended and Redmans gave a talk about sharing feelings, modeled a dialogue not only to reinforce that sharing of feelings concept but to model what a journey group would look like with a short presentation. Couples were given a question, had writing time and dialogue time)

Both before and after the experience there were meetings for organization, evaluation. We had 4 couples (2 lay and 2 clergy) attend the Kick off 1 and expressed their desires to become presenters. We met with 2 other couples who missed a particular talk and covered the concepts with them so they could fulfill the experience. We had another meeting with 1 lay couple and 1 clergy for Kick off 1 and they expressed interest in presenting. The 3 lay and 3 clergy couples are all to begin writing the self- talk and are to have it translated into English so that it can be workshopped in the US. We (Teuschers and Redmans left copies of their talks in hopes they can be helpful in their writing.

We were also elated to have a couple volunteer to be the finance couple and open a bank account for future monies and expenditures.

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS/observations

- **Before leaving we were advised that we didn't need any Indian Rupees. Upon arrival we found that incorrect as except for the presenter housing at Carol Stanish's we were expected to have Rupees. This was a huge challenge at the presentation site as we had to find an ATM to withdraw Rupees to pay for the food and facility costs. Due to daily withdrawal limits we had to use three different personal debit cards. It worked, but Monday's dinner was delayed because of lateness in getting funds. If Phase-2 is done the team will need to get Rupees!**
- **Recognize that they didn't easily understand spoken English but they could read written English with some comprehension.**
- **To establish a pattern that is unusual for their culture - writing and dialogues, except for Extended, should be 10/10. The Team believes this sets a pattern for all presentations and fits with Daily Dialogue. By observation, almost all individuals finished writing well ahead of ten minutes. The only exception was when all the women wrote for 15+ minutes following the Dulcinea sharing in Risk.**
- **If other dialogues are 10/10, the impact of extended would be more powerful. And, in the same concept, the writing and sharing of extended could be shortened. Our observation is that they won't focus for a 60/75. We recommend to shorten writing and sharing time of extended dialogue to perhaps 30/45 - or even 20/20.**
- **Shorten presentation lengths - lengthy storytelling is difficult when there is a language issue. Based on the open sharing we believe the couples true experience was in what they shared between themselves and not so much on the stories we told.**
- **Concepts are culturally different for them and a translator is essential for some key points.**
- **Recognize that their workbook is in their language and they can follow along. We should avoid reading passages in English if it is printed in their workbook in Malayalam. Perhaps their reading it orally would be beneficial.**
- **Powerpoint and sound system important! They can rent equipment**
- **Timing for tea time is a must 11AM and 4PM (slow to return to presentations after)**
- **Children were present but not a concern. They had their activities and did not disturb presentations. May have been more of a distractions for parents in time together, however, many would not have attended if they couldn't bring children. A care taker for the children was present.**

To take:

Colored markers, stapler, 3 hole punch, printer, own silverware, flashlights, hand fans, etc. Extra paper was inserted in the workbooks for dialogue, perhaps some notebooks for Journey group would be of value. (we were able to purchase there for 15 cents each.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1: Recognize the May 2018 Outreach as a valid Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience despite timelines for individual presentations, writing, and dialogue in variance with outlines. And, recognize six Indian couples (3 clergy and 3 lay couples) to engage the process of writing presentations for presenting Lutheran Marriage Encounter Experience in India using the Malayam language.
- 2: Conditionally approve Phase-2 of this project by applying unspent funds from Phase-1 plus additional funds to be allocated from the DREAM Fund and potential future contributions for the Project. The conditions to consider before final approval are how effectively the Indian presenters have prepared their talks. In order to make preparations for the follow up team to travel to India for Phase-2 the approval for should be done no later than the end of January, 2019.

REFERENCES

Raj, Subin 2014, Vocational Stress in Pastoral Ministry: Addressing the challenges faced by Indian Evangelical Lutheran Church Pastors. Pub. Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Kashmere Gate, Delhi, India

Appendix A

**Proposal to the NAR Board
India Mission Prayer schedule**

As a closing personal comment from the 4 of us - we are blessed to have been able to bring M.E. to India and we are blessed that the Indians are so excited for it to continue to improve their marriages and family life! They are willing to do the work that is needed to present another weekend in 2019.

INFORMATION REGARDING L.M.E. in TRIVANDRUM

Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend and Establishment of Community in Trivandrum

Location: Lutheran Community in Trivandrum, South India

Inviting Host: Lutheran Prayer Movement, Trivandrum

Date: 06/05/17

Statement of Need:

The India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) is the Church body that came about as a result of the work of LCMS missionaries in India from 1895-1956. In fact, the IELC is the first foreign mission of the LCMS and still struggles to address its own challenges and issues, and that of its church members. Especially in Trivandrum [the third mission station of LCMS work started in 1911...the other two being Ambur (started 1895) and Nagercoil (started 1907) respectively]; many church members have left the church criticizing it for not showing any concern for their daily life problems. Alongside, most of the believers who come to church are women, and men normally keep away from family and church responsibilities. Given the patriarchal nature of Indian society, many of the problems in families go unaddressed leading to stressful situations that then result in dysfunctional marriages and family households. This has led to a deteriorating of faith life and church membership. So, a group of Pastors and Laity in the Lutheran Church at Trivandrum have come together to form a platform called the Lutheran Prayer Movement (LPM) to address some of these important pastoral issues that touches the lives of ordinary believers in Trivandrum. This believer's group wants to facilitate the establishment of a community of committed Lutheran families that can promote healthy Christian values and empower families that will contribute to a healthy and faith-service oriented Lutheran Christian community in Trivandrum.

Project Objectives:

The beneficiaries of this project will be the Indian Lutheran believer and community in Trivandrum, South India. We request Lutheran Marriage Encounter to help the Lutheran community in Trivandrum by renewing and training Lutheran believers (both pastor and laity families) to live healthy God-pleasing marriages and family lives. Through such an experience and training, the Lutheran Prayer Movement (hosts) hopes to see the following:

- Indian Lutheran believers develop an awareness of the issues in their marriage that needs to be addressed.
- Indian Lutheran believers are empowered through the Lutheran Marriage Encounter's experience to have tools that can strengthen and enable a healthy God-pleasing marriage and family life.
- Encountered Lutheran believers will in-turn play an important role in the establishment of a healthy Lutheran community that would involve advocacy and recruiting of other Christian believers in the benefits of having healthy Christian families in Trivandrum.
- The overall movement that such training sets in motion will hopefully lead to healthy and functional families where God's love and power is visible and His name is praised in the wider community.

- This continuous process of training, equipping, and strengthening families would create a healthy support mechanism and gospel outreach opportunity for Lutheran Church ministry in a majority Hindu context.

Project in context of Church Ministry:

The encountering and resulting empowerment of Lutheran believers through Lutheran Marriage Encounter will hopefully awaken the believers to addressing problems in their own family unit and larger Christian community. Ever since the LCMS missionaries left Trivandrum in 1956, the IELC has turned in-ward to the point of completely forgetting its evangelistic call. As a result, the IELC has become a church body that is completely enmeshed in Church political conflicts and power struggle. The Church's call to make the Gospel message alive in the context of people's daily struggles and connect the redeemer Jesus Christ to their broken life condition has been sadly forgotten. Hopefully, through Lutheran Marriage Encounter, the Lutheran Church can display its Christian concern for the spiritual and holistic health of its members and thereby release the creative and service spirit of its members for the benefit of Church ministry.

Related Projects arising out of this Project:

A related consequence of this project could be a serious analysis of the public health of the participating community. Especially in a patriarchal culture like the one in India, the women and girl children are mostly at the receiving end of culture. The Lutheran Marriage Encounter ministry could end up invoking in the community, especially the Lutheran Church, the desire to address important problems and concerns faced by women and the larger Lutheran community. For instance, the necessity of having a Parish Nurse as an important support staff to the work of the pastor could be a consequent area of engagement. Another related possibility would be the establishment of an institution for holistic Family health and enrichment of pastors and their families. Lutheran Marriage Encounter could play a significant part in this. This could also include the establishment of a reading facility (Library) and a Family Wellness Center where families can come together for on-going study and growth in Christ and Christian values.

Project Constraints:

One of the constraints that such a training seminar will encounter is the awareness levels of what it means to have a healthy marriage. In a patriarchal culture like India, marriage is a "taken for granted" institution wherein husband and wife, and parents and children spend very little time with each other. Especially, the Pastor spends very little time with family and is primarily concerned with Church work, family visits, and house prayer meetings. Since these are considered the norm, it would take special effort to point out how lack of quality time invested in family relationships leads to dysfunctional individuals and family. This in turn results in believers being non-committed to serving as leaders and disciples in the Church.

Project Risks:

As mentioned before, the IELC in Trivandrum is caught in a Church political power struggle and this has affected Church ministry and growth. So, an important constraint would be to go through the Church power channels (not that it could not be done) and expect participation of

people in a spirit of ministry and service. So, an organization like the Lutheran Prayer Movement that stays away from Church political structure, will take the lead in hosting Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekends by inviting all interested parties to come and attend the sessions.

Project Expenses:

For the training of Indian Lutherans in Lutheran Marriage Encounter, the following initial Project expenses are foreseen:

Item	
Proposed Expenses	
• Stay, food, and transportation of 2 L.M.E. presenting couples from USA (for 7 days)	\$ 750.00 (NAR cost)
• Air flight for 2 couples	\$10,000.00 (NAR cost)
• Rental of Presentation room	\$ 300.00 (India cost)
• Sound system; Projector (If needed)	\$ 200.00 (India cost)
• Food for Weekend 5 meals 10 couples	\$ 300.00 (NAR cost)
	\$ 200.00 (India cost)
• Lodging for participants (3 day charge)	\$ 450.00 (NAR cost)
	\$ 250.00 (India cost)
• Translation and printing of 100 workbooks and Handouts	\$ 900.00 (NAR cost)
• If needed: follow-up visit by 2 USA couples for Presenting, Workshopping, planning, training, etc.	\$11,500.00 (NAR cost)

Primary Contact & Project In-Charge:

The primary contact and Project in-charge for the training of local Indian Lutheran believers in Trivandrum, South India, by Lutheran Marriage Encounter will be **Rev. Subin Raj**. Pastor Subin is an ordained Pastor of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church in Trivandrum and is presently studying for his PhD at Concordia Seminary, in S. Louis. He has served over 13 years in different Lutheran Churches in Trivandrum. He has his Master's in Pastoral Psychology and Counseling from India and is pursuing his Doctorate in the field of Practical Theology, focusing his research on the "Impact of Shame upon Dalit Lutherans in Trivandrum." (Dalits are the previously untouchable communities of India!). Pastor Subin is a founding member of the Lutheran Prayer Movement in Trivandrum and has contacts with Church workers from other denominations in Trivandrum including the Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Pentecostals,

etc. This places him in a unique and informed position to champion this project and advocate it in IELC circles and congregations. Also, as a person related to the Counseling field, he can be a valuable resource in organizing, translating materials, and strengthening this program in Trivandrum into the future.

Contact Information for Rev. Subin Raj: subinrv@gmail.com

Other Stakeholders:

If at all needed, the Lutheran Church power structure could be engaged in this outreach and training effort. The present administration in the IELC accepted by the LCMS has Rev. Y. Sukumaran from Trivandrum as Vice-President and Missions in-charge. If required, Rev. Sukumaran could be an additional advisor for this Project.

His contact information is: revsukumaran@gmail.com

How and When the Project can be started:

Rev. Subin Raj will be going back to India after submitting his PhD Proposal in December, 2017. On his return to India, Rev. Subin will start working on getting materials translated and printed and prepared for the first L.M.E. Weekend in May, 2018. The suggested activities and timeline for the Project are as follows:

Timeline Activity

July, 2017	Submit Proposal to the NAR Board of Lutheran Marriage encounter
July through November, 2017	Follow-up meetings between Rev Subin and LME Contacts for India
November, 2017	Rev Subin to attend LME Weekend in St. Louis, MO
December, 2017	Rev. Subin returns to India to begin preparation for 1st Marriage Encounter Weekend in Trivandrum
January through April, 2018	Marriage Encounter Workbook and handouts translated, Publicity, Preparations, and recruitment of couples and regular communication with USA contacts
May, 2018	1st Lutheran Marriage Encounter Training Session in Trivandrum

Initially we plan to have at least 10 couples attend our 1st Weekend and they in turn will participate in carrying further this ministry to hundreds of other families in the various Lutheran churches in Trivandrum. If we continue growing, we also hope to open this resource to other Christians and non-Christians in Trivandrum so that this is used as a Gospel outreach opportunity in our non-Christian majority neighborhood.

Our sincere thanks and gratefulness to Lutheran Marriage Encounter for allowing us to submit our humble request for training, help, and support.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Rev Dr. Stanish Stanley and Rev. Subin Raj

06/05/17

INDIA MISSION PROJECT

By **PASTOR DAN & JUDY TEUSCHER** and **DEAN & MARCIA REDMAN**

Pastor Dan and Judy Teuscher and Dean and Marcia Redman of North Carolina will be establishing Lutheran Marriage Encounter in southern India. This is in response to the pleading of Dr Stanish Stanley, an Indian pastor taking Advance Studies at Concordia Seminary. There is a desperate need for marriage education to help Indian pastors and wives and the marriages in their congregations. Their hope and prayer is that Marriage Encounter will have a profound effect on hurting marriages and families and be very instrumental in renewing the Church in India. They also want to have Marriage Encounter and Parish Nursing be powerful programs for reaching out to the community.

YOUR PRAYERS ARE VERY MUCH NEEDED AND APPRECIATED.

MONDAY, May 7: Depart STL at 3:50 pm to fly to Raleigh/Durham, NC. There we will meet up with our partners in this ministry, Dean and Marcia.

PRAYER: FOR GOOD FLYING WEATHER AND SAFE ARRIVAL OF US AND OUR LUGGAGE.

TUESDAY, May 8: We will adjust the clergy and lay presentations to the Indian culture and fine-tune the plan for establishing Marriage Encounter in southern India. **PRAYER; THAT GOD WILL GIVE THE FOUR OF US WISDOM AND SENSITIVITY TO THE CULTURE AND THE NEEDS OF THE INDIAN COUPLES.**

WEDNESDAY, May 9: Depart Raleigh/Durham at 6:18 pm to Boston. Depart Boston at 11:10 pm for arrival at Dubai on Thursday at 7:25 pm. **PRAYER: FOR GOOD FLYING WEATHER; THAT WE HAVE A SAFE AND COMFORTABLE FLIGHT; THAT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO SLEEP AND REST WELL; AND THAT CLEARING CUSTOMS WOULD BE TROUBLE FREE.**

THURSDAY, May 10: Depart from Dubai at 9:35 pm for arrival at Thiruvananthapuram on Friday at 3:20 am. **PRAYER; THAT ALL OF OUR LUGGAGE ARRIVES SAFELY; THAT THERE BE NO COMPLICATIONS GOING THROUGH CUSTOMS; THAT OUR DRIVERS WILL BE AT THE AIRPORT TO MEET US; THAT WE WILL NOT BE TOO MUCH OF A BURDEN FOR OUR HOST.**

FRIDAY, SATURDAY, May 11,12: We will spend these two days getting to know our host, orientating to time and our new surroundings, resting and meeting up with Pastor Subin Raj, the coordinating person for Lutheran Marriage Encounter in India. **PRAYER: THAT FATIGUE AND EXHAUSTION WILL NOT BE AN ISSUE FOR US; THAT OUR INITIAL CONTACTS AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WILL GO WELL AND THAT THE UP-TO-DATE REPORT FROM PASTOR RAJ WOULD BE MOST POSITIVE.**

SUNDAY, May 13: We will be attending worship with our host. It is customary and expected that a visiting pastor outside of India will preach. **PRAYER: THAT WE WOULD HAVE OPEN HEARTS AND MINDS AS WE WORSHIP IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT CULTURE AND LANGUAGE.** (Women and children sit on one side of the church and men sit on the other side.) **PLEASE PRAY THAT OUR PRESENCE AND MESSAGE WILL BE A GREAT BLESSING AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR REIGNITING MINISTRY AND REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY; THAT MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS MAY BE ESTABLISHED WITH MORE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION.**

MONDAY, MAY14: This will be a day of preparation for presenting the Marriage Encounter Experience. **PRAYER: THAT OUR PREPARATIONS FOR THE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER EXPERIENCE WILL GO WELL; THAT ALL THE TRANSLATIONS AND PRINTING MAY BE COMPLETE AND ALL THE NEEDED MATERIALS WILL BE ACQUIRED AND PRESENT.**

TUESDAY, May 15: The Marriage Encounter Experience begins today and lasts through late Thursday afternoon. **PRAYER: THAT THE FACILITY FOR OUR ENCOUNTER EXPERIENCE MAY WORK OUT WELL; THAT WE WOULD HAVE FULL ATTENDANCE; THAT THE COUPLES WOULD COME WITH OPEN HEARTS AND MINDS AND BE READY TO LEARN HOW TO HAVE AN INTIMATE AND JOY-FILLED MARRIAGE.**

WEDNESDAY 16: The second day of the Encounter Experience is a long and intense day for the couples as they discover more about themselves and each other. **PRAYER: THAT THE COUPLES MAY DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THEMSELVES AND EACH OTHER; THAT THEY LEARN HOW TO SHARE THEIR FEELINGS, TO LISTEN TO EACH OTHER, LEARN HOW TO LIVE GOD'S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE, AND HOW TO TRULY EXPRESS THEIR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.**

THURSDAY, MAY 17: **PRAYER: PLEASE PRAY THAT THE COUPLES WILL GROW IN THEIR OWN RELATIONSHIP AND HAVE A COMPELLING DESIRE TO REACH OUT TO OTHER COUPLES AND PERSONS TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE. ASK GOD TO GIVE THEM THE DESIRE AND COMMITMENT TO WORK ON THEIR RELATIONSHIP EACH DAY. PRAY ALSO, THAT OUR LORD WILL RAISE UP SEVERAL CLERGY AND LAY COUPLES WHO WILL COMMIT THEMSELVES TO BECOME PRESENTERS AND TAKE ON LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR ESTABLISHING LUTHERAN MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER IN INDIA.**

FRIDAY, May 18: This may be a day of rest, meeting with couples who plan to take on greater involvement in the ministry of Marriage Encounter, and working on details for establishing Marriage Encounter in India. **PRAYER: PLEASE PRAY THAT GOD WILL RAISE UP WILLING COUPLES WITH VISION AND COMMITMENT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN LEADERSHIP ROLES.**

SATURDAY, May 19: We will hold a workshop for the Lay couples who have committed to become presenters. We will help them to better understand the concepts of the Encounter presentations and start on their writing and development of their Talks. **PRAYER: PRAY FOR THEIR FULL COOPERATION, UNDERSTANDING AND WILLINGNESS TO DIG DEEPLY INTO THEIR RELATIONSHIP SO THAT THEIR FUTURE PRESENTATIONS WILL BE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE.**

SUNDAY, MAY 20: PRAYER: THAT OUR PRESENCE AND MESSAGE AT THEIR WORSHIP SERVICE WILL NOT BE A DISTRACTION BUT A BLESSING AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THEM TO BROADEN THEIR MINISTRY AND REACH OUT TO THEIR COMMUNITY MORE EFFECTIVELY.

MONDAY, MAY 21: We will meet with several clergy couples who commit to becoming presenters and help them get started in writing their presentations. **PRAYER: THAT THE CLERGY COUPLES WILL BE OPEN, UNDERSTANDING AND WILLING TO SHARE DEEPLY IN THEIR PRESENTATIONS. PRAY THAT THEY WILL HAVE A BURNING DESIRE AND COMMITMENT TO MOVE THE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER MINISTRY FORWARD IN INDIA.**

TUESDAY, May 22: Per the request of some of the Indian pastors, Pastor and Judy have been asked to share the Parish Nurse program and various ways to revitalize their churches and reach out to the community. We will meet with interested pastors and lay members of the congregations. **PRAYER: PLEASE PRAY THAT OUR LAST FULL DAY WILL BE VERY PRODUCTIVE AND MOST HELPFUL TOWARDS REVITALIZING THE CONGREGATIONS AND THEIR MINISTRY VIA LUTHERAN MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER AND OTHER AVENUES THEY MAY BE LED TO CHOOSE.**

WEDNESDAY, May 23: Depart Thiruvananthapuram at 4:35 pm flying to Dubai and then on to New York. We continue on to Raleigh/Durham, NC. **PRAYER: PLEASE PRAY FOR GOOD FLYING WEATHER; A SAFE AND COMFORTABLE FLIGHT; THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO SLEEP AND REST WELL; THAT CLEARING CUSTOMS WILL BE TROUBLE-FREE; THAT WE AND OUR LUGGAGE WILL ARRIVE SAFELY.**

THURSDAY, May 24: PRAYER: THAT THIS WILL BE A DAY OF REST AND ACCLAMATION TO THE U.S.; PRAY FOR A SAFE JOURNEY ARRIVING IN ST LOUIS AT 8:35 PM.

Upon our return, we look forward to thanking you for your prayers and also sharing and celebrating the many wonderful experiences God will provide throughout our mission journey.