

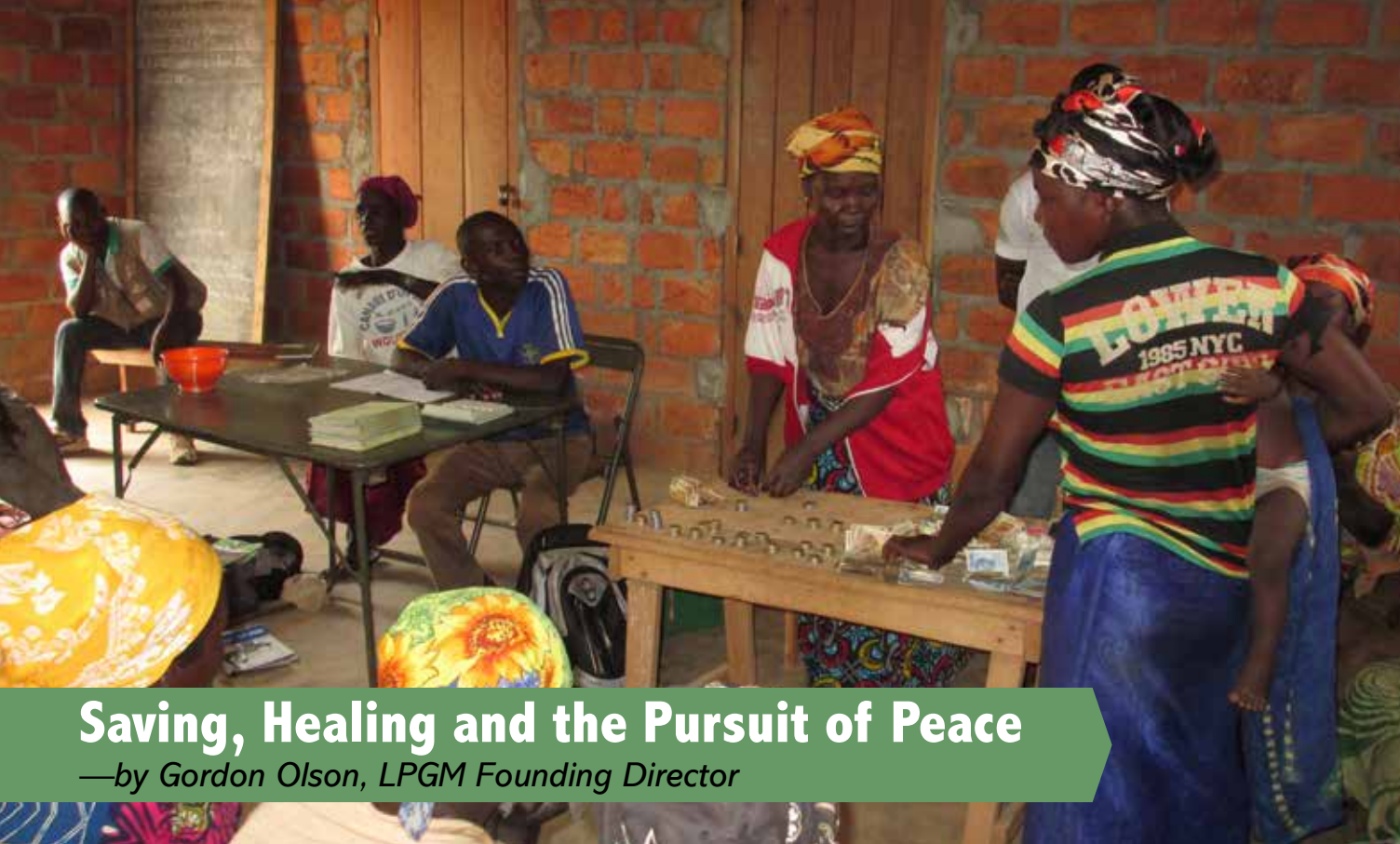


lutheran
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MINUTE^{FOR} MISSION

Volume 21, Issue 3
Summer 2016



Saving, Healing and the Pursuit of Peace

—by Gordon Olson, LPGM Founding Director

Gordon Olson and Llewellyn Hille represented LPGM in CAR in April 2016. After more than 2 years of conflict, peace is finally settling in and life for the population is getting back to normal. The LPGM-supported Village Savings program, under the direction of the Lutheran Church of CAR, now has over 12,000 members. You can help us by donating to LPGM today.

Twenty women and one man gathered in a tiny thatched roof mud hut with a dirt floor, going through their weekly ritual that has become commonplace in several remote villages. This meeting of a village savings group has been in existence for only a few months. Just two years before, a band of Seleka fighters ravaged their town, burning homes and stealing anything of value. Villagers fled for their lives. Now, a semblance of peace has come to the area, many houses have been rebuilt, and many, but not all, have returned to resume “normal” life.

In this group, every member is expected to save a minimum of 500CFA each week – the equivalent of ~ 90 cents. But some have worked hard and saved two or three times or even 5 times that much. Each member is expected to also contribute a small amount – perhaps 18 cents – to a “solidarity” fund reserved for helping members of the group who have a special medical or personal need. The group looks out for each other.

I thought of the recent conflict and its devastating impacts on whole communities. But then I saw the strength of this group and how they support one other. We are here to find ways to promote peace. But these groups have already been promoting peace and have done so for some time. I am convinced that the functioning of these savings groups, with the bond and discipline they promote, have been very influential in bringing life back to some normalcy. Yes, there are wounds. Yes, there are still scars. But healing is taking place. Some healing will take a long time. But these small, cohesive village groups are speeding up the process.

We may think we are contributing to peace by being present. But our presence only encourages a natural and lasting method for peace and reconciliation that is already taking place.

2016 Guatemala Trip Reflections

—by Julie Rogness, LPGM Executive Director



“...we were one group, some from a rural village and some from a big city.”



I was deeply moved by our travel group, the many people we met, including the Cahills, founders of the Community Cloud Forest Conservation (CCFC). I experienced all that LPGM is about through this trip – the power of education, empowerment of women, transformational travel, and collaborative impact with our CCFC partners.

As the students learned more about the vital need to protect the Cloud Forest, I found myself a student and planting trees to keep the Cloud Forest renewed. As I watched young

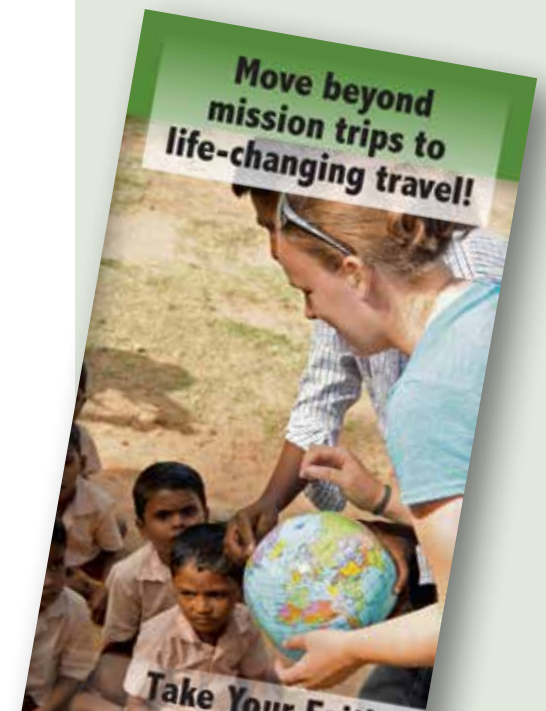
women empowered to understand and use new nutritional sustainable food sources, I found myself fed by their very hands at every meal. Our group was transformed before my eyes when our youngest traveler joined hands with a girl from the village school. Later, we were one group, some from a rural village and some from a big city.

LPGM is blessed by this partnership with CCFC. Next year, join us on one of our trips to CCFC in Guatemala. More information can be found in our latest Transformational Travel Brochure online and also available in print upon request.



Join Us in 2017 for a Transformational Travel Opportunity!

We're proud to share our latest 2017 Travel Brochure, which outlines our transformational travel opportunities in 2017. Please consider joining a group to India or Guatemala in 2017! There is so much to experience and share about our work in these two locations, and we look forward to deepening our partnerships overseas and creating new partnerships as new groups travel with us.





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LPGM to Honor Legacy Circle Donors on August 23rd at 11:30 a.m.

We're both humbled and proud to share that over 20 individuals have self-selected to join Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry's newly established Legacy Circle.

The Legacy Circle is being established to honor and recognize individuals who have included LPGM in their estate plans. We want to gather and honor these generous individuals at an inaugural luncheon at our LPGM offices on Tuesday, August 23rd, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. We look forward to sharing stories over lunch that will be provided as well as a short presentation by Julie Rogness, LPGM Executive Director, and Valerie Aas, LPGM Development and Communications Director. Betsy Thayer, a long-time LPGM Board Member and Financial Consultant at Thrivent Financial will also be present to answer questions.

Please join us on August 23rd! Invitations have been sent out to those who've already identified LPGM in their will or estate plans. Donors intending to identify LPGM in their planned giving are also welcome to attend. **Please RSVP by calling Valerie at 612.823.5058 or emailing her at valerie@lutheranpartners.org.** Forms will be available to those interested in acknowledging LPGM in their estate giving plans.

Special Contributions made between 4.1.16 and 6.30.16

IN MEMORY OF / *Remembered by*
LORRAINE BUNDY / *Donna Piehl and Katie & Rich Piehl*
RED EIDE / *Paul Johnson*
MEL GEORGE / *Betty & Gordon Olson*
DAN JOHNSON / *Paul Johnson*
FRANK OJILE / *Corinne, Dan, Peter & Bekah Engstrand*
DICK RUSSELL / *Marion Cunnington and Delores Randby and Anne & Doug Westby*
JOYCE SPECTOR / *Rosemary & Jim Dean*

IN HONOR OF / *Recognized by*
KANAO HAYAKAWA / *David & Inez Baskerville*
JANE KOONS / *Linda Miller & Keith Syfert*
GORDON & BETTY OLSON / *Judy & Jim Fogdall and Janet Peterson*