

PIGS FOR PASTORS

By Douglas Schoelles

Ideas From Churches, August 2023



St. John's Lutheran Church - Lake Township (NALC), located in farmland just outside Ft. Wayne, Indiana, has a long history of supporting servant projects and missionary work throughout the world. We see servant outreach as a key aspect of our disciple making process.

Come be transformed by the story of Jesus

At St. John's, our goal is to share our faith in Christ in ways that are real and relevant to your life.

We believe the age-old truths of the Bible are especially meaningful today. The worship, music and teachings at St. John's all work together to explore this ancient mystery and connect the Good News about Jesus to your daily life.

St. John's Lutheran Church – Lake Township, Fort Wayne, IN



Pastor Thomas Thorstad

After Pastor Thomas Thorstad (First Lutheran, Kirkland, Illinois) introduced me to the bishop of the Laos Evangelical Church last year, I have been looking for a way to support Lutheran trained pastors there. Pastor Thorstad, who served as a Bible translator there, said most pastors must supplement their income.



Map of Laos

Even though Laos in Southeast Asia is a communist nation and predominately Buddhist, the Christian faith is spreading. Through Awakening Lives to World Missions (ALWM) we worked to help support a pastor and his congregation in Laos.

The cost of living for an average-sized family is around \$500/month, but the average salary of a pastor in Laos is only around \$100/month. Most pastors are bi-vocational, which limits the amount of work they can do to grow disciples and their congregations. ALWM is working with the Laos Evangelical Church to help provide capital for pastors to have small pig farms that can supplement the pastor's income. This creates a recurring income for the pastor's family.

PIGS FOR PASTORS



- Goal to raise \$1900-2000
- Buys shelter, sow, 10 piglets and feed.
- For Pastor to have small pig farm to support his family.



A small pig farm costs around \$1,900 - \$2,000: to build a shed enclosure, purchase a sow and 10 piglets, and the feed for the first six months. Everything they need to launch a business that will provide a steady income as they serve the Lord!

We supported Pastor King, who pastors a congregation and serves as president of Phonsavan province, supervising at least 20 other congregations. He graduated from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. He and his wife converted to the Christian faith as young teenagers. They have two children. Pastoring since 2013, he plans to complete a doctoral process in order to train other pastors in Laos. They hope to build a provincial training center at his church to raise up evangelists and lay pastors.

At St. John's NALC, we do a different mission emphasis for each month for the entire month. We announce the mission focus each Sunday. We provide a half-page handout the first Sunday. We set up a table with a display board to explain the project with an emphasis on large pictures.

We always try to find a project that has a clear definition and goal so our people can clearly understand what we are supporting. I came up with the title, Pigs For Pastors, that was catchy and clear about the purpose of the project.

For Pigs For Pastors, we got a 9" plastic piggy bank for the table. You could put out other toy pigs or plush toy pigs. We raised \$1,900 our first time doing this. We plan to make this an annual project. We would like to get about 100 miniature piggy banks with the ALWM logo that we could re-use every year.





Rev. Bill Moberly (ALWM) says this “Pigs for Pastors” program, replicated across 25 to 50 congregations, could have a huge impact. We are excited about the potential to provide support to more and more pastors in Laos! If you would like to help, go to: <https://donorbox.org/pigs-for-pastors-laos>

For Bulletin inserts, a power point slide, and our downloadable 'Pigs for Pastors' video, visit: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Z_GRtBRmUFF74AALSfiQmbJkEfwIY8jn?usp=sharing

Rev. Dr. Douglas Schoelles

After 30 years of ministry, Pastor Douglas is more excited than ever about reaching people with the Gospel and seeing the life transforming power of the Holy Spirit as people grow as disciples. He has served congregations in Texas, California and now Indiana. He podcasts the **Daily Plunge**.