Dear Friends of Madagascar Mission,

With all of the talk about how the new tax law will affect charitable giving, I have been thinking about Why Do Christians Give?

As Christians we have better reasons to give than just to receive a tax break. The news reports about the new tax law have confused the issue. My financial sources tell me: It is not that the new rules scale back the tax benefits of donating to charity. It is that many taxpayers may find it makes more sense not to claim them now that the standard deduction has been significantly increased. Giving to charity is valuable for reasons that go beyond the tax benefits.

So, why do Christians give? We believe that we have received the greatest gifts from a loving, caring God: We are created in the IMAGE OF GOD! We, though sinful and rebellious, have a God who constantly REACHES OUT TO LOVE US! And not only does God seek to find us, God FORGIVES US! God claims us as a CHILD OF GOD! God did all of this through sending his Son, Jesus Christ, to GIVE US THE GIFT OF SALVATION!

That’s what God has done for you and me. Martin Luther thus reflects upon how we should respond in the Small Catechism in the explanation of the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed: “Therefore, I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey him.”

I have always taught that Christian giving includes the “3 T’s (Time - Talent - Treasure)”. In these ways, every Christian is able give thanks for God’s gift to us. There is no score keeping with our giving, our giving does not earn us our salvation. The motto for Christian giving is: “Not equal gifts, but equal commitment”.

This is important to remember as we plan our charitable giving in 2018. How blessed each of us will be when we give to the mission and ministry of the church! May this Annual Report thank you for your past year’s giving and inspire you to continue your support!

PEACE IN CHRIST!

The Rev. David P. Lerseth


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A confirmation worship service at a women's prison
Prison Ministry Program

Psalm 118:5 - “Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free.”

Total 2017 Financial Support Sent: $46,500.00 plus $6,440 in extra budget gifts

TOTAL 2018 FINANCIAL SUPPORT BUDGET: $48,000.00

The Prison Ministry Program currently works in 12 prisons and is the largest recipient of financial support from FOMM. There are 80 prisons in Madagascar. The Malagasy government Ministry of Justice stated, “We beg you to begin work in more prisons.” To expand this ministry FOMM will need to raise additional funds as the cost to start and maintain a prison ministry is $3,000.00 per year.

In 2018 we are beginning a Prison Ministry Sponsorship Program with the goal to raise more funds for the Prison Ministry Fund. To provide full support for a Prison Ministry Program site, just like the Evangelist Sponsorship Program, we are asking for a gift of $3,000.00 per year for full support or partial gifts of $600.00 for one-fifth support. Donors will then receive a photo from the prison to which their sponsorship has been assigned. A donor may give a gift by the month, quarterly, semiannually or annually. Smaller gifts will also be welcomed.

In 2017 FOMM provided a gift of money to begin a Vocational Training Program within the prisons. The Madagascar government Ministry of Justice does not provide such programming. The idea was warmly accepted by the Ministry of Justice and the program is working well. We have received items made through this Vocational Training Program, pictured below. If you would like to know how you may participate in this program, please call FOMM at 847-445-8177 or email at FriendsOfMadagascarMission@gmail.com.

A child is baptized in the women’s prison. The woman have their children with them.

Items made by the Prison Ministry Vocational Program, available for purchase.

Coming in 2018, a recording of the prison choirs, called “The Freedom Singers!” will be available to all Prison Ministry donors.
Bible School Program

Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

**Total 2017 Financial Support Sent: $30,500.00**

**TOTAL 2018 FINANCIAL SUPPORT BUDGET:**

$30,500.00

Friends of Madagascar supports three Bible Schools in the three synods where FOMM supports evangelists.

1) **Mananovy:** + 21 students and 3 teachers  
   + The school is working to become self-reliant. They have purchased land to raise cash crops.

2) **Manasoa:** + 25 students (3 are women) and 7 teachers and staff members  
   + A Drip Irrigation Teaching Center will be developed at the school in 2018 (See page 5).  
   + An internship program assigns students to preach in the remote areas of the synod.

3) **Manatantely:** + 14 students and 6 teachers  
   + The school has land for raising crops and raising livestock. They sell these commodities to support the budget of the school.

After two years of study and graduating from the Bible School, these students are assigned to a group of villages where they live and preach/teach the Gospel.

Evangelist Program

Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

**Total 2017 Financial Support: $26,450.00**

**TOTAL 2018 FINANCIAL SUPPORT NEEDED: $30,100 Budgeted**

($4,200.00 for additional evangelists has been requested by the Fort Dauphin Synod)

Currently Friends of Madagascar Mission supports 43 evangelists in three synods. There are individuals, families and congregations who give $600 per year for their salary, plus an extra $100 per year for their continuing education. What does an evangelist do? They visit numerous villages, teach, preach and minister to the people with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Two good examples about FOMM evangelist’s work can be read on our web site under “Updates and Prayer Items” www.MadagascarMission.org “Report of Visiting to Nagnasoa and Ampitroara (November 29, 2017) and Madagascar Pentecost Event (May 19, 2017).

The program will expand as new donors join in support the Evangelist Program. Donors may provide the sponsorship monthly, quarterly, semiannual or a one-time annual gift. Where else may you support a missionary for $600 a year?
Ejeda Nutrition Program and Good/Medical Emergency Fund

I John 3:17-18 "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."

Total 2017 Financial Support Sent: $8,400.00 (FOOD)

TOTAL 2018 FINANCIAL SUPPORT BUDGET: $8,400.00 and $5,000.00 for the Emergency Medical and Food Program

Ejeda Hospital is located in the arid far South West region of Madagascar. It is a “mission hospital” which means it started to bear witness to the Christian Faith in their caring for the medical and physical needs of the people.

The proud Mahafaly people surrounding Ejeda Hospital frequently suffer from extreme drought and famine. National Public Radio recently described this region as frequently “on the brink of famine.” Here is what you need to know about this area of Madagascar:

- In just one year, the number of hungry people in Madagascar jumped from 86,000 to 840,000 — that’s a 900% increase.
- Ninety percent of the country’s southern region lives under the poverty line. Forty percent of children are facing malnutrition. Even before the drought, Madagascar had the fifth-highest child stunting rate in the world.
- Agricultural production this year was 90 percent to 95 percent lower than usual. Most people in the country are small-scale farmers who tend to grow corn, cassava and rice. This year’s harvest was so bad that the lean season—the time of year when food runs scarce—began much earlier in September.
- Nearly one-third of households have pulled their children out of primary school to cope with the ongoing drought. “They use their children to go to the forest to look for fruits and cactus flowers and leaves,” says Jeanluc Siblot, the emergency coordinator for the World Food Programme (WFP) in Madagascar.
- According to a new WFP study, Madagascar is losing 14.5 percent of its GDP through the effects of hunger and child malnutrition, making it one of the worst-hit countries of ten countries that WFP has surveyed so far about the cost of hunger.
- If farmers can’t successfully plant crops in the next few weeks, families will have to rely on food assistance through 2018.

In the midst of these conditions, Ejeda Hospital serves and ministers to patients who have no money or food. (In Africa the family must provide food for the patients.) FOMM’s assistance with the Nutrition and the Emergency Medical and Food Program provides for those who need medical attention but do not have any money. (See Page 5 for the story of FOMM beginning a Drip Irrigation Program at Ejeda.)

A family receives their allotment of rice and a protein for their family member who is in the hospital.
Drip Irrigation Program

Matthew 25:38-40 – “And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? 39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? 40 And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

Total 2017 Financial Support: $4,550.00 as of December 31, 2017 from receipts over the past several years.

TOTAL 2018 FINANCIAL SUPPORT NEEDED: $10,000.00

For the past several years FOMM has been working to develop a Drip Irrigation Program in South West Madagascar, particularly in the Ejeda and Manasoa area. In early January of 2017 a Drip Irrigation Task Force was formed to develop this program. Those serving on the task force: Matt Ellingson (Frontier Irrigation Company), Loren Morschen (architect, former Madagascar missionary and former director of Sharing Hope Water Project), Andry Ranaivoson (Hydrologist with the State of Minnesota/University) and David Lerseth (Friends of Madagascar Mission, President/Executive Director). A special thank you to this group for their excellent work.

Through the efforts a plan of operation was developed; a Madagascar company, Patrakala, was hired to be the National Coordinator to manage the training and supply the equipment. Two centers have been established, Ejeda Hospital and Manasoa Bible School, to train local residents how to grow enough food for their family throughout the year, even during the times of drought. Patrakala will also do the follow-up management of the program.

A copy of the Drip Irrigation Program description is posted on the FOMM website: www.MadagascarMission.org

![A diagram of how the drip irrigation system works. Nothing fancy, simply gravity flow to each plant.](image)

People come to see how a drip irrigation system works. We pray that this program will feed many people during the dry times in south west Madagascar.
The Printing of the Tandroy Bible and Hymnal

Romans 10:17 “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

Total 2017 Financial Support: $84,379.00 (Total as of December 31, 2017)

TOTAL 2018 FINANCIAL SUPPORT NEEDED: $20,000.00

For sixteen years Steve Lellelid has been translating the Bible into the Tandroy dialect (pronounced Andruy). It has been a passion of determination to provide the Tandroy people with the Gospel message. The Tandroy are a traditional nomadic ethnic group of Madagascar who inhabit the arid southern part of the country and are an illiterate society. The name Tandroy literally means “People of the Thorn Bush”. They have always lived in relative isolation from the rest of Madagascar and have rejected the official Malagasy language.

The translation has been completed for two years, but as we wait to find a place to have the Bibles printed with quality paper and printing at a reasonable price; Steve continues to read through the Tandroy Bible and makes improvements to the translation. We have been working with the China Christian Council to do the printing in Nanjing, China. It has become difficult to finalize a printing quote. In January, Pastor Lerseth received news of a Christian printing company in Kerala, India who expressed interest in doing the printing. We are now waiting for a quote from them.

The plan is to have 20,000 Bibles printed and a lesser number of hymnals. To keep informed, please check the FOMM web site for updates at: www.MadagascarMission.org

FOMM has a new program called The Ambassadors. They are a group of individuals located across the USA who represent FOMM in telling the story, encouraging support, helping to maintain a relationship with FOMM and encouraging people to visit Madagascar. They will accomplish this support through daily contacts, a planned visit, sending an email, writing a letter, making a phone call, etc. If you are interested in being an Ambassador, please contact FOMM.
Special Giving in 2017

1. Thrivent Choice Dollars $1,151.00
2. Memorial and In Honor Gifts (January through August 2017) $3,195.00
   (Details of these gifts were printed in the Fall FOMM Newsletter)
3. Remembrance Gifts (September through December 2017) $1,687.20

   In Memory Of
   Joanne Toso
   Pete, Catherine and Joan Darchuk
   Rodney Voss
   Amy Langeland
   Marlayne Domyahn
   Bertram Brown

   Given By
   Kim Dolan
   Arlys Zieske
   Luann Keifer
   David and Diane Lerseth
   Kirsten and Jeff Schlicht
   Luann Keifer
   David and Diane Lerseth

4. Easter Appeal $2,075.00
5. Christmas Appeal $18,251.00
6. FOMM's Endowment Program Interest earned in 2017 $11,467.01

TOTAL SPECIAL GIVING GIFTS IN 2017 $37,826.21

Report of FOMM's Endowment Program
January 1, 2017 Balance forward $85,110.83
2017 Receipts: Judith Kidd Estate $8,470.16
                                       FOMM Donor $3,000.00
                                       2017 Investment performance $11,467.01
                                       As of December 31, 2017 Total $108,048.00

2017 Thrivent Choice Dollars
Individuals who have qualifying Thrivent products will accumulate Choice Dollars. Members have until March 31, 2018 to designate any remaining 2017 Choice Dollars. If you qualify, please consider designating them to Friends of Madagascar Mission (FOMM). Visit www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 1-800-847-4836.

Friends of Madagascar Mission Endowment Fund
We invite you to consider leaving a legacy gift to FOMM that will provide income each year for mission and ministry in Madagascar. Consult with your financial manager about how to make a gift.

Charitable IRA Distribution: If you have an IRA and are age 70 ½ or older, you may make your required minimum distribution by giving it directly to FOMM without any tax consequences to you or FOMM. Consult with your tax advisor to take advantage of this opportunity to support Friends of Madagascar Mission.
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!
The Rev. David P. Lerseth

2017 Annual Report

WAYS TO SUPPORT FRIENDS OF MADAGASCAR MISSION (FOMM)

• Charitable IRA Distributions: If you have an IRA and you like the idea of saving taxes and supporting FOMM, you may give an IRA rollover gift that does not count as taxable income. Contact your financial adviser for details on how you may make this gift.

• Thrivent Choice Dollars: Dollars If you have qualifying Thrivent annuities and/or insurance products, you will accumulate Choice Dollars to designate to FOMM. Call 1-800-847-4836 or visit www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice on how to designate these gifts to FOMM.

• FOMM’s Endowment Fund: The total in our endowment fund as of June 30, 2017 is $100,022.97. Gifts of any size will help support and strengthen our mission and ministry.

YOUR GIFT MEANS WE CAN CONTINUE TO EXPAND GOD’S MISSION IN MADAGASCAR.

YES, I WISH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH A GIFT OF … (Circle one) $6.00 $26.00 $101.00 OTHER AMOUNT $__________

Name_________________________________________ Email ____________________________
Address_________________________________________ City ___________________________ State ______ Zip________

☐ I have enclosed a check
☐ I have made a gift on FOMM’s website
☐ I would like to make a gift to FOMM’s Endowment Fund
☐ I would like receive information about making a gift from my IRA, will or estate.

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