

GARNERING SUPPORT FOR A NEW MISSIONARY FROM OUR LOCAL AREA

RICHARD SARKER

We on the LSS Global Missions Committee have committed to sponsoring missionary Richard Sarker, who currently has no sponsors.

WHY? We have a responsibility to support missionaries, especially such a devoted, talented local synod resident (from Ephrata)

HIS AREA OF SERVICE: Asia Pacific (India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal)

DATE SERVICE BEGAN: July, 2008

HIS WORK INVOLVES: regional representative for the health, education, and sustainable development programs

HIS CALL: Having been born in Bangladesh, he is no stranger to poverty. "I can respond to God's grace by working with people who are suffering from hunger, poverty, malnutrition, oppression, and injustice."

EXCERPTS FROM AN E-MAIL 10/27 FROM INDIA: "The people here are poor but they are very rich in spirit."

"God sent me for a specific purpose: to live among them, walk with them, learn from them, and be a part of their community to find ways to address common concerns and together do what God has commanded us to do."

READ: "*GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH RICHARD SARKER*" on the synod website -- <http://www.lss-elca.org/> -- for biographical and information from him on the field. This could be used as a bulletin insert or newsletter article for churches.

WHAT IS NEEDED? "I ask for prayers from everyone so that I can be faithful to fulfill God's mission to me in this world. I pray that God will walk with me in my new journey and guide me to fulfill my dreams."

OUR RESPONSIBILITY: It takes \$40,000 a year to cover the expenses of a single missionary. If family members join him or her, costs rise exponentially.

PLEASE prayerfully consider helping to sponsor this missionary from our local synod.

HOW CAN I HELP? Write a check of any size to your congregation OR to *Lower Susquehanna Synod*, 900 South Arlington Avenue Suite 208, Harrisburg, PA 17109. Clearly note on the memo line of your check: *Synod Missionary Sponsorship – Richard Sarker*

INTERESTED IN YOUR CONGREGATION FORMING A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP TO SUPPORT RICHARD? For information about this, or any other questions, e-mail Joyce Saeger at joycesaeger@verizon.net or Caroline Sheaffer at cjs12@comcast.net .

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GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH RICHARD SARKER

FAMILY STATUS: Married with two grown children, Jonathan and David

BIRTHDAY: January 26

AS A YOUTH: Richard grew up in poverty in Bangladesh – “I struggled financially as a child to finish elementary, high school, and college education. . . . both my parents worked very hard to make ends meet . . . my understanding and empathy for the poor goes beyond mere theory.”



EDUCATION: B.A. Political Science, Economics, and Islamic History, Dhaka University, Dhaka, Bangladesh; MBA, London International, London, England

EXPERIENCE: a wide range of managerial and administrative positions in various areas (*i.e.* Ten Thousand Villages in Ephrata; UN Development/World Food Development in Bangladesh)

AREA OF SERVICE: Asia-Pacific Region

GOALS: • Building relationships with local communities and churches, particularly to bring sustainable projects that improve people’s lives (health, education)
• Strengthen leadership roles within the church communities
• Assist during times of natural disasters and coordinating ELCA Global Mission response

OBSERVATIONS FROM HIM IN FIRST TWO MONTHS: In India Richard has spent much time supporting the Bible Women Groups who seem to have a voice in the Christian community there. In addition to preaching the “Good News” and visiting the homes of inquirers, they are dealing with issues such as the women’s role in the family and church, women’s health and economic issues, and atrocities against women.

He notes that, due to the caste system in the country, there may be two Lutheran Churches within 500 feet of each other!

HIS BELIEF: “I believe that all we have – our talents, wealth, good health, and happiness – comes from God. Christ’s teaching is a big motivator for me to go serve His people no matter where they are.”

HIS PRAYER: “Dear Lord, ‘Here I am, send me.’”

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