

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

Inspired to a Life of Service in God's Name

As Laura Stephenson sat in a traffic jam in Denver, a billboard caught her eye.

The enormous sign featured two loaves of bread shaped like a cross and read: \$20 million to feed the hungry ... Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) ... God's work. Our hands.



Laura, a member of Atonement Lutheran Church in Boulder, Colo., had been considering mission work for some time. But after seeing that billboard and after “years and years of things adding up, I was given no choice but to follow,” she said.

In the past, friends and family had told Laura she'd make a good pastor, counselor or missionary. As Laura got more involved at Atonement, her call to mission work became stronger. She volunteered as an interim youth director, served at soup suppers and participated in a congregational mission trip to Haiti, among other activities.

After researching opportunities available through ELCA Global Mission, Laura applied for a missionary position in Indonesia. She soon found herself serving in North Sumatra, teaching English in a deaconess community and “encountering Christ” through those whom she befriended and served.

Through that experience, Laura felt called again, this time to parish ministry. Laura's journey continues today as she hopes to attend seminary “to strengthen my theology and shape my heart to be a better servant,” she said.

DID YOU KNOW

The ELCA billboard Laura saw played an important role as she discerned her call to mission work. The outdoor ad was the result of a partnership between Communication Services at the churchwide organization, which developed the advertising campaign, and the ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod, which launched the pilot ads in 2007.

In addition to billboards, the ads appeared on buses and bus shelters, postcards, posters, outdoor banners and in local newspapers in the Boulder and Denver vicinities. Two television ads were developed and broadcast nationally in spring 2009.

To learn more, visit www.elca.org/godsworkeurhands.

For more *Stories of Faith in Action*, visit www.elca.org/stories. Do you have a story to share? E-mail us at stories@elca.org.



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