

Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane
Training Lutheran Pastors and Deaconesses for Africa

LTS News www.lts.org.za

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Learning to Work in the Lord's Harvest

By God's grace LTS students and staff are thankful that another academic year began on 5 February. Travel from country to country in Africa is not always easy, so some of the students arrived a week later. But by mid-February all expected students arrived safely.

Courses

The pastoral students in the bridging course are studying Lutheran Catechetics, Greek and Hebrew Grammar, Old Testament History, Academic Skills and Computer Skills.

The advanced theology students are taking Christology, Ethics, Missiology, First Corinthians, Psalms, Apology of the Augsburg Confession, and Hebrew and Greek readings.

The deaconess students are taking the deaconess courses Deaconess Skills and Contemporary Issues in Ministry to Women and Children. They also are taking Catechetics, Old Testament, Academic Skills and Computer Skills.

Student Body

LTS has students in several different programs of study. There are seven pastoral students in the bridging classes and three advanced

theology pastoral students. Deaconess students add another six to the courses. In addition, six Lutheran pastoral students studying for Bachelor, Masters and Ph.D. at the University of Pretoria are being supported by LTS. These students have already studied at LTS. Two additional guest students from Ethiopia are auditing LTS courses as well.

All told the students at LTS represent eight African countries: South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Nigeria, Liberia, South Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia.

Upcoming Events

We look forward to two-week visits from Prof. John Pless (Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft Wayne) and Deaconess Grace Rao (LCMS International Center) in March. Both have taught in South Africa on numerous occasions.

In April the seminary community looks forward to two events not directly tied



to the seminary, but in which the community can participate. On 26 April there will be a special presentation of the Book of Concord translated into seTswana. On 28 April a joint Mission Festival will be held by the LCSA, Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA) and the Mission of Lutheran Churches.

Prayers

Please continue to pray for our students and staff as they continually grow in the Word of the Lord.

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LTS Fundraising Committee



LTS fundraising committee: Rev. John Nkambule, Ms. Zanele Mtshali, Dr. Carl Rockrohr and Mr. Rueben Dlamini

In the October 2013 LTS Board of Directors (BoD) meeting, the income portion of LTS' budget was analyzed. The BoD discussed ways that a greater portion of income could come from South African sources to help stabilize the financial challenges of LTS.

During that meeting a Fundraising Committee was formed. The committee consists of Rev. John Nkambule and Mr. Rueben Dlamini (both BoD members); LCMS missionary Dr. Carl Rockrohr; and assistant to Mr. Dlamini, Ms. Zanele Mtshali.

The committee met five times from November 2012 through January 2013. In their deliberations they developed a plan for a two year long fundraising project that will be implemented in 2013.

Details of the proposed plan were presented to the LTS Board of Directors in their 29 January meeting. In that meeting the BoD heartily adopted the fundraising plan.

The plan was also presented to the Church Council of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa on 31 January. The Deans, Deputy-Deans and Lay Representatives of the five dioceses also endorsed the plan with prayers for God's blessings on the efforts.

The fundraising subcommittee will continue to meet in February and March to finalize details so that a full public announcement may soon be made. The committee hopes to publish details in April 2013.

The committee asks for the prayers of all supporters of LTS so that it may be led by the Holy Spirit to formulate ideas that will be well understood and supported. We pray the Lord Jesus will lead us to do His will, training Lutheran pastors and deaconesses for Africa.

LTS Friends in U.S. Start Mission Society

Submitted by Pastor Christopher Maronde of the St. Philip Lutheran Mission Society, USA.

In the spring of 2008, a group of students from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne Indiana traveled with Dr. Timothy Quill and Dr. Lawrence Rast to LTS. Over the course of three weeks, these future American pastors spent time with future African pastors, taking a class, seeing the countryside, and developing relationships together. Now, almost five years later, most of the students from both continents are pastors, and LTS remains as the link between them.

All who went on this study-abroad trip fell in love with the seminary, its students, and with Africa, and now these former seminarians are in a position as parish pastors to help the seminary in its important work. A mission society has been established, Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society,

named for the same Philip who explicated the Scriptures and baptized the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts chapter 8. As Philip sent the eunuch back to Ethiopia with the freeing message of the Gospel, so Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society hopes to help in the task of sending forth preachers from LTS to pulpits, altars, and fonts all over the African continent. The goal of this mission society is therefore to support the students of LTS by raising funds for their tuition needs.

Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society sees theological education as essential to the spread of the Gospel throughout the world, and its members especially consider LTS to be uniquely positioned for that task, as the seminary trains men from all over the African continent



utilizing faculty from around the world.

If you are looking for a way to support the vitally important work of LTS by contributing to the tuition needs of its students, please consider supporting Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society. You will soon be able to donate on the web at www.splms.org, or you can send a check to: Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society c/o Rev. Anthony Oliphant, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 43 W 301 Plank Rd., Hampshire, IL 60140.

2008 photo of students who visited from Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana and are now LCMS pastors wanting to support LTS through the St Philip Lutheran Mission Society. The photo shows (left to right) Gemah Ballah (Liberia), Tony Oliphant (USA), Samuel Wirgau (USA), Jerome Wamala (Uganda) and Roy Coats (USA).

How to Support LTS

Support to LTS directly benefits the spread of the Gospel in Africa. LTS trains pastoral and deaconess students to faithfully carry out ministry according to the teachings of our Lord Jesus.

LTS is thankful for the start of the St. Philip Lutheran

Mission Society to help support its work! U.S. friends wanting to support the seminary might use that route.

Alternatively, financial support can be directly deposited into the LTS bank account. The banking details are on the back of this newsletter.

South African supporters are reminded that Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane is a registered Public Benefits Organization. *Donations to LTS can be deducted according to the rules of Section 18(a) in the South African tax laws.*

LCSA Synod Meets in Wartburg



Bishop Dr. Wilhelm Weber (and Rector of LTS) gives a report at the LCSA Synod. LCSA Dean Rev. Vilakazi and Deputy-Dean Rev. Lushaba are at the table.

When LTS is not in session it does not mean that LTS staff and students are not busy with matters of the Church!

During 10-13 December the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA) held its general synod. Deans, Deputy Deans, Pastors and Lay Delegates from all five dioceses

attended to hear reports and presentations, and deliberate on plans for the work of the LCSA for the coming years. The LCSA elects a bishop every five years, but the synod meets twice during that time. The last synod conference was in 2010.

The venue for the synod was in Wartburg, Kwa-zulu Natal. Good meals and sleeping accommodations were enjoyed by all.

Highlights included keynote addresses: "LCSA since Independence (1967)" by Rev. R.P. Ntsimane and "Mission and Outreach" by Rev. M.J. Nkambule. Southern Illinois District President Rev. Timothy Schaar of the LCMS led Bible studies for the synod.

LTS became a topic of the

synod not only in the matter of reporting but also in the matter of its accreditation. Though LTS has an agreement with the University of Pretoria (UP) to be able to teach B.Th. courses leading towards a B.Th. Degree from UP, the delegates at the synod did not want LTS only to have that one plan. The delegates urged through resolution that LTS should continue its investigations and actions to seek its own accreditation to offer a B.Th.

The legacy that the ministry of LTS is making in South Africa can be readily seen. The synod was largely made up of pastors who graduated from LTS (including the keynote presenters)!

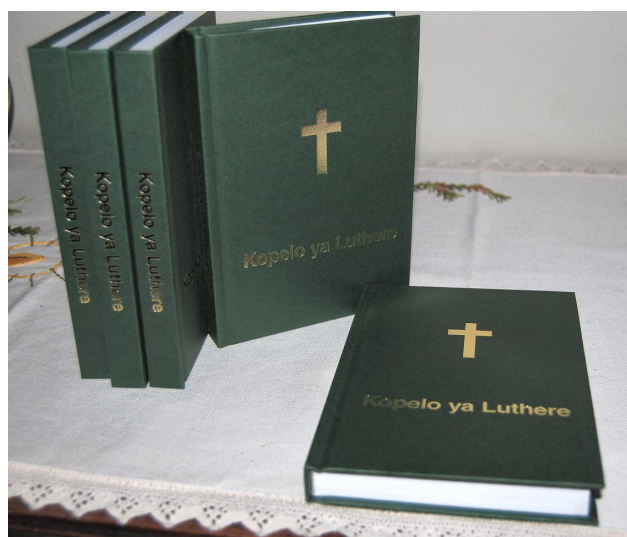
Glory be to the Lord God that His Church continues in many ways, including His faithful servants meeting together to study, deliberate and plan the work of His people.

New Hymnal for LCSA

A new edition of the seTswana hymnal for the LCSA, *Kopelo ya Luthere*, was recently published and first distributed at the LCSA Church Council meeting on 31 January 2013. Corrections and minor revisions were made to existing hymns and liturgy as well as adding Luther's Small Catechism. The Church Council members were happy to receive hymnals since the previous supply was exhausted.

This project was supported by Lutheran Heritage Foundation. The hymnals will be distributed throughout the LCSA through the local Diocesan Councils.

We thank God for the generous support to print this hymnal. And we thank God for the LTS graduates (pastors) who contributed to the editing of the hymnal.



African Lutherans Stand with Scripture

This article is from the Reporter of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

*Available at
www.reporter.lcms.org*

By Adriane Dorr

One of the largest Lutheran church bodies in the world, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), announced Feb. 5 that it had broken fellowship with “those churches who have openly accepted same-sex marriage,” namely, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Church of Sweden.

With more than 6 million members, the EECMY recognized that the “challenges and changes that we encounter in our contexts are forcing us to make decisions which are consistent with our belief about God and our biblical, theological and ethical understandings,” explained the Rev. Dr. Wakseyoum Idosa, president of the EECMY.

At the request of the EECMY, LCMS church leaders traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to take part in the EECMY’s Committee of Mutual Christian Responsibility (CMCR). During this Feb. 4-6 meeting, ELCA officials asked for clarification regarding the EECMY’s decision on human sexuality. Director of Church Relations Dr. Albert B. Collver III; the Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations; and Dr. Michael

Rodewald, regional director for Africa, took part on behalf of the LCMS.

Watching the church bodies part ways was “deeply sobering,” said Lehenbauer. “This was clearly a sad and painful moment in this history of the relationship between these two churches. But the EECMY acted in accordance with their long-held and patiently expressed biblical conviction on this issue, rooted in their conscience-bound view that Scripture alone is and must be our only authority for deciding such matters — matters that go to the heart of the Gospel itself.”

“The ELCA is very saddened by this decision,” said the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director for ELCA Global Mission, in a press release issued by the ELCA. “The ELCA and its predecessor church bodies have been walking with the people of Ethiopia for more than 50 years, and our sister church, the Church of Sweden, for more than 150 years. In this journey, we have learned from one another, we have deepened and extended the bonds of fellowship and partnership in the Gospel.”

Undergoing a realignment

“At this moment in history, world Lutheranism, particularly in Africa, is undergoing a realignment,” Collver noted. “African Lutheran churches, full of gratitude for receiving the Gospel from

their partners, are confronted with the reality that some of their partners have departed from that faith once delivered to them.”

In this instance, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted in 2009 to allow gay and lesbian pastors to serve in the ministry. But after its own General Assembly meeting in 2010, the EECMY sent a letter to Bishop Mark Hanson of the ELCA, rejecting “the decision of the ELCA that allows gays and lesbians to become clergy and engage in the church’s ministry.” The letter encouraged the ELCA to repent and return to the “eternal holy and inspired Word of God,” noting the EECMY’s “serious concern,” “deep sadness” and “dismay” over the position taken by the ELCA on human sexuality.

“The fundamental position of the EECMY on any ethical issue including homosexual practice rests on her belief in the eternal truth of teaching of the Holy Scripture and not on human decision,” the EECMY’s letter stated. But in July 2012, after years of waiting for a response from the ELCA and receiving none, the EECMY’s General Assembly finally voted, and fellowship between the churches was over.

Official minutes from the 2012 meeting make clear that EECMY members will no longer “receive Holy Communion from the leadership

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African Lutheran Leaders Meet in Ghana



Four presenters take questions: (left to right) Rev. Gordon Gyampo-Kumi (Ghana); Rev. Dr. Lawrence Rast (USA); Rev. Dr. Joseph Ochola Omolo (Kenya); and Rev. Prof. Sibongiseni Elliot (South Africa, LTS graduate). Standing: Rev. Dr. Al Collver (USA).

On 12–15 February about sixty Lutheran church leaders, most from Africa, met in Accra Ghana for the African Lutheran Theological Conference. The conference was hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana, the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and Luther Academy. This conference was much anticipated since the last one was held five years ago.

The purpose of the conference was “to deepen the understanding of confessional Lutheran doctrine and practice and to strengthen relationships between churches that are committed to confessional Lutheranism.” The theme of the conference was “The Third Article of the Creed: The Holy Spirit.”

The presentations analyzed the understandings of the Holy Spirit and His work in the church in Africa. The discussion was often lively as participants shared their own ministry situations with the group.

The conference gathered Lutheran church leaders from both English and French speaking areas of Africa. There were interpreters for all presentations and responses, as well as for the devotional services. Leaders from French speaking African countries also led the liturgy and preached for daily devotions.

African Seminaries Meeting

After the close of the conference, on 15-16 February, representatives from five Lutheran seminaries in Africa met: Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa. This meeting did not represent all Lutheran seminaries in Africa but those closely connected to the International Lutheran Council (ILC). Each seminary representative gave an update of its programs, enrollment and plans for the future. It was agreed by all that there is a great desire to continue to improve the academic quality of Lutheran seminaries in Africa. All would like to have Bachelor

of Theology programs, but only Kenya currently has a fully functioning and enrolled B.Th. Program. Nigeria and LTS in South Africa are both striving to work with partner institutions to put B.Th. degrees in place.

It was also the sincere desire among all seminary representatives that an advanced Lutheran seminary for solid confessional Lutheran curriculum be established in Africa. The desire is for Masters and Doctoral level teaching to be available from a confessional Lutheran institution without having to travel outside the continent. There was a commitment made by ILC—Africa leadership and LCMS leadership to assist studying and reporting on this goal.

African Lutheran Churches Take Stand on Scriptural Teaching

The conference participants heard reports and discussed the implications of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus’ (EECMY) momentous decision to break its historic ties with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Church of Sweden for reasons of Biblical teachings, including the issue of same sex marriage. (See story on page 5.) The conference participants sent a joint letter to the EECMY supporting the church’s stand on Biblical teachings, including the issue of same sex marriage.



13 December 2012 Ordination of three new LCSA pastors (all who studied at LTS): Rev. Moses Mokopane, Rev. Tokane Skosana, and Rev. Mpolasi A. Masibi

Biblical Stand *cont.*

(Continued from page 5)

and pastors of the [ELCA and the Church of Sweden]" and, in turn, that "the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus will not distribute communion to these churches."

"We appreciate the strong stand taken by African Lutheran Christians toward a biblical understanding of those social issues that challenge us together as Christians," Rodewald noted. "Their courage in taking such a stand is encouraging to us in a time when some Lutheran church bodies are looking to other means than Scripture for guidance."

"These African Lutheran churches remaining faithful to the Holy Scriptures also see it as their duty to call Western churches to repentance for departing from the historic Christian faith," added Collver. "These churches will seek partners in Africa and around the world who share the same convictions as they do about the Holy Scriptures. The EECMY is an encouragement to churches around the world for being a faithful witness. We as the LCMS need to lift the EECMY up in prayer, so that we can be like Aaron holding up Moses' hands."

LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison acknowledged the weightiness of the situation, saying,



Christoph Weber working in the LTS office.



New LTS Student Committee: Chairman Benjamin Kaumba (Zambia), Treasurer Paul Baibai (Sudan) and Secretary Mduduzi Nkosi (South Africa)

"The LCMS is sensitive to the difficulty the EECMY faced in making a decision of this magnitude, and we appreciate the bold and courageous action of EECMY General Assembly. Our church stands ready to talk with the EECMY if or when they are ready, and we invite them for further discussions on how we can together serve the Lord and His people."

Adriane Dorr is managing editor of The Lutheran Witness.

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OUR WEBSITE IS

WWW.LTS.ORG.ZA

***Look for more information
about LTS online!***

Prayer Requests for LTS:

- ✧ Thanksgiving for safety for all returning students.
- ✧ That LTS students may have guidance of the Holy Spirit in their study of Scripture.
- ✧ The Lord's blessings on the fundraising plans for the seminary.
- ✧ Safety for all volunteers and instructors traveling to LTS.
- ✧ Thanksgiving that Lutherans in Africa are standing firm in their belief of the Scriptures.



**LTS is located in Tshwane (Pretoria),
Gauteng Province, South Africa**

LTS Calendar:

- 25 Feb—8 March Ordination course by Prof. Pless
- 26 April Presentation of Book of Concord in seTswana
- 4-15 March Deaconess Grace Rao visits LTS and LCSA to give instruction.
- 28 April Mission Festival of LCSA, FELSiSA and MLC
- 22 March 1st Quarter Closes
- 24 May 2nd Quarter Ends
- 9 April 2nd Quarter Begins
- 27 May—7 June 1st Semester Exams

Student Enquiries Welcome

Lutheran Theological Seminary offers confessional Lutheran education to prepare those who seek to serve as Lutheran pastors and deaconesses in Africa.

LTS has had students from a variety of African countries including Botswana, Zambia, Nigeria, Liberia, Uganda, South Sudan, Ethiopia as well as South Africa.

Pastoral students who qualify may pursue a Bachelor of Theology from the University of Pretoria (UP)

through taking courses at LTS as well as at UP.

Prospective students need to have the recommendation and support of their home Lutheran church.

For more information contact LTS at the details given at the top of this page.



Deaconess class: Trinah Simakoloyi (Zambia), Tshirileetso Lonyatso (South Africa), Deaconess Rockrohr, Evelyn Khuto and Sadie Otukile (both Botswana). Two students not shown.