

# Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane

*Training Lutheran Pastors and Deaconesses for Africa*

## LTS NEWS

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June 2014

### Seminary on vacation



After the examinations our Seminary has finished the 1st Semester and is enjoying the well deserved winter break. It's the dry season in Southern Africa and that is why every day is bright and shiny with lovely blue skies and no clouds in sight. Even if it might get freezing cold in the morning, it usually warms up nicely during the day to above 20°C. That's a balmy 68°F—and a long way off from the cold familiar to our friends up north!

A favourite spot for our students is the sunny spot outside the sanctuary, where they share this and that or just enjoy the study break and vacation—even if it's far from home and their families for most. It's only the students from Zambian, Botswana and South Africa that can afford to go home at this time. Others from further afield just stay put and even put in an extra -stint of work like the Malagasy students, who are working on an intensive preparation in English to get into the post-graduate program at the university of Pretoria next year. Others have started with their reading schedule to prepare for the classes next semester.

The dry winter break is a suitable time for renovations and upgrades on the facility. This has been a long-way coming and very urgent. The picture above shows the last renovations to the Luther House a decade ago during the summer break in 2004. At that time the Seminary students were the main agents of the renovations and helping the Seminary with their input. Now a local firm is taking care of this professionally. Here the students from 2004 are seen in action on the roof top. This time around the St. Paul's Youth took the initiative when they made these renovations the focus of their fundraising efforts during the last summer and Christmas break. Their collection of over R50k made it easier for the Seminary Board to consent to these necessary repairs at their last meeting.

Thanks to the supervision of Mr. Hans Straeuli and the coordination of Mr. Willem Breedts in the Seminary office the work has gotten off to a good start when it began in all earnest at the beginning of this month. We are hopeful that come the 2nd Semester, this will again be history and the place will be ready for the coming rainy season.

### St. Paul writes to Timothy:

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 2.Ti 4:1-5

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During the first semester the LTS was blessed with a dedicated team of helpers teaching, serving and fulfilling various duties to make it a good place for our students to be prepared for their calling to become Lutheran pastors and deaconesses throughout the continent.

In the picture from right to left:

Rev. Siza Lugojobo from Lutheran Hour Ministries (Randburg) for Business Administration, Rev. Mbongeni J. Nkambule for Mission and Fundraising, Mr Willem Breedt for Administration, Student representative Benjamin Kaumba from Zambia, Mr. Aaron S. Mothimunya for Facility security and maintenance, Rev. Musawenkosi

Mntambo is the Dean of Chapel and responsible for Practical Theology and Hebrew, Vicar Enoch MacBen instructs Greek Grammar and gives an Introduction to the New Testament; Mrs Emily K. Ngubeni is responsible for Housecleaning and the Kitchen, Mrs Thulisiwe Bhengu for English and Administration, Mrs Breedt for English and Bishop Weber for Lutheran Dogmatics & Symbolics.

## You want to support missions in Africa? Here is how you could do it very effectively.

Support to LTS directly benefits the spread of the Gospel in Africa. LTS trains pastoral and deaconess students from more than 10 African countries to faithfully serve the Church and its people according to all the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and his faithful servant Dr. Martin Luther.

In the U.S. it is especially the LCMS districts of South Illinois (SID: President Timothy Scharr) and the Rocky Mountains (RMD: President Allan Anderson) that continue to support the LTS significantly and fervently. The newly founded St. Philip Lutheran Mission Society

has joined this effort to support the Seminary in Tshwane, South Africa. We Seminarists at the LTS here in Pretoria are very grateful for this support and daily praise the Lord most thankfully for it!

In Germany it is the *Lutherische Kirchenmission* (LKM) of the SELK, which through the local institution of the Mission of Lutheran Churches (MLC) faithfully supports the LTS regularly and meaningfully.

Financial support can be deposited directly 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.* Please contact the Seminary office for further information: +12 344 2302 or via email: [LTS in Tshwane](mailto:LTS in Tshwane)





## John Magara from Congo: An introduction

I am Mr. John Magara and I was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1973 at Luvungi in the DRC. Luvungi is situated at Uvira town, is in Bukavu Province it is in East Congo. It is close to Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda Republic. I have six siblings of whom I am the fifth child. I have three sisters and three brothers. My father is Mr. John Zabore and my mother is Kabaliza Kwinanika. I started school at Ruzizi Primary School until grade six, I then went to Itara Institute Secondary School where I completed grade twelve and I got my Diploma.

I grew up in a Pentecostal Church where our parents belonged. I learnt about the Lutheran Church at School from one teacher who was teaching Religious course in 1986. He taught us how Dr. Martin Luther fought for faith against the Catholic Church. From that time onwards I started to love the Lutheran Church. When I was twenty-three years old, I decided to join the Lutheran Church without the consent of my parents. They were very angry with me in a way that they rejected me. They treated me as a stranger. I was prepared to lose the family because of the Lutheran faith. In 1995 I got married to Rehema Sifa Mukulikire. At present we have five children (four sons and one daughter).

There was no Lutheran Church in our area at that time. It was only built ten years later in 1996. I still kept that teaching in my heart. The teacher was not a Lutheran Church member, instead he was a Pentecostal. As far as I remember him, he did not join the Lutheran Church. He was only teaching us from a book about the history of Dr. Martin Luther. The Lutheran Church came to our area through a Bishop's secretary of the Pentecostal Church. That secretary saw mails from the Bishop's office using the Lutheran Church's image.

The secretary liked the Lutheran Church even though he was not a Lutheran Church member by then. He decided to leave the Pentecostal Church and his employment to join the Lutheran Church. He then influenced the Lutherans to come and build their church in our area. When the Lutheran Church came, I remembered what I was taught by that teacher at school. I joined the church and I was not bothered by the rejection from my family because Dr. Luther himself was once rejected by his father and family. He did not have fear, so neither did I. I prayed to God that my family may understand the truth of the Bible.

In 1997, my brother's wife got sick; she suffered from a demon possession. My mother and her pastor from the Pentecost Church made a prayer for two hours for her but she did not get better. When I came there I prayed for her for only three minutes. By the help of God, she got better. That is when my family started to understand the Lutheran faith and they joined the Lutheran Church. At that time the whole family consisted of twenty members. I was then chosen to be an



evangelist of our Parish. My duty was to open other congregations. I managed to open five congregations by the help of God in two years from 1997. The total membership was 1 320.

I was chosen to be a member of the Church council in 2007 and in 2010 the love to be a pastor started to develop. Because of wars in our country, many church members left DRC to South Africa. I was then sent to come and try to gather them and continue to give them the Gospel. Many of them left our country while they were still weak in the Lutheran way of worship. When they came to South Africa they continued to practice the Pentecostal way of worship.

I came to South Africa through difference Boarder gates (Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and finally South Africa). It took me four months to come to South Africa. Although I did not have a passport at that time, but by the Grace of God I could pass all those Boarder gates as a refugee. My family followed later through the same way after 2 years.

I was then instructed to teach them about the Lutheran liturgy. When I found our people in South Africa, I reported back home. They were more than 300 at that time concentrated around Durban, KZN. At this time I was given the address of Rev. Christoph Weber, the representative of Mission of Lutheran Churches (MLC) so that we could meet and he could help me. We started to teach the Congolese gathering in the inner city of Durban the divine liturgy with Rev. Christoph Weber.

When I was helping Rev. Weber in his ministry in Umlazi, KZN, told him that I wanted to be a pastor. So he recommended that I study at the Lutheran Theological Seminary. At present I am busy with my first year at this Seminary. I stay here with my wife and my children. I am grateful for this opportunity to study and also for the support by the Seminary and also the Mission of Lutheran Churches for me and my family. (JM 2014)

## This vicar at LTS comes a long way



Introducing oneself is one of the hardest things for me! I do not know where to start when faced with the question: Introduce yourself, please! I am glad this question is not part of my Doctoral Thesis at University of Pretoria (UP). Well, I will try!

I am Enoch MacBen, I teach Greek and New Testament at the LTS. I am from the Lutheran Church Mission in Uganda, South-Western Uganda. I am privileged to have my family with me, my wife Prossy and our son Shalom, who joined me at LTS in 2012. I have been at the LTS since February 2008, when I joined the Seminary for my first year in Theological studies. It's been quite a journey for me full of ups and downs. However, I am so glad that I didn't have to go through it alone. God has always been my help (Ps 124). For the most part the Seminary has been a great place apart from the strange ancient languages of Greek and Hebrew which I encountered for the first time in my life. Before 2008 I had not seen any text in Greek or Hebrew. It was a challenge at the first time. However, things got a bit easier with time and I later picked interest in Greek.

The most difficult part for me at the Seminary was to live far away from my family for so long. To leave my family at the beginning of each year and only to see them again at the end of the year was the hardest thing I had to endure. It wasn't easy but thanks to God who saw me through this period. I guess it is a price the disciples of Jesus have to pay (Mark 8:34). It was after my four years at the Seminary that my family joined me. Thanks to the Seminary and its faithful

supporters, which provided the financial means for this to happen, otherwise I would not have pursued my postgraduate studies at UP.

After my family joined me I was motivated more than ever to further my studies. I joined the post-graduate programme at the University for BA Honours Theology specializing in New Testament in 2012, and the following year entered their Masters programme. This however would not have happened if it was not for the financial support of the LTS. I am so grateful for this support. It was after my Masters that I was offered a chance to practice what I have learnt: to teach the once-difficult Greek and New Testament at LTS. For this trust and encouragement I thank Bishop Weber when offering me this opportunity. This is what I am doing at the moment: teaching at LTS, doing my vicarage while I continue with my Doctoral studies at UP. Who knows how long this will take! It's harder than I thought though by God's grace I will be up for that challenge. In my research I am presently studying the Lutheran understanding of the Law and how the Lutheran Church of Uganda applies this understanding in pastoral practice. Suggestions on helpful sources are highly welcome.

A big vote of thanks goes to the LTS together with its faithful partners and sponsors as it offers theological studies in Lutheran theology to prospective pastors and also deaconesses from Africa. These donations are most welcome as they help our Seminary to carry out its main purpose to promote the Lutheran Church and its faithful mission on the African continent and beyond. So praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen. (EM)



## First pastors from Madagascar at LTS



### **Pastor HERINAY Oscar Isaora Zefania writes:**

I'm 30 years old. I came from Madagascar and grew up in the Malagasy Lutheran Church. I'm married and have one daughter with my wife. I was ordained in June 2011. Before I became a Pastor, I had finished two years in Mathematics and one year in Economics at the University of Antananarivo. From 2003 to 2007, I helped Lutheran Congregations to teach the Word of God in Sunday School at Ivato Malagasy Lutheran Church. Then, I spent two years in Lutheran Theology School for Layman (SEFATEL) and four years in Malagasy Lutheran Seminary at Atsimoniavoko to obtain the pastoral degree and become a Pastor in this church.

Afterward, I worked two and half years after my Ordination, in my parish at Mahasolo Lutheran Church, 175 km western from the Malagasy Capital. Now I am here in South Africa to study Theology and have an ambition to do continually all the best during my study so that, when I finally return to my family and country, I will be even better prepared to lead Christians to maturity in faith in Jesus Christ and face up to all kinds of false doctrines that are prevalent today.

This year, I'm happy to partake in the English, Greek and Hebrew courses here at LTS (Lutheran Tshwane Seminary in Tshwane, South Africa) and next year I hope, I will be ready to join the postgraduate program at the University of Pretoria.

Studying theology is not easy, but I hope that God will continue to support me with your help of prayers and even donations as he has graciously done up to date. So I give thanks for all those who pray for us and support us as we are eager to finish our study and I pray, that God will bless and reward you with His fullness blessing. (HZ)

### **Pastor RASOLONJANAHARY Hobinirina Riri Harivelo writes :**

I was born on the 31st of March 1972 in Antsirabe Madagascar. I am married and have two children, Mikanto and Mitsanta, 14 and 6 years old.

I am a Pastor from the Malagasy Lutheran Church. Following studies in Theology at the Malagasy Lutheran Seminary (S.T.P.L. Atsimoniavoko Atsirabe) since 2007, I obtained my Pastoral Diploma in four years. I was ordained on 28 August 2011. Then on 19 June 2013 I obtained my Bachelor Degree. Before I came here I served as a Pastor in 6 churches (Arivonimamo, Amboanana, Imerintsiatosika, Mandiavato, Bemasoandro, Ambohimandry) with more than 1000 congregants.

Now I am here at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane since February 2014, according to the cooperation between the Regional Synod of Antananarivo and the LTS, to attend the Bridging Course. My goal, if God permit is to get a Master's Degree at the University of Pretoria in two years to come.

I am separated from my family. (See picture on the left) I wish to be well supported so that I can concentrate fully on my studies. Thanks to the financial sponsorship, my dream of becoming a well-educated Pastor can be fulfilled and I can confidently lead people to Christ through Lutheran Confession, being well equipped. I am glad to thank you so much. May God be with you! (RH)

**LTS: Pastor Jeffrey Kuddes from Trinity Lutheran Church has supported these students in the past year - and we are very grateful for this support!**



## LTS has a Fundraiser: Rev. M.J. Nkambule



### **The Lutheran Theological Seminary National Fundraising Co-ordinator writes:**

My name is Mbongeni John Nkambule. I am an ordained pastor of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA) and stationed at Mohlakeng, Gauteng. I am given the task to fundraise for the Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) by its Board of Directors.

Fundraising for the LTS to me is an interesting job, even though I was not trained to be a fundraiser. Working for the LTS as a fundraiser is like giving back to the institution which made me to be who and what I am today.

The LTS which I graduated from in 2003 has changed a lot from that time to the present. Many things have changed and many properties were bought with the help of friends and supporters of the Seminary worldwide. Many more students are attending the LTS more than my time. At that time it was only students from South Africa and a few from Liberia. Now we have students from more than 10 different countries in Africa. The LTS has other partners now who were not there before. Especially friends in the United States of America and Canada have made a significant impact since that time. The LTS is no longer an institution which trains the LCSA pastors alone. A significant challenge of the LTS has is to gain more financial support locally and especially also from the LCSA.

My target is to raise R1,5 Million per annum for the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane. That fee covers amongst other things students' food, their accommodation, annual air tickets from and back to home, books and tuition. The LTS staff also needs salaries and the LTS needs to keep up the student accommodation, class rooms, gardens and premises. In the end all fundraising aims to pay the costs to train suitable men and women from the LCSA and other Lutheran Churches from the African continent and beyond as faithful pastors and deaconesses.

It is my idea, that the fundraiser raises these funds by visiting Lutheran parishes where he challenges individuals and entire congregations to pledge support for the LTS by signing up a certain amount through a Debit Order System. It is also my plan, to challenge business people and entire companies with the aim to gain their support for the LTS. As the fundraiser of the LTS, I would like to see that the LTS through the help of God and many generous friends and supporters becomes financially independent and can run its training operation sustainably in the years to come—for the benefit of many more theological students and the entire Lutheran Church in Africa. This could also enable the enrolment of many more students and also facilitate the employment of long-term staff members, which are crucial for the successful running of the Seminary as a theological training institution carrying out its calling even more effectively and efficiently.

I would like to see LTS continuing to train more and more students to spread the Gospel all over African continent and beyond. I would like to see more people joining hands with the LTS to shoulder the work that is done by the LTS. The LTS has changed lives for many students who could not achieve things on their own but through the LTS a student can be accepted in the University of Pretoria and achieve a lot in his/her life. The LTS trains men and women for the pastoral office and diaconic ministry respectively so that the saving Gospel and good works of mercy may be shared far more effectively and joyfully.

I therefore appeal to the reader of this article to consider donating generously to the LTS so that the work of God may continue in the Lutheran Church throughout Africa and its crucial mission to spread the saving Gospel to even more people than before. That can only be done if we all put hands together, pray to God to grant means and ways to train, call, and support workers in his harvest. He is faithful and will surely hear our prayers. (MJN)



During the Mission festival of Lutheran Churches celebrated in the Aula of the University of Pretoria on the Sunday Cantate 18th May 2014 our students paraded their national flags. The student choir also sang as part of the divine service of the day.



Rev. Abraham Segoe and his congregation at LC Mabopane invited the LTS on the high holiday of Pentecost. This is the Sunday that the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa has designated to support its Seminary—LTS.

Here members of the congregation are seen together with their pastor and Rev. Nkambule behind the gifts and donations designated for the LTS.

**Kaleboga tata**

Dear friends in Mabopane!

President Timothy Scharr (South Illinois District of the LCMS = SID) together with Eunice and Ray Haussler (2nd and 3rd from left) and staff from Concordia Publishing House (CPH) are packing piles of books for the LTS in Tshwane.

We are very grateful for this generous support from SID and its leadership and trust that the good theological literature from CPH will continue to edify and train our students at LTS.





*Training Christ's disciples  
as pastors, teachers,  
evangelists, missionaries,  
bishops and deaconesses  
for faithful service in the  
Lutheran Church of Africa*

## **Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane**

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**LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY IN TSHWANE**

## **A new kitchen planned ...**

It has been a few years now that I prepare lunch for the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane. This is mainly to help students and their families have more time to study and get a warm, balanced meal with fruit & vegetables at least once a day, but it also helps staff and the occasional visitors like the Church Councils, Women's league and others, who regularly convene at the Seminary. The Seminary does not have a suitably equipped and big enough kitchen to cook for more than 25 (sometimes over 50!) people. So I cook at home and bring the meal to the seminary.

Seminarians eat outside in the LAPA and thanks to the mostly good weather in Pretoria this is possible—even if the space there too is rather limited.

That is why, I think it would be wonderful to build a well-equipped kitchen with cafeteria and dinning hall for this purpose on the seminary campus. For this purpose I would like to start a fundraiser. Would you care to help and support this project? Please consider this request prayerfully and share it with your friends or members of your congregation or your women's league. Would the women guild in your congregations support this project? Would you introduce me to a suitable person, who would be the spokesperson for this project in your congregation?

If you are interested, I will send further details. Please be enthusiastic about this project. You may share this freely. Contact email: [rmstraegli@gmail.com](mailto:rmstraegli@gmail.com)

Kind regards Renate Straegli.

## **Coming up:**

- 15 July: Beginning of 3rd Qtr
- 15-25 July: Dr. Sithole teaches an OT Intensive on Isaiah
- 29th July: Board of Directors
- 18-29 August: Prof Pless teaches on "Spiritual Care"
- 29 August: End of 3rd Quarter
- 1 September: Start of 4th Quarter
- 6 September: Seminary Open Day

Lutheran Theological Seminary offers confessional Lutheran education in preparation for service as Lutheran pastors and also deaconesses in Africa.

LTS has trained students from across Africa: South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia, Madagascar, Tanzania, Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Ruanda, S. Sudan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia.

Pastoral students of the Lu-

theran Theological Seminary (LTS), who qualify may pursue a Bachelor of Theology (BTh) and proceed with post-graduate studies with our partner University of Pretoria.

Prospective students need to have the positive recommendation and support of their home church to be considered for enrolment.

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

## **STUDENT ENQUIRY MOST WELCOME !**

