



# Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society

SUPPORTING LUTHERAN PASTORAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA

SPRING 2015 NEWSLETTER

## LIBRARIES AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

by Rev. Christopher Maronde, President

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Nebraska

Pastors are bibliophiles, lovers of books. Certainly they are lovers of one book, *the* book, the Bible, which can never be fully mined, which proclaims not only our sin but the very words and deeds of our Savior. The Bible doesn't just contain God's Word, it is God's Word, declaring to us both God's stern Law and His precious Gospel. Every pastor, every Christian, loves this book, and the study of this book is the center and focus of a Christian's devotion. Lutheran pastors also love another book, the Book of Concord. This book clearly and accurately confesses the faith taught in the Scriptures. A Lutheran pastor doesn't just subscribe to this book, he loves it, because it confesses Christ and teaches him how to do the same.

Every other book on a pastor's shelf or in a theological library is to assist the study of these two books. The tools of language study are there, to help him to translate and understand the Scriptures. Grammars, lexicons, and other linguistic resources help him to understand the

scriptures. Commentaries guide him as he prepares to preach and teach. Texts of history teach him that there is 'nothing new under the sun,' and prepare him to meet the challenges of today with firm roots in the past. Dogmatic texts, new and old, take the teachings given in the Scripture and confessed in the Book of Concord and put them into proper order so that they can be studied, topic by topic. And finally, books on pastoral care, preaching, teaching, and apologetics teach the pastor how to apply these doctrines to Church and world.

A pastor is a bibliophile because he doesn't know it all. He needs the knowledge of the centuries to apply the Gospel to a dying world, wisdom brought to him in the pages of countless texts. This is as true in North America as it is in South Africa.

For this reason, most visiting professors to Lutheran Theological Seminary-Tshwane bring along a bag of books;

both to provide for the seminary's fledgling library and to provide for the student's own personal collections. Often, the books given out in class are the only books a LTS alumni will have when he goes out to serve as a pastor.

Lack of books is only part of the problem with seminary libraries around the world. Harsh environments, inadequate cataloging, and inconsistent internet access are only a few of the problems that make providing the resources pastors-in-training need a significant challenge. The professors, too, at these seminaries need adequate libraries to prepare lectures and guide research. Supporting theological education means supporting seminary libraries. While many of these libraries will never reach the level of a North American or European seminary library, we who support theological education should extend every effort to make these libraries more and more helpful in the training of pastors.

On the next page, the board of directors of SPLMS invites you to do just that, participating in an exciting project to provide a new library to the students and faculty of LTS. We pray that this new opportunity will bless the seminary and its students!

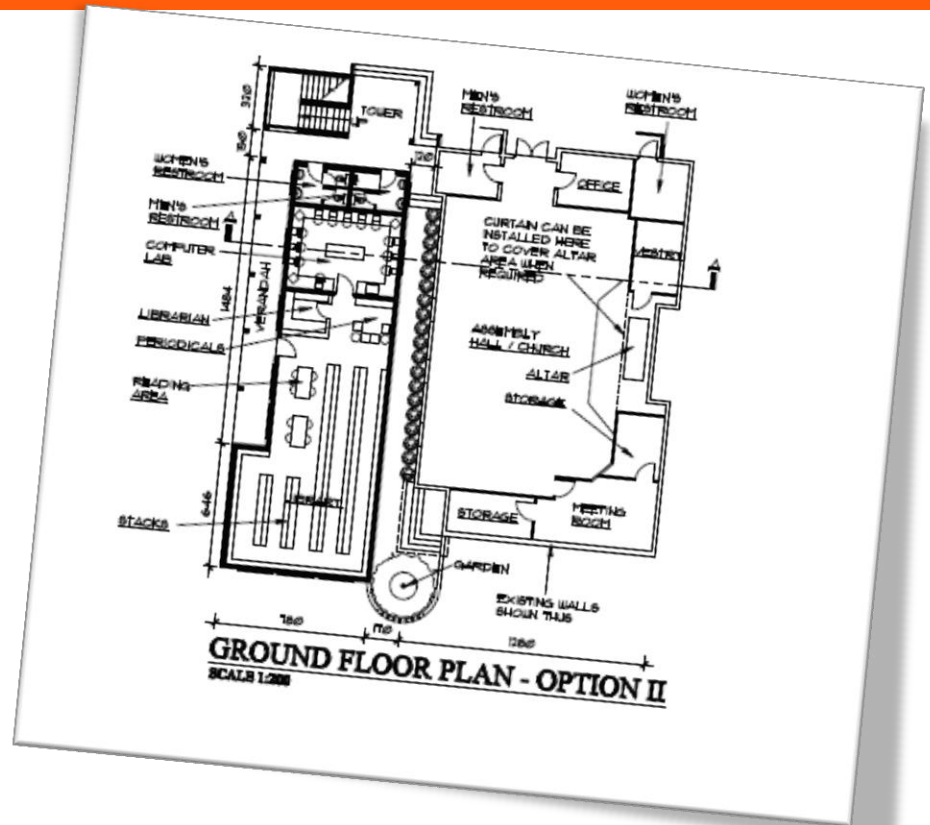
# The Library Project

During the short history of Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society, the goal has always been to provide tuition support for the students at Lutheran Theological Seminary-Tshwane in Pretoria, South Africa. At the same time, the board of SPLMS has always been watchful for other opportunities to support the seminary. One such opportunity has recently presented itself.

The SPLMS board of directors, at its spring meeting, has agreed to join with the Rocky Mountain District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to raise \$30,000 to build a library at LTS. Both the district and the SPLMS will raise half of that total (\$15,000), with the total amount to be raised by August of 2016.

To the right is the potential floor plan for a new library. The current library is at capacity and is far too small for the seminary to continue to provide for its students the materials needed to study.

It is essential that this new effort does not hamper our efforts to provide for the tuition needs of the seminary; those efforts need to continue to grow and expand for the good of



the seminary as a whole, even as we raise these additional funds. If you are interested in supporting this project directly, simply donate using our contact information below, earmarking your donation for the library.

## THRIVENT CHOICE

Another way to donate to Saint Philip Lutheran Mission Society is through Thrivent Choice. Please contact your Thrivent Representative for more information or visit [www.thrivent.org](http://www.thrivent.org)

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