

LTS Rector's Report at St.Pauls

Annual meeting: 20th February 2016.

Following the example of your old pastor Matthias Albers, who is presently FELSiSA director on the LTS Board of directors, I too want to greet you with the watchword for today, because it seems to me a appropriate beginning to my brief comments today.

The Lord our God said to Joshua: „**Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.**“ (Jos.1:9 KJV) And his apostel St. Paul writes to the pastor and bishop St. Timothy: „**For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**“ (2.Timothy 1,7 KJV)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all +

These are daunting times and we're right in the midst of them. Yet we're not alone. The Lord is with us and he has promised that he will continue to build his Church where and when it pleases him in those, who hear and trust his word and promises. He promised most solemnly that he will be with us to the ends of the world as we make disciples of all people - preaching, teaching and witnessing to all he entrusted to his one holy Christendom and church universal. Our Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane stands in this ancient heritage and does its work even today under this promise and encouragement. That's why we are not afraid, but are hopefull, taking courage in the Lord's presence and faithful committment to overcome our weakness and be strong in his name. He has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind too.

You have my written report, which was shared with your pastor weeks ago. In the short time allocated to me by Pastor Paul, allow me to highlight some brief points that I think are relevant:

1. Thanks to support and help by faithful members of St.Paul in 2015 and also 2016.
 1. **Hans and Renate Straeuli** deserve a extra-mention as they together with **Hartmut Albers and Otto Johannes** go about renovating the kitchen at our Seminary. We are grateful for all support you have given to them and through them to this project. We are hopeful that it will be finished by Easter. Renate has cooked for the Seminary for over 5 years - and I don't know, whether we've had the same recipe for lunch ever. It sure makes for some delightful discoveries. Thank you Hans and Renate.
 2. **Berno and Karin Niebuhr** continue to be stalwarts on the Seminary front. Berno is the treasurer of our Board and has helped us navigate countless pitfalls and challenges. Karin together with her sister **Imke** have started a Day-Care-Centre at the LTS - mainly for student's children, but obviously outreach to the community is part of the game too. They are going from strength to strength and its a joy to see their successful and flourishing story. Thank you Berno and Karin.
 3. **Hugo and Rosa Meyer** have donated pork to the Seminarians time and again. This makes for good eating, but also for happy students and staff - even if we have a number of those,

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who just eat chicken. There are also plans in the pipeline to get cattle of the LTS grazing on Hugo's lands. All to help and promote the Seminary growing and expanding.

4. **Pastors Paul and Damaske** have led the Confessional services at LTS regularly. Thank you dear brothers for your faithful service.
5. Please don't forget that this is your Seminary too. FELSiSA is a member. Pastor Albers is your director there. And our success is yours and our failure is yours also. So please don't grow tired of helping us moving forward and growing the LTS in a way that is to the glory of God and to the benefit of many, many more. Please continue to pray for this Seminary privately and also as congregation in the general prayer during the divine service on Sundays!

2. We have over 50 students in 2016.

1. **31 of these are our regular students:** 21 beginners, 2 deaconesses and 8 post-graduates.
2. More than **20 are part of the distance learning program by the Mekane Yesous LC** in cooperation with our Seminary staff.
3. We have students from the following nine countries:
 1. Liberia
 2. Ghana
 3. Nigeria
 4. Uganda
 5. Ethiopia
 6. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
 7. Zambia
 8. Botswana
 9. South Africa has 12 and most of those are from the LCSA.
4. The following **10 teachers are at the Seminary** presently:
 1. Rev. Dr. Wilhelm Weber (Rector) is doing Lutheran Symbolics i.e. Augsburg Confession.
 2. Rev. Musawenkosi N. Mntambo is on sabbatical and working on his PhD in CS St.Louis.
 3. Rev. Mbongeni J. Nkambule is teaching Hebrew and working on his PhD in CTS Ft.Wayne
 4. Rev. Orapeleng Shuping is doing secretarial work and teaching liturgical singing.
 5. Rev. Dr. Karl Böhmer is teaching Reformation History.
 6. Rev. Muzein Teferea from Mekane Yesous teaching the distance education course.
 7. Tutor Eric Gbotoe is teaching OT Bibs I together with Rev. Dr. Sibongisile E. Sithole
 8. Tutor Robert van Niekerk from UP is teaching Greek Grammar
 9. Tutor Henk Labuschagne from UP teaching Hebrew Grammar
 10. Tutor Thandeka Maseko from UP is doing Academic Skills.
11. **Six guest lecturers in the first Semester:**
 1. Deaconess Grace Rao: Women's role in the church and basic deaconess skills.
 2. Rev. Dr. Sibongisile E. Sithole: Genesis and Psalms (OT Bibs I)
 3. Prof. Dr. Werner Klän from LTH Oberursel i.T teaching the Advance course: „Lutheran Doctrine of the office of the ministry“

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4. Prof. John Pless CTS Ft.Wayne also teaching the Advanced course: „Pastoral ministry“
5. Prof. Dr. John Nordling CTS Ft.Wayne on St.Paul's letters to the Corinthians.
6. Rev. Eric Skovgaard from Elm Grove, LC in Wisconsin

5. Please remember that our Lord IX said unto his disciples, *The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.* (Mt 9:37-38) Please don't get tired in following your Lord in this faithful prayer for workers into his harvest - and for the necessary means to train, equip and support them too. For a Seminary to function well it needs willing and able teachers, it needs the necessary room and suitable facility, it needs money and it needs a lot of goodwill and support from friends and supporters like you. So please keep us in your prayers even as we train future Lutheran pastors, who will face considerable and novel challenges in church and mission throughout this continent as they go out to do the work of the church in teaching all Christ has taught us.

3. The **Seminary Open Day** is every first Saturday in September. That's a good time to hear about the workings of the Seminary at some length and to see first hand, what is happening there. This year God willing the Seminary Open Day will be on the 3rd September.
4. Years back our Seminary was recipient of your gracious donations and gifts. Even your Youth supported this good work. Please remember that this Seminary remains a worthy cause, which helps students to study Lutheran confessional theology, it promotes good cooperation between confessional Lutherans in Southern Africa and it also helps you with reducing your tax burden as we have applicable BEE rating and are also registered to write letters for tax remission according to Section 18A of the tax law. Several of your congregants are aware of this and are making good use of it too.
5. Our Seminary is now in the 16 year in Pretoria. Good reason to be thankful and full of praises of the Lord's blessings and graces all along. All this time we've published about 5 or 6 newsletters every year illustrating our progress, hopes and plans. The LTS News is still available and we hope to have the next newsletter out by Easter this year. Please feel free to request being put on our mailing list to keep updated on this work as we go along and you want to be informed what to pray for and what to support financially too.
6. Thank you very much for this opportunity to share some highlights of the Seminary with you - and may our good Lord continue to bless you and his Lutheran Church now and always.