

LTS Open Day, 3 September 2016

The first Saturday of September dawned bright and cheery in Pretoria, with a taste of Spring in the air. True to its custom, the LTS received guests and visitors to the Open Day on the seminary grounds with hospitality and cheerful welcomes. Seen on the seminary grounds this day were dignitaries such as Rev. Fisseha Abebe Fetamo, Samuel Wolde Solomon, and Motuma Badassa Amante, representatives of the Ethiopian Evangelical Mekane Yesus in South Africa delegation, conferring and visiting with their compatriot and newly minted father Chernet Arifecho. Others included of course the guest speakers and friends and family of the seminarians.

Rev. Mbongeni John Nkambule started the official program with a matins service. Dr. Eric Gbotoe, who had graduated with a doctoral degree at the University of Pretoria along with LTS graduate Enoch MacBen and FELSISA pastor Heinz Hiester mann the day before, served as the distinguished master of ceremonies for the day. The student choir sang Lutheran hymns, and then welcomed the guest speakers of the day. A representative from the South African Bible Society spoke about the work of translating the Scriptures in the South African contexts, and the work of the Bible Society in distributing Bibles around the country. Due to its efforts, there are now Bibles in all 11 national languages of South Africa available today. His presentation segued neatly into that by Dr. Eliot Sithole, also a former LTS student, who now serves in the Zulu Bible translation project of the South African Bible Society. He introduced the audience into some of the technical details and the careful revision process of the translation project. After him, Rev. Hendrien van Vliet presented the work her organization does in Sunnyside and the inner city of Pretoria, focusing on pre-primary education and on accompanying learners, youngsters, and older folks with special needs through various stages of life, seeking to minister to their needs. Another keynote speaker was Prof. Dr. Werner Klän, who spoke on “Reformation then... and now.”

Unfortunately, Rector Dr. Wilhelm Weber was unable to present, since he was attending the funeral of his father-in-law, president emeritus of the FELSISA Rev. Günther Scharlach. The seminary community expresses its condolences toward Rector Weber and his family and pray the comfort of Christ for them.

The festivities of the Open Day were concluded with a delicious braai and a smorgasbord prepared by the capable hands of LTS caretaker and stand-in mother Emily Ngubeni, competently assisted by student representative Ben Mokopanele. We are grateful to all who participated, attended, and contributed to shaping and organizing the day. We would also like to invite all our readers to attend next year's festivities at the 2017 LTS Open Day on the first Saturday in September, God willing.