



# Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN CHRISTIANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

*May Family Newsletter*

## Home Front News



*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. ~Psalm 19:1*



AFRICA, HERE WE ARE!

We have returned back to Kenya after two months spent in Finland. We found our home exactly where we left it at the end of May. The summer in Finland was exceptionally cold so this time Nairobi hasn't felt as freezing as it usually does when we come back but the floors in our house are totally icy. One pair of wool socks is just a joke when one tries to protect herself from the cold! After we left from Finland people started to send messages and pictures of themselves at the beach or enjoying a sunny forest walk.

We missed proper summer weather this time around, but all in all we are thankful for those past couple of months and longingly remember the time we got to spend with family and friends. Finland's clean nature and lakes, sauna, freedom to go around without restricting walls and barbwire, our son Tristan's many opportunities to fish, and visits to several congregations were some of the things that made our summer time amazing. Everywhere we went people welcomed us warmly and took care of our needs.

This fall we succeeded at being smart: all previous years we had stretched our summer travel as long as possible, returning only one or two days before kids started school. Not this time! You have no idea how different everything feels when school supplies have been purchased and packed a few days before the school doors open and one has had time to get into the African rhythm. It is never easy to prepare kids to begin their studies, because they are still holding fast on summer break mood. But now, the panicking and pulling out of one's hair out were minimized and I believe most of us were even smiling at times.

There weren't any major changes in the beginning of the school year: our elementary kids moved up one level each and even when their classrooms and teachers were different, those teachers had already been around last year, so everyone knew them. Tristan and Maggie also continue in familiar surroundings at middle school, but half of their teachers are new. Maggie takes her math classes on the high school side since she skipped straight to Algebra 1 after seventh grade. Her class doesn't have any new students nor did any student leave, but others, especially Tristan and Sofia experienced bigger switches in their friend circles, because their closest friends moved away. Now they need to put more effort finding their own safe spot amongst the other students and it hasn't been very easy to either one. We are asking your prayers especially for Tristan whose class consists of many types of kids and belonging to the boys' group is being tested by ways that neither school nor us as parents approve. Thankfully Tristan talks about these issues to us and we can try to support him in any way we can, but it does seem like the choices for a good peer group are quite limited. Hopefully as the year goes by and when he gets more involved in the band and sports, more positive opportunities will present themselves and he can better enjoy school.



I had raised some hopes that I could give up being the Parent Teacher Organization's chairman, but since the replacement is yet to be found, I have gotten things started on various fronts. Advertizing, meetings, presentations, and events have already started to fill my calendar. It also looks like leading the moms' prayer group might get added on my shoulders, because the mom who has been in charge of it is even busier with her life than I'm with mine and has asked for my help. Let's see how my organizational skills start developing as a result of vigorous practice ;).

During these few weeks in Africa Pastor James has already managed to make two teaching trips. He enjoyed especially the seminar that was targeting youth, because it always comes as a great and pleasant surprise when youth "whine" for more teaching. Even after sitting in church for several hours. "Pastor, could you stay for one more day?" "Would you have some extra time to teach more about the Holy Communion?" "I already attempted to learn the Catechism by heart. Could you spend some time testing me after the teaching tonight?"



After his second trip when returning to Nairobi, Pastor James's phone rang just as he stepped through the door of our home. It was a late Saturday afternoon and he had been traveling all day having no chance to eat or rest. "I have a bus load of pastors and other church folks who just arrived from Tanzania here. They are asking about a teaching seminar. Do you know anything about it? ... Oh, you don't? Well, I will send them to you anyway and you can try to figure it out." After ten minutes the bus arrived at our compound. People stepped out one after another shaking our hands telling us how nice of us to receive them. I rushed back and forth trying to find something to drink and eat, while pastor James found out that Doctor Giessler was supposed to teach this group, but he had canceled the seminar already a long time ago, because he had gotten blood poisoning while teaching in Uganda. Apparently word had not reached these dear Christians who had hired a bus without making final confirmation and were now sitting at our home.

We couldn't just send them back so pastor James left to look for a place for them to stay and promised to teach them for three days. Later on when the darkness had already fallen, my husband



returned back home and admitted that there's not much strength left in him. However, on Sunday morning, after he had run some seventeen miles and also picked up our Tanzanian guests for the church service, he stood in the front of the congregation telling everyone about God's surprise gift with a twinkle in his eyes, that out of the blue he had received this wonderful opportunity to teach! It so happened that after the promised three days of teaching, the group was begging for two more days. Because "we must find out more". The seminar was extended until the weekend. I admire my husband.

*Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ~Eph.8:7-10*

In Christ,

*Tina May*

[www.LutheransINAfrica.com](http://www.LutheransINAfrica.com)

**We encourage you to share newsletters with your family, friends, congregations, etc.!**

**You may print copies and distribute them or share electronic versions online. Thank you!**

To make a donation by check, please make it payable to *Lutherans in Africa*, write *LIA Training Center* OR *daily mission work* in the memo and send it to the address below:

To support the preaching of the Gospel and the training of workers for the harvest, please make a donation:

[lutheransin africa.com/training/](http://lutheransin africa.com/training/) for *LIA Training Center*

[lutheransin africa.com/daily/](http://lutheransin africa.com/daily/) for *daily mission work*