



# Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN CHRISTIANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

*May Family Newsletter*

## Home Front News



### Thankful for the summer in the United States

WOW! What a summer! Many people don't realize this, but our furlough time is not really a vacation. During the nine weeks we spent in the USA, we drove around 6,000 miles visiting many congregations. We all enjoyed seeing different places and meeting with old and new friends, but sitting in a car proved to be frustrating at times. We are thankful for everyone who invited us to share in their church about our work. We were always warmly welcomed with open arms. Meals were provided and needs taken care of. It was quite amazing that there were always those courageous people available who willingly (or without better judgment!) hosted us in their homes. It isn't a breeze to take on a family of eight! We loved being with you all and appreciated the fun activities, good conversations, and just hanging out together. This summer we were also

blessed by a group of people, who collected funds to provide for a trip to Disney World for our family.

### What do the kids say about it

*Maggie:* I loved going to Disney World and seeing our grandparents and cousins. Also being with friends I had made two years ago was great. The fireworks and goodies for the 4th of July were awesome (or actually we spent the 4th in the car -thanks to our parents- but Pastor Rohde and his congregation organized a delayed celebration for us)!

*Tristan:* It was fun to go fishing so many times. I enjoyed catching gray fish with our hands with my new friends Thaddaeus and Ryan.







*Sarai:* I liked watching movies during long flights. I enjoyed being at grandpa and grandma's lake house fishing and swimming. Also my godparents' cottage and spending time with them was fun. The Magic Waters water park with the Woolery Family was one of the best places we went to and staying in Woodford's home was nice.

*Sofia:* I liked going to other people's houses and playing with children. The Magic Waters park was one of my favorite places, because I dared to go down the "Double-dare" slides. I loved all the babies we saw and when I got to hold them! Also the hotel nights were fun.

*Jonas:* Fishing, tubing, and swinging at Lori-täti [aunt] and Tom-setä's [uncle] cottage was so fun! I caught many fish at grandma's lake house.

*Matthew:* I liked fishing and one time I caught a snake with my fishing rod and it was so funny! I liked going fast when I was in the boat with Lori-täti and Tom-setä. I would like to go there and grandma's house again.



## Back in Africa

Now we have returned to Nairobi. It took a while to get our heads back into "home" mode after the long period of living out of suitcases in other peoples' houses. I believe also the seven hour time difference played a part in this delay. Being faithful to our old habits, we repeated the very same mistake which we make every year: we returned home too close to kids' school's opening day. I wonder when we will learn that it's just plain painful trying to survive with jet lag while school supply purchases must be made and kids have to be shocked from vacation freedoms to scheduled school reality. I was occupied also with getting the school's Parent Teacher Organization up and



running, since I was voted to be the chairman. There were moments when in the midst of all this I felt that I wasn't providing proper support to Matthew, 4, who started in pre-school. All last year's pleading to go to school with his siblings surprisingly changed into hesitance on his first day. A classmate crying loudly in his classroom, that wasn't even the same one where his older brother went, was scary. We had a couple of rough mornings after that, and believe me, it was tough for me to make him go since he is my baby after all, but we both survived and ever since, he has left for school with a smile on his face.

## What do the kids say about the beginning of the school

*Maggie (7th):* I made the basketball team and was elected to the Student Council again this year and both things are very cool! I started playing clarinet in the school band and I'm learning quite fast. It was nice to come back to my friends.

*Tristan (6th, new to middle school):* The locker is hard to operate! There is way too much homework in middle school! My friends are always there to talk to and have fun with. Most of the subjects are easy, but math is a bit hard. I'm playing trumpet in the band and it's really cool.

*Sarai (4th):* I'm happy to be with my classmates again. I got a new teacher.

*Sofia (3rd):* My new teacher is pretty and kind. We were told that we'll get new desks. I think the new one won't get messy as easily. I have a lot of homework and it's getting harder, but school is fun.

*Jonas (1st):* There are lots of monkeys at our school grounds. I like them. I want to do hard work, but there's never hard work in first grade!

*Matthew (pre-K, new to school):* I play the bat game at recess. I have a bat and my friend throws a ball and I hit it. I get to go to the library on Wednesdays.



## The way forward

Now, when I'm freed from some of my motherly duties during the school hours, I am hoping to ease my husband's workload a bit. As of now, it means that I will be writing the news. I will include his experiences from the trips he makes and, if he so wishes, he can continue to share his deeper theological insight into things (I don't feel quite up to it!). But, the tone of the letters is apt to change: they will be written in Finnish style! I'm telling this because my English is not top notch and sometimes I might use expressions that make complete sense in

Finnish, but will possibly leave some of you wondering. Apologies in advance! And I am sure there will be grammar mistakes, so please bear with me. If there are none, it's because my dear husband has proofread my text!

Pastor James, being the language wizard he is, has taken on German language studies. In this way, he's doing ground work for his doctoral thesis that will discuss early Lutheran mission work in Africa. Some of the research material is written in German and since my husband is not afraid of learning new languages, he's quite excited about adding one into his relatively vast language base. James has recently returned from Burundi, which was his first teaching trip after the summer. I will put my skills as the family's primary reporter to use when I write about his experiences in our next newsletter :).

The LIA Training Center campaign moves along. This far people from America and Finland have raised around \$240,000. Thank you! The price of land unfortunately climbs continuously in Nairobi. Keeping in mind that this is a capital city with millions of people, it doesn't come as a surprise that with that amount we couldn't get even one acre from where we currently reside and we are a half an hour drive from downtown. Therefore, we are actively looking to be completely outside the city area. Before our summer travels, we thought that we had found THE place. The location was good, the price was right, and we excitedly started the legal proceedings that have to take place in order to ensure there are no complications in buying a plot. Well, there were complications. The seller was not the owner of that piece of land in question. 'Tis Africa! It was a setback, but a good lesson about how important it is to follow the proper procedures. I pray that even as we were disappointed, it all happened, because God has some place so much better in store for us! Due to the increase in land price, we are still looking at around \$60,000 more. That would allow us to purchase a plot of ten or more acres where we can fit all buildings and farm land needed, before the year's end. All prayers and donations to help this happen are truly appreciated.

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Jer 29:11*

Wishing you all a beautiful Fall time!  
In Christ,  
Tiina May

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