



# Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN LUTHERANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

[www.lutheransinafrica.com](http://www.lutheransinafrica.com) | May 2022

## Lutheran Teaching and Encouragement for Everybody

Lutherans in Africa's mission is to form African Lutherans to be teachers of the faith. Ever since we bought a plot of land and started to build the Lutheran School of Theology, this teaching has mostly taken place on the campus. Groups of men from several African countries have been sent by their bishops to receive a high quality theological training equipping them to serve as Lutheran pastors in the future. However, when there have been obstacles for the arrival of pastoral students (such as COVID restrictions) or when the students have had term breaks, LIA has striven to reach out to other groups with the Lutheran teaching. By the grace of God, during this past month we were able to organize four teaching events to very diverse audiences.

### Good News for Refugees



The first teaching seminar took place in Kenya's Kalobeyei and Kakuma refugee camps. Our student, Adelino Upwoth, traveled to there ahead of time to carry out the mobilization of the church leaders and to prepare the ground for successful training. Upon Pastor May's arrival, he and Adelino first met with Gambella Lutheran Church leaders. They discussed

about different ways in which LIA can work together to jointly proclaim the Gospel of Christ to refugees at Kakuma and Kalobeyei settlements.

On Sunday, Pastor May preached in Pari Lutheran Church's Divine Service. Nineteen children of the members were united with Christ through Holy Baptism. After the service, the men rushed over to the other settlement, Kakuma, where installation of Bishop Nathaniel Bol Nyok of South Sudan had already commenced. Pastor May had been invited to the occasion to share some words, because many years ago he was instrumental in colloquizing Pastor Bol Nyok's church in Bor town, South Sudan,





from Anglicanism to Lutheranism. That teaching trip to Bor town was appreciated ever so much more because it took place during unrest in South Sudan. Pastor May ended up getting stranded in Bor town as the military took possession of all planes. He was only able to get to the capital city after he hired an expensive taxi ride along a route with heavy presence of armed militia and land mines.



Now, Pastor May was happy to join in the installation celebration of his old friend, Bishop Bol Nyok, and give him several copies of the Good News magazine to further enable and encourage the Bor town congregation and other churches in Bishop Bol Nyok's area to continue growing in the Lutheran faith. Adelino described the service as wonderful event with Anyuak and Dinka communities praising God for their son being installed as bishop.

A four day teaching seminar at Pari church followed. The participants came from both Gambella and Pari congregations. Pastor May taught about liturgy, creation, baptism, and about battle between the Old Man and the New Man in us. The participants received hymnals and Good News magazines and appreciated the clear teaching. They requested Pastor May to return again. Also, the

Anyuaks are preparing to send new students to study at LST.



### Local Pastors' Seminar

Immediately after Pastor May returned from the refugee camps, we received a group of twelve pastors from LST's neighboring churches for a theological seminar. None of these pastors are shepherding a Lutheran congregation, but they were happy to receive teaching and wished for more seminars to be arranged. This teaches us that new churches do not always need to be planted but existing congregations can correct their doctrine by being taught rightly. A few of our students were also able to attend.

Pastor May used the Good News magazine to teach about the daily struggle we engage in; the struggle between flesh and Spirit, between the old man and the new man in us. The old man, the flesh, in us lives according to sinful passions and does not have the ability to do good. Our flesh serves the devil and





leads to death. But as baptized Christians we also have a new man, the spiritual side, in us. It lives according to Holy Spirit and desires to do good. The new man serves God which leads to life.

*"For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do." Galatians 5:17*

*"For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code." Romans 7:5-6*



### Visiting Pastor Matheka's Congregation

The May family traveled to visit a former LST student, Pastor David Matheka where we met his family and congregation in a small village of Kibwezi. So much love was poured on us, as we were invited to share in several meals in different homes and simply spend time together. Pastor Matheka's congregants had built a new church building since his ordination in May 2021, but now they are beginning the construction of yet another one that will fit the growing congregation.

They will continue the example learned at the LST by collecting local stones from 2.5 miles away. In connection with the teaching of Good News magazine's Encouragement issue, Pastor May encouraged the members to talk with other people along the way when they are wheeling in the stones. People are likely to ask where are they hauling the

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stones. That opens an opportunity to tell that they are constructing a Lutheran church and explain how Lutheran church is different from other churches. They can encourage other people to come and receive God's gifts in his Word, Baptism, and Lord's Supper. Life in the Lutheran Church includes encouraging others by carrying each other's burdens just as we carry the building stones together.



Pastor Matheka officiated the Service on Sunday and Pastor May preached. It was a delight to attend a service with clear liturgy and joyous hymn singing. Pastor May preached of John 16:16-24, "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me." He combined this text with the topic of encouragement. In life we face troubles. We get discouraged. Christians help each other. We carry each other's loads. God gives the greatest encouragement and strengthens us in our challenges through his word and Holy Communion. These give us healing. When Jesus died and was put into a grave, he was there only a little while. He rose from the dead and came to his disciples encouraging them again. Also, just a little while and we will see Jesus face to face in heaven.

Later in the evening, the children and youth gathered back in the church again eager to sing and learn more. Pastor May used the illustrations of Good News magazine to tell the account of Adam and Eve. He recounted how in the beginning God made everything good. But Adam and Eve sinned by not believing what God had said. Satan, in the



form of a snake, tempted Eve and she fell into sin through the temptation to be their own gods. In the beginning, there were no thorns nor weeds for Adam to worry about. After the fall, God cursed the ground. Work became hard. God also cursed the woman. In the beginning, giving birth to babies was painless, but now delivery is cursed with pain. Additionally, death was sentenced upon all.



Pastor May taught, "When we do wrong, we repent and confess. When you feel burdened by something you have done and your conscience blames you, you can confess your sins. Even in the church we confessed our sins together in the morning. Pastor forgave your every sin. He is commanded by Jesus to do that. You can know for certain that whatever it was that you had done is now finished. God always forgives us. He cleanses us and leads us to heaven."

"Adam did not repent and take responsibility. Instead he blamed others. We should be quick to confess when we have done wrong and also to forgive so that we can restore the relationship. God covered Adam and Eve with animal skins. God says

that without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. In Old Testament times, people sacrificed animals for their sin offerings up to the time when Jesus came. He was the final sacrifice to cover our sins. Satan took a form of a snake. God took a form of a human being. Jesus was like you and his holy blood covered your sins. His blood was shed to forgive the whole world's sins and to heal us. When you were baptized, the skin of Jesus Christ was put on you. In baptism you are covered by Christ."



### Mutual Encouragement in Oloitokitok Prison

The full account of Pastor May's visit in the prison was supposed to be recounted here. However, the Editor in Chief informed us that the newsletter's length has reached its maximum. Therefore, we shall end with a cliffhanger :) What took place in the prison will be revealed in our next letter alongside with the LST construction update. Until then, may God keep you in his wonderful care and enable you to encourage others with the Gospel!

*"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."  
1 Thessalonians 5:11*

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