



# Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN LUTHERANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

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## The May Family on Three Continents

*From the Home Front*

This summer, the May Family divided their forces between Finland, USA, and Kenya. For Tiina it was hard not to see all the children, but because three years had passed since any of us visited the family and friends in Finland she felt an overwhelming need to do so now. Here follows an account of what happened with the Mays around the world in June and July.

### Mays in the USA

Pastor May and our four oldest children walked on the American soil this summer. With tears we let our youngest daughter, Sofia, follow her big siblings' path to leave Kenya behind and study her final two years of high school in Mayer Lutheran, MN. Pastor May and Sofi flew to USA together to set her up in her new surroundings.



Right after moving in her wonderful host parents', Lyle and Wanda Honebrink's, home and getting a bicycle, bank account, and a phone connection, Sofi began her baby sitter's summer job. She has had -and will be having- plenty of opportunities to spend time with Sarai, as they live in same town and



will even have some classes together next school year. Sarai is now a Senior. She continues working at the same pizza shop / gas station where she also worked during weekends throughout her Junior year. We are exceedingly happy that for one year these two sisters get to have each other's support.



For an extra bonus, also Tristan worked the whole summer in Mayer and saw his sisters more than usually. He was hired by his girlfriend's, Abby's, father to work in his company to build houses. Therefore, Tristan got to spend a lot of time with Abby as well after his first year in college six hours



away. At the end of his spring semester, he joined the National Guard and went through two weekend training sessions during summer. In the beginning of August, he will be shipped out for his basic training that continues until December. Please keep him in your prayers! We are proud of him, excited, and partly nervous too because we do not have a clear understanding of everything that comes with the Army service. But we trust him in God's good care and that our Heavenly Father keeps His, and our, son steadfast in the faith.

After completing her second year in college, Maggie has been working as a lifeguard together with her boyfriend, Christian, to earn money to pay the next tuition bill. Maggie has stayed with Christian's family. The outdoor pool where they work is close by their home in Saint Louis, MO. Maggie flew to Mayer to spend a weekend with her dad and siblings upon Pastor May and Sofi's arrival. She and Christian also tackled a ten hour drive to celebrate Sofi's sweet sixteen birthday and to spend time together with all four siblings and friends before Tristan begins his basic training.







For Pastor May it was a proud moment to be able to get Sofi set up in her new place and reconnect with the older kids who have already left home to live in the USA. He spent as much time as possible with the four oldest children. They went out to eat, shared home meals together, played putt-putt golf, went to movies... While conversing, Dad was able to help his children in many practical issues and share some advice about living as Christian members in today's society. In the end of Pastor's time in the USA, it was sad for him to say good bye to the kids and leave the continent without them.



In addition to spending precious time with our children, the USA trip included three weeks of visiting thirteen different cities in seven different states. Pastor May traveled between Spokane, Washington and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It was



quite exhausting but, as always, also very encouraging to be able to share what is happening on the mission field and to hear that so many people are praying for us and for all the future pastors in Africa. This time, Pastor May also had an opportunity to attend the Issues Etc. Conference in Chicago, IL. It was heartening to be in a packed chapel with several hundred confessional Lutherans singing hymns together, praying, and having good conversations about the spiritual state of the world.

Visiting so many congregations from rural areas of the USA to major cities enabled Pastor May to see the diversity and various challenges that churches in different settings face. He felt that it was mutually uplifting; on one hand he could offer Christian advice from his experience and the other he could receive advice from the faithful Lutheran pastors of these congregations. In the same way as in America, our African pastoral students come from various kinds of backgrounds and surroundings. They face different challenges when they serve in congregations all over Africa. It would be an oversight to think that every country, city, or



congregation has a one-for-all model answer to each demand. At LST, through discussions and teaching, the students can learn ways how to respond to the needs and challenges in their own unique settings.

### Mays in Finland and Kenya

Tiina and the two youngest boys, Jonas and Matthew, spent two months in Finland this summer. It was a wonderful time to reconnect with family, especially with Tiina's father, whom we saw last time in 2019. From their grandpa the boys learned to catch fish with nets and also some other fundamental fishing skills. They also got to spend time with their cousins mostly swimming or playing different ball games. Overall, the boys got to know their extended family in Finland better.



Tiina loved spending time at one of her favorite places on earth: her parents' summer cottage. By the lake without running water and electricity, her body and soul revived. She delighted in helping her father with the boys to cut down trees, making firewood, and fixing structures that had crumbled. A definite highlight for her too was to spend quality time with

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family and dear friends whom we can see so seldom.



From the USA, Pastor May flew to Kenya for a week to check on the garden, animals, and the construction progress. His decisions were needed for different interior solutions for the cafeteria and dormitories. Then, after a hectic time in the USA and Kenya, he flew to be reunited with Tiina and the boys in Finland to get some much needed rest for a couple of weeks. The time in Finland was planned as a vacation time. However, some members of Tiina's hometown congregation asked Pastor May to





teach a Bible study and tell about the mission work, which he eagerly agreed to do. Teaching the Word is his passion, so he did not mind the least. Tiina feels somewhat inadequate as a translator, so the bar to step in the front of an audience is higher for her. When Pastor May was also interviewed in a radio program for three 25 minute sessions, Tiina had even greater concerns, but by the grace of God she hopefully managed to deliver the translation clearly enough for the hearers to understand and enjoy.

The May family sends their heartfelt thanks to all congregations and families who hosted Pastor May in the USA. We Thank the host families who have taken our oldest children under their roof for this summer and those who continue to do so for our girls through the rest of their high school. We thank Tiina's parents for providing for us and spending so much time with us and send our love to all friends and relatives who blessed our lives in various ways during summer. Our greatest thanks goes to our



Heavenly Father, who has inserted all you wonderful people in our life to make it rich beyond measure. In addition, we are abundantly blessed to have beautiful places to visit on three different continents.



### A Glimpse to the Near Future

Our new missionary family, The Ristaus, have their bins and suitcases packed and they are heading to Kenya in the beginning of August. Your prayers for a green light for their travel were appreciated exceedingly! Please continue your prayers for them and for a safe passage to Kenya. The LST is also preparing to receive a volunteer couple, Robert and Denise, from the USA. And most importantly, we are working on getting all our students to the school to begin their new semester in the first of September. In our next month's newsletter you can expect to hear much more about Ristaus and our newest volunteers' first impressions and thoughts after making a life changing decision to serve the Lord in Africa.



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