



Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN LUTHERANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

www.lutheransinafrica.com | September 2022

Students Have Arrived!



The activity level at LST has risen. Not only do we have our new missionaries and volunteers, whom we talked about in our last month's letter, but now we also have our dear students here! The classes began with the intensive English course to raise everyone's language level to better understand theological classes that are taught mainly in English while some French and Kiswahili help is available. The English teachers, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Timothy, from SIL International have worked with several mission organizations and Bible translators in the past. The first theology courses that the students

now engage in are the Catechism class taught by Pastor May and the New Testament Survey taught by Dr. Ristau.

Working together with African Churches

This year we have students from Kenya, South-Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda, and Liberia. Before the semester began, Pastor May traveled to Burundi twice. These were teaching trips, but also opportunities to interview the student candidates to make sure they will be able to handle the rigor of theological studies at the Lutheran School of Theology.



During the first trip, Bishop-elect, Rev Emile Nkurunziza of Burundi, requested a teaching on Baptism and the work of the Holy Spirit. These are two of the most controversial topics, which is understandable considering that the Pentecostal

Church is the largest protestant denomination in Africa. Pastor May re-iterated the use of the catechism in responding to these questions.



Another one of the most controversial points was the use of the crucifix. Pentecostals repeatedly proclaim that the crucifix is Catholic, some even say it is demonic. The primary message they emphasize is the power of the Holy Spirit to give them reins to succeed and flourish in earthly life. It is understandable why a dead person on a cross would be offensive to this earthly message. Many people find Christ's crucifixion confusing. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, *"Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."* (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)

Jesus's death is not a failure. It is redemption! We should have been the ones on the cross but Christ endures our punishment in order to atone for our sins. It is salvation from eternal damnation in hell. It is Christ's love for us because He did not want us to suffer eternally. This is why the crucifix is comforting and powerful.

When Pastor May traveled to Burundi second time, it was with Pastor Matt Anker from Australia. The Lutheran Church in Australia sponsors many projects there, including the building of churches. What is really encouraging is that one of the donors is a Burundian refugee, now living in Australia. She has not forgotten her home country. After joining the Lutheran Church in Australia, she tries in many and

various ways to spread the Gospel back in her home country.



Bishops warmly received at LST

Last week, Lutherans in Africa held their Annual General Meeting (AGM). This is the same thing as an annual board meeting. Bishops and other church leaders from Burundi, Rwanda, Benin, Sudan, South-Sudan, Kenya and Australia attended. In addition to the board meeting, discussions were held about curriculum development. We do not want to simply impose a Western curriculum on the African continent. There are certain fundamental courses like: Greek, Church history, Lutheran Confessions, homiletics, books of the Bible, and Luther's Small Catechism. But then there are other courses like evangelism to Muslims or African traditional religion, liturgy in local languages, pastoral leadership, and bookkeeping which were requested by the bishops.

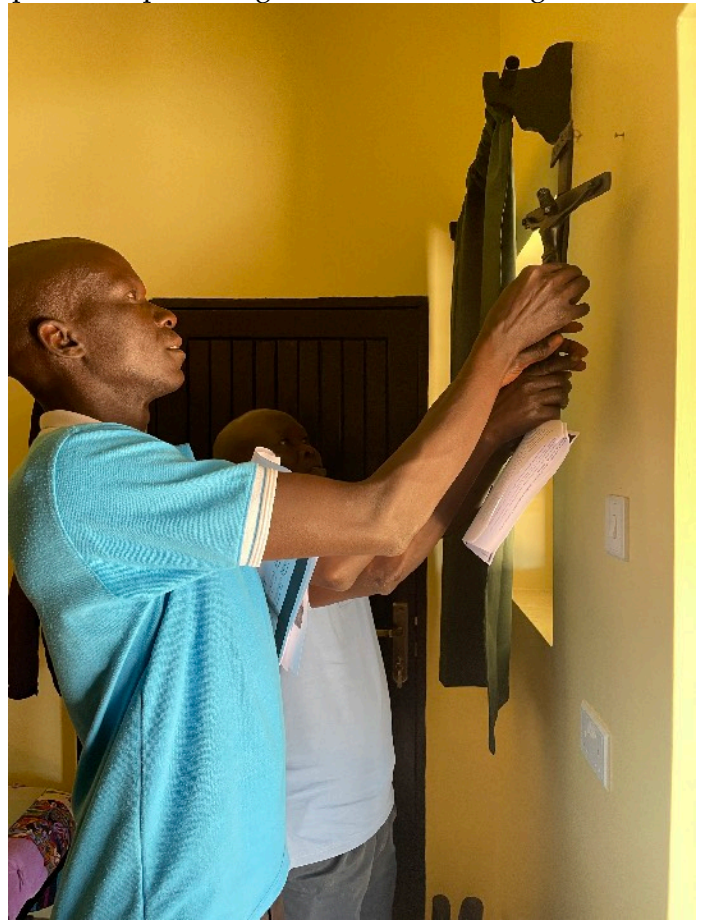


Bishops who have sent students to LST submitted their membership applications to become members of the Lutherans in Africa board. These applications have been reviewed and the current board is in a process of voting to approve these new partners to the leadership of the newly formed Lutheran School of Theology board. We thank the Lord who continues to spread His work on the African continent through new and old partners!



The bishops were able to visit with the students they have sent to LST. It was heart warming to see them interact, share stories and laughs, as well as pray together. The visitors got a tour of the developing campus. They learned about the future building plans, and were shown how LST strives to implement self sustainability. Students cover their tuition by working three hours every weekday. They have an option to pay for their room and board, but this far everyone has rather chosen team work in the garden, in animal care, or in other jobs on campus grounds. A lot of food is produced on campus but we are still striving to reduce even more expenses.

One of the greatest assets is water. Uncountable hours of work has been put into making our dam larger hoping that rains will begin soon and fill it. In addition, we have two huge rain water reservoirs. Borehole caters for many water needs, but we are praying for rain for irrigation and neighbors' cattle. Solar panels provide for all electrical needs. Reaping all possible benefits from the rain water and solar power helps cutting down LST's running costs.



While visiting, the church leaders participated in LST's routine activities by attending the morning and evening chapel services. These Daily Prayer services and Divine Service on Sundays provide the students opportunities to get familiar with Lutheran liturgy. They get to practice leading the services and learn the Lutheran Confessions through the reading and explanation of the Book of Concord and Catechism. In addition to the everyday events, the bishops participated in the dedication services for the new cafeteria building and the student dormitories. Each student received a crucifix and hung it on his room wall. LIA Chairman, Pastor Matt Anker preached during the Divine Service prior to the meeting as well as installed Dr. Ristau



into his new position as the Academic Dean of the LST. Dr. Ristau's two lectures on fasting were well received. After the lectures, the church leaders shared their own experiences and questions about fasting practices in their churches.



The students and missionaries bid goodbyes to the church leaders after the AGM and visiting days were over. Invitations to go and visit them and their congregations were extended and some dates were already locked. May God bless our cooperation as

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He uses LST to extend His kingdom in Africa through forming the teachers of the faith.

"You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." 2 Tim 2:1-2

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