



# Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN LUTHERANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

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## Pastors Doing What Pastors Do

**Rev. May and Dr. Ristau hit the road to visit graduates and chaplains**



Rev. May and Dr. Ristau had their first road trip together in an effort to provide ongoing support to Gospel ministry. They were accompanied by the whole Ristau family and Jonas. The pastors' first stop was the Oloitokitok prison. Back in the summer, Rev. May was invited by the prison chaplain, Lutheran pastor George Araka, to offer both prayer and preaching support to this new and poor prison on the border of Kenya and Tanzania. The prisoners were so grateful for his message, love, gifts of Good News magazines, and items such as toilet paper and soap.

Now, the pastors met with the chaplain team to discuss chaplain training and refresher courses. The chaplains were very excited about the idea, especially when they realized that LIA isn't interested in making money off tuition, but seeking ways of serving prisoners in ways that would glorify Jesus (i.e. training chaplains who can faithfully offer the Gospel and help these prisoners live lives that reflect their faith, since most of them confess to be Christians). Dr. Ristau has four-year

experience training chaplains at the Canadian Forces Chaplain School and Center, outside Toronto. The school included officers sent from various African nations. Dr. Ristau is brainstorming ways in which that training package can be adapted, tailored and applied to the current setting here in Kenya.



At their second stop, Rev. May, Dr. Ristau, and family members had the opportunity to visit a graduate of Lutheran School of Theology (LST), Rev. David Matheka, in Kibwezi. Kibwezi is a poor

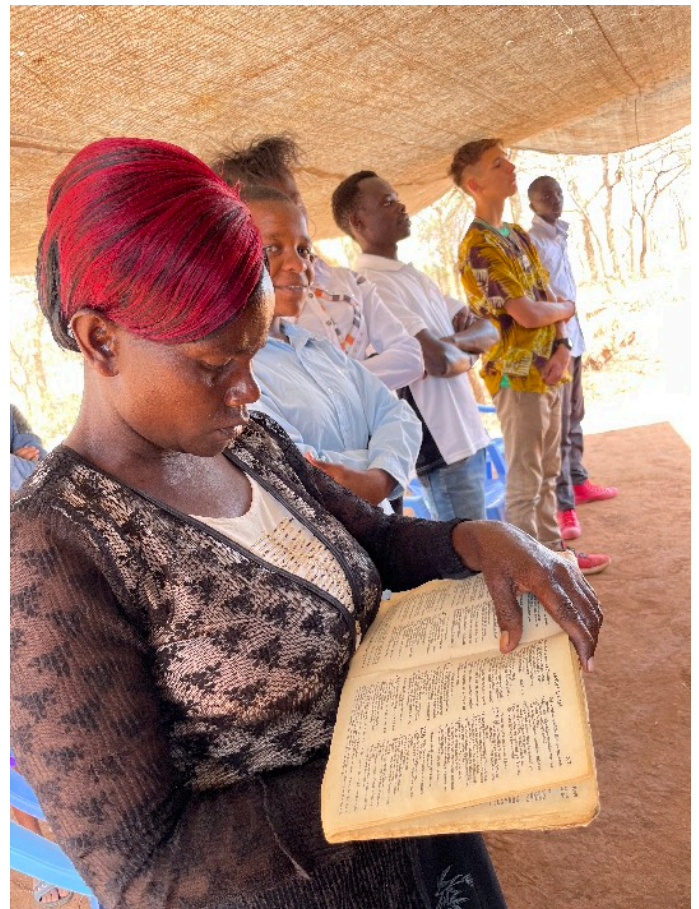


community about five hours from LST. During the Divine Service, Dr. Ristau preached on the Parables of the Lost Son, Lost Coin, and Lost Sheep. He focused on the comforting reality that Jesus was consumed with seeking out and finding the lost, like us sinners. The service was conducted in both English and Swahili, with some of the attendees listening from outside the overflowing tiny church. The congregation has suffered much due to persecution it has endured by government officials over a dispute over a land claim. Even though the congregation was declared innocent of any wrong doing, members were wrongfully arrested and their church building was vandalized and dismantled. However, praise be to God, these efforts only strengthened the faith of these committed Lutherans, who now worship in a crowded mud hut, with a coffee table as an altar. Yet, they have begun construction on a new building which they hope to complete within the next year, depending on fundraising efforts.



Rev. May and Dr. Ristau plan on returning to the site in January with the second year students. The professors would teach the students classes in the

morning, and all of them would help to build the new church in the later afternoon and evening by hauling rocks to the site from a mile away. Eating simple cuisine and sleeping in tents, Rev. May believes that this would not only help motivate the congregation to continue their work, and help them see how they are not alone in their mission, but also help the students understand the importance of such communal efforts. Also, this would prepare the students for possibly needing to mimic the process in their own future congregations. There is a lot of value in building something with your own hands, instead of asking others to do it for you. Even at LST, students work half the day, growing the food that they eat for meals. There are very few seminaries that offer such holistic education: preparing students for Christian ministry along with teaching them practical skills for future supplementary employments. Regretfully, many congregations cannot afford to pay their pastors an adequate salary, so pastors need to work part-time doing other jobs, in line with the "tentmaker" idea of some of the Apostles in the New Testament.





The location may also be a site for upcoming vicarages, due to the fantastic outreach opportunities that exist within the surrounding areas and villages. We will keep you posted on more developments.



### Rev. Bell Teaching and Filling in at LST

While Rev. May and Dr. Ristau were in southern Kenya, LST enjoyed the good care of Rev. Randall Bell. He came from Christ Lutheran Church Augusta, MO to teach a three week intensive course on preaching with the emphasis on properly distinguishing Law and Gospel. Rev. Bell also filled



in at LST's Luther Chapel. The whole LST community extends their thanks to Rev. Bell for sharing his time and talents in equipping the students with sound theology so they can better serve in their future congregations all over Africa!

*"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit." Ephesians 2:19-22*



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