



# Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN LUTHERANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

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

## Proclaiming Gospel to Neighbors and Refugees

Blessed Christmas to you dear friend!



The classes at the Lutheran School of Theology have closed for the Christmas break. Our pastoral candidates have traveled to their homes to enjoy the fellowship with their families and their home congregations. Pastor May flew to the USA for fundraising and to give much needed fatherly care to the older May children. We thank each and every family and congregation who received him giving him several opportunities to share about the mission of Lutherans in Africa. Thank you for all dear friends who provided for his housing and meals.

Meanwhile in Kenya, Pastor Ristau traveled to the refugee camps soon after closing the classes at the LST. Just before his flight to the camps, he had a chance to attend our neighbor's housewarming celebration together with his family and the Mays who remained in Kenya. Below, you can read the accounts of both of these events. Our Heavenly Father continues to open up opportunities for His Gospel to be proclaimed, and we praise Him for that!

### Mama Joshua Has a New Home

We had the privilege to be invited to our neighbor's housewarming. The entire Maasai community from the neighborhood and also from farther distances away came together to greet each other, eat, dance, and wish God's blessings upon Mama Joshua and her new house. Heartwarmingly, we were fully considered as members of the local community. "This is where we line up. You are part of us, so together with us you will be receiving and welcoming the long distance travelers to your area." Pastor Ristau was also pulled into a joyful Maasai dance procession in honor of Mama Joshua.



According to the Maasai tradition, the youngest son of the family builds a house for the mother next to his own house and is responsible for taking care of her at her old age. The father of the family moves in with the oldest son and is similarly looked after by him.

We enjoyed connecting with the LST student, Gabriel, who hasn't been able to attend classes this semester. The drought that has forced him to take his family's cattle long distances from his home to





find water and food. Many of their animals have perished. He is hoping to rejoin the classes next semester.

As we were handing our gifts to Mama Joshua, Pastor Ristau was given an opportunity to address the whole community. He shared a brief message of gratitude and above all talked about our greatest thankfulness for Jesus Christ who died on the cross taking on the punishment for all our sins. Jesus, our



Savior, who was raised from the dead and desires to give eternal life in heaven to all who believe in him.

### **Baptizing Refugees in the Desert: Christ Child Remains Born in Lowly Places**



The week before Christmas, Pastor Ristau visited a UN refugee camp located in Kakuma Kenya situated on the border of South Sudan. The camp is home to over 700,000 refugees and there are several Lutheran communities that are growing. Two lay leaders, who are students at LST, asked LIA if they could send a pastor to perform baptisms on several new catechumens. Because Rev. May was fundraising in the USA, Dr. Ristau was asked to provide instruction and baptisms for 39 new Christians. Due to the remoteness of the camp and difficult accessibility, some of the candidates had been waiting close to a year for the sacrament of the Holy baptism.

In one of the two locations, the church is simply a shelter with half a roof, and there is no other furniture. Worshippers sit on the ground or bring their own chairs. However, in spite their lack, the Holy Spirit is alive and active, as He continues to call and gather his Church together through His means of grace.

One of Pastor Ristau's many illustrations for the children on the meaning of Baptism during his hours of instruction was comparing the washing of our bodies with the washing of our hearts and souls. The children understand that there is no entrance for a meal in their physical homes until they have



been cleaned of all the dirt caked on their bodies. And that cleansing requires two things: water and soap. Pastor Ristau continued to explain, similarly, there is no entrance into our spiritual home until we have been cleansed from the dirt of sin that is caked onto our hearts. By holding up a small bar of soap behind the crucifix that he was wearing, Pastor Ristau explained how Jesus is our soap, and He joins himself with the water to wash away all our sins.



Jesus was born in a manger 2000 years ago. Yet He continues to be found in lowly places. The celebration of these dozens of baptisms in a Kenyan desert is evidence of that! Praise God our Heavenly Father for making salvation so simple: just a little water to bring the Word of God into the hearts and souls of His redeemed. And, even though a beautiful church is a fitting house for the Lord, He also dwells in the ones that are simple and poor.

Please pray for our two students, Adelino and John, who are spending their Christmas break at their home in the refugee camp. Pray for them as they are being prepared for ordination and as they continue Biblical instruction and further catechesis of these newly baptized Christians. Also, commit each of

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these new believers to the loving care of our Father in Heaven so that they would continue to abide in God's Word and their baptismal grace.

*"... I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10-11*



## Support the work of Lutherans in Africa

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- By mail: Checks may be sent to  
Lutherans in Africa  
PO Box 121, Ocean Shores, WA 98569
- Online: Go to [www.lutheransinafrica.com](http://www.lutheransinafrica.com) and select either the Paypal button or the Donor Perfect button.
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Direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Lutherans In Africa. Follow the link [here](#) for instructions.

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### Australia

- By mail: Checks may be sent to  
*Lutherans in Africa - Australia Inc*  
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Shepparton, Victoria, 3630
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- Online: through Canada Helps: visit the link below and apply your donation to project “2118 Lutherans in Africa” – <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/concordia-lutheran-mission-society/>

