

# LTS NEWS

## Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane [Pretoria, South Africa]



Rev. Dr. Carl Rockrohr together with his wife Deborah and their son Ted standing on Church Square in down-town Pretoria. Both Carl and Debbie have received and accepted a call to serve with the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa. Carl is to be an academic associate to the Bishop and Debbie is to set up the deaconess school for the LCSA at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane. Both have experience in Africa as they were serving in Ghana for 5 years before moving back to the USA to teach theology at the CU Ann Arbor, Michigan. We pray that God may continue to bless the Rockrohrs as they answer his calling to continue serving him in his Church.

### Called to serve in SA

Another academic year has gotten off to a good start at the LTS. Seven new students have started with the beginners course - and another four have started their post-graduate work at the theological faculty of the university of Pretoria [UP]. We are hopeful that the cooperation with UP can continue at a higher and more intensive level in the course of this year. Presently the advanced course is going full-steam ahead with Prof. Dr. John Kleinig from the Lutheran Church in Australia teaching Psalms and Lutheran Spirituality, whereas Prof. John Pless from the Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft.Wayne, Indiana is teaching both Catechesis and Law & Gospel. After that we are expecting Grace Rao from LCMS World Relief & Human Care to offer the 3rd consecutive deaconess course at the LTS God willing and then in no time at all the 1st Quarter will again be history.

# Holidays in Sudan

Thank God, I went home for Christmas holidays after being at LTS for another academic year. It was amazing to see my family again, friends and colleagues; I cannot explain the joy and excitement...it is true home is sweet!

It was not all about being home and relaxing though, I had to do some practical, teaching and preaching what I have learnt from the seminary. I preached three times at my home congregation in Yambio and visited two other congregations about 25 miles away. I was also busy teaching Luther's Small Catechism to the youth group in my congregation and some youth from the neighboring reformed churches joined the lessons in the catechism. I was so happy to see how they enjoyed the explanations of Luther's Catechism and some even ask me for copies to use for teaching in their churches. To me it is amazing to see how powerful the catechism is, even non-Lutherans desire to have it.

Another thing to thank God for is that I got the privilege to be invited by Rev. Daniel Preus to attend the Luther Academy conference in Kampala on the "Preaching of Law and Gospel." This was a great opportunity for me, many of my colleagues were there, we shared great times and were learning together.

The Lutheran church in Sudan started in 1993 by late Bishop Andrew Mbugo Elisa, today it has over 20 pastors and more than 19,000 baptized Christians attend the church. Our church has faced so many challenges in doing mission work especially the struggle between Islam and Christianity, despite this we have Lutheran churches located throughout Sudan by the grace of God. My aim is to finish my studies and go back and be a Lutheran Pastor in Sudan, to preach and teach the message of salvation.

Finally thank God South Sudan is already an independent State since we voted overwhelmingly for session from the north in the referendum last January.

I hope and pray that things will be a little bit easier than before. Please keep us in your prayers. I thank God that I am back at LTS again for the advance course and honors program at the University of Pretoria. My special thanks go to all the sponsors of LTS who make it possible for us to study Lutheran Theology here in Pretoria+

P.A. ABIA



Clockwise from the left: Pat Hoffmeier, Ashenafi Desta, Laura Gbotoe, Lee Hoffmeier,

# Lutherans in Uganda



Lutheran missionaries came from Ghana in 1994: John and Solomon. They started the church in E. Uganda, the Busoga kingdom in Jinja near the source of the Nile. Missionary John invited Lutheran Hour Ministries to open media ministries in the capital city Kampala. Missionary Solomon left to work in the Ankole kingdom in W. Uganda called Mbarara. Here Pastor Barahuka Benson joined him before continuing his studies at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane [Pretoria, South Africa].

To help with the growth of the church the missionaries sent three promising men to the LTS in Accra, Ghana under the guidance of President Dr. Paul Fynn to study theology: Bameka Charles, Waako Samuel and Daniel Namayo. After completing their three year course they returned home to work in Lutheran Hour ministries, the Church office and with World Relief and Human care respectively.

Bishop Waako Samuel was the first Ugandan

church leader to contact Bishop David Tswaedi to help them with the further training of future Lutheran pastors. The first student from Uganda came to the LTS in 1994: Angus Lukeeta, but soon others followed: Wamaala Jerome, Samuel Ogwang and Waako Moses. They did very well in Southern Africa and left very good impressions there. These students returned to be ordained and then worked in the LC of Uganda. Others followed in their footsteps: Benson Barahuka, Daniel Nkoyooyo, Aaron Bamumwanye, Bwire Nicholas and Robert Wakiso. Obura Johnson, Waako York, Peter Maganda, Odoo Okello James, and Johnson Balihikya did too, but are still busy in vicarage. Enoch Machen and myself are the only ones left at LTS studying in the 4th year.

I thank God for His mercy for the church growth in Uganda, and for everyone supporting God's mission of by preaching His word and administering His sacraments faithfully. I also thank him for protecting me and my 2 sisters in 1986, when our parents were killed during the civil war.

In 2009 I was posted to W. Uganda to learn preaching, teaching, visiting congregants and evangelization. We worked in Kiruhura, Mbarara, Ibanda, Kyenjojo and Kamwenge: 40 Christians were confirmed, 5 babies baptized, 500 people came to Holy Communion.

During my last Christmas holidays I served in Kampala under pastor Wamaala Jerome., another graduate of LTS in Tshwane SA. There I continued with my training until my papers were ready to return to my alma mater in Pretoria. May God continue to bless the Lutheran

# Trip Report by Prof. J.T.Pless



I am grateful to Dr. Wilhelm Weber for the invitation to teach two advanced courses in the intensive term (February 28- March 11) at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (Pretoria). I also wish to thank Benediction Lutheran Church (Milwaukee) and their pastor, Rev. Donald Hougard for providing funds for my flight to South Africa. This term I taught "Catechetics" and "The Theology of Law and Gospel" with 16 students in each class and several students who listened in as their schedules allowed but did not take the classes for credit Each class met for two hours each of the ten days.

The Catechetics class sought to examine the history behind Luther's development of the Small Catechism, the theology of the Catechism, and approaches to teaching the Catechism. Using Oswald Bayer's *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation* as

the text for the class, students were exposed to the Catechism as a framework for Luther's doctrine. Students worked on developing outlines for teaching particular parts of the Catechism in the congregation.

"The Theology of Law and Gospel" was primarily based on C. F. W. Walther's classic treatment, *Law and Gospel* with secondary reading from Hans Joachim Iwand's *The Righteousness of Faith According to Martin Luther* and my *Handling the Word of Truth: Law and Gospel in the Church Today*. Although we able only to cover in detail the first nine theses of Walther's book, students were eager to engage questions relative to the application of the law and the Gospel in preaching and pastoral care in their various African contexts.

The generosity of Salem Lutheran Church (Taylorsville, NC), Trinity Lutheran Church (Reese,

MI), Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church (Coldstrip, MT) and numerous individuals made it possible for each student to receive a personal copy of the above-mentioned books. This funding enabled me to take 150 pounds of books for use by students and for the permanent collection at the LTS library.

While at the seminary I preached for two chapel services (March 3 and 10), attended the Divine Service at the Zulu-speaking congregation at Daveytown on March 6, and participated in a seminar on "Women's Ordination" with Dr. John Kleinig who was also teaching an intensive term course at LTS. Given the pressures put on African churches by the Lutheran World Federation to ordain women, there is interest in a follow up seminar on this topic in August.

Overlapping with my time at LTS was a visit by Dr. and Mrs. Carl Rockrohr and their son, Ted. Dr. Rockrohr has accepted the call to serve LTS and the LCSA, and Mrs. Debra Rockrohr, a deaconess, has accepted the call to work with deaconess education. I fully anticipate that the considerable insight, talent, and energy that Dr. and Deaconess Rockrohr bring to the work in South Africa will be a blessing for Lutherans throughout Africa.

Dr. Michael Rodewald, Area Director for LCMS World Missions, has always been supportive and encouraging of my teaching trips to South Africa. I appreciate his collaborative spirit and thoughtfulness. He and his wife, Cindy, hosted Dr. Kleinig, the Rockrohrs, and me for an enjoyable dinner at their home.

I continue to be impressed with the potential for LTS as it is strategically located to have tremendous influence for confessional Lutheranism in all of Africa. With a student body that includes seminarians from South Africa, Botswana, Uganda, Liberia, Sudan, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia, LTS is well-positioned to provide sound Lutheran theological education and formation for pastors and deaconesses so desperately needed in Africa today. The establishment of a Lutheran Chair at the University of Pretoria is still in progress. This Chair along with a continual program of short-term, visiting professors

from our LCMS seminaries will go a long way in building the capacity of LTS for the challenges that face African Lutheranism. LTS has a vital role to play not only in preparing future pastors and deaconesses but also in raising up confessional Lutheran theologians from Africa and for Africa.

I see these short-term teaching trips by LCMS professors as an important component of the overall work of LTS. In addition to covering courses in the LTS curriculum, we are able to identify, nurture and give guidance to individual students who might be promising candidates for STM or PhD programs at our seminaries in the USA. Visiting professors are also able to assist with continuing education events for the deans and pastors of the LCSA as we did with the seminar of women's ordination.

This was my fourth teaching trip to South Africa in the last eighteen months. Going back to LTS on a fairly frequent basis has allowed me to establish a good mentoring connection with several of the students and to build an approach to Lutheran pastoral theology incrementally in the courses I teach. I have appreciated the opportunity to visit with some the LTS students also cross-registered in degree programs at the University of Pretoria. The majority of the faculty at the University of Pretoria are either classically Reformed or Barthian in their approach. It is important for our Lutheran students to be well-resourced with Lutheran texts and opportunities for constructive but critical engagement of the lectures they hear at the University.

Dr. Weber has asked me to return again in August to teach a class on "Luther's Ethics." This course would be a good follow up to both the Catechetics and the Theology of Law and Gospel course, as I would be able to address issues of natural law, two governments, orders of creation, etc. in light of Luther's exposition of the Decalogue using Albrecht Peters' *Commentary on the Catechism: Ten Commandments*. I am eager and willing to do this if funding can be found.

Prof. John T. Pless  
Concordia Theological Seminary  
Fort Wayne, Indiana USA - March 13, 2011

## An Australian in Africa

Since reading the novels of Andre Brink I have wanted to visit South Africa. The desire has grown as I have followed the course of events in this country over the last 25 years. My curiosity about the political and social changes that have occurred has also aroused my interest in discovering how the Lutheran church has adapted to its changing context here since the end of apartheid.

So when Dr Weber asked me to come to teach at the Lutheran Seminary in Tshwane and I discovered that the seminary drew on students from many different Lutheran churches in Sub-Sahara Africa, I had no hesitation in accepting his invitation. This was made easier for me by my retirement in 2010 from full time teaching at the Australian Lutheran College, formerly called Luther Seminary, in Adelaide, South Australia.

Since 1982 I have been training pastors there for ordination by teaching courses on introduction to the Bible, the Psalms, wisdom in the Old Testament, the theology of the Old Testament, liturgics, preaching, and Lutheran spirituality. You can see from this that while I teach in many different areas, my main expertise is in the Old Testament. That's what I have studied in my post-graduate work at the University of Cambridge in England. For my master's degree I submitted a thesis on the getting of wisdom

in Proverbs; for my doctorate I wrote a published dissertation on the basis, function and significance of choral music in Chronicles. I have also written a commentary on Leviticus and book on Lutheran Spirituality called *Grace Upon Grace*.

Here in Pretoria I have been teaching two intensive courses, the first over two weeks on the Psalms and the second over one week on Lutheran spirituality. This has been most enjoyable for me, because, as we have studied these topics, we have, from the questions of the students, also covered many practical topics such as spiritual warfare, ancestral spirits, the purpose of praising God, the Lutheran theology of worship, and providing pastoral care for African people in many different situations.

One of my passionate interests is the cross-cultural communication of the gospel with a concern for evangelising and teaching people from animist societies, such as the Aborigines in Australia as well as tribal people in New Guinea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and India. From my own experience I have discovered how God's word seems to transcend the barriers of language and custom and culture. So I have been eager to discover how the gospel has been taught and received by various tribal groups here in Africa.

There is so much that I have learnt so far in the short time that I have been here. Two



After preaching at Matins Prof. Dr. John Kleinig [Australia] is seen here in discussion with the student of theology Daniel Fitebo [Ethiopia]. Pat Hoffmeier in the background.

things have struck me most in my exposure to African Lutherans here at the seminary and in the few congregations that I have visited. The first is the wonderful African way of singing and praising God. With that goes a sense of rhythm and bodily movement that I have never seen anywhere else. The other is the challenge to the Lutheran church from various Pentecostal churches that put more emphasis on what we do and bring to God in worship than on what the triune God does

for us and gives to us through his word.

Many scholars who study the mission of the church around the world, claim that within the next century the church will, most likely, be strongest in Africa. I do know if that will happen. But I am grateful to see for myself just a little of what is happening in this wonderful continent.

Prof. Dr. John Kleinig [Australia]

## 2011 Newcomers and a new look



Clock-

wise from the left: Trafaina Nkya [Tanzania]; Herman Gacha [Tanzania]; Amos Kilimba [Tanzania]; Harold Mkaro [Tanzania]; Zungu Maqoba [Mpumalanga]; Jonah Mkubwa



The expansion of the LTS facility was enhanced even more, when the unsightly wall around Mdluli House was demolished and this palisade fence replaced it. This is the view of the LTS from the corner of Arcadia and Farenden Streets. Presently three married student couples are living here: Ghebotoe, Madonsela and Ngobese. The 4th unit

## Induction of vicar Thokane Skosana

On the 13th March—Invocavit Sunday—Thokane Skosana was inducted into his vicarage at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in the town of Siyabuswa, KwaNdebele.

Last year he finished his studies at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane and now he is to serve under the auspices of Bishop Dr. Mandla Kuhmalo of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Middleburg, Mpumalanga.

Several Seminarians were part of the joyful occasion. Here vicar Skosana is seen with some of his teachers Bishop Weber and Prof. Dr. Kleinig from Australia.



## Workshop: “Women & Ordination”



On Saturday, the 5th March, the LTS offered a workshop on “women and ordination”. This had been initiated by the LCSA Botswana diocesan synod in November 2010. After deliberations with the LCSA Church Council the workshop was planned at the Seminary to attract more visitors from other dioceses too. Here the delegation from Botswana is seen with the 2 guest-speakers: Prof. John T. Pless [Ft. Wayne, In] and Prof. Dr. John Kleinig [Australia]. God willing a follow-up of this workshop is planned in more dioceses before tackling the next issue at LTS: “Homosexuality” in August.

# Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane

## [Pretoria, South Africa]

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BIC: 33 55 45  
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## Coming up in 2.Quarter 2011 dv

- 26. April: Start of the 2.Quarter at LTS
- 17.May: Meeting of the LTS Board of directors
- 20-30th May: Students from CU Austin, Texas
- 29. May: Mission festival in Salem, Mpumalanga
- 14-24. June: 1. Semester examination
- 25.June—18.July: Winter break

## Congratulations & Blessings

Salomé van Niekerk and Niel Smith will be getting married from Constantia Park Baptist Church on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2011.

Niel is a software developer, originally from Windhoek, Namibia and Salomé has been an administrative assistant at the LTS for nearly 2 years now.

They will continue living in Pretoria.



### Prayer Requests for the LTS

- > More able students to study Lutheran theology and be prepared as pastors and deaconesses in Africa
- > Means to support teachers so that they can concentrate on teaching, preaching and research.
- > More bursaries for students from Africa to study Lutheran theology full-time at LTS and UP.
- > Suitable opportunities for graduates to be called and installed, ordained and taken into service.
- > Volunteers to help with a growing work-load: administratively, with house-keeping & tutoring
- > Necessary means to sustain, renovate and expand the facility as required.
- > Good theological books for the library, for teachers and students.
- > Opportunities for Seminarians to tell their story and that of the Seminary in the Churches and beyond.
- > A good start for the Rockrohrs as they begin raising funds for their ministry in SA
- > Possibilities for international exchange to broaden the perspective of Seminarians globally.