

My Time in South Africa
Edward Kettner, Professor Emeritus, Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Canada

How wonderful it is to experience the hospitality of Lutherans from throughout the world! The Gospel unites God's people under the joy of knowing that we have the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.

I had the joy of experiencing this for the last two weeks in May, as I taught an advanced course in Christology (the Person and Work of Christ) to the senior and graduate students at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane in Pretoria. I arrived on the afternoon of Saturday, May 16. That evening I enjoyed a dinner with the Weber Family and a few of the students. On Sunday I enjoyed the opportunity to worship with the English speaking congregation that meets on the seminary campus. On Monday I began teaching. Working with seven students, we went through the article concerning Jesus Christ from the perspectives of Scripture, church history, and the Lutheran Confessions. We worked through the struggles and controversies of the Early Church as it came to terms with Christ's true deity and humanity, and through the confessional material that sought to preserve the glory of Christ's work for us against all attempts to add human involvement in the work of salvation. While we looked at all of this with dogmatic precision, we did so with the understanding that this was not simply for the sake of establishing the correct "theory," but was done in order that the Good News would come forth to the people of God in all of its beauty.

Besides teaching, I had the joy of participating in the worship life of the seminary community. The rhythm of the day is defined by responsive prayer at the beginning of the day, Matins in mid-morning, and Vespers at the close of the day. These prayer services kept us all grounded in the Word. In addition, I had the privilege of preaching at the Wednesday morning confessional services. How wonderful to be able to bring God's Word to this community!

The week ended with a brai on Friday afternoon after the final exam was completed. I flew out on Saturday, May 30 and arrived home on Sunday, May 31. God granted me safe travels, and I have fond memories, a feeling of satisfaction that the course challenged and inspired the students, and a few new Facebook friends as well!

I pray that God would continue to bless faculty and students at the seminary, and to bless the church with a continuing supply of faithful pastors, who will bring the Good News to God's people in southern Africa and elsewhere.