

# LTS NEWS

## Training Lutheran Pastors and Deaconesses for Africa

1. *Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of Glory waits; The King of kings is drawing near, The Saviour of the world is here Life and salvation He doth bring, Wherefore rejoice and gladly sing: We praise Thee, Father, now, Creator, wise art Thou!*

2. *A Helper just He comes to thee, His chariot is humility, His kingly crown is holiness, His scepter, pity in distress, The end of all our woe He brings; Wherefore the earth is glad and sings: We praise Thee, Saviour, now, Mighty in deed art Thou!*

3. *O blest the land, the city blest, Where Christ the Ruler is confessed! O happy hearts and happy homes To whom this King in triumph comes! The cloudless Sun of joy He is, Who bringeth pure delight and bliss. We praise Thee, Spirit, now, Our Comforter art Thou!*

4. *Fling wide the portals of your heart; Make it a temple set apart From earthly use for Heaven's employ, Adorned with prayer and love and joy. So shall your Sovereign enter in And new and nobler life begin. To Thee, O God, be praise For word and deed and grace!*

5. *Redeemer, come! I open wide My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide! Let me Thy inner presence feel, Thy grace and love in me reveal; Thy Holy Spirit guide us on Until our glorious goal is won. Eternal praise and fame We offer to Thy name.*

Georg Weissel, 1642t translated by Catherine Winkworth, 1855, alt.



## Thanksgiving

*+ Lot's of reason to be thankful and praise our God +*

Another 5 students have successfully completed their theological training of 5 years at our Seminary. This was celebrated at our Seminary's thanksgiving on the 12 November. This crowns 2 years of bridging & preparation, followed by another 3 years of theology proper. Chifunilo Thembo is returning to Zambia, Mduduzi Nkosi to St. Peter's LC in Middleburg, MP and Katlego Monyipau from Bapedi Lutheran will remain in Gauteng. Both Tariku Lemma and Mulato Zeleke are from Hosanna LC (Mekane Yesus) in Ethiopia and are looking forward to continue with post-graduate studies.

We look forward to 10 more students in the new academic year starting off on the first Tuesday in February 2016. We have applications from Zambia, Uganda, Congo and South Africa. It is our prayer, that they will make it in good time.

Although we do not have a theological course starting in 2016, we do still have a handful of post-graduate students enrolled at the University of Pretoria and abroad in the CS St. Louis (MO) and at CTS Ft. Wayne (IN). More than 10 post-graduates, vicars and young pastors are enrolled in the advanced course meeting at least twice a year: 2-3 weeks pro semester to do intensive training with guest professors like Pless, Dr. Klän, Dr. Kettner, Dr. Nordling and Dr. Schulz.

## Opportunity & Impressions

*Vicar Gbotoe travels to US & tells us his story*



It is with humble spirit I recount my experience in the USA. The journey started back in 2014 when I received a communication from the University of Pretoria that my academic performance qualifies me to become a member the "Golden key international honour society". This is of the world's largest. It connects high-achieving individuals locally, regionally and globally with lifetime opportunity, reward & success. It focuses on academic excellence, leadership development and community service. It affiliates over 400 universities throughout the world and connects its members to realise their potential through affiliation. Twice a year it holds a symposium in two countries. It then invites members to present abstracts to foster cooperation.

Early this year I was invited to present in Italy and Australia. But I declined due to the intensity of my studies at the time. However, I accepted a following one to present in the USA.

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him above ye heav'nly hosts; Praise Father, Son + Holy Ghost!**

There I presented: "The role of Christianity in a fragile society, with highlight on African countries like Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, Liberia and others." This is a broader scope than my PhD thesis which primarily focuses on the fragility of Liberia. I argue for an active role of the church to oppose the cataclysm threatening our globe, especially Africa.

So the role of Christianity within a given society is more than just preaching the gospel. The statistical permutation of Christianity in Liberia called for the church to position itself as a key pillar on which, the nascent structures of peace and development in the land are rested and nourished.

The experience did not only enhance my credentials, but helped me to perceive the world from a boarder perspective that gives Christians the platform to explore and promulgate our values. For it is our obligation to utilise every opportunity to preach Christ in an uncondescending manner. I wish to extend my word of gratitude to everyone who made the trip possible.



Vicar Eric Gbotoe with his wife Laura and their children Ophelia & Eric jr



## Early Child Care

Our deaconess students, who graduated last year 2014 are now completing their supplementary course work in Early Childhood Education and Caring, which has further equipped them for the work at the Seminary's Day-Care-Centre, which has already more than 10 little darlings enrolled and is growing from strength to strength.

## MaBhengu retires

Mrs Thulisiwe Bhengu, who was part of the very first deaconess course offered by Deaconess Grace Rao (LCMS World Mission) years back, was also the first headmistress of our Day-Care-Centre at the Seminary. Now that she is 65, she is retiring to her home in Pongola, KZN. We wish her all the best and will miss her jubilant song every day. Thank you and „Hamba kahle!“

## 2 classes & new staff

Thankfully we do have trained teachers and the prospect of a new intake of deaconess students in 2016.

Deaconesses Trinh and Tshireletso are to continue teaching our little ones about God's wonderful world and their place in it. With the help of our competent assistants, Raheema and Nokulunga we plan to have two classes starting in January and are excited about further growth at the LTS Preschool.

## Pre School: Past & Future



As we reflect on a busy year we are truly humbled and in awe of the rich blessings the Lord has bestowed on the LTS Preschool. We are thankful to Pastor Weber for giving us the encouragement and space to grow, to our donors for their generosity, to our staff and volunteers for their servant hearts and to our preschoolers' parents for entrusting their children to us.

We opened our doors in January 2015 and began with four preschoolers. Without the dedication and hard work of our Deaconesses and Principal Thuli Bhengu, however, this project would not have been possible. The Deaconesses embarked on a one-year Early Childhood Education certificate through INTEC and we are thrilled to announce that not only have they completed the course but they have done so with flying colours. Congratulations Ladies!

In addition to studying about Early Childhood Education they gained valuable experience by doing practical training at our preschool. They prepared and taught lessons, supervised the children in all activities and have started to work with the children in their faith formation.

We are also thankful for the value that our assistants, Raheema, Prossy, Nokulunga and Emily have added to our program and we are excited about their further training. It has been a pleasure to watch the ladies grow in their work with the children and we are grateful for the loving atmosphere and caring community that all our staff have helped create for the children. A BIG Thank You to all of you! From Mrs. Imke Baier

## Rev. Mntambo enrolled at CS St. Louis:

### *Impressed and so eager to run and follow suit*

Impressive! This really is the way to describe Concordia Seminary St. Louis (CSL). It is also impressive that CSL has granted me an opportunity to study with them. Their letter of admission gave me a lot of joy, and I thank God for the opportunity given to me. Enrolment into an impressive PhD program in a school like this is an honour, a great honour. Such a highly esteemed institution, CSL is.

For enrolment in 2015-2016, the CSL invited their prospective students to gather at their impressive facility for five days. This was back in September 2015.

With much confidence CSL extended this invitation to the students. Their impressive invitation and welcome documentation was coloured with these words: "Our staff, students and faculty are here to assist you and your family during this important transitional period. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have." They are confident in doing everything not only to inform, but also to impart great inspiration to the prospective students.

The impressive thing is that indeed they did everything, and still do, reach out to the students. They make sure that confidently students begin their respective programs, and carry them through to graduation. It's very nice to belong to a community like this.

During that week in September, the staff at the Graduate School warmly welcomed students. They took turns explaining all aspects of the PhD program. They introduced students to the methods, lecturers, resources, and location of everything students will need during their years of study. Students are inspired by the library, the rich archives facility and the advanced IT functionality of all these.

The story of the LC-MS and the Seminary told by Dr. G. Bode was particularly impressive. All staff members are passionate about their seminary.

Students can only inherit this passion; it's enough to drive them to harder and prosperous academic work.

CSL is a very good place for spiritual enrichment and this is good for the students. Dr. Dale Meyer is their impressive and very gifted man. He made the welcome of students a very good experience. He is like a caring father; it is great to interact with this man of God. More than this, he is a very gifted preacher and lover of God's Word. He and several of his colleagues have memorised the Gospel of St Mark. They perform this Gospel around the country to inviting audiences. This is also very impressive! Maybe now all Lutheran pastors must do this as well.

Various charity organisations are linked to certain congregations of the LC-MS around the city St Louis. CSL sent groups of students on the Wednesday to help with some chores at these organisations. It was a very hot St Louis day, much like the 2015 spring in SA. What a privilege, though, to see those places: cleaning rooms, fixing electric wiring, cutting away tree branches, mowing lawns, picking up rubbish in the yard, and removing heavily grown vegetation from the garden! Impressive! Not the work but the result of it! The places were left clean. The experience was a humbling one.

The week ended with a worship service at the CSL's chapel on the Friday. New students were warmly welcomed, new staff members installed, and the academic year was begun. In this service some international students from various parts of the world read the Word of God. Beautiful music was shared. It's in this service that Dr. Meyer skilfully preached a powerful sermon, never to be forgotten. Its message is intriguing; it can be found in the CONCORDIA JOURNAL, SUMMER 2015. Thank you CSL! May God continue to bless your work!

Reverend Musawenkosi N. Mntambo



# LTS & Mekane Yesous Seminary cooperate

*Together they open a College of Distance Learning based in Pretoria*

The Lord Almighty said to them: "Go in to all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation." Holding this command our college is running to fulfil its Vision, Mission and Doctrinal Statement. Now Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesous (EECMY) -Mekane Yesous Seminary (MYS) College of Distance Education (CDE) reaches out in South Africa from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane.

MYS was established in Addis Ababa in the 1960s with Diploma and BTH training programs. The amazing increment of believers and subsequent growth of the EECMY in all parts of the country are highly demanding trained pastors, evangelists and voluntary ministers as per the Church's strategic plan. So MYS has become a core training centre. Yet, the number of its graduates cannot match the Church growth.

Therefore MYS reaches beyond its borders through COE. By arranging courses at different levels it will meet the needs of society locally and abroad. All courses equip Church workers to effectively evangelise within and beyond an Ethiopian context.

The MYS brings strong spiritual life and better service. It works to keep the learners from heretical teachings and helps them with orthodox knowledge so that they can be faithful in their services.

EECMY is established and registered in South Africa. This Church will continue to work at being a good example to the community and other denominations that are living as diaspora by bringing them to the right teaching of biblical and theological foundations and principles.




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**From left to right: Dr. Belay Guta Olam, Reverend Tefera Muzein & Mister Motuma Amente**

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Therefore MYS will reach out to all. Anyone can join this distant education and our new college and benefit from it at various places.

This is a historical occasion to both EECMY and LTS as we partner in theological training and outreach. Our honourable guests from Ethiopia, Dr. Belay Guta Olam and Mr Motuma Amente have landed in South Africa to discuss the relevant issue before the Centre's opening at LTS in Tshwane.

To fulfil the goals we give training both at degree and diploma levels. There by the students who graduated from the College would be able to continue further education.

Rev. Tefera Muzein:

Co-ordinator EECMY in SA.

# Pain, Suffering and Lament

## *Pastor-Philosopher in Residence at the Lutheran Seminary in Tshwane*

Last month we visited Lutheran Seminary so that I could present a course titled "The Problem of Suffering" for students, interested instructors and pastors. I also presented my paper "Pain, Suffering, Lament" to the Theology Faculty of the University of Pretoria, generating a substantial conversation about authentic Lutheran pastoral care for souls who are suffering.

The seminary course was adapted from a five-week lecture series that I presented previously in Cambridge, England. An expanded version of this paper was recently published in LOGIA: A Journal of Lutheran Theology in its Eastertide 2015 edition.

I met Dr. Weber at a DOXOLOGY presentation in the United States last year and, following several enjoyable visits in person and then by email about the need for philosophy for Lutheran seminary students I was invited with my wife, Paula, to be guests of the Seminary during part my fall term 2015 sabbatical.

I preached in chapel (please see the published sermons on FB), visited St. Paul's Lutheran for Confirmation Sunday and was welcomed into the homes of seminary professors, board members and families. We also enjoyed watching South Africa in the rugby championships, visiting historical sites and reading about the unique modern history and heritage here, and even dropping in for a lecture on South African theatre and film at the African Museum in Johannesburg.

We were especially enthusiastic about the Preschool as Paula is herself an experienced and credentialed Lutheran educator and currently aides and teaches at

a Lutheran Pre-school, but also about the many friendly people we met during their daily walks in Pretoria. We are very appreciative of local food, especially the daily fare provided by Renate Straeuli & MaNgubeni!

Together with President Weber we have been talking about the possibility of providing a distance-learning course to provide training in philosophy in order to prepare our Seminary students for their vital work of caring for souls as they study here at the Seminary, in university and then enter the Lord's field as Lutheran pastors.



Gregory P. Schulz is Professor of Philosophy at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon. He is a husband, father, grandfather and a Lutheran pastor with over 30 years in the ministry, both in the parish and in higher education. A graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin, he has earned doctorates in both theology (DMin from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana) and in philosophy (PhD from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin).

Dr. Schulz is active in academic, church and community service, including DOXOLOGY: The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel. He directs The Martin Galstad



Institute for Lutheran Philosophy and hosts the website [LutheranPhilosopher.com](http://LutheranPhilosopher.com). An outspoken proponent of philosophy for seminary students and pastors, Pastor Schulz is Adjunct Professor of Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, where he teaches in the seminary's Ph.D., Missiology Program. In his community and national service he is a Lt. Colonel in the Air Force's Civil Air Patrol, where he flies search and rescue, teaches aerospace education and USAF core values, and is Director of the Great Lakes Region Staff College, Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

Professor Schulz has lectured and presented academic papers at major universities stateside and in Canada, and also at Oxford, Cambridge, and the University of Hertfordshire in the U.K., in Hong Kong and in mainland China. He has published articles and reviews on various theological and philosophical topics in professional and academic journals such as *Dialog*, *De Philosophia*, *Lutheran Quarterly* and *LOGIA* and is the author recently of *Wednesday's Child: From Heidegger to Affective Neuroscience*, *A Field Theory of Angst* and a second,

expanded edition of *The Problem of Suffering* (in hard copy from CPH and in hard copy as well as a Kindle edition at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)). He is the editor of the CD *The Problem of Suffering: Companion and Resource* featuring a substantial 6-week Bible study on suffering, with student questions and a leader's annotated guide, as well as articles, sermons, an annotated bibliography and commentaries on suffering, grieving and lamenting.

Currently on sabbatical from Concordia, he has been teaching and lecturing in Cambridge at the invitation of Westfield House, as well as at our Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (Pretoria), South Africa. His sabbatical project is an open online course titled "Philosophy Kata Christon: A Pastor's Guided Introduction to Philosophy for the Gospel Ministry", scheduled to launch early in Epiphany 2016. Concordia University

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Professor Dr. Gregory Schulz and his wife  
Paula



## Coming up in the 1st Quarter of 2016 DV

### February

- 1 Staff meeting
- 2 Beginning of classes & Board meeting
- 15-24: Deaconess Grace Rao
- 22-26: Rev. Dr. Sibongisile Sithole (OT)

### March

- 1-11: Prof. John Pless (PT)
- 1-18: Prof. Dr. Werner Klän (CH/Symbolics)
- 19 End of 1st Quarter: Start of Easter break
- 5 April: Start of 2nd Quarter

Training Christ's followers as pastors, teachers, evangelists, missionaries, bishops and deaconesses for faithful service in the Lutheran Church of Africa.

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The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane is a registered Public Benefits Organisation. Donations to LTS can be deducted according to the rules of Section 18 (a) in the South African tax laws. Please contact Rev. O.G. Shuping in the Seminary office for further information.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (LTS in Tshwane: Pretoria, South Africa) prepares dedicated servants for service in Africa. LTS trains students from across Africa.

In the past 15 years students have come from South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia, Madagascar, Tanzania, Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Ruanda, S.Sudan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia.

Pastoral students of the LTS in Tshwane, who qualify may pursue a Bachelor of Theology (BTh) and even proceed with post-graduate studies with our accredited partner the University of Pretoria (UP).

Prospective students need the recommendation and support of their home church for successful enrolment.

For more information and support, help and advice please contact LTS in Tshwane directly using the details on the left.