

Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane

Training Lutheran Pastors and Deaconesses for Africa

LTS NEWS

Volume 16, Issue 1

March 2016

OVER 50 STUDENTS

Missionary Heinrich Voges likes to quip, that one should not exaggerate the truth let alone lie, not even for the kingdom of God for the end doesn't justify the means! Now that we've got over 50 students this year allow me to break this number down for you, so that you don't think I'm spreading it on a bit too thick here.

Well, we've got 24 students in the Beginners Course this year (10 from last year and 14 new ones). They come from Ethiopia, Uganda, Congo, Liberia, Zambia, Ghana and South Africa. The biggest challenge remains our course language English, especially for those who are used to French or Amharic rather. Thankfully we've got good staff from the University of Pretoria (UP) teaching academic skills (i.e. English reading and writing at tertiary level). Besides that tutors from the UP teach Greek and Hebrew Grammar with the aim that our students pass the first exam, which qualifies for the Bachelor in Theology degree. Finally we also give an overview over both Old and New Testaments plus an introduction into Lutheran Theology via Luther's Catechisms and the Augsburg Confession in two years. All this keeps us on our toes and tied to our desks as we go about preparing to study the main course in Lutheran Theology, which takes another three years.

Although we don't have any students in this course presently, we still do have 5 post-graduate students enrolled plus 23 Ethiopian students, who are part of a new distance education program based here at our Seminary in Pretoria.

These 20+ students come together one Saturday per month to be evaluated and to prepare the next course of a total of ten per year. Our Seminary staff together with Rev. Tefera Muzein offer this course, which is bound to attract more students as we go along.

Deaconess Grace Rao has started a third deaconess course, this time with 6 candidates from Zambia, Liberia, South Africa and Ethiopia. Another 8+ students were tutored by our visiting Professors Dr. Klän (LTH Oberursel) and Pless (CTS Ft.Wayne) on pastoral theology and the Lutheran doctrine of the pastoral ministry. They are all planning to return later on in the year for another intensive course.

We are grateful for these keen and willing students, who have gone to great lengths to study the Lutheran way of life and teaching. We thank all our friends and supporters, who make it possible that these students can come here and find accommodation and ongoing help to go about their basic studies with dedication and without too much distraction too.

We are convinced that these students are an answer to our ongoing prayers, that we lift up to the triune God based on appraisal and admonition of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ: ***"The harvest is plentiful but workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."*** (Matthew 9:37-38) So please join us in these prayers and also in the thanksgiving to him for answering our prayers so favourably.

O Christ, You walked the road
Our wand'ring feet must go.
You faced with us temptation's pow'r
And fought our ancient foe.

No bread of earth alone
Can fill our hung'ring hearts.
Lord, help us seek Your living Word,
The food Your grace imparts.

No blinding sign we ask,
No wonder from above.
Lord, help us place our trust alone
In Your unswerving love.

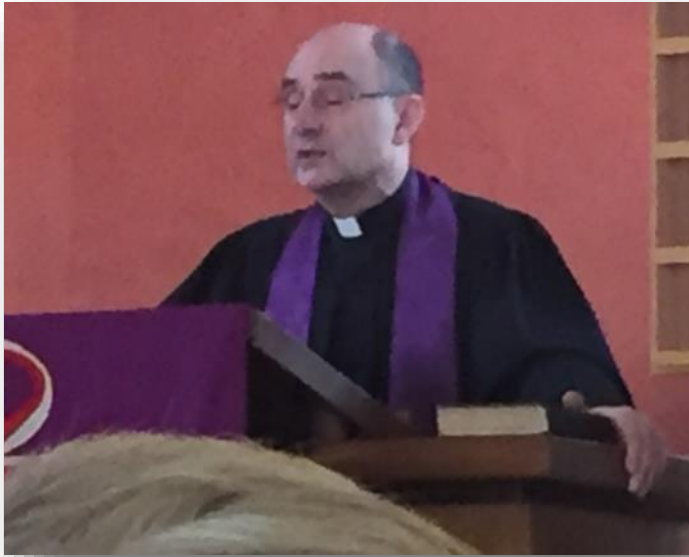
When lures of easy gain
With promise brightly shine,
Lord, help us seek Your kingdom first;
Our wills with Yours align.

O Christ, You walked the road
Our wand'ring feet must go.
Stay with us through temptation's hour
To fight our ancient foe.

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TWO WEEKS AT LTS



From Monday, February 29th, until Friday, March 11th, I once again had the opportunity to teach at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, Pretoria (LTS). It was for the first time, however, that the Advanced Course was entrusted to me, together with Prof. John Pless of Concordia Theological Seminary Ft. Wayne, IN, USA. The topics we addressed linked, as far as I have understood the participants and my colleague, quite nicely. While Prof. Pless taught on “The Life and Work of the Pastor” along the lines of Wilhelm Löhe’s pastoral theology (see his report), I gave an introduction to “Church and Ministry in the Lutheran Confessions”. Most of the participants in the Advanced Course of LTS are pastors from Lutheran churches, experienced already in working in God’s vineyard; in addition some post-graduate students join the class.

It takes a whole lot of dedication to concentrate for three hours per day on the sublime distinctions of Lutheran theology as it is laid down in the Book of Concord. But working through the confessional documents of the 16th century, that are, next to the Scriptures, binding for all doctrine in those churches to subscribe to them as correct exposition of the Biblical teaching, discoveries can be made: How the doctrine of the Church is linked to the doctrine of the office of the ministry, and this doctrine again is based in the doctrine of God’s Word. For God’s Word, especially the Gospel and its various ways of application, like the spoken Word, holy Baptism, the Sacra-

ment of the Altar, and Confession and Absolution, are fundamental to the Church and the ministry at the same time. The Church, according to Martin Luther, is “*creatura verbi*” (creature of the Word), and the office of the ministry is subservient to these very “means of grace”. Having identified the historical background and context of the doctrinal positions on “Church and Ministry” as taken in the Book of Concord, discussions revolved around the application of those statements to church life in our time and day.

My sojourn in South Africa provided the opportunity of meeting with bishop Modise Maragelo of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA). In the conversation we had on Tuesday March 1st, we discussed the proceedings of the “Trilateral Commission on Apartheid” consisting of representatives of the LCSA, the Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa, the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (SELK) and the mission of Lutheran Churches (MLC). Bishop Maragelo asserted it to be desirable if the output produced by the commission would help the churches involved to create a process along the lines of “healing of memories”, moreover to form a real and jointly shaped way of living together as the churches by now find themselves still in a rather abstract kind of church fellowship. Bishop Maragelo and I agreed upon enforcing the endeavor of achieving this goal for the sake of credibility of the confessional Lutheran witness in South Africa, and hopefully beyond. The Commission itself met on March 8th on the LTS premises and made some progress in its work (see Karl Böhmer’s report on the meeting on the next page).

In pursuing the goal of gathering the LTS post graduate students to have them discuss their research projects, it was decided to convene a second Post Graduate Colloquy for September 2nd/3rd, 2016, on the occasion of this year’s Seminary Open Day at LTS.

Once again, I am grateful for the fellowship between our seminaries and churches that enables us to witness to the standards and positions of confessional Lutheran theology at a larger scale.

Professor Dr. Werner Klän: Lutheran Theological Seminary in Oberursel i.T., Germany.

MEETING ON APARTHEID



The Trilateral Research Commission on Apartheid met in the library of the LTS on the 8 March 2016

Members of the Research Commission on Apartheid met again on the grounds of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane this month in order to coordinate efforts and work towards meeting its mandate. The commission is chaired by the esteemed IELC/SELK theologian Prof. Dr. Werner Klän. Its membership is made up of delegates from the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, the Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa, and the Mission of Lutheran Churches.

The commission has been mandated to provide information to its members on the position of the various partners before and during the apartheid era. To this end, the commission engages in historiographical and documentary research. The initial goal is to publish a reader containing salient documents and position papers from the various personages and entities over the years, as well as theological positions on apartheid and racism. There is a need for some of the material to be translated, so as to reach a wider audience.

The aim of the commission is also to engage in ethnological research in the form of oral history interviews

with eyewitnesses, so as to supplement the historiographical material and to draw on living sources. Special training is being planned for potential interviewers in order to facilitate this process. In this way, the commission plans to allow for both a greater distance to the subject warranted by the historical approach, and a close-up consideration of the sometimes painful experiences of living sources immediately affected by the apartheid worldview and way of life.

Even though some question the relevancy of the commission and the value of its work, the commission believes that its task is highly current in light of past decisions taken by the members churches themselves in this regard, in light of the current direction of the respective church bodies, and in light of the self-evident anomaly of having separate confessional Lutheran churches in full fellowship with one another within the same area.

The commission plans to submit a report to the participating churches and recommendations for addressing the issue in due course.

Rev. Dr. Karl Böhmer: Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (Pretoria, South Africa)

PASTOR NKAMBULE IN FT.WAYNE



Pastor Mbongeni J. Nkambule as Master of ceremonies at last year's Seminary Open Day in September.

Trip to Fort Wayne

22 January – 08 February 2016

This time I went well to Fort Wayne for my studies again. There were no big surprises as I'm used to the program. The work load was not too much as it was last year. I took two classes:

- How to preach to skeptic people by Professor Thomas Ahlersmeyer
- Introduction to Missiological Research Design by Professor Robert Bennett.

They were very good Professors indeed and they opened my eyes in many ways. Professor Ahlersmeyer offered to help set lecturing online between him and the LTS. He wanted to fundraise for that program.

Professor Robert Bennett from Luther Academy was a class mate of Pastor Dr. Eliot Sithole from the LTS in Tshwane. He is the author of a book called "[I'm not afraid](#)." It talks about spirits and spiritual attack and exorcism in the Malagasy Lutheran Church.

I could meet with my previous class mates and had new ones. Friendship became stronger this time. I could also meet my previous Professors and new ones. We started to know each other even more. Many of those LTS friends send regards, the likes of Cindy Johnson, Professor Dr. Detlev Schulz, Professor John T. Pless, Dr. Carl Rockrohr and family and Leah Flahaut.

One of my previous class mates, a Baptist pastor in America Rev. Kenan Burba, originally from Nigeria wants to send his cousin to the LTS as a student next year 2017. Hopefully this can be worked out in the course of this year still.

All my studies went well this time without too much stress. There are possibilities that I may go back in June and July again, but that needs to be confirmed still. Out of the 21 classes that are required for Ph.D course work, I now have 6. So I'm just about 20% done.

Last Friday, I was privileged to be invited to an oral exam of one of our class mates Rev. Don Wiley. He was tested by Professors Dr. Detlev Schulz, Dr. Peter Scaer and Dr. Robert Bennett. Some of the questions were tricky, but he could stand his ground as a true Lutheran. One of the questions was coming from Matthew 22 concerning the invitation to the great banquet. Professor Dr. David Scaer asked, if that was not referring to open Communion as everybody was invited to eat in the banquet. Don said no, but people should be taught and be confirmed first before given the Holy Communion. That gave me a picture of how an oral exam is conducted.

I'm looking forward to the next session at CTS Ft.Wayne later on this year. This is helping me doing academic research, promoting international contacts amongst confessional Lutherans and broadening my theological perspective considerably as I learn and teach Lutheran missions.

Report prepared by Rev. M. J. Nkambule (09th February 2016)

PLESS' REPORT

Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (Pretoria, South Africa) 27 February- 13 March 2016

I am grateful to God for another safe and productive trip to South Africa where I taught a two-week intensive course on "The Life and Work of the Lutheran Pastor" for a total of nineteen students. This was an advanced course (ordination level) which included several pastors as well as our residential students. This course also had two Congolese evangelists working in South Africa under the tutelage of a FELSISA pastor, Rev. Thomas Ben- eke. The key text for the course was Wilhelm Löhe's The Pastor and the course followed the basic pattern of his outline with lectures on the pastor's fitness for office based on the pastoral epistles, beginning the ministry, the marriage and family of the pastor, the pastor's spir- itual life, homiletics, catechesis, liturgics, confession/ absolution, and pastoral care of the sick. The students engaged in lively class discussion on a wide range of top- ics which grew out of the assigned readings and lectures. The generosity of donors in the USA made it possible to provide each student with a copy of The Pastor as well as George Kraus' The Pastor at Prayer.

Dr. Werner Klän from our sister seminary (LTH in Oberursel, Germany) also taught a two-week course. In the morning, Dr. Klän lectured on the office of the min- istry in the Lutheran Confessions and in the afternoon I taught pastoral theology. The two courses nicely compli- mented each other as students could clearly see the con- nection between confessional doctrine and confessional practice. In addition to teaching, I preached three times. Two of sermons were for the confessional services held at the seminary chapel each Wednesday. The third ser- mon was preached for the Evangelical Lutheran Church (the English congregation) on the Fourth Sunday in Lent (March 6). I also spoke to the Lutheran Campus Ministry Bible Study at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on March 2. Fifteen students attended this presentation on a Lutheran approach to bioethics. I also had the oppor- tunity to worship with the German congregation at St. Paul's for their midweek Lenten services.

Once again I am thankful to Pastor Gerald Paul and Trinity Lutheran Church in Great Falls, Montana for providing funds to cover the cost of the ticket and sever- al donors for purchasing the books for students as well as books for the LTS library. I am grateful for the hous- ing, hospitality, and local transportation provided by Pastor Jacob Corzine. While faced with financial chal- lenges, the seminary continues to grow and demonstrate

GREEK GRAMMAR

a commitment to provide confessional Lutheran theo- logical education in southern Africa and beyond. I am delighted to contribute in this small way to the work of the seminary. God willing it, I will return to LTS for a two-week course on "Learning to Pray with Luther" on August 15-27, 2016. [Prof. John T. Pless, CTS Ft.Wayne, IN]

TO TEACH AND BE TAUGHT:

On the 2nd of February 2016 I started to teach Greek 1 and 2 courses at the Lutheran Theological Seminar (LTS) in Tshwane. Excited for the year's classes we started on reading, translation and interpretation. Little did I realize then that the excitement for teaching was only half of it...

On the one hand I am at the LTS in the capacity of a teacher, host. For each morning the students are wel- comed as guests into a the world of the Greek language. We learn about paradigms, vocabulary and different methods for learning all the details of the Greek lan- guage. They come into a room that I have prepared to host for them a 'feast' of knowledge, to give to them what they need to read and translate the Greek Testa- ment.

On the other hand, slowly but surely, my role as host and theirs as guests began to change. Just as I was re- ceiving them, as guests, each morning with enthusiasm for the Greek language, they were also receiving me as their guest. Offering me a window into a world that I have not previously known. Into cultures and heritages that I would never have dreamed of encountering.

In this first quarter alone a sort of metamorphosis took place. A host and teacher of Greek became a gust and learner through the encounter of the Other. And the students and guests in the class room became the hosts and teachers. Each morning when I get to the Seminar I realize that this is a space where different people, from different cultural backgrounds, from different countries converge. But that in the end through respect for one another's differences, and eagerness to learn from one another the fear of the unknown, of the different Other, becomes less. And so even the fear and uncertainty of learning a new language such as Greek is conquered!

It has been, and I trust will be, an experience that has enriched my life as a student of life, a theologian, and as being part of the Body of Christ! By Robert van Niekerk (University of Pretoria)

CARING FOR CHILDREN AT LTS



2016 is in Full Swing at our Preschool!

We are thankful to God for a vibrant and busy start to our new school year! With the addition of several new children, to include a boisterous set of twins, and the return of our former Preschoolers, we are kept very busy! Our teachers, Trinhah and Tshireletso have returned with enthusiasm and continue to grow under the guidance and mentoring of Karin. Our wonderful assistant Raheema has also found a way into each child's heart with her kind and nurturing spirit!

We are thankful for the growth of the Preschool and to quote Dr. Weber, who gave the devotion, from Mark 4, at our recent Parent Meeting, "...the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how..." so, we can rest assured that our gracious and merciful God is watching over us, our children, our Preschool and the Seminary even while we sleep!"

Faith Integration for Preschoolers

Our Children begin the day with a Prayer and Song Ring and later on in the morning, they have a Bible Ring in which they are beginning to learn about God and creation and that Jesus is our Savior. As part of our Faith Integration curriculum, the children and the teachers attend Matins on a Wednesday morning with the Seminarians in the chapel. The Confession and Absolution service dovetails beautifully with our playground faith integration as we encourage the children to reconcile after a push or shove or after a toy was snatched away in haste. It is a joy to watch as one child apologizes and the other gives a forgiving hug and they both go on their way! What a blessing that we continually receive God's forgiveness despite missing the mark! [Imke Beier]



INTERVIEW WITH PETER KIZUNGU

•So, tell us a little about your background. I am from the DRC Congo, but I was born in Kenya. I lived in the Ivory Coast for 13 years before coming to South Africa 7 years ago. The reason I was born in Kenya is that my dad was working there as a missionary. Nowadays, he lives in the Congo. When I came to South Africa, I joined the Lutheran Church in Durban. To be precise, my home congregation is in the process of aligning itself with the Lutheran Church, and this is one of the reasons why 2 of us were sent to the seminary – to study and to learn more about faith in the Lutheran Church. My home congregation is working closely with Rev. Christoph Weber of the MLC.

•What would you consider your home country? (Laughs) It's hard to say – I've been all over. My nationality is Congolese, but I am a global citizen.

•What prompted you to volunteer to become a theology student at the LTS? This is my second year at the seminary. I have always felt the need to know more about the Bible. When the opportunity arose in my home congregation for a student to come to the seminary, I went for it. As a result, I was delegated to become a seminary student at the LTS, along with Safari Chomachoma, who is the son of our pastor.

•What is seminary life like? Seminary life is very interesting. From my own perspective, I have gained a lot since I have come here. Studying here has opened my mind, I have learned things I did not know before. This makes it easier to understand more about God and about faith, because there are so many things out there, so many churches, so many denominations. Sometimes you get confused and it is hard to know which is the right one to follow. I have gained a lot from the Lutheran teaching. I really enjoy being here. Our days are full, and there is much to do, especially this year. There is a lot to prepare for and to do, especially your reaction papers... (laughs) There is always something to do. And we have good fellowship among the students. We come from all over, so it is a great way to become familiarized with other people's cultures; we live here like brothers and sisters, which is a very positive experience.

•Have you enjoyed having the guest lecturers coming in from overseas? Yes, it has been very good. Each of them comes with his own specialized area, and introduces us to it. It is very helpful to hear about their

experiences and to benefit from the knowledge they share with us. It is a great experience.

•Would you be willing to share some of your challenges and joys with us? It was very challenging in the beginning to cope with Greek and Hebrew; that is always a challenging experience at the seminary. But it is a challenge which we have overcome, so I'm not going to complain about it. That was the biggest challenge, learning the ancient languages. But we do also benefit from them. Just yesterday in class, we talked about a controversial issue in Scripture, and for these things it really helps to know the original languages. As a pastor-to-be, I believe it is very important to know them.

•My greatest joy is the studies themselves. (laughs) Like I said earlier, there has always been something inside me prompting me to learn more about God and about His Word, and I will say that that is my greatest joy here. You learn something new every day, and that is what I enjoy the most here.

•What are you hoping to gain from your seminary studies, and how do you plan to use what you learn here? For me and the congregation I come from, it is very important to gain knowledge about the background and the teaching and to open people's eyes. There are very many beliefs out there, and a lot of people are unsure. When you ask people, "What do you believe in?," many don't know, even Christians who go to church regularly. I find it particularly stimulating to go out there and to talk to people, to teach people what I learn here. I have a heart for teaching. I am in the service of Christ and hope to help build his kingdom. I am hoping to be of service to the church which sent me here, but I am open to where the Lord will lead.

•What would you say to people thinking about coming here? It is a great advantage to come here for those who would like to become pastors or who are hoping to teach people. I don't see how people can teach in the church without knowledge about the Word. If someone is willing or has an innate desire to teach others and to be a pastor in a congregation, this is the best place to come.

[Rev. Dr. Karl Böhmer held this interview with Mr Kizungu on March 16, 2016]

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

Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (Pretoria, South Africa)

Arcadia Street 790
P.O. Box 12547; Hatfield 0028
Tel/Fax: (012) 344 2302

Email: LTSinTshwane@gmail.com

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Please contact the Seminary office at telephone +12 344 2302 or using email: [LTS in Tshwane](mailto:LTSinTshwane@gmail.com)

Coming up God willing

April

- 4 Beginning of 2nd Qtr

- 4-16: Prof. Dr. Nordling and Rev. Erik Skovgaard

May

- 3 Board meeting

- 20 End of classes

- 23 Start of exams

June

- 1-15 Deaconess Rao

- 3 End of exam

- 4 Winter break

The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane continues to prepare dedicated servants for service in Africa. LTS successfully trains students from across African.

In the past 16 years students have come from South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia, Madagascar, Tanzania, DRC/Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Ruanda, S. Sudan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia and the USA.

Pastoral students of the LTS, who successfully pass the Bridging Course may pursue a Bachelor of Theology (BTh) and even proceed with post-graduate studies with our accredited partner the University of Pretoria (UP) at Honours, Masters and Doctoral levels.

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

For more information and the necessary application forms contact the office of the Lutheran Theological Seminary directly using the details on the left.

