



**REV. THOMAS V. AADLAND
PROJECT TIMOTHY - KENYA**

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Dear Friends in Christ,

We are two weeks into the second half of the first semester here at Matongo Lutheran Theological College. Our work is vital to train up those who will one day, Lord willing, shepherd the flock of Christ in East Africa. 48 students are presently studying, with more expected in January. Just a brief word of introduction to my colleagues and what they are teaching here this semester.



MLTC Faculty – October 30, 2008 (Standing with me from left to right, Academic Dean Rev. Osmo Harjula, Rev. Tom Omolo, Rev. Hamilton Timothy Shihemi, Rev. John Miruka, Rev. Moses Okoyo, Principal Rev. Dr. Joseph Ochola)

Rev. Harjula is teaching Lutheran Confessions, Hebrew, and the Catechism (Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed). Rev. Omolo teaches courses in Church Administration and Western & African Philosophy and Worship. Rev. Shihemi is teaching Family Studies, Ethics and Evangelism and coordinates the work of each student of DT6 (senior class) on their Study Paper, a major integrative requirement 60 pages in length. Rev. Miruka instructs in African Church History, Parish Education, and History of the Early Church. Rev. Moses Okoyo, of course, must teach the Torah (the Books of Moses!) as well as Intertestamental Literature and the prophets Isaiah to Malachi. Dr. Ochola teaches Greek, 1 Corinthians, the Gospel of John and a course on the ELCK Constitution. My own work continues teaching Dogmatics, the History of Theology and Hermeneutics (Interpretation of Scripture) as well as reviewing Greek with the senior class DT6.

In addition to teaching, there are many other significant opportunities for sharing the Gospel and for assisting the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK). This past month, I have enjoyed helping the development of Neema Lutheran University in Kenya by editing its 5-year strategic plan. Presiding Bishop Rev. Dr. Walter Obare and ELCK General Secretary John Halakhe are now in the United States sharing this vision and soliciting support for it through use of a PowerPoint

presentation I created to illustrate this effort being launched. I am also developing materials for use by Dr. Ochola when he visits the US later this month.

I applaud the efforts the ELCK is making to educate its people in Biblical truth. At this time of year, many parishes are regularly holding “synods” – large multi-day gatherings of clergy and laity alike with special themes and guest speakers. On Reformation Day, Friday, October 31, I was privileged to address a large audience in the parish of Erandi in the Southwest Diocese on the assigned topic: “Contending for Faith – Present and Future Challenges of Reformation”. Prior to the opening service, I vested with others out of doors nearly a half mile from the church and processed with over a hundred people, clergy and choirs, with much singing and dancing down the roadway and into the church. It was a jubilant celebration!



Reformation Day Procession in Erandi – October 31, 2008

I am asked to speak at future synods as well, November 23, in Mambolayo, on “Judgment Day”, December 12, in Matongo, on “Justification”, and December 13, in Kenyoro, on “The Work of the Holy Spirit” – all wonderful opportunities for teaching and for sharing in what Christ has purchased and won for us, freedom from guilt, the fear of death and condemnation, and the incredible blessing of peace with God, joy in the communion of saints, and the hope of life everlasting.

I have had very gracious hosts during my stay here. When I first arrived in Kisumu – and also during a couple weekend visits thereafter – I have stayed with our missionaries, Rev. Dan and Patty Schmelzer, members of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church (AALC) in Patterson, CA. Their work is called “Capstone Ministries” and, in association with Rotary Clubs, it has had a tremendous impact on the lives of street boys and the “boda-boda” bicycle taxi drivers that carry much of the traffic along busy streets in this third-largest city in Kenya located on the northeast shore of Lake Victoria. Please keep them in your prayers as well, especially as Dan now travels in the US.



Rev. Dan Schmelzer baptizing boys from Kisumu near Mbali (north of the Equator)



Dan & Patty Schmelzer at home

Here in Matongo, and on regular trips by 4-wheel drive vehicle into Kisumu, I have been given a big *Karibu!* ("Welcome!") by Rev. Dr. Joseph Ochola and his wife Ruth. We are praying for a newer and more reliable vehicle for them and their vital work in this country.



Rev. Dr. Joseph and Ruth Ochola relaxing in their home in Matongo

We have been praying for you at home, especially during such repercussive tumult and economic displacement, and the widespread erosion of trust in public officials for whose long-standing policies of easy credit we are now reaping the bitter fruit. As the elections are upon us, we pray for wisdom from above. The founders of the republic looked to the Lord. Does our nation still do so? Or do we now think we can establish a secular governance without any reference to transcendence, to the living God and His will for our lives? The divine service still begins *Kyrie eleison!* Lord, have mercy! It is well that it should. And it is well that we continue with that prayer in our hearts, even as we undertake the great work ahead of us as God's children, thinking and speaking and acting on behalf of Him who is Lord of all, our only Savior Jesus Christ. Our God is never surprised by such events. He beholds as in a single moment the foolish ways of men, yet still beckons to us efficaciously in the Gospel and holds His own always in the palm of His hand.

In the difficult days ahead, may God's peace hold you and give you all necessary courage and wisdom and endurance, knowing that for Jesus' sake you belong to Him!

From East Africa,
Your friend in Christ,

Rev. Thomas V. Aadland

Post-script: Project Timothy – Kenya is a commitment for a minimum of two years. But the work here will likely need five years to complete. In either case, I don't want to have to come home prematurely, before the task is finished. If you haven't already, may I implore you by the mercies of Christ to ask your missions committee in your own congregation to join in this effort with its support. God bless you!

A reminder: Please make checks in support of this ministry payable to:

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

18360 Minnetonka Boulevard

Wayzata, MN 55391

Please note in the memo line **“For Project Timothy – Kenya”**. Thank you!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- God's watchful care over my family and safety as I travel within Kenya to various congregations
- Physical health and stamina
- Continued civil peace and stability of government in Kenya
- Openness to the Gospel in Kenya
- Sustained support among donors, other congregations, and foundation grants
- Spiritual strength to withstand any attacks of the Enemy
- Resources to expand the facilities at Matongo for a growing student population
- Effective strategic planning for Neema Lutheran University of Kenya
- Travel safety for Bishop Obare, Rev. John Halakhe, Rev. Dan Schmelzer, and Rev. Dr. Ochola
- A safe and reliable vehicle for MLTC Principal Dr. Ochola