

# LTS NEWS

November 2019 Page 1



by Rector Dr. C. Walter Winterle

**H**ow many plans have you made in your life? Everyone has a dream. Children make plans for when they grow up. Teens pursue a career. Businesspeople have to plan their goals for the next year. The church also has to plan her finances and her budget, her growth and her activities. Even Jesus said: *“For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?”* (Luke 14:28, ESV).

Jesus’ death and resurrection happened as the accomplishment of the eternal plan of God. Nothing in His life happened by chance. Everything happened *“so that Scripture would be fulfilled”* (John 17:12, NIV). *“But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship”* (Galatians 4:4, NIV).

I had many dreams when I was studying. I had to create a yearly plan for my congregations, and, after this, for my Synod, always together with a good team of supporters. Many dreams were fulfilled and many plans were accomplished. Conversely, however, many plans were not accomplished. But I cannot complain: **God’s plans are always better than ours.** *“We may make our plans, but God has the last word.”* (Prov. 16:1 GNT).

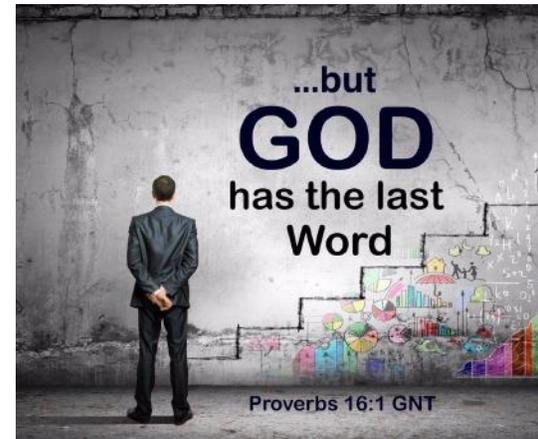
When did I dream to come to Africa? NEVER! And my wife and I have now been in Africa for 13 years. When did I plan to become rector of the LTS? NEVER EVER! On the contrary, I was very reluctant to accept the call, just like Moses was when God called him. But God leads our way much better than we ourselves, and we thank Him for this.

At the end of another year, the LTS is planning for 2020. The academic calendar is ready. The curriculum is ready. The budget is ready. Lot of plans are on the table. But lots of question marks are also on the table. Will we accomplish our goals? Will we have enough money to pay our bills? How many new students are coming? Will my visa be renewed? What about health issues? And so on...

*“We may make our plans, but God has the last word.”* We trust that God will continue to guide us according to His plans. If our plans will be hindered, God has a Plan B for the LTS. We don’t know what His plan is for the seminary, but we trust it is a good plan.

When we arrived at the LTS beginning of 2018, we confessed with Paul: *“Not that we are competent in ourselves...but our competence comes from God”* (2 Corinthians 3:5). (LTS News 2018/1). After the first impact, we confessed with Samuel: *“Ebenezer: Thus far the Lord has helped us”* (1 Samuel 7:12). (LTS News 2018/2). Later, facing many challenges, we confessed with Moses: *“Is the Lord’s arm too short?”* (Numbers 11:23) (LTS News 2018/3). I put a prayer on the door to my office: *“We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you, O God”* (2 Chronicles 20:12).

God’s plans are always better than ours. With this confidence, we conclude the Academic Year of 2019, and in this confidence we face the challenges of 2020, confident that with your support and prayers and with God’s blessings, the LTS will continue operating for another year **as a mission agency seeking to graduate multipliers for the Lutheran Church in Africa** (LTS Mission Statement)



LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN TSHWANE

## LTS Seniors GRADUATE



Pictured above (left to right): Peter Kizungu, Nkosikhona Mkhabela, Dumisani Mokobedi, Chernet Arifecho, Gentil Magala, Charles Ofentse Tsatsi

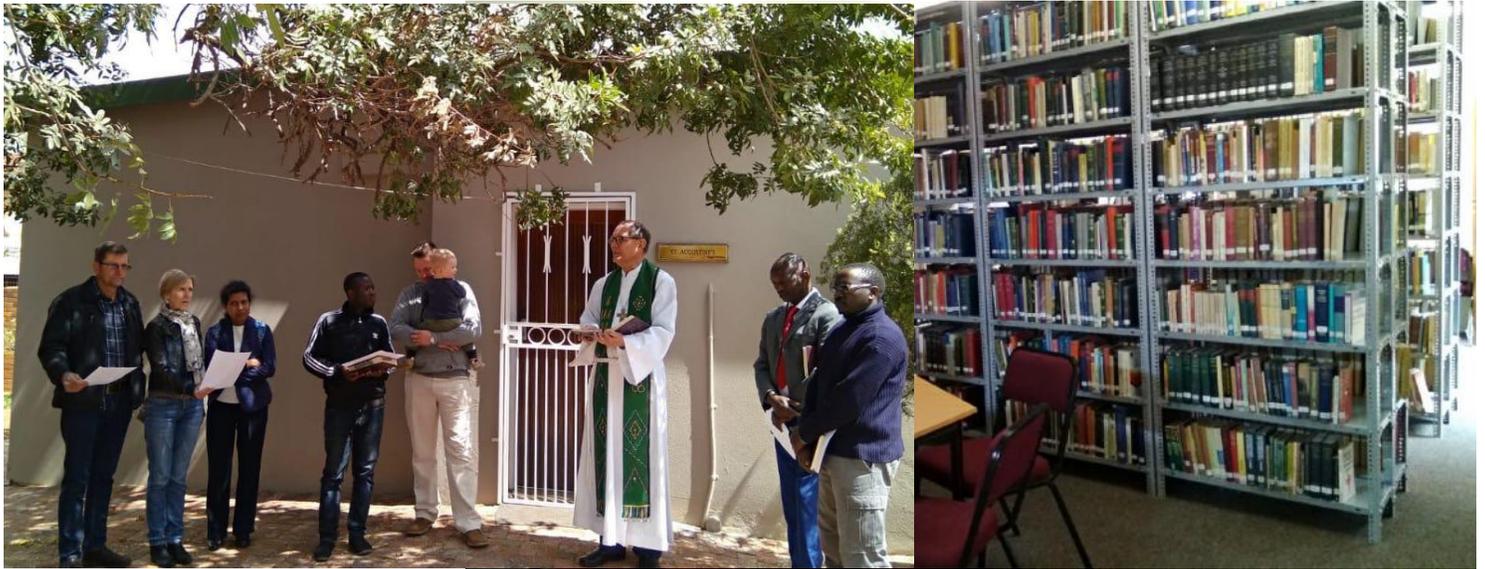
The great day has arrived - after five years of studies at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, six senior students graduated from the seminary’s course of theology studies on 21 November 2019 and were certified for vicarage.

Representatives from their home churches, family members, LTS staff, and fellow students convened at the

*(continued on page 7)*

# Library Dedication

September 7, 2019



## Dedication of the New Library

at the LTS

On Saturday, 7. September 2019, by the grace of God and thanks to the support of generous friends and donors, the new seminary library was dedicated at the LTS to the glory of God and to the benefit and blessing of LTS students in their academic development. The bulk of the funds were raised by our Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) friends of the St. Philip Lutheran Mission Society (SPLMS), a committed group of LCMS supporters who have recently been granted Recognized Service Organization (RSO) status in the LCMS, and by the Rocky Mountain District of the LCMS.

## Thank you!

Special grants were made to make the library extension and renovation projects possible. We would like to express our gratitude to the St. Philip Lutheran Mission Society, the Rocky Mountain District of the LCMS, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as a whole (LCMS), the Mission of Lutheran Churches (Lutherische Kirchenmission), and to individual donors and congregations. We could not have completed this project or renovated Schulz House after the fire without your help. Thank you! The Lord bless you.

The library building extension and refurbishment was part of a multifaceted construction project which was accomplished over the space of more than three months in mid-2019. The groundbreaking for the extension took place in early June. The main project was the extension of the library building towards the north and south, with much-needed space being added to accommodate the seminary's holdings of books and for a librarian's desk for administrative purposes. In addition, the existing roof was sealed and painted, as were the exterior and interior walls, providing a serviceable and uniform appearance. Carpeting was laid and new shelves installed, with study desks being added to provide students with opportunity to research and write. The LTS library was recently equipped with new computers and electronic infrastructure to enable access to electronic books and journals as well.

All of this is in line with and in aid of the overall accreditation project at the LTS, with the academic program at the LTS being streamlined to comply with the standards administered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the Council on Higher Education (CHE). Such accreditation requires not only that the academic curriculum conform to the set standards, but that the library provides sufficient learning and assessment opportunities.

As it is, the infrastructure of the entire campus needs to comply with SAQA and CHE policies. As mentioned, the library expansion was part of a multifaceted project improving the LTS infrastructure. Improvements include the paving of large

parts of the campus, revamping the main entryway, providing adequate seating on campus, upgrading electric wiring in the houses, and landscaping the areas around trees and flower beds. Future projects include the installation of additional signage, upgrading the interior of the LTS chapel, and purchasing needed books. We are grateful for the ongoing support the LTS receives and pray that it may continue to be a blessing to the Lutheran churches of Southern Africa through the training of confessional Lutheran pastors and church workers.

LTS Rector Dr. C. Walter Winterle observed the dedication of the revamped library and campus areas. Prof. em. Dr. Dr. Werner Klän, having presented a two-week set of intensive lectures on the Theology of the Book of Concord, officially represented our German sister church, the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (SELK) at the dedication. Deaconess Grace Rao, hosting a women's seminar at the LTS, was an official representative of the LCMS, our American sister church. In addition to the rector, Dr. Klän, Rev. Mbongeni John Nkambule, Mrs. Karin Niebuhr of the LTS Preschool/DayCare, Deaconess Rao, and LTS student representative Dumisani Mokobedi addressed the attendees at the dedication, giving thanks to the Lord God and speaking words of greeting and encouragement. After the dedication was performed, the new library was entrusted to the competent administration and oversight of LTS librarian Mintesinot Birru, originally of the Mekane Yesous Church in Ethiopia. Also in attendance at the dedication were numerous friends and supporters of the LTS.



# Address at the Dedication of the New Library

by Prof. em. Dr. Dr. Werner Klän

Dear Rector Dr Winterle, dear Colleagues, dear Students, Board Members, and Guests, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

It is a pleasure and a privilege for me to bring you greetings from far north, from Germany, on this occasion of the dedication of the enlarged and renovated, hence new library of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane. It is on behalf of Bishop Hans-Jörg Voigt, bishop of the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (SELK), on behalf of Mission Director Roger Zieger of Lutherische Kirchenmission/Mission of Lutheran churches (Bleckmar Mission), and of Diasporawerk in der SELK, the chairman of which I happen to be, that I am speaking. Thus, I wish this venerable academic institution God's richest blessings as the new facilities for studying God's word and the important works of exegesis, history, systematics, and practical theology that revolve around the "Book of Books" – the holy Scriptures – are being opened.

"Of making many books there is no end", we read in the book of Ecclesiastes (12:12). At first sight, this sounds rather like a desperate sight. As though Kohelet was complaining about the multitude of publications he saw coming out. Thus many a student, or even professor, might even agree to the continuation of this verse: "... and much study wears the body" – especially during the intensives that have come to an end just yesterday.

But you see, Ecclesiastes himself wrote a book. And if we look at the Bible thoroughly, we will discover that this "Book of Books" is indeed a library, containing a whole collection of various books, written by various authors at various times in various places. Nonetheless, we know that there is only one true author, namely the Holy Spirit.

It is therefore worthwhile to study this "Book of Books" thoroughly in the first place, and diligently. And to do this, it is important and valuable, to learn from other books that certainly are not on the same level, theologically speaking, as the Word of God in the Scriptures. But these books may help us better understand the background, details, contexts, and history of the biblical writings. And they may teach us how the Bible was understood in the course of church history, and provide information on how the divine truth laid down in the Bible can be summarized into the doctrine of the Church.

Having come to the seminary since twelve years now, those students I had the privilege to teach, who dealt with the books in the library thoroughly, diligently, and with great dedication of their hearts and minds, now that they are working in their home churches all over Africa, fulfil an excellent task by serving as pastors, teachers, leaders, and missionaries. And they do so because here at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, they were taught, and learned sound and solid confessional Lutheran theology – not least with the help and support that comes from the books in the library.



Pictured above: Rector C.W.Winterle and Prof. em. Dr. Werner Klän of the SELK

werk in der SELK has, if only to a smaller amount, time and again contributed to the equipment of the library. Lutherische Kirchenmission/Mission of Lutheran Churches has been and still is involved with supporting teachers at this institution, e.g. by paying for my travels here, and beyond. Bishop Voigt not only encouraged me twelve years ago to engage in teaching here, but being also chairman of the International Lutheran Council, knows all too well of the critical and crucial importance of thorough theological instruction for the benefit of sustaining and further developing confessional Lutheran churches in Africa and on the world level, in order to strengthen our witness to this world.

May God continue to bless this seminary and all those who make use of its new library. Thank you.



# Trip Report *by Prof. Dr. John T. Pless*

Intensive held at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, South Africa

28 July – 9 August 2019



For this intensive term class I taught the fifth of a series of five courses based on the five-volume work of Albrecht Peters, *Commentary on Luther's Catechisms*. This course used Volume 5: *Confession and the Christian Life*. As a supplementary text we used my *Luther's Small Catechism: A Manual for Discipleship*. Copies of both books were provided to the students thanks to funding from donors in the USA. We had 25 students in the class. In addition to the residential students from LTS several pastors and lay preachers attended from various Lutheran bodies in South Africa.

I started teaching this sequence of Advanced Catechetics courses February/March 2017 with the Ten Commandments. We have now worked through the whole of Luther's Catechisms demonstrating a "catechetical systematics" while assisting the students in learning how to teach, preach, and provide pastoral care based on this section of our Lutheran Confessions. This course covered the place of confession/absolution in the Catechisms as well as the daily prayers and the table of duties in the Small Catechism.

I appreciate the continuity I have with these students; it is especially heartening to have a solid core group of pastors and lay preachers who return for each offering.

In addition to teaching, I preached in chapel twice while here. It was also good to have time to visit with local pastors, colleagues from the neighboring Reformed seminary, and my colleagues on the LTS faculty. I thank to thank Dr. Karl and Brigette Böhmer for once again hosting me at their home. Their gracious hospitality is greatly appreciated. I will miss their companionship in the future as Dr. Böhmer has accepted the call to serve in Wartburg, South Africa and will be relocating there around Christmas.

I want to thank the seminary's rector, Dr. Carlos Walter Winterle for his warm welcome and encouragement to continue to serve in Pretoria. He has done a very fine job of providing stability and focus for the seminary as we continue to navigate challenging times. LTS is blessed by his leadership.

It was good to have Rev. Michael Roth from Trinity Lutheran Church in Saint Joseph, Michigan on campus for this intensive term as well. I taught the Advanced Catechetics course each morning for three hours, Pastor Roth taught a course on evangelism and missions for three hours each afternoon. Pastor Roth and I taught together in Madagascar in 2004 so it was good to reconnect with him in this way.

Certainly a high light of this trip was to watch the daily progress being made on the library expansion and renovation, a project supported by the St. Philip Lutheran Mission Society. The remodeled library will more than double the space for our holdings enabling us to bring many books out of storage and have them on the shelves for student use. The renovation will also have an office for the librarian and space for seminary archives. The dedication of the new facility is planned for the seminary's "open day" on

September 7. I look forward to seeing it fully functional when I return in March. I should add that our librarian, Mr. Mintesinot Birru is rendering excellent service organizing are holdings and providing a mechanism to reduce lost and stolen books.

In addition to work on the library, the campus itself is also receiving improvements with pavement and construction of outdoor seating areas for students. We rejoice in the support of donors whose generosity has made these improvements possible.

Unfortunately a devastating fire broke out in the Schulz House on Wednesday evening, August 7th. Apparently the fire was connected to an electrical problem in the water heater. Thankfully there were no bodily injuries but the house did sustain severe damage from water and smoke displacing the two seminary families who lived there.

As has become the tradition, the night before the final day of classes is marked with a celebratory braai of brats, pork, lamb, beef, and chicken with students as we rejoice in the work completed and look forward to the future as God gives it.

God willing it, I will return to LTS to teach a course on "The Psalms in Pastoral Theology" on March 2-13, 2020. While an exact date is not yet determined, the plan is for me to teach "Confessions I" in August, 2020. The Confessions I course will include the new students to be admitted at the start of the new academic year in January.

I am grateful to the congregations and individuals whose gifts have enabled me to travel to South Africa and bring books for our students. As long as we can find funding for these trips, I am willing and eager to come to South Africa twice a year.



LTS Lecturer Rev.M.J. Nkambule

## Study in CTSFW

*by Rev. Mbongeni John Nkambule*

PhD studies update

Recently, I traveled to CTS in Fort Wayne again, where I met with Prof. Nordling. We looked at my proposal together. He made a lot of suggestions regarding grammar, theology, and template. He also referred me to Dr. Don Wiley who helped me with the proposal template. I learnt a lot from them as the University Pretoria style of writing is very different from that of CTS. I had a chance to make some corrections in my work. I also

received in-depth articles about the FELSISA and LCSA history. Prof. Nordling suggested additional readings for my proposal.

We met with Dr. Schulz, Cindy, Jessica, and Prof. Pless. We discussed my study progress and personal issues. It was good to reconnect with old friends and professors. The time in Fort Wayne was short but very busy. Librarian Rev. Roger Peters helped me to download documents related to my proposal and dissertation from the CTS library website.

Professor Pless invited Rev. Andre Dreher and me to his house. It was a good connection indeed. I learnt a lot from all whom I met. I am grateful for a worthwhile trip.



## Trip Report

by Rev. Michael Roth, LCMS

I had the privilege of teaching an intensive course, *The Practice of Missions*, 28 July – 9 August on the campus of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Pretoria, South Africa. There were 16 traditional students in the class and 4 guests. Students were from South Africa, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Congo, and Zambia. Our focus was on the theology of mission and evangelism, with contextual application for the church today. The students were eager to learn and participate in the discussion. The instructional method included classroom presentation and discussion, independent Bible study, writing a Bible study on missions, classroom presentation and final paper. The goal was to integrate biblical theology with practical application in a congregational or missional setting.

I also had the joyful opportunity to preach in two chapel services to the campus community. On Sunday, 4 August I preached at the joint mission festival

hosted by St. Paul Lutheran Church – Pretoria. The service was followed by a slide presentation from my teaching experience at Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry, Yambio, South Sudan. Those who attended the service and presentation on this Mission Sunday were interested in the Lord's work in other parts of the world.

During my stay on the campus of LTS I enjoyed wonderful hospitality and socializing with the students and staff. Monday through Friday we gathered together for Morning Prayer, Matins and Evening Prayer. I found the student body to be very dedicated and devout, eager to prepare for the holy ministry. During my time at LTS there were many improvements taking place. Work was being done on the library addition and brick paving was taking place around the buildings.

One evening there was a fire in the Schulz house attic. It appeared as if the geyser began to leak, creating a short in the wiring, causing the fire. The students reacted very efficiently to evacuate the building and call the emergency responders to the scene. They were also quick to lend a helping hand to the families displaced by the fire. The last evening of class was celebrated with a braai, which included good food, fellowship and singing.

LTS made my trip and teaching time a pleasure. It was wonderful to experience the Christian community in and around the campus. The students demonstrated an eagerness to serve the Lord and His church in ministry. The Lord blessed both teacher and students from start to finish. The Lord willing, I look forward to a return visit and the opportunity to be with God's people in South Africa.



## Farewell to Rev. Dr. Karl Böhmer

At the end of 2019, the LTS says goodbye to its current academic registrar and lecturer in church history, who has served the LTS since the 2015. He writes:

It has been my privilege to serve at the LTS for the past 5 years in service of the *Lutherische Kirchenmission* (LKM) and the FELSISA. This has been a tremendous learning opportunity for me, and I am grateful for the experience I have had in teaching subjects very near and dear to me, namely church history and mission. The church of God is not called to reinvent herself every so often, but to remain faithful to the Lord's Word and to follow His call. I have tried to instil in the students a

passion for both the great heritage and the great opportunity of the church.

I would like to express my gratitude to Director Roger Zieger, Rev. Christoph Weber, and Bishop Dieter Reinstorf for facilitating my service here. My heartfelt thanks goes especially to Rector Winterle for faithful and patient leadership - you have been a great example to us all. Thank you also to the seminary community for the warm welcome. The Lord God bless the LTS.



## Introducing

## Rev. Dr. Heinz Hiestermann

With Dr. Böhmer leaving the LTS at the end of 2019, the Free Evangelical Synod in South Africa (FELSISA) extended a divine call to Dr. Hiestermann to serve at the LTS, which he prayerfully accepted. He has been serving as parish pastor of the FELSISA congregation in Greytown, South Africa since late 2014 and thus brings 5 years of experience in parish ministry with him to the seminary. He plans to relocate to Pretoria with his family after Christmas 2019 in order to take up his duties at the LTS. He is to be installed into his office on 9 February 2020. Dr. Hiestermann's area of specialization is the New Testament.

LTS News asked Dr. Hiestermann to introduce himself to the LTS. He writes:

My name is Heinz Hiestermann. I am 39 years old. I am married to Renate and have two children, Lotta (7) and Jana (5).

After finishing school in 1998, I studied at the University of Pretoria and attained a BCom (Business Management) degree. Thereafter I spent a gap year in the UK (2002) and also worked on the family farm (2003).

In 2004 I started my theological studies, starting with a BA (Ancient Languages) degree, again at the University of Pretoria. After getting married at the start of 2007, my wife and I went to Germany where I studied at the Lutherische Theologische Hochschule Oberursel. We returned to South Africa in 2012, and I did my vicarage in Wartburg, first in the German Kirchdorf congregation and then in the English Our Saviour congregation. In this time I also started my PhD in New Testament studies at the University of Pretoria. I was ordained into the ministry on 2 November 2014 in Greytown, where I am currently serving as pastor. I completed my PhD in 2016 with a thesis on Paul's use of the synoptic Jesus Tradition.

Apart from serving the church of the Lord, I enjoy vegetable gardening, cooking, and trail running.

# Introducing our students and their home churches

As in previous issues, we present here portraits by our students of themselves and their home contexts and churches.



Pictured from left to right:  
Lucky Miya, Nkosikhona Mkhabela, Charles Tsatsi

1. KwaZulu-Natal Diocese, led by Deputy Bishop and Dean M. Thwala
2. Gauteng Diocese, led by Dean P.M. Mokopanele
3. North West Diocese, led by Dean T.J. Mafereka
4. Mpumalanga Diocese, led by Dean M.R. Lushaba
5. Botswana Diocese across the border

Official statistics of the LCSA have not been released for several years, and so the exact number of members is not known. The LCSA has over 44 congregations spread across South Africa and Botswana. These congregations are ministered to by faithful men of God in divine services held in the people's home languages. The LCSA is a full member of the International Lutheran Council (ILC). It is a confessional Lutheran church body, meaning that it is bound primarily to the teachings of the Holy Scripture and secondarily to the Lutheran Book of Concord of 1580.

The LCSA is the major shareholder of the LTS with 40% with MLC 30% and FELSISA 30%. It has currently

3 students studying at the LTS: Final year students Mr C. Ofentse Tsatsi (student treasurer) from North West Diocese, Mr Z. Nkosikhona Mkhabela from Umhlangeni Parish in the KwaZulu-Natal Diocese, and, last but not least, Mr S. Lucky Miya (student secretary general), also from Umhlangeni Parish in the KwaZulu-Natal Diocese.

The LTS offers training in the Holy Ministry and provides confessional Lutheran education to candidates preparing to serve as pastors. Candidates are invited to apply to pursue their studies here. As the Scriptures proclaim, the harvest is plenty, but the labourers are few; therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest to send faithful labourers into the harvest. This then is our prayer as the LCSA also. Amen.



## LCSA Students

### at the LTS

While the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA) was founded in 1967, it traces its roots to Lutheran mission efforts among Zulu and Tswana peoples going back to the year 1854. While in 2017, the LCSA celebrated its first official half century, it also celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The LCSA truly is a historic church dating back through its predecessors and church fathers and mothers to the church of the apostles. It is served today by Bishop Modise Maragelo and Deputy Bishop Mandla Thwala. The church body is divided up into 5 dioceses (regional districts):

## Xenophobia in South Africa

### Did Jesus say: Hate thy Neighbor?

As in 2008 and 2015, xenophobic violence again flared up in South Africa in September of 2019, with armed crowds chasing foreigners out of shops, public spaces, and neighborhoods, shouting and chanting: "Foreigners must go back to where they came from." Such actions are almost always directed at people from other African and Asian countries. Tragically, some foreigners were killed, with others "merely" being driven out.

By God's grace, these events occurred far away from the LTS

campus. No violence was perpetrated close to the LTS, nor were seminary students threatened directly. Nevertheless, such violence in South Africa is of great concern to the LTS community, since we have a number of foreign students living on campus.

Due to the reports of violence in South Africa, three students were called home by their families and church leaders. They left the country for a short time until peace returned. Since then, they have all come back to resume their studies. Thanks be to God!

Please pray for our students and South Africa, that the Lord would turn the hate shown to sojourners to love for the neighbor, and that the LTS may lead by example.



## Xenophobic Violence in SA

Unfortunately, there are periodic waves of aggression against foreigners living in South Africa. Thankfully, the LTS has been spared such violence.



LTS Students



# GRADUATE

*(continued from cover page)*

seminary for the joyous occasion and to congratulate the graduates on the completion of their studies. During the divine service held to commemorate the graduation, Pastor Loci Rev. Nathan Mntambo preached a dynamic and very apropos sermon on Ex. 32:27, calling on the graduates to consecrate themselves to the Lord and to cast off worldly ways, and reminding them that the Word of the Lord would always achieve what it was sent out to do, that it would bless, enliven, and inform their ministry and keep them faithful to their task if they listened to it and took it to heart.

The six LTS graduates of 2019 are:

- Chernet Fitebo Arifecho from the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesous
- Peter Kizungu, originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, a member of the Gologese Congregation in Durban, South Africa
- Gentil Magala, also originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo
- Nkosikhona Mkhabela from Ohlangeni, South Africa, belonging to the LCSA
- Dumisani Mokobedi from Atteridgeville, South Africa, belonging to the Lutheran Bapedi
- Charles Ofentse Tsatsi from Northwest Province, belonging to the LCSA

Representing the Leadership of the Lutheran Church of Southern Africa (LCSA) at the graduation ceremony was Dean Moses Mokopanele. He announced that three of the LTS graduates were accepted for vicarages in the LCSA: Peter Kizungu (KZN Diocese), Nkosikhona Mkhabela (Mpumalanga Diocese), and Charles Tsatsi (Gauteng Diocese). Chernet Arifecho plans to pursue postgraduate studies in theology, Dumisani Mokobedi is headed to the Lutheran Bapedi Church for vicarage, and Gentil Magala is planning to serve the Lord in Mocambique.



Top left, right, and centre: Scenes from the graduation service and ceremony

Right: Rector & Mrs. Lidia Winterle

Left: LTS Faculty and graduates 2019

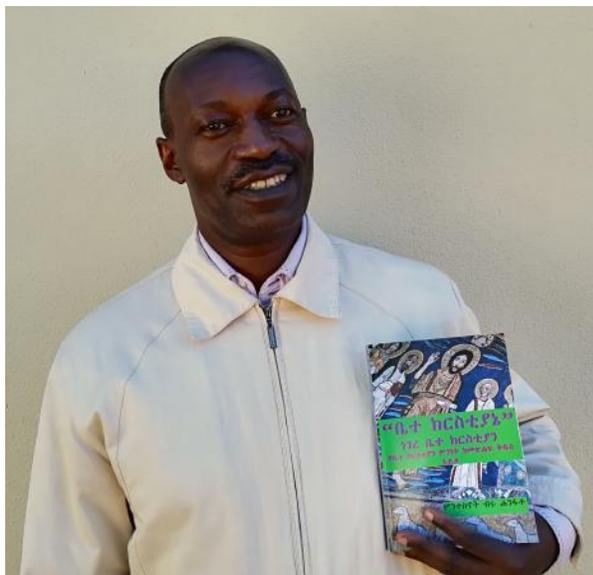
## March 2020 Intensives by Guest Lecturers



Prof. Dr. John T. Pless



Rev. Stephen Preus, STM



the first issue of our newsletter this year (2019/1). A native Ethiopian and graduate of the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Ethiopia, Mr. Hanfato has been faithfully serving as librarian at the LTS throughout this year and has also taught courses on research methodology and the use of the library, among others.

Having completed his Masters of Divinity degree, it is Mr. Hanfato's desire to pursue PhD studies.

Recently, he had the joy of publishing a book in Amharic on the subject of ecclesiology (the nature of the church). We asked him to provide us with a synopsis of his book, which it is our pleasure to publish below.

## Book published

by LTS Librarian Mintesinot B. Hanfato

LTS librarian Mintesinot Birru Hanfato was introduced in

## Coming up@LTS

### February 2020

- 03 Welcome Day
- 04 Lectures commence (Quarter 1)
- 09 Installation of new faculty

### March 2020

- 02-13 Intensives 1 (taught by Prof. Dr. J. Pless and Rev. S. Preus)
- 21 Human Rights Day (public holiday)

### April 2020

- 03 Lectures end (Quarter 1)
- 04-13 Holy Week/Easter Recess
- 14 Lectures commence (Quarter 2)

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

The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane is a registered Public Benefits Organization. Donations to LTS can be deducted according to Section 18(a) in the South African tax laws. Donations are also possible via check or Paypal. Please see our website for details ([www.lts.ac.za](http://www.lts.ac.za)).

Account Holder: "Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane NPC"

Bank: ABSA, current account no. 860510030

Branch Code: 632005

Swift Code: ABSA ZA JJ

Bank Address: ABSA Enterprise Business, Campus Building, 1102 Burnett Street, Hatfield, 0083 South Africa

Title of the Book: "My church:" A Biblical Perspective on Ecclesiology; "My Church" Matt. 16:18

It has become the habit of so-called pastors, both trained and untrained, to open a church and to refer to it as "my church," as their own property. In my studies and after conversations with some evangelical church members, I discovered that they do not know the biblical meaning of the church. This problem provoked me to think, pray, and start writing to address the issue through literature. Here follows a summary of each of the six chapters of my book.

Chapter one: A study of the Greek and Hebrew words for "church" in the Old and New Testaments. I focus especially on the Greek term "ecclesia" and its meaning in Scripture.

Chapter two: The early church fathers picked up on some concepts from the Old Testament in their use of "ecclesia," which they read allegorically. For instance, the Garden of Eden was interpreted as "ecclesia" relating to the meaning of "church" in the New Testament. The burning bush at Mount Sinai was interpreted as church in the sense that the flame of suffering, afflictions, and demonic power could not extinguish the church of Christ.

Chapter three: In addition to the Greek word "ecclesia," there are other names in the New Testament reflecting the meaning of the church: body of Christ, the city of God, the temple of God, bride of Christ, and the house of God. I attempted to show how these names directly relate to the meaning of the church.

Chapter four: I discuss the Reformed concept of the visible and invisible church in relation to the idea of salvation. The Bible tells us there are people who look like Christians and even pastors, but their life and ministry do not reflect the true faith. Grace alone, Christ alone, Scripture alone, faith alone are indeed enough for salvation, but that true faith must be reflected in our Christian life for us as members of both the visible body of Christ and the invisible church which is the body of Christ, sitting at the right hand of God the Father.

Chapter five: The idea of the great commission is discussed in depth in relation to mission and outreach ministry. Many new emerging churches do not consider the great commission a major task of the church. But all Christians have been sent into the world to preach the good news, make financial contributions, by prayer, and by supporting missionaries and church institutions.

Church six: This chapter covers contemporary issues such as the tendency of looking at the church as a business, racism on different levels, homosexuality, immorality, and church leadership problems.