



# For the Life of the World

## Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

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April 2008, Volume Twelve, Number Two



### Out of Africa

Rev. Dr Arthur Just

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### There and Back Again

Rev. Prof. Robert Roethemeyer

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### Starving for the Gospel

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The Concordia Theological Seminary deaconess program has been privileged to learn and receive mercy from the deaconesses in the ELCK. One of their leaders, Lorna Meeker, studied to be a deaconess at our seminary and now serves alongside her husband Dennis at a church in the Kibera slums of Nairobi that suffered much from the post-election violence.

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In the capital of an African country, a white person stands out. Very frequently, people come up and say, "My friend, how are you?" The questions nearly always lead to, "Who are you, and why are you here?" I respond, "I am a Lutheran pastor, and I have been sent to teach the Word of God."

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In a country where poverty and deadly diseases are rampant, "what speaks the loudest to the people of Kenya is love. . . acts of love and mercy speak loudly and clearly," states Meeker. "It becomes an opportunity to proclaim Law and Gospel, to introduce them to Baptism, and confirm them in the gifts of the Eternal Feast of Victory."



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# There and Back Again: A Librarian's Tale

By The Reverend Prof. Robert Roethemeyer

**Chronos! Kairos!** These are two Greek words for time. The former means time as “the actual passage of time,” while the latter means time in the sense of the “right time.”

The original request to visit Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, South Africa, came in May 2005 when its rector, Reverend Dr. Wilhelm Weber, visited the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary. I suggested that January or February might be a good time in my schedule. January 2006 came. January 2007 went. Time (*chronos*) continued to pass; would there ever be a right time (*kairos*) in my calendar?



*The faculty present for the opening quarter of the eighth academic year at Lutheran Theological Seminary included (from left to right): Dr. Timothy Quill (Fort Wayne, Homiletics); Prof. Roethemeyer (Fort Wayne, Library and Research); Dr. Anssi Simojoki (Kenya, Galatians and Reformation Church); Dr. Wilhelm Weber (Rector, Symbolics and Systematics); Rev. Günther Hohls (Greek, Greek Lectio Continuo); Bishop David Tswaedi (Catechetics; Baptism, Confession, and Absolution); and Rev. Nathan Mntambo (Hebrew; Hebrew Lectio Continuo, O.T. Intro, Tradition Religions in Africa).*

The answer began with a visit in March 2007 from our Ph.D. in Missiology student and LTS's Old Testament instructor, Eliot Sithole, seeking books for the library and echoing the plea of the rector for me to visit. Our spring book sale provided us with funds to ship eight m-bags of books to LTS, including thirty Hebrew grammars and lexicons for the students there.

Then a personal request came during a second visit by Dr. Weber to Fort Wayne in September 2007. With the support of a visiting professor grant from LCMS World Mission, the blessing of my President and Academic Dean, and the prayerful persistence and able assistance of my helpmate, I began the nine-thousand-mile journey to Pretoria, South Africa, on January 21. Another January would not pass!

Dr. Weber wanted this to be an investigative visit. “Come, Robert, and tell me what your eyes see and your mind thinks,” he said. During what was the last two weeks of their summer holiday, I did just that. I sought to understand and then to provide options and models and solutions for a wide range of library, technology, accreditation, and utilization of space issues.

At the beginning of the second week, we transformed the large room used for Sunday worship services and weekday chapel services into a space that could serve during the week both as an electronic classroom seating thirty and a chapel seating sixty. The classroom space incorporated large tables arranged in a U-shape for the students, a teaching table for the instructor, a portable white board, a video projector mounted on the ceiling, a screen mounted on the wall, and excellent access to the new wireless Internet signal. Even before classes started, students were using the large tables as a place to study and, for those with laptops, a place to connect both to the wireless Internet and to the ample electrical outlets around the room.

As the week unfolded, Dr. Weber arranged for a tour of the library at the neighboring University of Pretoria. There I thought about how to coordinate





*Prof. Roethemeyer giving a Logos Library System tutorial to (from left to right): Silas Mogale (South Africa/3rd year); Moses Mokopanele (South Africa/4th year); Bongani Dlamini (South Africa/4th year); Pheny Mokgaimena (Botswana/3rd year); and Jacob Mueller (Illinois USA/1st year).*

library resources between the seminary and the university and how to use the seminary library as a stepping stone to the university library. I also went shopping for books at Protea Book Store, seeking to bring back books documenting African Christianity and Lutheranism in Africa for the Walther Library collection.

Then as we geared up for the opening of the eighth academic year of LTS on Tuesday, February 5, I interviewed three students: Pheny Mokgaimena, a third-year student from Botswana; Boss Sebeelo, a fifth-year student from Botswana who is just beginning his Theology Honours post-graduate program at the University of Pretoria while continuing with a practical internship at the seminary; and Vincent Cane from South Africa, who has completed both his B.A. Honours in Theology and his M.A. in Theology at the University of Pretoria. Again, I sought to understand how they used the resources of the seminary library, how well they transitioned to the much larger university library, and what instruction they received in the use of libraries, library resources, and the vast electronic resources available at the university.

With those interviews fresh in mind, I taught a version of my “Bibliography and Technology for Students of Theology” course intensively from February 5–8 in the electronic classroom. As students learned about the Dewey Decimal Classification system, I watched them transition from browsing the shelves of the four thousand volume seminary library, hoping to find a resource on their topic, to coming in and seeking materials on a specific topic that should be shelved together under a specific Dewey number, and were!

The rhythm of the seminary day is marked there by Matins at 10 in the morning and Vespers at 6 in the evening. I took my place in the preaching cycle, preaching in Matins on Friday, February 8.

Finally, on the last weekend, with the help of students and volunteers, we totally rearranged the library, creating a continuous run of shelving for the books and preparing for the arrival of three computer workstations. On Sunday evening, I held a cataloging camp with Jacob Mueller, who graduated in December from Concordia Ann Arbor and is studying at LTS until June. I repeated the training on Monday morning with Pat and Barbara Hoffmeier, sisters-in-law volunteering here with their husbands, Lee and Willis, for six months and three months respectively. They have seven weeks to work on creating a web catalog using LibraryThing, an online service for cataloging books easily and creating a catalog that can be accessed from anywhere. They also will create new, consistent spine labels for all the books

## CTS Professors Supplement LTS International Team of Teachers

The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (LTS) has trained more than a hundred pastors over the past decades for service in the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA). Since 2000, it has been situated in Arcadia, which is a suburb of the national capital city, Tshwane (Pretoria), which is in close proximity to the University of Pretoria.

With requests from various Lutheran churches through sub-Saharan Africa, it has enrolled young men from various regions to address the growing need for well-trained pastors. Presently, nearly forty young men from Sudan, Kenya, Liberia, Ghana, Uganda, Botswana, and South Africa are enrolled at LTS.

Further applications from Congo, Rwanda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are on the table. But due to facility constraints and funding limitations, too many of these have been turned down. Hopefully, the new plans for extension will enable LTS to accommodate more suitable applications.

Lutheran Theological Seminary develops Christian values, pastoral skills, and theological knowledge as its students practice a Lutheran way of communal life in preparation for the ordained ministry in the Lutheran Church throughout Africa. The curriculum is divided into three stages of two years each: bridging course (juniors), theology proper (seniors), and post-graduate (vicar).

Confessional teachers from Germany, Kenya, Finland, Sudan, and the United States complement the permanent staff. During the first semester of 2008, five professors—Professor Robert Roethemeyer, Dr. Tim Quill, Dr. Larry Rast, Dr. John Nordling, and Dr. Arthur Just—from Concordia Theological Seminary supplemented this international and confessional team at LTS. Volunteers from many different parts of the world help to cope further with the growing workload of running the seminary. In February, eighteen students from Concordia Theological Seminary came to visit and help the seminary in any way they could.



*Dr. Wilhelm Weber is rector of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane.*



- ✠ The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod began work in South Africa in 1981.
- ✠ The Free Evangelical—Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA):
  - Was founded in 1892 by German colonists who left Germany over unionistic issues;
  - Today has 17 congregations, 2,646 baptized members, 2,067 communicant members, and 15 active pastors;
  - Is headquartered at St. Paul's congregation in Arcadia.
- ✠ The Lutheran Church in South Africa (LCSA):
  - Grew out of German mission work, becoming an autonomous church in 1967;
  - Today has 51 parishes, 204 congregations, 20,000 baptized members, 10,000 communicant members, and 36 active pastors;
  - Is headquartered in Soweto, the largest black settlement in South Africa;
  - Became partner church of the LCMS in 1995.
- ✠ Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) has trained more than a hundred pastors for service in the LCSA. Over time it moved from Madola to Salem (Mpumalanga) and then to Enhlanhleni (KwaZulu/Natal) before locating to Arcadia, an eastern suburb of the national capital, Pretoria (Tshwane), at the end of 2000.
- ✠ Since then it has consciously enrolled students from the rest of Africa to address the growing need for well trained pastors throughout the continent. Current students are from South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, Liberia, Sudan, and Uganda.
- ✠ LTS instructors, Nathan Mntambo and Eliot Sithole, earned their S.T.M. degrees at CTS. Rev. Sithole is now pursuing his PhD in Missiology here.

*Prof. Roethemeyer giving a LibraryThing cataloging workshop to sisters-in-law Barbara Hoffmeier (Northville, MI) and Pat Hoffmeier (Collinsville, IL). Dr. Anssi Simojoki browsing a table of uncataloged materials received from CTS in Fort Wayne and Concordia Publishing House in Saint Louis.*



*The Reverend Eliot Sithole (center) worked in Walther Library while he earned his S.T.M. from Concordia Theological Seminary. Originally from the KwaZulu-Natal region of South Africa, Rev. Sithole teaches Old Testament at Lutheran Theological Seminary and has returned to Fort Wayne to pursue the Ph.D. in Missiology degree. Here he is pictured with Walther Library staff as three carts of books were prepared for shipment to LTS from CTS last May!*

so that they can be found easily. I'm able to see and edit their work on the catalog via the Web and to answer their questions via e-mail.

On February 12, as I boarded the plane for the journey home, I knew indeed that this had been the right time (*kairos*). We had created teaching and learning spaces that would be utilized by my colleagues Drs. Tim Quill, Larry Rast, John Nordling, and Arthur Just, as they each take a turn teaching at LTS this year, including one space large enough to accommodate the additional sixteen students from Concordia Theological Seminary who will be at LTS during a study abroad trip. We had LibraryThing, an inexpensive Web-centric solution to the need for a sustainable library catalog. It wasn't launched until August 29, 2005! We had volunteers who could carry out the cataloging and labeling activities. I had an appreciation of theological education on a blessed continent ripe for the proclamation of the Word. Kairos indeed!

To learn more about Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane and the training of pastors for Africa, go to <http://www.lts.org.za>. There you will learn how you may support LTS in its **mission** to provide a great theological education for students from all over the African continent and its **vision** to expand its physical facility to handle sixty pastoral and twenty diaconal students.

*Schole* is another Greek word for time. This word means time as "leisure" or "spare time." In Southern Africa, that means a trip to a game reserve, such as Pilanesberg National Park or to the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa. But that is another article, or better yet, slideshow! 🌍

*The Reverend Prof. Robert V. Roethemeyer is Director of Library and Information Services, an Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, and Executive Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.*



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