



# The History of LHF Work in Sudan and South Sudan

*by Rev. Robert L. Rahn*  
*Founder, Lutheran Heritage Foundation*



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## Dedication

*It is only fitting and proper that we dedicate this history  
first of all to our faithful Lord,  
and secondly to His faithful servants:  
to Rev. Andrew Mbugo Elisa, to Rev. Peter Anibati, and to Rev. Simon Gatluak.  
To God be the glory and praise!*

"The History of LHF Work in Sudan and South Sudan"

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## Foreword

The history of the Evangelical Lutheran church in South Sudan and Sudan is one in which we have seen the promise — GOD’S WORD SHALL NOT RETURN EMPTY — fulfilled in so many ways. For the past 25 years, it has been evident that the history of the ELCSS/S is God’s arranged plan of salvation to the people of South Sudan and Sudan.

The ELCSS/S was established in November 23, 1993 in Juba when Andrew Mbugo Elisa (who later became the first pastor and the first Bishop of the ELCSS/S) was discouraged by what he saw in the Episcopal Church of the Sudan in which he was brought up. In his search for a church that faithfully taught Scriptures, he became connected with the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn, who sent him five copies of Luther’s *Small Catechism* and a *Book of Concord*.

God’s Word taught from these books amazingly transformed the destiny of the newly-organized small church, and it therefore marked the beginning of the relationship with the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and the Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn, the author of this book who is also regarded as the “grandfather” of the ELCSS/S. What nobody knew then was that this church, through LHF’s books and encouragement, would become a national church body and would later serve the two countries of South Sudan and Sudan.

From 1993 – 2018, we have seen the Word not “returning empty.” The membership of the ELCSS/S continues to increase. Pastors are being trained and ordained; many congregations and worship centres opened and the church continues to grow big and strong, resulting in the demand for more pastors. As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ELCSS/S this year, we reflect back. All we can see is the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word being taught and preached by sinners accomplishing its purpose: conversion and faith in Jesus Christ.

May this history book delight the hearts of many who read it and awaken in them the flame of faith to always trust in the power of God’s Word and the fact that it does what it says: God’s Word does not return empty when taught and preached.

Peter Anibati Abia

Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan (ELCSS/S)



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(Excerpts taken from the book *Jesus Never Fails*)

## **1993**

### **June 1993**

Andrew Mbugo Elisa returns from France, where he had gone for a two-week meeting of the World Council of Churches. But the question that kept disturbing his mind was why should a church be church in name only, and not in practice?

At that time, there were serious problems in the Episcopal Church of Sudan, of which he was a member. These problems had caused divisions among the clergy and the laity, and Andrew (not being happy with all the ungodly practices that had engulfed the ECS that time) decided to look for another church that could truthfully teach the Gospel to all Sudanese people.

After sharing the idea with his friends and some senior government officials in Juba, they supported the idea that a Lutheran Church be established in Sudan. After several meetings, Andrew declared publicly that he was establishing the Lutheran Church in Sudan, and this was launched on November 23, 1993 in Juba.

Because of the growing insecurity in Juba at that time, Andrew moved immediately to Khartoum where the members of the newly created faith started prayers at his home. Thereafter, prayers were held in the different homes of the members of the new faith in Khartoum.

## **1994**

In early 1994, Andrew flew to Nairobi to visit the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya in search of knowledge about Lutheranism and materials that could be used to expand the knowledge of those who had joined the Lutheran Church in Sudan. Andrew visited Uhuru Highway Parish, which was then served by Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki, and at that same time the ELCK was receiving delegates for the Confessional Lutheran Conference organized by Matongo Lutheran College.

The meeting between Andrew and Dr. Simojoki included meetings with several delegates coming for the conference, including Rev. Dr. Robert Preus, then Chairman of Lutheran Heritage Foundation. The meeting with Dr. Preus established a link between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan and the Lutheran Heritage Foundation, which Andrew requested to supply the ELCS with confessional Lutheran materials.

**June 16**

Dr. Robert Preus, LHF Board Chairman, lectures on “Inspiration of Scriptures” in Nairobi.

**June 29**

Dr. Preus receives a letter from Andrew Mbugo Elisa, requesting books referenced by Dr. Preus.

**August 8**

Rev. Rahn fulfills request and sends one copy of the *Book of Concord* and five *Small Catechisms*. This marks the official beginning of a relationship that helped to organize the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sudan (ELCS).

**July 31**

Andrew mentions request to Lutheran World Federation for funds. Rev. Rahn writes to Andrew: “In my opinion, LWF does not represent that which is genuinely and confessionally Lutheran, and that means you need to discover for yourselves what is Lutheran. The best source for you is the Bible and the *Book of Concord*. I’m sure LWF would not deem it necessary to publish the volume since they, in general, violate the statements of faith found in these documents.”

## 1995

**November 27**

Funds provided to lease an office complex in Khartoum to serve as church headquarters, meeting rooms, and worship center. Later it would also house a doctor’s office and a pharmacy.

## 1996

**August 1**

Zande *Hymnal* published.

**August 22**

Wire sent on this date to Khartoum and it was not delivered until October 1.

**October 18**

ELCS uses \$5,000 grant to purchase computer, printer, table, software, and translation of *Liturgy Prayerbook*.

## 1997

**February 10**

Andrew gives a report on the state of the church: “Hardship, suffering, war, poverty, displacement, militarism, racial conflict, poor economy, plus many other problems have become part of the life styles for us in Africa. In addition, there is the growing religious conflict which affects countries like Sudan, particularly where Christians are a minority. But we continue to believe that one day we shall have new life in Africa, most of all in Sudan.”

**March 5**

A \$2,000 grant sent to the ELCS to enable a deposit on a worship center for Juba.

**March 19**

*Prayerbook* published in Zande language.

**June 14-22**

Andrew goes to Nairobi to spend two weeks studying the *Augsburg Confession* with Dr. Anssi Simojoki.

**July 30**

Books are provided by two widows of pastors to start libraries in Latvia, Siberia and Sudan.

**September 10**

Andrew gives an update on the history of the ELCS. “When the idea of starting ELCS came into people’s minds, we thought of southern Sudan as the home of ELCS. This remains to be so in our plan. Our existence in the North today is quite temporary, waiting for peace to come to southern Sudan. As we were moving to build congregations and increase the number of Christians, we began to realize the difference between confessional and liberal Lutheranism. Thanks to those who helped us from the very beginning. Among them were Dr. Robert Rahn, Dr. Anssi Simojoki and Dr. Reijo Arkkila.”

**September 29**

A report is sent to Andrew that LHF contacted LCMS President A.L. Barry and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, regarding the gathering of information to enable enrollment at the seminary. In the request for help in supporting Andrew, he also asked about forming an official partnership with LHF or the LCMS. We suggested that this should be a partnership with the LCMS. It was at this time we made the request for him to come to Fort Wayne.

**December 12**

Andrew informs us he has been hospitalized for 26 days in three different hospitals without a diagnosis as to the problem.

## 1998

**February 16**

Jeff Rahn, in keeping with efforts to be on the cutting edge of international finance, obtained a registration number from the U.S. Treasury Department that allowed LHF to send funds into Sudan during a time when the U.S. had sanctions against Sudan. Test funds of \$1,000 were sent on February 23 with Andrew confirming receipt of the funds on March 3, and an official account was opened in Citibank of Khartoum. This avenue of fund transfers was subsequently utilized by the synod and other Lutheran agencies.

**February 28**

Andrew sends an application for admission to Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana (CTS-FW) and began preliminary enrollment discussions.

**March 9**

LHF granted \$15,000 to ELCS to assist in the upgrading of the Khartoum leased facilities.



### **March 11**

Andrew writes to Rev. Ken Greinke: "I came to know Dr. Anssi Simojoki in 1994 when he was pastor of Uhuru Highway Lutheran Church in Nairobi. In the same year we began correspondence first with the late Dr. Robert Preus and then with Rev. Rahn. Thanks to almighty God, these contacts have resulted in the actual birth of the ELCS, particularly with the concern and support received from LHF and Rev. Rahn. We always ask God to give him more wisdom and talent so that the relationship between LHF and ELCS can grow further."

### **March 18**

A fax from Andrew bemoans the common problem faced in Khartoum: days without electricity. The problem was later solved when the LHF and LCMS World Mission jointly purchase a large generator that provided power for lights, fax use and air conditioning.

### **April 24**

LHF provided funds for a mission exploratory trip to South Sudan for Andrew and Dr. Simojoki, LHF vice president for Africa. The trip is hindered by problems related to the People's Liberation Army security. When permission was finally received there were no flights available. Dr. Simojoki stated, "Right now we are standing on a step stone of grand Lutheran missionary future, if the existing opportunities are seized timely by the right people. It is high time to concentrate missionary efforts."

### **August 7**

The bombing of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar El Salaam impacts the obtaining of visas, requiring Andrew to go to Cairo to obtain documents to come to Fort Wayne.

### **September 15**

Andrew arrives in Fort Wayne after much difficulty in obtaining documents. He writes, "Though I'm yet to learn what is being taught here, one thing I have discovered is the Lutheran worship." He also voiced concern about his family back in Khartoum. LHF was able to alleviate the anxiety by assuring Andrew that proper support would be given them in his absence.

### **December 11**

LHF is granted Recognized Service Organization (RSO) status under the LCMS World Mission, an effort that began on July 31, 1995.

## **1999**

### **February 12**

Andrew shares his Sudan story with members of St. John Lutheran Church in Fraser, Michigan by preaching for services and reporting in the Bible class. During presentation he remarked, "I am just a very small person saying something big." This statement could appropriately describe the heart and soul of Andrew's service and commitment.

### **March 23**

Rev. Elisa made an interesting comparison when thanking donors, Ron and Wanda Beck, for their special gifts. He said, "Among the Zande people, if you give birth to a boy, you are to bring him up making sure he is well trained. Upon reaching his teen years, you will first buy him a bow and arrow to begin shooting small animals and birds. As he grows older, you will buy him a spear which will be his defense as well as a tool

for killing animals. The spear can protect him and at the same time feed him. Finally, you will assist him in building a house and getting married. After his marriage, it will be his responsibility to produce children, while you retire very happy in heart.

“Coming to know you, Ron and Wanda, has reminded me of this old Zande father described above. First, you gave me the *Lutheran Worship Liturgy Book*, which in the above context symbolizes a bow and arrow. Secondly, you gave me my New King James Bible, which symbolizes the spear to defend me spiritually. Thirdly, you have decided to donate money which can build a house for me. It is now my responsibility to use the tools you have offered to produce (i.e. to fish people into Christ’s church).”

It is a very interesting analogy for the support LHF receives from thousands of partners around the world. Let it be Andrew’s way of thanking you as his special memorial.

### May 20

Andrew finished his study at CTS-FW. Rev. Rahn wrote on this occasion, “As you close this American seminary chapter in your life, I hope it will be a case where you can look back and view it as a positive experience. Now you begin another part of the journey. As you do, I want to commend you for your untiring zeal for the Lord’s work and also want to pledge our continued support. We want to do what we can to support your efforts in planting Lutheran churches in Sudan.” Andrew was sent back with a six month \$20,000 commitment. This amount was provided since Andrew during his studies at Fort Wayne was very active in promoting the work of LHF. The amount included \$15,000 to purchase a pre-owned vehicle.

### August 26

Rev. Elisa welcomed special guests to his ordination festivities. Included in the delegation were Rev. Ken Greinke and Dr. Allan Buckman, representing LCMS World Missions; Dr. Dave Adams, representing Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri; Dr. Tim Quill, representing Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki, LHF vice president for Africa, Nairobi, Kenya; Rev. Japheth Dachi, general secretary, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya; and Rev. Dr. Robert L. Rahn, LHF executive director.

Andrew gave a historic overview of the ELCS from the time of its formation stating, “May I on behalf of the Executive Council and the entire membership of the ELCS welcome all of you to Sudan to participate in this historical occasion of ordination. We look forward to your faithful participation.

“You have come like the three men who came from the Far East to see the Son of Mary, who was the very Savior born in Bethlehem. You have come like the man whom Jesus spoke about in His parable, who left 99 of his sheep, tracing the whereabouts of the one sheep which got lost. Indeed, all of you who are in this country today have left your dear ones, your faithful Christians entrusted to you, your staff, to come and stay with the Sudanese people, who by God’s grace have become Lutherans, who are now seriously waiting and expecting to realize God’s miracle among them.

“Our Executive Council members are especially excited to see Rev. Robert L. Rahn among us, most importantly attending the first priestly ordination taking place in the ELCS. Rev. Rahn has made history in building ELCS tirelessly since 1994, starting with five catechisms, one *Book of Concord* and \$1,500 for printing 1,000 *Hymnals*, followed by funds for purchasing chairs and tables. Rev. Rahn has done more than just that. We all thank him for his real commitment to the Sudanese people and promoting confessional Lutheranism in Sudan. The work in Sudan was started by Rev. Rahn during a time when the late Dr. Robert Preus was chairman of the LHF Board.

“In 1995, LHF as a young organization took upon itself the task of building another church. Again thanks to Rev. Rahn for introducing the ELCS to the LCMS Board for World Missions to join hands and support the work in Sudan. Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki, who is always referred to as the father of the ELCS, is very much welcome. You are all welcome to Sudan. May God bless you.”

### **August 27**

An invitation was given to meet with Hassan Osman Dahawi, State Minister of Social Planning. He was most eager to give us the full police escort to the pharmaceutical plant bombed by President Clinton. They wanted us to see the debris and to observe that this was not a nerve gas plant. They are waiting for the United Nations to come to confirm that the United States made a grave error. We found out that evening, when we were shown on TV, why all the video cameras were present. While we could not understand the language, it seemed evident that we were the objects of some government propaganda for their networks.

After being whisked back to the city, we were taken to the Sudanese Parliament to have an audience with the Speaker of the Parliament, Dr. Hassan Abdullah El Turabi. In both cases we were first given almost an hour of what I call propaganda. In essence, their theme was “There are no problems in Sudan.” Most stories were contrived by news media. In a meeting with the General Secretary of the Council For International People’s Friendship, along with several other clergy, our questions about religious persecution were neatly skirted. On our return to America, an editorial in the *International Herald Tribune* had a headline “Sudan Must End Its Brutal War Against Civilians.” They accused Sudan of engaging in a “charm campaign.” I think that is what we experienced. Being in the highest offices of the land, it was perhaps good that we had in our company Dr. David Adams from the LCMS Government Office in Washington, D.C. It was interesting to see their reaction when we introduced him as being from the Office of Religious Affairs.

After all our meetings, Rev. Elisa told Rev. Rahn he was astounded over the fact that he read from the Bible in one of the highest Muslim offices in the country when he was explaining the Lutheran understanding of the power of the government and read Romans 13:1-8. Even more astounding to Rev. Elisa was the fact that they wanted Rev. Rahn to send copies of Luther’s position on government. Upon returning to America, pertinent articles were sent to those government officials.

### **August 28**

Andrew received a call document from the Executive Council of the ELCS which stated, “In faithfulness to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, the Executive Council of the ELCS met on August 28, 1999, and elected to call you as pastor of the established congregations of the ELCS. It is our fervent prayer that you would accept this call from God and shepherd the Lord’s flock, over which the Holy Spirit will ordain you as overseer.” It was signed by 11 members of the ELCS Executive Council.

These members of the council met on this date with the World Mission delegation and LHF representatives. During the meeting the electricity went off, which was an ongoing problem addressed previously with a request for a generator. As we sat in the darkness and increasing heat, we looked at the mission representatives and told them that this was certainly the hand of God. Andrew had previously asked for \$11,000 to purchase a generator and we could only provide half the amount. Perhaps the other half could be provided by the World Mission. In the presence of the Council, how could their answer be anything but yes? A very large and functional generator served the church well and the daily outages could be better managed.

The next major question addressed to the World Mission representatives was, can you help us start a seminary? The response was that the mission direction these days was more along the line of leadership training. It was an answer that was a bit disappointing to the ELCS leadership. After the meeting, the council asked if

the LHF delegation could meet on Monday.

### **August 29**

Rev. Andrew Mbugo Elisa was ordained and installed as President of the ELCS. The event took place in Khartoum on the street in front of the ELCS office complex and church headquarters. The street had been closed to traffic (vehicle but not donkey) and a huge tent erected to accommodate over 300 congregants who had arrived on foot, bicycles, mopeds and chartered buses. They represented eight congregations that had become part of the official ELCS church body.

Service participants included members of the World Mission staff, Rev. Dr. Allan Buckman (preacher) and Rev. Ken Greinke. LHF Vice President for Africa, Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki, served as ordinator; Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn (liturgist); Rev. Dr. Timothy Quill (reader); Rev. Dr. David Adam (reader); Rev. Japheth Dachi (representing Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya) and Rev. Edward Nzeme (ELCS general secretary). Several choirs from ELCS congregations provided African songs in a manner that still rings in one's ears; the clear crisp voice of a soloist can still be heard.

This historic six-hour service was conducted in three languages: English, Arabic and Zande. Following the service, a typical full African meal was served that had been cooked the previous day, including a goat that was butchered on site. The rice and goat meat with gravy was served on three-foot trays that were set in the midst of some six to eight people, who used the traditional African finger style to consume the food. Visiting dignitaries were ushered into the mission complex and provided with plates and eating utensils. Africans think of everything.

After the meal special music was played on homemade drums and violin-like instruments. With this music as a background, an African dance began with dancers surrounding all dignitaries and involving them in the celebratory dancing. When darkness began to set in around 9 p.m., the long day of celebration that had begun at 11 a.m. came to an end.

We became friends with the man who served as the Arabic translator. On an ensuing visit, I asked of his whereabouts and was informed he was no longer in Khartoum; he had to move to Cairo, Andrew explained, because of persecution. His children were removed from school and he lost his job. I lamented, "That's too bad!" Andrew replied that it wasn't all bad, because he had already started a secret Lutheran house church in Cairo.

### **August 30**

Members of the ELCS Church Council in their specially-called meeting asked LHF if we would help start a seminary for the church and our immediate response was that we could help and that we would even suggest a name: the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry (CLIHM). It was a lengthy name, but there would be no question as to the purpose of the school — to train pastors.

A short time later, Andrew again approached LCMS World Mission and asked if they could help with leadership training, as the seminary was operating with two tracks. One was a track for training pastors and the other track was for training church leaders. LHF ended up providing the funds for both tracks as the leadership training track also trained people to be translators.

Thus ended a very historic weekend for the ELCS. It included the ordination of Andrew, the installation as bishop, the opening of a seminary and later the program of leadership training.

### **August 31**

Andrew wrote a letter to the then-President of the LCMS, Rev. Dr. A. L. Barry. “As pastor, president and founder of the ELCS, my church body is herewith requesting to enter fellowship with you.” He explained, “The ELCS was organized on its own initiative and received significant early help from LHF. The late Dr. Robert Preus, Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn and Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki were instrumental in helping to shape the confessional Lutheran position of the ELCS. In more recent times, the LCMS Board for Missions also provided help.”

## **2000**

### **January 26**

LCMS World Mission provides \$27,500 for a portion of the five years of rent on the ELCS Mission Center in Khartoum.

### **February 9**

Rev. Andrew Elisa wrote, “Since the beginning of this millennium, it has been my daily prayer that the year 2000 should be more special making ELCS to receive God’s blessings in abundance. And this for sure will happen with your prayers, full support, and commitment to assist the ongoing development efforts. I am exerting in Sudan at this critical moment to preach Christ to those who have lost hope. My fears, worries, and troubles are always waved away when I read God’s Word. His unfailing promise to those who trust in Him, and knowing that you are a true brother in Christ who prays for this church day and night, making all possible efforts to assist me to accomplish God’s will in Sudan.”

Along with the above letter he sent a document outlining why the ELCS decided to establish the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry, along with a copy of a proposed curriculum for the CLIHM. It has a track for deaconesses, evangelists, deacons, business, and pastors. Prof. Tim Quill was mentioned as one providing assistance in developing the curriculum. Andrew discussed the opening of the seminary with the Director of Church Affairs in the Ministry of Social Planning, who has given his approval. Andrew says, “This letter shall help create a file for CLIHM to be recognized as one of the higher institutions in Sudan. As things stand now, we hope to open CLIHM officially on April 17, 2000.

### **June 5**

Luther's *Small Catechism* is published in the Arabic language of Sudan (10,000 copies). Andrew reported on a request that came from Bodosh with a population of 300,000 in the Northern region. He received word that no church had ever visited the town and the Chief of Bodosh requested Lutheran services start there.

### **July 13**

Tom Blackwell, John Hatteberg, Dr. Scott Murray and Rev. Rahn arrived in Khartoum, Sudan, the headquarters in the early years for the ELCS. This was to be a working visit, with Dr. Murray serving as a seminary instructor and the rest of us serving as painters. The goal was to paint both the inside and outside of the very large ELCS headquarters. The following report was filed in my trip journal:

It has been a great day so far. Started with “opening ceremonies” only like the ELCS can do it. It is most humbling and cuts away all the nonsense we had to put up with in getting visas and making the plans and to experience their joy in having people from America interested in helping. Rev. Rahn told them the LHF philosophy may be best summarized in two parts: We don’t know what we are doing and where we are going, and then had them turn to Psalm 27:14 and 2 Chronicles 15:7. We reminded them that the Lord knows, and that is what is most important



as they begin their journey to start the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry. “Wait for the Lord; be strong and let your heart take courage; yes, wait for the Lord.” (Psalm 27:14) “Be ye strong, therefore, and let now your hands be weak, for your work will be rewarded.” (2 Chronicles 15:7)

Scott started his lectures and we toured the building to map out our strategy. We decided not to invest too much, as it was not going to be a permanent location. Already at this time there were thoughts of eventually moving to the south. We would have to receive permission from the landlord for any major changes. We decided to finish one room as a library and do the painting while we were there. The upstairs balcony would be enclosed with bamboo to serve as a classroom. A second balcony area would be enclosed for another classroom, leaving the roof area to be available if needed.

We estimated the paint quantities and colors, and someone went off to the shop to make the purchase. They returned with seven five-gallon cans of paint. Some scaffolding was erected (have you ever seen that done by a bunch of seminarians?). They did eventually get it assembled and the lower patio area was tackled. All the bamboo was taken off the roof and replaced. This is the area where the church services are held. The next interesting sight was to see the only man who claimed to be a painter take a five-gallon pail up 30 feet of scaffolding — the pail being handed up level to level — and go to work.

Rev. Rahn brought a paint roller and pan and this was a new phenomenon to this crew. The painter took the roller and plunged it into the five-gallon pail and began rolling with paint flying in all directions. We had put down some plastic to protect the floor, which still had gobs from the last painting done. There were about 20 guys giving instructions until we got brushes into their hands and put them to work.

On Sunday, Rev. Rahn was to preach at several refugee camp services that surround Khartoum. A problem developed Sunday morning in getting an appropriate stamp in the passport that allowed visiting the refugee location. The process was changed, a regular occurrence, and it now required visiting four offices. Laymen were dispatched early Sunday morning (regular work day in a Muslim community) to obtain the passes. We waited for them to return. When they finally came at 11 a.m., Andrew had left because the service was to have started at that time. We went back to the guest house disappointed, and had our own service for the four of us rather than the 200 who gathered for Andrew’s substitute preaching.

I thought I misunderstood that there were 170 candidates for baptism at the camp services. It would have been more had the weather cooperated and had Andrew gotten to the several locations. He baptized 64 in one place, and when it rained, the gumbo wouldn’t allow traveling to a place where 90 were waiting. Twenty more waiting at a third location went home when Andrew didn’t arrive long after the designated time, and there was no way to summon their return.

Can you envision someone walking 23 miles to be baptized, or members of the congregation walking seven miles to fetch the closest water for the baptisms? How many would volunteer for Altar Guild duty if that were the normal practice? Not a problem for the Sudanese.

## July 17

Work continued on the headquarters with the report given that shelving had been purchased for the library that will be constructed and put in place on Thursday.

## July 18

The painting work usually started slow in the morning and picked up in the afternoon when we got a flurry of activity, as the students are released from class at 12:30 p.m. and many of them got to the painting. Today we had to do a major revision in our work, as there is something under the old paint that causes peeling when it is dampened by the new coat of paint. All of it had to be wetted down and peeled off before the new coat of paint was applied.

When we got back to the guest house around 6 p.m., the thermometer read 101 degrees. The electricity, as was common, went out and we moved a table outside for a “candlelight dinner.” Every day in Khartoum, there was a period of blackouts and the generator kicked in. Would that such a mechanism were available to us as a church when the darkness of sin crowds out the light! In reality there is such a generator available and our problem is getting people plugged in so that the Light can enter.

I wrote to one of our workers along these lines in another country, where he was experiencing difficulties with his church body. “I know these are dark days for you, and I would encourage you to stay connected with the Word that generates light and power. There seems to have been a complete severing of the power source for key individuals, and this is damaging the church. It seems the plug has been inserted into the wrong power source and sin is being generated. ‘Jesus Never Fails’ is more than a slogan on a bookmark. There is no blackout possible with him. In the darkest hour he is still able to be our source of power and light. Hopefully you can dispense some of this power in the right places through the energized Word of our Lord.”

## 2001

### February 19

On the way to Sudan, on a circuitous route because of airline snafus. We arrived two hours early at the Nairobi Airport and were told we had no reservations and the flight was overbooked by 18 passengers. Our question was, “How can this be? We not only have reservations but we have seat assignments?” I had never experienced activities demonstrated by irate Kenyans. They jumped the counter, engaged the agents and even filed into offices making demands. We watched with interest. The head ticket agent tried to calm everyone down and had a solution. We could fly to Muscat, which we discovered was in Oman. Our suitcases were at international arrival and the flight was soon to depart. I told Mrs. Simojoki to wait at the counter for the boarding passes and I would run to the baggage area.

I gave the attendant the baggage stubs. He disappeared and the flight was leaving. I left the luggage area and ran to the departure area, with the ticket agent running with us past customs and security. Naturally the plane was the farthest one away on tarmac. No jetways to the plane here. Gave the steward our boarding pass and requested first class because of the run around. Directed to the coach area, but he kept our stubs.

There were six of us trying to get to Khartoum, all strangers. We were told a plane would leave at 7 a.m. for Khartoum. All was well until we got to Muscat. We were now on our way to Khartoum and had no luggage tags, no tickets, not even stubs saying we were on the plane. They tried to figure out what to do with me, especially, and finally with some vouching from the others I got passage. They gave us a “pink slip” we could use to pick up tickets in the morning. There was no plane at 7 a.m. but one at 11 a.m. They did give us lodging at a Holiday Inn, arriving at 2 a.m.

We discovered the flight from Muscat would go to Khartoum via Dubai, a six-hour flight arriving well after the service we were planning to attend. We did manage to get our tickets but not in simple fashion. Lots of “just go over there and be seated...wait over there...just wait and be patient.” Of course, by this time all of that

was ignored and we maintained an “in your face” style of waiting. We were not going to be denied. By this time, the six of us had developed a pretty good camaraderie, with a lot of imitating of the agents.

Muscat was impressive and could be called “the oil city.” I have never been on a road such as the one from the airport to the hotel. There were mile after mile of beautifully manicured boulevards and ditches. All the stucco homes and businesses were elegantly painted, looking like a page out of a fairy tale. They were pleased that the price of oil had recently doubled. This was not too far from Baghdad, which came up in the news while we were traveling. My fellow traveler and guest seminary instructor, Rev. Andy Simcak, was amazed at the hoops we went through to get to Khartoum where a big delegation was waiting for us. This was the occasion when I was introduced no longer as the “father of Sudan Lutheranism, but the grandfather.” They learned of the birth of our first grandchild, Mackenzie.

Just before leaving on this trip, a phone call was received from Dr. Glen O’Shoney, World Mission executive director, requesting a meeting. The underlying hidden agenda seemed to be LHF’s RSO status. A number of issues were listed and the Benjamin name was mentioned. It seems they did not approve of us taking Rev. Scott Benjamin on staff. I wrote a message to him before boarding the plane informing him as to how disappointed I was with the phone call and leaving with this burden. I suggested he prepare an agenda so that we would be ready to address all concerns. There was an attempt to block Benjamin’s installation until matters were resolved.

This was the time when a new term surfaced in connection with our work. It’s another one of those “t” words. Recently the “t” word becoming more and more prominent is the word “tolerance.” But for the World Mission at this time, it was the word “transparency.” The point of the entire scenario was that LHF delayed calling Benjamin until all matters had become “transparent.” This was a case where an LCMS pastor was sent as a missionary and became frustrated with the direction being taken and resigned, but stayed in the country to do mission work. It wasn’t the last time this very same action was taken by a missionary who was clergy trained.

## **February 22**

Container shipped to Khartoum, Sudan — 220 boxes (80 books & 140 clothing) weighing 15,000 pounds.

## **May 1**

Rev. Tom Petersen and Rev. Rahn attended a meeting of the Executive Committee of the ELCS in Khartoum. Each member gave a report. The thank yous to LHF became a little overwhelming and almost embarrassing. I spoke to them on the theme “The Word Works — Let It Work in Your Work,” the same theme that was used when I spoke to the Fort Wayne graduates one year earlier. I told them all the accolades belong to the Lord and not to us. Their reports only indicated that the Word works and it would be our prayer that the people who support LHF would believe this and continue to support LHF, so we in turn could continue our active involvement in their mission.

We were given a tour of the complex and found many changes from our last visit. A kitchen upstairs had become an office. A small room downstairs had a cooler with Pepsi. The cooler is provided free by Pepsi if their products are sold. They expanded the clinic and are hoping the government will provide funds for a six-bed hospital, where patients can be held for 12 hours to see if their health requires transfer to the main hospital. The worship area was also altered with the bamboo roof raised about three feet and ceiling fans installed. They also have their own sound system and have bought their own large video camera. They previously had



to pay \$60 for two hour sessions and now they hire out at the same rate. They sold the motorized rickshaws and now have a 20-passenger bus that “runs the streets” and provides fares of some \$25 per day. There has been a proliferation of new city buses and they are afraid it will affect their income. An annex building that was nothing more than a junk room has been turned into the Youth Department. They have purchased a welder, and instead of paying \$10 per six foot bench, they make them themselves and provide them for new congregations.

## May 2

We just had dinner with Dr. Costa Jarvas and Mr. Joseph Ukel. The doctor was with us when we visited the government Office of Peace earlier today. Dr. Jarvas wanted us to have direct access to the other side’s report. Mr. Ukel has been with the Sudan People’s Liberation Army as a leader and has spent 11 months in jail, has had his passport removed, and travel restricted. He is being watched by government people, as he is an outspoken supporter of the SPLA and does not support a cease fire in the south until their demands have been addressed. He calls the Muslim-based government a minority and leaders not true Sudanese. Until the majority is convinced that Danforth’s suggestion for sharing the wealth of the oil and the south having true input in the government, there will be no full cease fire. The Muslims will only use it to build up their power and force. They have had this happen before and been shafted by the government. The government has offered minor posts to southerners in the government, but they are marginalized and forbidden to speak openly.

He feels that Danforth has made the right step and is looking for the monitors to keep the initiative, but talks have to address their main issues, recognizing their natural right as true Sudanese and the country’s majority population of 69 percent, and that there be assurance of sharing the power and sharing the wealth. The SPLA seems to have most of the south covered, even though the government forces control the towns, the largest of which has a population of 5,000. Danforth met with this man and his leaders when he was here.

Both of the above-mentioned men are Christians and more “transparent” than the government operatives. Mr. Ukel warned us as Americans that our great minority rights and freedom of religion have helped us in the Cold War, but the growing Muslim population is going to heat things up if their usual pattern of operation holds. He listed all the places where they lay low until they have the power. (An interesting synopsis prior to the recent division of the country.)

## May 15

Report to LHF Board on Trip to Sudan (April 29-May 8):

*“I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who remains in Me and I in Him is the one who bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”*

ON THE OTHER HAND...WITH ME YOU CAN DO SOMETHING!

I returned from the Sudan vineyard with awe and humility, for I saw the hand of God enabling fruit to be produced in some of the most barren places on the face of the earth. Only God could provide the increase: only God could do something here, and He has done it. With Him, it has been proven; we could do something. Had you been there, your conviction would have been to do more. This report can only convey a small tinge of the overwhelming, enthusiastic joy I felt being with these displaced people.

It is hard to put into words the tremendous and overwhelming feeling of awe that surrounded the many events in Sudan. I don’t believe any synod president, district president or mission official has ever participated in events that filled our four consecutive days. To report that I participated

in five services during those four days would not be that significant, as I recently had a Sunday in the United States with five services. The unique ingredient was that three of the services were church dedications, two involved the baptisms of some 60 people, and one also included the first anniversary observance for the CLIHM. No service was less than three hours, and Sunday's worship went for seven hours.

### ***Abu Hajar***

Abu Hajar is in the Sennar State of Sudan. We drove for five hours to get to this church site. The first 40 miles were smooth, and the next 80 were a real test even for a 4WD Toyota. We stopped along the way for our potluck breakfast using one of the bamboo shelters in a roadside market area. It was evident that even animals sought shelter here from the 100-plus degree heat. When we arrived in Abu Hajar, our first stop was at the police station to report our presence. There was no marking on the hut to indicate it was a police station, and the officer had no uniform to indicate he was such.

We proceeded to an area where there were grass thatched huts. In the midst of these huts stood a straw thatched church with a congregation gathered, giving us a welcome in song. There were handshakes all around with many children and women making up the group. We were told the men had left to travel many miles, as they do twice a year, to help on Arabic-owned farms. They stay several months and then return. It is their only income for the year.

A tent was erected in front of the church to accommodate the congregation, since the church had already been outgrown before it was completed. The sermon, preached and translated into Arabic and Dinka, was on Matthew 7, the house built on the rock and the one built on the sand. The baptisms of adults and children followed the sermon. There is no school of any kind in this village, so many are totally illiterate.

### ***Singia***

We were greeted again by a delegation literally running ahead of us, after obtaining permission to be there. This was scheduled as a dedication service. The structure was "knit straw" from top to bottom. Again a tent was erected to accommodate the crowd. Think about this in terms of a mid-week special service and yet some 150 people showed up. I cut the ribbon to enter and then moved to the altar and pulpit for a special blessing. I preached on Solomon's temple dedication prayer in Chronicles. Here we had 11 baptisms.

Andrew distributed little lapel pins with the fish inside the cross, and I was wearing a wood model and had extra with me. I hung one on the front side of the altar and explained the symbol the early Christians used and taught them the Greek word *ichthus*, containing the first Greek letters of the words: Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.

In this place, as well in the previous, I'm sure many from the village came out of curiosity. Not too many white people had ever been in the village. The children were a little surprised to see me open a bottle of Pepsi on the rim of the tire when an opener wasn't available. I pointed to the cross that was painted on the wall behind the altar. I alluded to the fact that the message of the cross was for all – those gathered in the church, those under the tent, those peering in the door and windows, and for the entire camp. Here Jesus will be preached, and this message is needed because of our sin and His victory over it, giving us hope in every situation.

After the service we made the usual greetings, and I mentioned to the group that I was going to pay Andrew a "left-handed compliment." I told them Andrew was the most successful mistake maker when it came to building churches. I alluded to the fact that we visited two churches and both of them are too small before they are opened. They understood and were amused.

## **Mandela**

Mandela is located about a half-hour from the ELCS/LHF Center in Khartoum. When we left the main road, we drove nearly 15 minutes to the church site. All this time we were driving through the middle of the camp of those displaced from the south. We saw huts made of mud and straw, some made with discarded grain sacks, and some out of simple cardboard. We saw only one other car, but hundreds of donkeys with carts, each carrying a large barrel. They were carrying water, buying it from a water station and then selling it to consumers, who pay approximately \$1.25 per day for water. When income is only \$70 per month, one has to reduce consumption. No electricity, no water. Such is “camp life.”

As we drove through the camp on a trail barely wide enough for the 4WD, people stood in amazement and then began to wave. Children in some cases were not clothed and they lived in an endless dirt environment. Whether playing soccer or sitting on the sidelines, it was always in the dirt. There were so many huts it was impossible even for Andrew to find the church until a man with a Bible came running to direct us.

The usual singing welcomed us. The choirs were already singing and marching around the church, and the leaders were waiting at the door of the church. We were ushered to the “sacristy,” an adjoining little hut where we could robe for the service. A tent was again set up next to the church to accommodate the crowd. We joined in the procession around the church and then cut the ribbon and performed the dedication rite. In six months this structure will also be too small. The structure is probably what we would term the \$3,500 model.

The service lasted for 3½ hours with lots of singing by both the youth and adult choirs. The longer the service lasted, the more children there were standing at the windows watching and adults stood at the perimeter studying the proceedings.

We were whisked away after the service because we had “overextended our stay.” As Andrew was leaving the Khartoum office, he received a phone call saying that we would need a permit to visit the camp. Andrew told the official it was too late as we were on the way. We were to be out of the camp by six, and Andrew was asked to meet with the official about our infraction. Water is the great need. The digging of a well was the topic of discussion with the president of the Khartoum State, whom we met several times during the trip. The president offered assistance if we could enter a joint venture. Perhaps LCMS World Relief would join such a venture.

## **Khartoum**

Seven hours!! That was the length for the Sunday service, the first anniversary observance of CLIHM, that took place once again under a big tent outside the ELCS/LHF complex with over 400 in attendance. The service also included the confirmation of six adults and 36 baptisms, including Andrew’s son, Elisa. I preached on the Epistle of the day, 1 Peter 3:20, on the theme “Brought Safely Through.” There is obvious evidence that the Spirit of God captures you in these circumstances because it wasn’t what I planned to preach, certainly not what I had on my notes. I started in the Old Testament to show how the children of Israel were brought safely through the Red Sea, and the Jordan, how Jonah was brought safely through, and how eight were brought safely through the flood. I then talked about the problems they faced and how we have all failed, and how God, through Jesus, was able to bring us safely through.

I then told them we were even going to see in the service how God brings us safely through by baptism. I ended on the note as to how God brought us safely through, when in the fullness of time He sent His one and only Son. The length of the service, of course, was impacted by the fact that some of it was in three languages and the sermon in two. There was also the special music by choirs from three different congregations, the seminary choir and a Sunday school choir.

LHF provided catechisms for a special English language school that was conducted in Khar-toum on three different levels. The upper level required reading from the catechism, and as a result, a number of Muslims were converted. We brought 75 copies on one occasion, which resulted in a \$200 overweight charge in Nairobi. In Detroit, the agent at the ticket counter honored our humanitarian aid plea and waived any added charges.

### ***Rimela***

It was a Monday afternoon when we made another journey into a displacement camp. It was another one of those areas of basic huts. These were a little more pretentious than the ones of straw, canvas, and mud brick. These were also of mud brick but the construction was more advanced. We drove for a good half-hour after entering the area with these huts. One really can't describe the endless number of walled dwellings. There were buses available to assist in the transport of people.

The church we dedicated here was one of the more advanced models. It still needed the zinc roof to put it in that category. I spoke on three texts for this dedication service. Using 2 Chronicles 6:18, and adding John 1:14 and Galatians 4:4, the theme was "Will God Dwell With Us?" All those passages are "dwell" passages. Solomon said, "The heavens of heaven cannot contain God, much less this building I have built." If Solomon said that about his glitzy, gold temple, it is surely true of this building. We, however, can have the assurance of Him dwelling with us. They happened to have a picture in front of the church showing all the items we usually connect with Lent and the crucifixion. Under the cross was a snake and a human skull and I told them: "He has put everything under His feet." That's why we know he dwells with us through His suffering, death, and resurrection.

I told them the story of the adopted boy, who only had torn and tattered clothes, shoes that were only remnants of leather. The father gave him all new clothes and new shoes, but he took the old shoes and placed them on the mantle. Whenever the boy did something wrong, he was ushered to the mantle and reminded, "This is who you were, and this is who you are now." I told them this is not a picture of our heavenly Father and how He deals with us. Sins are removed as far as the east is from the west – red like crimson, white as wool. He truly dwells with us. After the service there were the usual speeches. I began to disrobe in the chancel as I explained to them that I was wearing vestments of a former St. John, Fraser, Michigan, pastor, and I had been given the vestments to distribute. As I removed my vestments one by one, I mentioned how the late Rev. Walter Rutkowsky had finished his work and was now in heaven, and that his daughter (Lois Brenner) wanted his vestments to have continued use. I placed them on the altar and told Andrew they were for the first men to enter the ministry of the ELCS.

I called this the "deluxe model church." There are three styles of construction. One is just a straw roof set on posts; another is a straw roof with sides enclosed with straw, and the third is the one here in Rimela. The roof is bamboo, then a layer of grain sacks, then the mud and straw covering. The floor is dirt, but the raised chancel area has a soft red sand. The interior walls are finished with a "fine covering of mud mixed with fine cut grass and donkey dung mixed in." We were told you could buy donkey dung for \$10-\$15 per large sack. Eventually this church became more deluxe with a zinc roof. Several years later as the persecution of Christians continued in the north, this church was bulldozed "because a road was going to be built and the church was in the way." There were no cars present and there didn't seem to be any need for some kind of highway just for donkey carts. Nevertheless it was demolished by the local Muslim government.

I wrote in my report that this represented worship on that side of the world. You'll soon be rising to make your way to worship, but there will be many others who won't find the way because they have lost appreciation for what it is all about, and have become comfortable in their own

little huts and haunts that have no space for Jesus to crowd in. There they have nothing. Why can't we give them hope in Christ? We need help to give hope. Let it be our plea to the LHF board and to our family of donors.

### **ELCS Council Meeting**

Members of the council reported on the state of the church. By the end of the year, the ELCS hopes to achieve their goal of opening ten new congregations. In the first quarter alone, 258 people were baptized and 400 received into membership. Andrew said, "The seed has been planted, and we look to LHF to provide the water. We can plant the seed, but we can't do it ourselves. If we can do the work, we will be able to add 5,000 to the church, but we may not be able to get to them because of the great time demand. I should be in the field. I should be in the office. I'm trying to balance it. Training manpower is the key and our hope is in the seminary."

At the end of the visit, Rev. Tom Petersen was conscripted to teach 22 evangelists that had arrived for a week's training. Their work is having a great impact and has resulted in two new congregations opening.

Yes, we are still in the translation, publishing and distribution mode. In the middle of May, a binding machine is being delivered so that LHF will have a complete publishing center to go with the Rizzograph that was provided earlier. The problem encountered is that printers fear doing any print job for Christians. With our own press, the following four books will be printed: Zande hymnals (3,000), Arabic *Prayerbooks* (3,000), Arabic *Good News About Jesus* (5,000) and Zande catechisms (3,000).

### **November 23**

The schedule which had been prepared called for a two-hour tenth anniversary worship celebration of the ELCS. I commented that I had never been involved in that sort of a service in Sudan, and that it would probably be more like five hours. We gathered under a makeshift covering of a large mango tree and palm branches that had been placed over poles, mostly for protection from the sun. My sermon contributed to the five-hour service length. It was translated into Zande and came from Nehemiah's wall building episode. I made the points that Nehemiah's project was (1) Begun in a posture of penitence and prayer; (2) Continued with some practical preparations and (3) Completed through patient persistence.

I won't record the entire sermon, but I can tell you that there were 500 worshiping souls listening attentively. The service also included 18 baptisms and 20 confirmations, along with many choral numbers from four different choirs. Bishop Andrew started to give his greetings at the end of the service. It began lightening and thundering, so we moved to the church building that only held 200. A driving rain began and people were forced to crowd into one side of the church that had no windows and a short overhang. We waited for half an hour, and Andrew announced that festivities would be reserved until the next Sunday when an ordination of pastors was scheduled.

### **November 24**

This was the day of dedication for the newly-constructed guest house funded through a special gift from a faithful couple in Wisconsin. They had sold their lake home and demonstrated their love for the work in Sudan by making the building possible.

The guest house has five dormitory rooms, a kitchen, dining room, living room, and one and a half non-operating baths. Four "booths" were built nearby, creating a shower area and a toilet area for men and women. A shower meant dipping water heated in a barrel into a large pan, carrying it into the "booth" and using a cup for pouring. Surprising how good it felt after a day like Sunday when the clerical shirt had white rings



of salt from sweat. But, “no sweat,” there is washing every day and an ironing table was always functioning. How to heat the iron where there is no electricity? Simply fill the box on the top of the iron with live coals to generate heat.

The ceremony of dedication involved a ribbon cutting by Rev. Andrew and the president of the local congregation and then the reading of Scriptures. A plaque had been prepared and the inscription was read. There was a brief ceremony for each room and I made the comment that there should be a cross over the kitchen serving window, as a reminder of the fact that there are greater spiritual foods served for the soul. As soon as I made the statement, a lady came forward with a cross and the architect immediately put it in place — a rather dynamic, unplanned moment and testing of one’s composure.

#### **November 25**

This was another day of endurance, as we were special guests at a military ceremony marking the 13th anniversary of the freeing of Yambio from the North. It was also to commemorate the time many left the area and went North to escape fighting all around. The Sudanese People’s Liberation Army had their army, a rather scrawny, ill-clothed regiment of men and women parading the grounds. What was significantly strange was one of the soldiers leading the parade was carrying a cross. Quite a contrast! This “nothing to look at” army succeeded against all the forces unleashed by an army from the North in shiny uniforms with all their planes and bombs, but this SPLA volunteer army had the determination and will to win. The SPLA drove the leaders of the north to the peace table at a great price. This town showed why this army was sustained.

#### **November 27**

America’s National Day of Thanksgiving was celebrated in Sudan with goat featured as the main dish. I found myself involved by appointment in a custom common to Sudan: a hunting expedition. A large net was set up and people began to drive a goat into the net. When it was entangled in the net, it was the duty of the “spear-man” to spear the goat. That designation was given to me and there was “no right of refusal.” I’m sure many in America would see it as cruelty to animals, while Sudanese see it as giving the goat the right to escape.

#### **November 28**

Functions and services can seemingly be held on any day of the week. On this Friday we were in the “village” of Saura, kind of in the middle of the jungle. We were here to dedicate the Lutheran church that had been built by members of Royal Redeemer Lutheran Church, North Royalton, Ohio. The biggest challenge of the day was to get to the location. We like to complain about pot holes in our roads, but on this route we encountered mini lakes and steep banks that had to be traversed. At one point a truck got stuck, and it took many members pushing and shoving to release it so that its cargo of church benches could be delivered for the dedication.

#### **November 29**

On this Saturday we all journeyed the six miles to the village of Baguga, which Andrew had designated as the headquarters for the ELCS. The ceremony was to dedicate the cornerstones of two major buildings planned for the site: a headquarters building and a cathedral. Rev. Dan Preus dedicated the church cornerstone that looked more like a podium on which an inscription was printed. A similar podium had been built for the headquarters building. Andrew’s vision had the area growing to such an extent that the two villages on either side of Baguga, some six miles away, would merge and Baguga become the main center. With his death in 2008, it now appears that the headquarters will possibly be in Yambio.

#### **November 30**

The day of ordination for Rev. Nicholas, Rev. Wilson, and Rev. Elinama with participation by Revs. Simojoki,

Elisa, Dachi, Arkkila, Asaph and Preus and me. Rev. Preus preached the sermon for the event. Mary Biba, a Roman Catholic lady, spoke for the community. She headed up a program of feeding the SPLA Army and spoke of physical and spiritual development. When I spoke, I utilized her “development” concept that in our country means fundraising to keep missions moving forward.

“We have been here and have seen your needs, and I reflect on what we have been talking about before we came – development. We want to stand with you, but there are those who would prefer to decrease development. In a few weeks our board will make a decision about the work here. Rev. Preus is an executive member of the board. I will be here in June on a development project as we begin to build the headquarters for the ELCS, and I pledge to you that the LHF, as it did in 1999, will stand with you. In the Khartoum meeting on July 28 you heard a ‘no’ to your request for seminary development. On July 30 you asked for another meeting and you heard a ‘yes,’ although it wasn’t our main focus to develop the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry. We are committed to standing with you so that you can develop your country and the ELCS.” Simojoki labeled my speech as a war cry, a very bold message.

Rev. Preus mentioned that people were apprehensive and reluctant to come to Sudan, and he was also. But being here I can see the church in all its glory and joy. The joy on your faces will be remembered.

## 2004

### May 12

Rev. Andrew Mbugo Elisa estimated the cost of four-story mission center to be built on a Baguga site. Andrew was informed that the cost was excessive and needed to be reduced.

### July 27

Notice was received that the voters of a Lutheran Church in Minnesota approved a grant to build the Rich Valley Lutheran Mission Center for the ELCS.

### August 17

Rev. Elisa wrote, “Your message indicating that LHF would make available a grant for the construction of the ELCS Mission Center has been accepted and acknowledged with great thanks and appreciation. Upon receiving your message, I immediately notified the engineer with the figure, as he is arranging to produce the bill of quantity for the whole work.”

### October 1

Rev. Elisa traveled to South Africa and arranged the purchase of a brick-making machine with help from LHF and LCMS World Relief and Human Care. He was also able to purchase sawmill equipment, tools to set up a workshop building that would feature brick making, sawmill, welder, and mechanical operations. The foundation for the building was laid, but because of his sudden death it remains unfinished.

## 2005

### January 2 - February 7

Andrew arrived in Detroit and began a month-long tour of presentations and visits, including stops in Elgin (Illinois), Chicago, Cleveland, Westlake, Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne, Dearborn, Fraser, Frankenmuth, Oviedo (Florida), St. Louis, Springfield (Illinois), Chesterfield and Macomb (Michigan).

The trip to Pittsburgh was for the purpose of meeting with Rev. Jamison Hardy and the Concordia Lutheran Ministries Board, where we were able to share the history of the ELCS and present some of the church needs. An end result of this meeting was the willingness of the Concordia Lutheran Ministries to provide a grant to the ELCS for the purchase of medical vans. In discussing this with Rev. Jamison Hardy, we indicated that this would not be regarded in the general mission scope of the LHF, with the conclusion that we should direct the funds to be sent to the LCMS World Relief/Human Care designated for that purpose.

This activity established a relationship between Concordia Lutheran Ministries and LCMS World Relief and Human Care by which the ELCS benefited. Because LHF had the special permit to send funds into Sudan from the U.S. Treasury Department, we became the conduit for the disbursement of funds without charge to other entities. Two medical vans found their way to Sudan and were highly utilized for several years, but medical supplies became scarce. One of the vans became a bus for transporting goods and people, with some benefit to the church treasury.

### **January 9**

A contract was signed for the construction of the Rich Valley Lutheran Mission Center with Adventis Limited Architects and Interior Designers, Nairobi, Kenya.

### **February 18**

After visiting with Rev. Matthew Harrison (at that time heading up the LCMS World Relief and Human Care), Rev. Elisa wrote, "Allow me to repeat once again my words of thanks for the nice visit and meeting that took place in your office a week ago. It gave me great encouragement as I discovered your eagerness to assist the ELCS in her struggle to serve God's people in the Sudan, while concentrating on preaching the precious Word that announces the grace of God to all the people and the forgiveness of their sins. I remain praying and waiting to release what God has planned to be accomplished for the ELCS through the Human Care Department and your good self."

### **February 25**

A historic event took place with the movement of a shipping container from Nairobi to Baguga, Sudan, after six months of bureaucratic buffoonery. Had all the charges been applied as were requested for custom clearing and dock storage, the cost would have been \$50,000. At one point, in frustration, the suggestion was made that the container be taken into the ocean and dropped. We were told there would still be tariff charges. The lessons learned made it clear that we were definitely out of the container shipping business. Our next shipment was made through Orphan Grain Train, and they, too, encountered untold problems dealing with graft, greed and corruption. Perhaps with the new country of South Sudan there will be some improvement in this shipping saga.

### **March 10**

The ordination of Alison Zebedayo Zebe was announced by Rev. Elisa, bringing the total to five pastors who are ordained and serving the ELCS. He graduated from Matongo Lutheran College in Kenya and was ordained in Juba, Sudan.

### **March 14**

Rev. Elisa expressed appreciation to LHF for sending staff to teach the catechism during several sessions over a two-week period.

### **April 21**

First request sent to President Gerald Kieschnick to initiate talks for ELCS church fellowship.



## May 1

An arrangement was made to have Dr. Kieschnick meet with the ELCS church leaders. General Secretary Rev. Japheth Dachi wrote, “We have no words to express ourselves to you and also to your office about such a wonderful happening.” Unfortunately the event never happened, and the ELCS continued its efforts to convince the LCMS that there is a desire for fellowship and partnership.

## May 8

Once again I had the privilege to preach for yet another service in Yambio, Sudan. This time the day’s Epistle lesson was 1 Peter 4:12-19. I began with a long introduction on what is the universal question asked in every culture and time, by Christians and non-Christians alike, during time of tragedy and uncertainty, during time of joy and happiness, at the death of a child or family member, when the roof blows off a church, when the roads are rough and the way is difficult? Do you know the question? Before I ask the all-pervasive question, let me tell you there is an answer to the question in the 1 Peter text. Are you ready for the question and the theme? The theme, the question: “Why?”

Why is there suffering? It is no surprise that Christians suffer. There are some things from which you can expect suffering: murder, theft, evil doers, meddlers (verse 15). Suffering as a Christian happens all over the world, perhaps here in your life as well. Cast your care upon Him for He cares for you. Why? He loved you enough to send His very best (John 3:16). No painted picture of privilege, a phrase my translator had a tough time translating.

At a gathering around the fire pit in the evening I told the group the word I would use to describe roads is “unbelievable.” I would use the same word in discovering that a container from America had arrived with the most unbelievable route taken and the unbelievable price that was gouged from LHF. The lesson learned was never send a container.

## May 10

Andrew scheduled a ground breaking ceremony prior to leaving for our flight to Nairobi. The original church had become too small for the congregation and a new building was being built. Since this was another one of those surprises, and since I’m usually the “go to” man for all seasons, I was asked to do the ceremony. I had no *Agenda*, so it was done from what I could remember for such an event. I read an appropriate lesson and commented briefly on it before handing the shovel to each participant.

## May 2-11

Harvard Schulz, LHF board member and owner of Welfl Construction Corporation in Yankton, South Dakota, and I visited Baguga and participated in the first site meeting with the officials of Adventis Construction. Harvard reported that the foundation which had been laid was more than adequate for the building project. It meant that we were on solid footing as the project began. It was unfortunate that the construction firm was not on the same kind of footing. After numerous delays and court battles, the firm was dismissed from the project on March 17, 2009.

On July 26, 2008, Nilo Engineering & Consultancy Services, Juba, Sudan, provided a Technical Site Investigation, indicating that a portion of the building with the second floor cement poured showed significant signs of structural failure. It was suggested that the eastern first floor slab and beams should be demolished before any work commenced, and that the structural design of the building should be reviewed. The granting congregation was kept informed of all activities and on November 1, 2009, the congregation suggested that the construction at the Baguga site be discontinued and that LHF would have permission to sell any materials or salvaging portions of the building and consider a one-story structure.

### July 23

Visited South Sudan with Rev. Tom Hoyt, Tomball, Texas; Mark Loessel, Macomb, Michigan; and Phil Porter, Shelby Township, Michigan. We made our visit to the Baguga site and ran into a problem with the road being blocked by a disabled truck. Water on each side of the road did not allow a vehicle to pass, so we were faced with walking a mile to our destination. At Baguga a project was underway, building a shed to protect a sawmill operation and brick-making machine. We hauled fourteen 2x4s in a 16' length to the site, which were nailed together to form a 40' roof stringer. It was difficult driving nails, as the wood was mahogany or teak. Mark and Phil assisted in the building project. Our next trip to the site had us riding bicycles from the blocked road.

We returned for the wedding ceremony of Rev. Nicholas and his bride, Flora, a very somber couple who never smiled during the ceremony. She indicated nervousness as the reason. I spoke on Eccl. 4:9-12, "A Cord of Three Strands Is Not Easily Broken." The church was full with many peering in the windows and doors. A dinner followed for about 150 people.

### July 24

I made the trip to Baguga on a motorcycle driven by Andrew and was dropped off for the service led by Evangelist Cephas. I preached on Ephesians 2:11-23, on barriers and gates and Christ enabling us to cross over. I used the illustration of broad jumpers trying to jump a 30-foot canyon, and each one jumping farther than the next, but all ending up falling short of the mark. So it is, if we assume we can get to heaven by our own efforts. Perfection is demanded and the mark achieved by the cross of Christ. Only 30 attended the service and I told Andrew this was of great concern to me. A pastor needs to be stationed here where there is so much activity going on with the construction of a building and a school of some 500 students.

In the afternoon discussions were going on when someone mentioned termites. The kitchen crew was summoned, the termite hill attacked, and soon before us was a tray of roasted termites that we all helped to consume.

### July 26

Andrew announced that today was "farm day." It meant traveling out to the place where Andrew was born and now had the farm. We endured two hours of some unbelievable roads. A truck met us at the farm with 1,000 pineapple plants that I helped to plant. There were 15-20 of his relatives there to also help. Sad to say that with Andrew's death, the pineapple, banana, peanut, mango plot is overgrown with weeds. Each pineapple could have been sold for \$1.

### July 31

We are in Khartoum, Sudan, thanking God that visa problems were solved and we were able to fly here from Nairobi. The purpose of our trip was the ordination of six men for the ministry. The text I used was 2 Cor. 4:1-15 using the theme "The Posture of a Pastor." The three concepts centered on preparation, perseverance and prominence and relevance of Christ. The ordination followed our *Agenda* until completed, and then there was bedlam as everyone tried to rush up, bestow garlands, throw candy and give flowers. The service was again held under a tent, and some 350 people were in attendance. Following the ordination we also had a dedication of the Zande *Small Catechism*.

Andrew came to the guest house in the evening with Allyson Magaya, the Minister of Labor and another cabinet member. Magaya was on the phone most of the time, because the big event was that John Garang was missing on a helicopter trip. He had just been installed as Vice President of Sudan, second in command in the new administration. The initial reports said the helicopter had been forced to land because of bad weather.

Rev. Hoyt and I headed to the airport, with him departing for Texas and me to Riga, Latvia.

### **August 1**

Rev. Andrew sent the following message to LHF Mission headquarters: “The news from Khartoum is that the Vice President of the Republic of Sudan, Dr. John Garang, died on Saturday in a helicopter crash. This happened when he was returning from Uganda, using the helicopter of the Ugandan president. Soon I am going to release a statement giving details about the whole tragedy. The death of Dr. Garang has not interrupted the peace process in any way. His deputy has been named to replace him as all will continue as planned. May God rest his soul in eternal peace.

“As regarding the condition of our guests, Dr. Rahn left earlier this morning on Lufthansa on his way to Latvia. Other LHF staff are safe in the guest house. Only tonight they will go without electricity because of riots that closed most businesses in town. Our office, my house, and all the staff so far are safe. But as we receive the general information, there have been more damages and clashes between southerners and Arabs. We are staying inside to weather the storm and waiting for the problems to die down before resuming any activities or travel plans. The news which first came yesterday that his whereabouts is not known, was simply a security cover-up to make more preparations before announcing his death. The entire town of Khartoum was closed today, due to riots which have resulted in the deaths of many people.

“Since the news was announced yesterday, I have been in contact with most of the southern leaders, including the man who is expected to succeed Dr. Garang, and all have assured us that the death of Dr. Garang does not mean the end of the peace accord.

“The death of Dr. Garang is more than a tragedy to the southern Sudanese people. We have lost a man who gave his talents, time, and energy to struggle on behalf of the people. This has created a gap that will be very difficult to fill and forget. The very good Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ, will not forget us in this critical situation, and we strongly believe that peace will continue to flourish in the Sudan.”

### **December 5-8, 2005: First Joint Sudan Consultation**

It was realized that after more people and groups began to be involved in Sudan, some kind of consultation needed to take place to assimilate and organize efforts. The first joint consultation was called and sponsored by the ELCS, LHF, and LCMS World Missions. Thirty-one individuals participated in the meeting, and all signed a Memorandum of Understanding, indicating that all activities in Sudan would be coordinated through the leadership of the ELCS. A description of needs was developed, and each member agreed to promote these needs in whatever way possible. It was determined that another similar meeting be held in two years to determine progress and assess needs.

## **2006**

### **January 4**

Andrew arrives in Detroit on his way to Fort Wayne. Rev. Rick and Pat Nuffer provide a vehicle for his use. We do not report all of the red tape involved to arrange for his arrival. Preliminary courses had to be taken to obtain a recognized B.A., so Concordia-Mequon became involved because they had an extension in Fort Wayne.

### **January 9**

First discussions take place on the need to elect a bishop for the ELCS. The reasoning was that the office of

bishop would better demonstrate that there is one Lutheran church in Sudan around which all Lutherans should gather. Discussion also took place in regards to a constitution.

### **February 17**

A plea is made to President Russ Sommerfeld, Nebraska District, to assist and support Andrew and the ELCS. Andrew would be invited to the NE Dist Convention.

### **March 17**

President Kieschnick sent regrets at not being able to attend Andrew's consecration as bishop, but indicated a meeting with Andrew could take place when the President is in Nairobi August 3,4. "It is my hope that we will be able to discuss together at that time how we can proceed to put in place a plan for formal doctrinal discussions, with a view toward establishing altar and pulpit fellowship," Dr. Kieschnick wrote.

### **July 16**

Several major celebrations took place in Yambio. Banners were strung over the entrance of the Yambio Lutheran Church that said COMMISSIONING OF THE FIRST BISHOP OF THE ELCS. Up to this time Andrew's title had been president, but the church requested his title be more in keeping with the African culture. The commissioning took place in the early part of the service and there was a large delegation participating in addition to myself: Rev. Jamison Hardy, Pittsburgh, PA; Rev. & Mrs. Rick Nuffer, Fort Wayne, IN; Marcelina Nuffer, Ellsworth, MI; Mr. Ron Ziegler, Rev. Don Pohlers, Rev. Randy Bell, Pacific, MO; Pres. Russ Sommerfeld, Lincoln, NE; Rev. Ken Greinke, St. Louis, MO; Rev. Claude Houge, Nairobi, Kenya; Dr. Anssi Simojoki, Nairobi, Kenya; Bishop David Tswaidi, South Africa; Bishop Asiago, Kenya; Bishop Onderi, Kenya; Bishop Janis Vanags, Latvia; Rev. Asaph Kazahgunzi, Uganda; Matti Reinikka and guests; Mr. & Mrs. Milton Scott and Glen Ziegler.

Bishop Tswaidi gave a short address prior to the commissioning with Vanags, Onderi, and Asiago assisting me in the rite. Russ Sommerfeld presented a pectoral cross. Nuffer presented the bishop's ring. Anssi and I placed the chasuble, and the president of the congregation presented the shepherd's staff. As Andrew was presented to the congregation, there was much celebrating, flower petals thrown, and the usual leis bestowed.

This was then followed by the sermon. I preached on 1 Cor. 2:2-5 with the theme, "The Prevailing Proper Posture of a Pastor. After the message Andrew conducted the ordination rite for Moriano Joseph Bamuka and Joseph Otto Ottoniano, with assistance from Vanags and Tswaidi. Other pastors joined in for the laying on of hands and prayer. Sommerfeld and I presented the pectoral crosses, and Andrew placed the stole, and finally other gifts were given.

This was then followed by the commissioning of the five deaconesses and two deacons. The special deaconess patch was introduced and consecrated along with the patch for youth that Pat Nuffer provided. Pat was included with the group commissioned, having just graduated from the deaconess program at Fort Wayne.

### **July 17**

Because of a heavy rainfall during the night and roads being impassable for a bus, individuals who had not been to Baguga were taken by 4-WD over the hazardous roads. We visited the construction site for the Rich Valley Lutheran Mission Center and then the Baguga Lutheran Primary School. We brought with us 50 Zande Catechisms that were distributed in the upper grades. Rev. Hardy distributed T-shirts for all the children, while Matti was doing some filming for the documentary being made on the ELCS church body.

### **April 1**

Dr. Bernie Lutz launched “God’s Plan for Sudan,” a program to support the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry (CLIHM) seminary program. Dr. Bernie Lutz, former missionary to Lebanon and New Guinea, did several long stints of teaching and helped formulate the curriculum.

### **May 7**

On the way to Sudan with Dr. Bernie Lutz who will serve as a teacher for the CLIHM program. The securing of a South Sudan visa in Kampala, Uganda was a challenging effort. With the help of our Kampala LHF Representative, Mr. Pascal Kungbowia, we launched forth to the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) or South Sudan embassy. We have some documents we used for Khartoum and we are told in no uncertain terms that there was no interest in seeing anything to do with Khartoum. Documents from there were a detriment. Our goal was to receive the visa by the next day and we were told it would be impossible. We were ushered to several offices with the same story heard, but Rev. Lutz used his best begging style. We at least got a “maybe,” but plan to be here by 4:30 p.m.

No money changed hands in the embassy. You had to go directly to a bank and deposit the cost of the visa into their account. We did so and took the receipt back to the embassy to prove we made payment. In the meantime we were confirming our air ticket on the Mission Aviation Fellowship flight and arranging how all our luggage will get there because of weight restrictions. By the time we make those arrangements it is a race (up to 120 kph) to get back for picking up the visas by 4:30 p.m. We weren’t making the needed progress in a car due to the traffic, so Pascal jumped out and hired a motorbike, and he was off. We returned to the hotel and wondered if the visas would be granted. We would not be able to leave on the plane early the next morning with no visas. Pascal returned several hours later with visas in hand. How do you spell RELIEF?

### **May 9**

Our flight lands ten miles from Yambio and we were picked up. The day was spent meeting with seminary students and discussing curriculum with ELCS executive staff. A daily schedule for the seminary was adopted. We visited the construction site of the Rich Valley Lutheran Mission Center in Baguga where an engineering problem with two sagging beams was discussed. There was a problem with an inadequate number of workers and the engineer’s absence from the job. Because of the problems, we scheduled a meeting the next week with the engineer and a law firm in Nairobi. The Baguga Lutheran Primary School had three of their classrooms burned, and the rebuilding would start in the next days.

### **November 17**

Andrew hospitalized in Amman, Jordan with the prognosis that he was suffering from brain stem cancer. As he deteriorated, he was flown to Nairobi for further treatment.

### **December 27**

Dr. Simojoki and members of the LHF compound congregation conduct a short service with corporate confession and Eucharist.

### **December 31**

Bishop Andrew Mbugo Elisa’s death is recorded just before midnight. His death the result of many bouts of malaria, tuberculosis, and cancer of the brain stem. Rev. Rahn was unable to travel for the funeral as his passport was in New York and could not be rescued because all visa offices were closed for the New Year’s weekend.



## 2009

### January 10

Dr. Simojoki conducts funeral service for Andrew with burial next to the Yambio church. This has become a memorial site for the late Bishop.

### July: A Mission Report

#### **SUDAN: BREAD OF LIFE PROGRAM MOVES FORWARD**

All programs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan that enable the Bread of Life to be fed to the people are moving forward. The Word of Life is being translated into the language of the people so that worship can take place with the use of a Zande Liturgy and Prayer Book being revised for publishing. The catechism, which teaches about the One Who said "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE," is being used widely throughout the church and in the Baguga Lutheran School. Other language catechisms are in process.

#### ***Seminary***

The Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry will soon complete another year of training. Dr. Phil Giessler (Cleveland, Ohio spent three months teaching the 14 students "The Unity of the Scriptures" and "The Pastor as Bible and Catechism Teacher" Dr. Bernie Lutz (Crane Lake, Minnesota) followed with a three-week session on "Isaiah" and "The Principles of Bible Interpretation." Mr. Rob Lutz of Our Savior Lutheran School in Crookston, Minnesota, taught remedial English and some general principles of teaching in the Sunday school and home. Rev. Justin Kane (Immanuel Lutheran Church, Conover, North Carolina) taught a course on the Gospel of John. Rev. Roger Heintz, of Brookfield Lutheran Church in Brookfield, Wisconsin, will complete the current school year the end of September.

As the students depart for their break, they will be working in their home congregations to put into practice what they have learned. The new school year begins on January 18, 2010, and this will mark their final year of formal training.

#### ***More than just a teacher or student***

Dr. Bernie and Mr. Rob Lutz did more than teach in a classroom. They led the students and members of the ELCS in a work project to improve the water situation. Water drawn from a lake for bathing and washing was polluted and caused skin rashes, so a system was devised whereby gutters were installed on the guest house to capture the rain water coming off the zinc roof and empty into two 1,000 gallon containers. Sinks for washing were also installed to improve sanitary conditions.

#### ***Termites for bread***

One of the delicacies of this area is the crop of termites that are collected and served after frying in cooking oil or in some cases eaten raw. Even mahogany boards are no match for these creatures with a voracious appetite to satisfy their large bodies.

#### ***Other improvements made***

During weekends and free time other projects were carried out to improve the overall conditions. Brick was laid around buildings to improve conditions during the rainy season. Library shelves were built to get books out of storage for better utilization, and carpeting was laid in the guest house dining and conference room.

## November 5

The Minnesota congregation that funded the Rich Valley Mission Center reports that the Linkert Committee suggests that construction in Baguga be discontinued due a breach of contract with Adventis Construction Company, contractors for the building. Meetings to try and resolve difficulties were unsuccessful. LHF determined that the time and effort to continue the dispute would be fruitless. Their ineptness, failure to fulfill obligation and general lack of response all contributed. Without Rev. Elisa's tenacity, business acumen, and on-site control, the effort came to a standstill. Efforts continue to try and come up with a remedy for the faulty construction.

## December 14,15

A third mission consultation was held at King of Kings Lutheran, Omaha, NE, sponsored by the ELCS and mission partners of the LCMS. Rev. Fandrey and Rev. Rahn reported on the 15 years of generous support by LHF and invited participants to become involved to help alleviate the heavy financial responsibility assumed by the LHF ever since the church was organized.

Rev. Edward Nzeme, ELCS General Secretary, was unable to obtain a visa to travel to the meeting but sent a report indicating the church was being served by 10 pastors, 3 vicars, 15 seminarians, 4 deaconesses, 2 deacons, and 60 evangelists. The consultation called for a unified effort on the part of all participants.

# 2010

From: Edward Sunge  
Sent: Friday, April 23, 2010 8:35 AM  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: Greetings.

Dear Rahn,  
Find here the list of courses that have covered at CLIHM in the last three years.

I will send the courses covered by the first class that started in Khartoum next week. The program for the first group that started in Khartoum to be given B.A in Theology and Diploma in management. The diploma was awarded in 2004 to some and others were continued. When sending the subjects that they have covered, you can give Professor Richard to evaluate and decide for which certificate to be awarded.

Concerning the graduation we have no objection but have some questions such as: Will they go for their vicariate after the graduation and come for ordination after that? As they graduate do we start a new intake?

## THE DISCIPLINES THAT HAVE BEEN TAUGHT AT CLIHM ELCS YAMBIO, WES AS FROM MAY 2008-APRIL 2010

### Year 01 2008

#### Semester I

S/N	Course	Taught by
01	Introduction to OT	Dr. Bernie Lutz
02	Introduction to NT	Dr. Bernie Lutz
03	Law and Gospel	Dr. Bernie Lutz

04	History of Christianity	Dr. Bernie Lutz
05	English Language I	Robert Lutz

### Semester II

01	The Lutheran Worship	Rev. Japheth R. Dachi
02	Ephesians	Rev. Japheth R. Dachi
03	The History of Israel	Rev. Japheth R. Dachi
04	Christian Dogmatics	Rev. Nicholas Kumbo
05	English Language II	Robert Lutz
06	Islam	Rev. Edward Nzeme

### Year 02 2009

#### Semester I

01	Genesis	Rev. Dave Bolte
02	Early Church History	Dr. Reijo Arkkila
03	Nehemiah & Colossians	Rev. Lasse Raty
04	Project Management	Daniel Zogbo

#### Semester II

01	Isaiah	Dr. Bernie Lutz
02	Hermeneutics	Dr. Bernie Lutz
03	English Language III	Robert Lutz
04	The Gospel According to St. John	Rev. Justin Kane
05	Introduction to Christian Dogmatic II	Rev. Richard Ondito
06	General Instructions	Dr. Philip Giessler

#### Semester III

01	Reformation History	Dr. Martti Arkkila
02	Galatians	Dr. Arto Seppanen
03	I & II Timothy	Dr. Arto Seppanen
04	Leadership	Rev. Roger Heintz

### Year 03 2010

#### Semester I

01	Christology	Rev. Dave Bolte
02	Justification	Rev. Dave Bolte
03	Homiletics I	Rev. Reino Toika
04	Homiletics II	Rev. Don Neuendorf
05	Academic Writing	Rev. Nicholas Kumbo
06	Introduction to Anthropology	Charles Babiro
07	The Gospel According to St. Luke	Rev. Japheth R. Dachi
08	I & II Corinthians	Samuel Atunga

#### Still to come

Romans, Dogmatics VII	Phil Giessler
English	Rob Lutz
?	Daniel Grams



**CLIHM Staff**

01. Rev. Japheth Dachi: Principal
  02. Rev. Edward Nzeme: Dean of studies
  03. Rev. Nicholas Kumbo: Dean of students
- 

**INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHING IN SUDAN/UGANDA**

Dear Brother,

You are receiving this as a past, present, future or potential candidate for a short teaching (or longer if you desire) stint at the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry, established for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sudan.

This program was first established in Khartoum and has now moved, along with all ELCSS/S offices, to the South. We have facilities in Yambio, about 150 miles from Juba and in Baguga, six miles from Yambio. Should you choose to accept the opportunity, it would be a very challenging one, although conditions are much improved from what they were ten years ago. The first seminary graduated a class of about 10 students, now serving throughout Sudan as part of a 15-member clergy roster with around 100 congregations. There are trained evangelists, deacons and deaconesses helping the clergy.

We are looking for people to volunteer during the latter part of 2010 and in 2011 if another group of students is formed. Rev. Don Neuendorf (St. Paul - Ann Arbor, Michigan) returns this week after his two-week stint teaching Homiletics.

**EXPECTATIONS**

In order to carry out this volunteer program, we have asked that participants generate support for their own airfare, which would be around \$3000, including the charter in and out of Yambio from Uganda. If you are unable to generate the amount there might be some assistance from LHF, although we are paying for all meals and lodging while you are teaching.

You would be expected to teach for two or three weeks and longer if you desire or can work it out. If you can take a book or syllabus for each student (14) from which you are teaching it would be helpful. We do get a 20 percent discount from CPH. If you can't find funds for the books, LHF can supplement.

**CONDITIONS**

Conditions are primitive but improving. The toilets and showers have been outdoor types. Water is heated in a 50 gallon drum and parceled out for showers. Toilets, unless the new system has become operative, are holes in the floor and require you to be able to squat.

English is the language. Students are expected to know English. Rob Lutz has taught remedial English and will do so again to make sure they understand the language correctly.

Meals are generally good, prepared by our regular kitchen staff. Hopefully you can stomach a lot of rice, sometimes mixed with beef, chicken or goat. No dog or horse meat. That's the basic fare and it is supplemented with bread, kasava, yams, and seasonal pineapple and mango. No salads or lettuce or cabbage.

Travel in is generally by charter landing on gravel runways. Roads are atrocious and some work has been done but crews have not yet reached Yambio. Actually unbelievably rutted and almost non-passable. A wonder any truck gets through with material, but they do with lots of repairs necessary to keep operational.

Generally there is a 24-hour guarded compound that is fenced, mostly to keep cows from roaming through the compound. You will be housed in this compound with mosquito netting provided. Lots of flying bugs if there are lights. That is by generator, as there is no electricity.

Clothing is laundered by the staff, so super-filled suitcases need not be brought. Limited or charged for overweight. Something like 25 pounds is the limit. We do cheat a little bit on that because we generally have books to take in. It is worth paying excess weight charges to get those much-needed books for the library which has been established.

#### MEDICAL

You will be responsible to get the appropriate shots and most of all the malaria pills, as this is a heavy malaria area. Hospital travel centers in the major hospitals or clinics here in the U.S. can tell you which shots and pills are necessary for that region.

Sometimes the United Nations has medical teams in the region that may be housed in our compound. If that is the case the students and staff have access to their service. There is a medical clinic on wheels that was placed there through a Pittsburgh firm and LWR/HC. The small hospital in Yambio is not reliable so the medical van becomes an important component.

### A SUGGESTED FOUR-YEAR CURRICULUM

The coursework is based on the primary needs for pastoral students who are in training. The five major departments of study are:

- Exegetical Theology
- Hermeneutics
- Systematic Theology
- History
- Practical Ministry
- Further Studies
- Introduction to Greek
- Introduction to Hebrew

The way we had the curriculum worked out was that Dogmatics would cover as follows:

- I. The Holy Bible (source, origin, inspiration, attributes, divisions, purposes and use and the Doctrine of God, natural and revealed, essence and attributes of the Triune God.
- II. The Doctrine of Creation, doctrine of angels and man, original, actual sin.
- III. Doctrine of salvation by grace, justification, saving grace, person of Christ, humiliation, exaltation, work of Christ, office of Christ.
- IV. The Doctrine of Sanctification, conversion, faith, justification by faith, sanctification through faith, good works, prayer, Christian life, election
- V. The doctrine of salvation through the Means of Grace, The Gospel, the Law and the Gospel, the sacraments, Baptism, the Lord's Supper

- VI. The doctrine of the church, visible church, government of the church. Office of the Keys, power to remit/retain sins, church discipline, office of the ministry, the Antichrist
- VII. The doctrine of the Last Things, temporal death, state of death, Second Coming, Millennium, resurrection of the dead, Last Judgment, end of world, eternal damnation, eternal salvation.

The curriculum that was established pretty much followed that of our own U.S. seminaries, with three years of classroom work and ending with one year of vicarage and ordination following. Some suggested alternative courses were suggested as follows:

- Introduction to Guidance and Counseling
- History of Mission
- Pastoral Theology II
- Church Music and Worship
- Lutheran Worship
- Church Administration
- Research Techniques

## LOCATION

We in the past have included a Bible School in Kampala, Uganda for several days of teaching but that has been dropped for now.

Baguga, six miles from Yambio, was to become the location for the headquarters of the ELCS. We are trying to complete the Rich Valley Lutheran Mission Center, a 60' x 150' two-story building that would house all offices, the seminary, a hall for worship, translation and publishing center and classrooms. We ran into a snag with the builder, as might be imagined, in that part of the world. The construction firm is out of Nairobi and there has been some negligence and irresponsibility and we are looking elsewhere for help to finish the building. The engineering was also inadequate and some work has to be done over because beams were sagging. The woes of construction.

Baguga is the location of a Lutheran school that once had as many as 600 students, considerably less at the moment because of economics. A year ago they lost most of the straw-thatched classrooms because of a fire that swept through the area in the dry season. These have been rebuilt but eventually there is hope for a brick school structure.

While there currently are close to 100 Lutheran churches where there were none 15 years ago, the opportunities are endless. Rev. Andrew Mbugo Elisa, ELCS bishop, related to us that one new church could be opened every week if manpower and money were available. LHF was instrumental in bringing the church into existence through the publication of a catechism, *Prayerbook* and *Hymnal*. We have had to establish our own printing operation because printers were unwilling to print Christian materials for fear of reprisals from the Muslim brotherhood.

The ELCS suffered a great loss when the Lord called Rev. Elisa home on Dec. 31, 2008. We have tried to help them cope. These are the things that come to mind when I think of possible questions you might have. If there are other questions, please ask and we will add it to our Information Sheet.

If you are receiving this for the first time and are interested in offering your talent, and dates might fit into your schedule, please let me know. You might also inform me of what you consider a specialty topic and we might be able to slot that topic into the program. Some dual teaching would be good, as it lightens the load to have two or even three teaching short term courses. So you could recruit a friend to come with you.

October 28, 2010

## THE REFORMATION CONTINUES IN AFRICA

Dear Heirs of the Reformation,

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our strength.” Psalm 46:1,11

The Reformation continues and I just returned from my Africa trip where we saw new evidence of the continuing Reformation. During my three week trip there were a number of activities that had deep connections to the Reformation. This will serve as a brief report on some of the Reformation happenings.

I can't begin to explain all the emotions wrapped up in the ordination of 16 men for the ministry that took place in Yambio, Sudan on October 10th. Perhaps some of the pictures will give you a small sampling as to how God is continuing the Reformation in Sudan, how He blesses the study and proclamation of the Word. “THE WORD WORKS” is more than a mere slogan.

Activities started on Friday, October 8th with a graduation ceremony for the students. Led by the Yambio Police Band, a procession through town covered at least one mile as a pre-service activity and witness to the community. The six hour ceremony included a commencement address by Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz. Diplomas and certificates were distributed by Rev. Edward Nzeme, Acting Bishop, Rev. Nicholas Louis, Dean of Students and Rev. Japheth Dachi, Seminary Principal. After the service greetings were presented by government officials and visiting clergy, including Rev. Dr. Reijo Arkkila from Finland.

The ordination service on Sunday began with a shorter procession and 500 people crowded into the church and also spilled outside around the windows and doors. The seven hour service included the rite of ordination conducted by Rev. Edward Nzeme, Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz, Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn, Rev. Japheth Dachi, Rev. Nicholas Louis, Rev. Dr. Reijo Arkkila and nine ELCS Pastors.

The 16 men, including one from Finland and one from Tanzania, who joined the class after receiving their training in other seminaries, were given their stoles and clergy crosses during the rite and after the service other gifts were bestowed- Lutheran Agendas, private communion sets, baptismal napkins, baptismal crosses, communion wafers, and LHF tote bags for the wives. The Pastors already serving in congregations received a Thrivent desk calendar. Government officials were again present to bring greetings and several messages were read from faculty who had served as faculty during the three-year training.

The ordination rite also included the placement announcement for each student. A number of them go back to the parishes where they were serving as Evangelists and Deacons.

A 12 hour meeting on Monday following the ordination saw 45 pastors and laymen gather to discuss a structure change and a discussion on the proposed constitution. The group voted to elect Rev. Japheth Dachi as Interim President for a one year term and a Council of Advisers established to administer the mission of the ELCS. All other officers remained in office with the addition of an Assistant Treasurer's office held by a layman. It is hoped that the financial matters of the church will eventually be handled by a layman, who will be trained by the current General Secretary, Treasurer, Rev. Edward Nzeme.

A first reading of the proposed constitution took place on Tuesday, October 14th with a proposed second reading in October, 2011 followed by the election and installation of the ELCS Bishop.

At the ordination service the students read a Resolution of Thanks for the service of Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn, who served as the Concordia Institute for the Holy Ministry Program Director and provided the rotating faculty over the three-year period of training. Faculty came from the U.S., Finland, Kenya and Tanzania.

The ELCS Executive Committee met and discussed future seminary training and their intention of going back to the Khartoum Seminary model when two tracks of training encompassed the training. One track will be the pastoral track and the other track will be leadership training for deaconesses, deacons and evangelists. During 2011 a series of three different seminars will be held in three different locations to provide follow up and additional training for the new graduates and pastors, also for other church workers and interested lay people. The new seminary program will begin in January, 2012.

This is becoming a little long so there will be a Part II of the CONTINUING REFORMATION report to follow.

Thank you for your continued interest and support as we move into a new growing phase in the ELCS under the power of the Holy Spirit. We pray that the anticipated spurt in growth will be soon seen as these new men begin their ministry.

Any questions will be gladly received.

Robert L. Rahn  
LHF Founder  
CLIHM Program Director

### **October 7**

We were in Yambio, Sudan, with Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz of Crane Lake, Minnesota, and Rev. Reijo Arkkila from Finland. We conducted an open forum with the seminary students who lauded the program we provided. We informed them that the general economy of our country would not allow us to support programs at the same level, and that they should be prepared for stipends to be decreased each year. They were encouraged to develop stewardship programs in their congregations and to be ready for no support after four years.

### **October 8**

The Yambio Police Band arrived at the Center at 10 a.m. to lead the processing graduates through the village. The line-up included the processional cross, flags, large Bible, pastors, graduates, choirs and congregation. We marched to the town square on what was a very hot and sunny day. The procession led to the church for the service, and Dr. Lutz served as the speaker. Diplomas and certificates were given to each student. Speeches were given by members of the faculty and staff, including Nicholas, Dachi, Edwards and Arkkila. The Minister of Education for Sudan also spoke, as well as the Police Chief, who was more like a preacher who talked about wisdom in the context of “the fear of the Lord.”

The parents, wives, and friends of the students displayed their great exuberance in an unusual way. When the diploma was granted, all would run forward and pick up the student and carry him around to the applause of the congregation.

### **October 9**

An Interim Committee Meeting was announced and all pastors were invited to participate. Around 15 men

joined the discussions. The translation work was discussed and the ongoing difficulty with finances was another topic. It was reported that the Baguga Lutheran Primary School had declined to 110 students, and there were now more students in Yambio with 210 students. The St. Paul Hospital in Khartoum was in arrears financially and help was being sought from Lutheran Medical Missions and Lutheran World Relief. It was determined that a plan was needed to outline procedures for starting a school.

Rev. Jock Rianz from Malakal reported on a container that arrived in 2009, bringing a tractor, water purifier and other farming equipment. Two containers were joined with a roof, but the project was never completed. Other reports included information where churches were started and a place where people were arrested for starting a church and now moved from place to place to escape persecution. It was obvious that communication was a missing ingredient between the pastors. The flow of information is a problem, especially in northern Sudan. A plea was given that we continue the training of pastors.

I made a presentation calling for a plan and vision based on 2 Timothy 1: 6, 7: “For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.” We are not called to crawl, but to walk or even run. It calls for an entrepreneurial spirit. This is a time for us to think about a vision for the church in 2011 and 2012.

Dr. Lutz summarized the discussion and called it a great meeting. He quoted Revelation 12:12: “Woe to the earth and sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.”

The Baguga situation was addressed and the feeling was that the building project should be continued, perhaps on a smaller scale utilizing at least the first floor. The group will check for some possible large equipment in the area which could be used to knock down the north end with the poor construction.

### **October 10**

This was the designated day for the ordination of the 16 candidates. The festivities again began with a procession through the village of Yambio. Some 580 people attended the event. My sermon was based on 2 Timothy 1:13,14: “Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.” To be a fit minister you are called upon to “guard the treasure.” Of and by yourself this would be impossible, but it has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells in you by the power of God’s Word. Be faithful in guarding this treasure that many are trying to take from you. Guard the treasure of His Word as you serve in every aspect of your ministry.

The ordination rite was performed by Rev. Japheth Dachi and Rev. Edward Nzeme. Dr. Lutz presented each candidate with a stole, and I provided the pectoral cross. There were other gifts to be given but things became somewhat chaotic, and it was decided to give the rest of the gifts after the service ended. Those gifts included baptismal napkins, communion wafers, Mexican crosses and plastic crosses for children, and the wives received LHF tote bags. A dinner followed the service. The service and festivities lasted for seven hours.

### **October 11**

All-day meeting on a new structure that I proposed in anticipation of the election of a new bishop. Everyone was given an opportunity to speak about the proposed structure that would have Dachi serve as interim president and that a lay treasurer be elected to assist Edward in dealing with the money matters. It was explained that Dachi would be a good choice, since he would have no ambitions for the office for which he was ineligible, coming to Sudan as a guest from Kenya.



When the vote was taken, 38 voted in favor of the proposed structure and 17 voted against. Dachi encouraged participants to join hands and work in serving the Lord. "I thank you for the privilege to serve with you. If I have offended anyone I ask for forgiveness, and I offer forgiveness to those who have given any offense. The White and Blue Nile join and become one river; let us join hands and become a big ELCS. May the Lord strengthen us together, as we help one another." This was followed with discussion on the idea of a Council of Advisers, and these were voted on from each deanery. An assistant treasurer was also elected to serve with Edward.

### **October 12**

At the 7 a.m. devotion, we held an installation for Dachi as interim president and left for the airport while the delegates continued a program of working on the constitution. As it turned out, there was one delay after another with the plane arriving; finally it was too late to reach Entebbe in daylight so the plane had to be parked in Yambio overnight for a morning departure. All of the commotion had to do with bad weather in Entebbe, our destination.

### **October 13**

While we were having lunch in Entebbe, Dachi informed us of the first problem he had to deal with that took until 3 a.m. to resolve. It seems the Malakal Deanery demanded a new dean, and this became a point of contention. All parties met together and they finally agreed to have one of the new graduates serve as their dean. I congratulated him on successfully resolving his first problem as interim president of the ELCS.

## **2011**

### **September 11**

Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Juba, was dedicated. The project was funded by the LEAF Mission Society of Finland. Leaf missionaries Antti and Liisa Saarenketo worked in the Juba area, and Antti was subsequently authorized for ordination by LEAF and will be serving with Bishop Wilson Noah Rule. LEAF has joined LHF in financially supporting the ELCS/SS and CLIHM.

**October 11-** Recruitment letter is sent to potential faculty members to teach at the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry established for the ELCS. The program was first established in Khartoum and then moved to Yambio. The expectations for faculty were noted in the letter and conditions were outlined in order to help individual pastors, teachers and professors to make a decision. With the help of Rev. Bernie Lutz and Prof. Richard Nuffer, a four year program was developed and distributed to the candidates. This included a one-year vicarage program and also some type of field work program while students attend the seminary.

### **October 16**

Rev. Fandrey and I visited Yambio, Sudan to participate in the installation of the new ELCS bishop. Prior to the induction service, a church convention was held in order to ratify a constitution and vote to fill the bishop's office.

This is an article/report that summarized our activities in Sudan:

Isaiah 55:11 Return on Word is Full

The promise is from the Lord: "My Word shall not return empty." There is evidence everywhere in Sudan that the Word is accomplishing its purpose.

It may have been a slow return, but the ELCSS/S now has its constitution. It is the first time the official language of the church includes the “SS” designation. It was explained that the ELCS would refer to Sudan a nation now of the north, but it is a church that serves the south nation as well. So the designation ELCSS/S makes it a church for both nations that were just formed and officially started on July 1, 2011.

The designation was first recorded officially within the constitution. The first triennial convention of the ELCSS/S took place from October 10-14. After passing their constitution, the next order of business was the election of the second bishop to fill the office held by the late Rev. Bishop Andrew Mbugo Elisa. For this election, the church had gathered an independent election board made up of individuals from other denominations — Roman Catholic, Pentecostal and Anglican. The church election process had narrowed the list of eligible candidates to three. The candidates for the ballot were Rev. Wilson Noah, Rev. Nicholas Kumbo and Rev. Andrea Benado.

Rev. Wilson Noah was declared the bishop on the first ballot.

On Sunday, a Service of Induction took place with over 500 in attendance, including 35 clergy participants. The sermon for the occasion was given by Rev. Robert L. Rahn, referred to as the “grandfather of the ELCS.” The text was 2 Timothy 1: 6-13, and Rev. Rahn began by alluding to the fact that this was an occasion when we confront many mixed emotions. We remember the past but we look to the future. For those of us who had a close relationship with the late bishop, it is time to move forward into the new era with Bishop Wilson Noah. It may especially be a time of deep emotion for the widow and family of the late bishop, but together we must move on. We remember the past, but we heed the words of Paul to a young pastor in the text. These are the points Paul makes in the text: 1. Kindle afresh the flame of faith in you. 2. Do not be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord. 3. Retain and hold fast the standard of the Word. 4. Guard the Treasure entrusted to you.

Rev. Rahn used the illustration of the flame we saw in the fire pit at the guest house as we sat around that fire. Many logs were put together to form hot coals and then a large flame appeared. When the logs were removed from one another, the flames died out. “Rev. Wilson, you can’t do it alone, but with the help of the brothers here represented and with the members of the ELCSS/S, you can provide the heat of the Word by the flames from the Spirit. It will give you not a spirit of timidity, but one of boldness, power, love, and discipline. It will enable you to hold fast to the standard of truth being abandoned in too many circles today. Guard this treasure according to His purpose and grace, not on the basis of your good works, but by the power of the Spirit.”

Conducting the rite of induction was Rev. Christian Ekong, president of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria. During the rite, Rev. Wilson was asked to prostrate himself completely before the altar and give answer to the questions in which he pledged loyalty to the Scriptures, the Confessions, and the constitution of the church. The attire of the office of bishop were then bestowed: alb, chasuble, stole, pectoral cross, mitre, and staff.

Rev. Wilson was introduced and received congratulations from the members of the clergy, church officials, community leaders, and family members. With four choirs participating in the service, and the sermon and greetings translated into Arabic, the length of the service even exceeded the length of Andrew’s ordination service of seven hours set on August 29, 1999. This eight hour service began at 9:30 a.m. with a procession on the streets of Yambio and concluded with special greetings from the government officials, local church officials, and participants from the United States.



The governor, Honorable Colonel Joseph Bokosoro, sent his regrets, but the Deputy governor gave a passionate vote of thanks noting the movement of the church. It started in Juba, moved to Khartoum, and then here to Yambio. He noted that Juba and Khartoum are much more blessed than our little village of Yambio, and yet you chose to have this event in our community. He said, "We are from the church, we are part of the church, we stand with the church. I'm requesting you to give full support to your bishop, and I appeal to all churches to pray for our government so that we govern correctly. I salute the election committee for their work. They have conducted a peaceful election, the first in our state. Let our country elections be peaceful as we learn from the church. For us, the Bible will also guide our government. This is what the governor would have you know through me his representative today."

Speaking for another department of the government was The Honorable Norma Fodul, Minister of Social Development and Religious Affairs. She had also spoken at the convention earlier and had called for unity in working for the good of the people of the South Sudan. "Keep working for freedom, which could not have happened without the help from the church. From today you have a responsibility. Put the Bible in your right hand and your constitution and staff in your left. Wherever you walk, take them along for guidance."

Rev. Edward Nzeme (the general secretary), Rev. Japheth Dachi (the interim president) and Rev. Louis Kumbo (director of education) issued certificates of appreciation to all involved in making for a successful convention. Rev. Rahn carried a bag of lapel pin crosses. He mentioned that the congregation and pastors would remember other occasions when crosses were distributed. He said, "I see some of those crosses here today being worn by pastors, and they indicate if you were a member of the first seminary class or the second. Others of you will remember the woven crosses given last year to the youth and choir members as they were singing. Some plastic crosses were also distributed on one occasion to all children. I wondered what I would do with these crosses, and the inspiration came to me during a typical sleepless night after long travel and time changes. Therefore, today I'm naming these the 'bishop's crosses.' I'd like to distribute these to the 58 convention delegates, to the nominating committee, and to the youth and adult choirs. These bishop crosses indicate your special involvement in an historic event, the election of the second Bishop of the ELCSS/S. I'm giving the remaining crosses to the bishop for use as he sees fit in his office."

Rev. James E. Fandrey, Lutheran Heritage Foundation executive director, brought special greetings from the LHF Board, staff and donors and presented Bishop Wilson with a copy of *A Treasury of Prayers*, a large prayer guide using Bible readings based on the pericopes, a daily reading from the *Book of Concord*, the Psalms and prayers. Rev. Fandrey said, "These Bible readings and prayers will sustain you in your service."

The deaconesses of the church were introduced, including Deaconess Pat Nuffer, director of the Hands of Mercy organization, and Intern Deaconess Kaetlin Hiatt, who would be serving the next months in Yambio. Representatives from the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Pentecostal churches brought greetings from their church bodies, and all pledged to work with Bishop Wilson and the ELCSS/S in the new nation.

His Word does not return empty. In other words, where His Word is proclaimed, there it is in all fullness. We are seeing it in Sudan in special ways. For the past three years, we have stated that there are 100 congregations with around 15,000 members in the ELCS. As we were conversing with the pastors from the Malakal region, we were startled to hear there were some 100 congregations in this region alone. Many of them are smaller and difficult to reach because of poor transportation. Some of them are also enduring persecution. Their report led us to request the general secretary to gather the correct statistics for the church. That process began immediately.

## IT WILL NOT RETURN EMPTY

In an interview with the new bishop, I asked him what would be the biggest challenge he faced. He said, "It will be to bring people to faith through a strong evangelism program. It will be important to start with children, teaching them the Lutheran faith."

He then gave an example of a great opportunity for church growth. He told the story of a group of people he has been evangelizing, east of his location in Juba. There exists a community of Atsoni tribe people who were missionized years ago by the British and also by the Anglican Church, but have been abandoned. They became involved with the Lutheran church and are requesting books and materials in their language. The clergy want to serve as Lutheran pastors. Two of the pastors came to the convention as interested observers. There are many congregations ready to become part of the ELCSS/S. The Word is not returning empty. Together with the ELCSS/S, the LHF is assessing avenues of training for these pastors.

The Word doesn't return empty. The seminary is filling to capacity with 25 students enrolled to start on January 16, 2012. It will have a revolving faculty recruited through the LHF office in Macomb, Michigan. Rev. Art Bolstad (Arnold, Missouri) will be the first volunteer faculty member. Dr. Bernie Lutz (Crane Lake, Minnesota), a regular faculty member, will take a long stint in May, June and July. There are many eager candidates for the ministry.

The bishop also sees this as a major challenge in terms of the stewardship required from the church and from continued LHF support. Congregations, groups, and individuals will want to come to the rescue of this struggling but growing church by partnering with the LHF to provide the help needed. Gifts should be directed to LHF.

Immediately following the induction a special session of the convention was again scheduled for the next day. After lengthy discussions, the convention determined that the present officers of the church should continue in office to assist in the transition. These officers are to serve a three-year term.

One of the items placed on the cabinet's agenda is the discussion as to how the deaconess program will be carved out. Previously in Khartoum, the first set of deaconesses received their training as part of the seminary route. The church needs to address this situation and direct how all programs fit into the structure of the church. **His Word will not return empty.**

Other questions will be addressed. Will the headquarters of the church remain in Yambio even though the bishop is serving in Juba? Will the bishop's office be full-time or part-time? Will transportation be available? How will travel costs for his office be covered with the constitution calling for at least two annual visits to each congregation? What will be the best avenue of communication with only 20 percent of the pastors having Internet?

Bishop Wilson called for a continuation of the consultation agreements, that all activities by groups and individuals be coordinated through the ELCSS/S central office of the Bishop. This will enable the church to schedule and carry out her mission.

**His Word will no return empty.** The desire of the ELCSS/S has been and continues to be the establishment of fellowship with the LCMS. To that end, the church officials are renewing the call for fellowship that was first made some ten years ago.

The distant Malakal delegation of 11 participants was brought to the convention with air travel provided to Juba by the United Nations. This was a great help to the budget of LHF. President

Ekong traveled to Yambio under sponsorship by the LCMS.

While at the convention, Rev. Fandrey preached for the closing service of the convention. His text was John 8:36. He spoke about freedom that came to the country and that which comes through continuing in the Word. When the truth is known, it alone has the capacity to give true freedom.

To that end, he also renewed the translation and publishing schedule as the main focus of LHF. Two books being worked on will be published before the end of the year: the Arabic worship book and the Nuba *Hymnal* in the Otoro dialect. Another project to be continued is the Zande *Worship Book*. Collects and the three-year readings are yet to be added. The Moru catechism is completed and needs funding for publishing. With the Juba Atsoni tribe interested in Lutheranism, the Atsoni translation of the catechism will be high on the docket for 2012.

The weapons of mass instruction provided by the LHF in books like these will help to assure His Word will not return empty!

## 2012

### January 3

A Blessed New Year to all interested in the Sudan mission,

Today, Rev. Art Bolstad is on his way to Nairobi and then will proceed to Yambio to begin his stint as the first faculty member serving on the staff of Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry (CLIHM). With the beginning of this new term for the seminary, it appears that there will be a total of 20 students enrolled. We thank God that there were 27 candidates from which the 20 were selected.

I am including a teaching schedule and also the courses we have selected for the three-year program. As you will note, we are waiting for some responses for the February and March dates before we make decisions relative to those we have in the reserve corps.

This might also be a good time to appraise you of the agreement reached by the consultation team when we met on several occasions. Each time we underscored and agreed on especially two important issues. First of all, we agreed that all activity in Sudan would be channeled through the leadership of the ELCSS/S. Since we now have elected a new bishop, that means we will work through the office of Bishop Wilson Noah Rule in Juba. The second agreement made by the consultation committee was that we would give the highest priority to seminary education.

This is especially important this year when we have the highest number of students in seminary training. Over the past 17 years, the Lutheran Heritage Foundation has invested very heavily in all facets of the ELCSS/S ministry. We want to make it clear that this year we will need your help and urgently request that you support the seminary program as the first and primary need. It will be impossible for LHF to add the stipends for 20 students and still support those anticipating stipends. Would you venture a guess as to how many that might be? Recently Rev. Edward Nzeme sent us a listing of all those receiving stipends in 2011. The total number was 62. This includes pastors, vicars, deaconesses, evangelists, deacons, and staff personnel.

What a blessing these people are to the mission and ministry of the ELCSS/S. In the past we

have even foregone our main mission of translating and publishing books and materials in order to sustain the church and its mission. Now the need for books and materials is becoming a critical issue and we can't continue to disregard this part of our mission.

I would like to urge everyone to avoid tackling new projects other than the seminary, urgent as they might be. I view the seminary and stipends for workers as being the critical area of need to which we should focus our collective attention. I'm inviting synod officials, district officials, RSOs and other agencies to step up to the plate with us to share the load. Together the work can be accomplished.

These are not easy days for the ELCSS/S and they, too, will have to become proactive in finding ways to become more independent. The Malakal region is especially in need of our prayers as they continue to be confronted with persecution from hostile agents of Satan.

And pray for the entire ELCSS/S and her leadership that the church might move forward in spite of many challenges. Pray that the Word and Sacraments be delivered with power, so that the faith of the hearers is strengthened.

And pray that God would bless all our efforts to join hands with our fellow Lutheran Christians in the ELCSS/S so that God would receive the honor and glory.

With hope and confidence entering the New Year,  
Robert L. Rahn  
CLIHM Program Coordinator

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Lutz, Bernie  
Subject: Sea Foam

Bernie,

The Sea Foam check just arrived. The amount was for \$50,000 designated for CLIHM. Praise the Lord for this gift and two others of the same size that came in on Friday. Another one for \$50,000, an insurance proceed, is being contested by a family when the beneficiary said LHF.

We will be forwarding the \$20,000 for the seminary building immediately. When Jim returns, we will be discussing the entire scope of the Sudan mission for 2012. Last week I submitted a "Plan for Sudan" in 2012 that included the bread-making business, but it wasn't given immediate endorsement and now we wait for Fandrey to return to discuss this.

I sent a message out to all Sudan parties laying out a basic instruction that all support should be for the seminary, no special projects as we not only have 20 seminarians to support but also 62 others on stipends throughout the ELCSS/S. I'm targeting the synod to get involved also. We can't keep on going it alone.

Hope you had a quiet New Year.

Hello to Roberta.  
RR

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From: Edward Sunge  
To: Jeff Rahn  
Cc: Jim Fandrey; Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: Sudan Receipts

Dear Jeff,

Greetings from Yambio.

The seminary is supposed to open on January 16, 2012 and we need funds for starting. It is easier to come from the USA to South Sudan than to come from Malakal to Yambio. To transport all the students, we need at least a week or more.

In Christ,  
Rev. Edward Nzeme

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As is often the case with regards to a request for funds, there is always a need for clarification. In the following message Jeff Rahn, assistant executive director, poses some questions and concerns prior to the release of any funds:

From: Jeff Rahn  
To: Sunge, Edward; Masin, Justin  
Cc: Fandrey, James; Rahn, Robert  
Subject: Seminary Travel/Startup Funds

Edward,  
I will be sending some funds for the start-up of the seminary program but I do have some initial questions on the CLIHM budget.

According to your revised CLIHM budget, you indicated 19,080 SSp was needed for travel. This amount is the same from the first budget and it appears that it covers 29 people. You also indicated that only 20 students have been accepted. Does the travel budget need to be corrected to reflect the lower number of students?

I assume that everything is being multiplied by 2 to cover round-trip travel. I assume that only half of the amount is required now for travel to Yambio.

In light of the reduction to 20 students, is any further adjustment required in Section B? What does Section B cover?

In Section C you indicate feeding requirements for 28 people. Who else is covered by this in addition to the 20 students? It is not realistic to expect that LHF will be able to provide 294,000 SDG (\$110,000) for this.

In Section D is the amount for Medical care (\$11,200) only required if needed or is some kind of policy purchased for each student regardless of their health?

In Section I, what is the line for National Lecturer for? Overall this section totals \$34,000 and again it is unrealistic to expect that LHF will be able to provide this amount. I assume Dachi is the Principal but who are the 2 Deans?

I am basing the above calculations using the exchange rate I see on-line which is 2.68. Your budget calculations are based on 3.4. At the bank in Yambio do the wires arrive as USD or SDG? If the wires arrive as USD do you convert to SDG or do you pay as USD? Is 3.4 the rate you are receiving at the bank?

I may have additional questions but want clarification on these items to start.

In Christ,  
Jeff Rahn

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January 17, 2012

Dear Brother,

I called over the weekend and left a message on your cell phone as I tried to track down the pastors being supported. I asked Dachi to report, as I don't have email addresses for all pastors and not all pastors have access to the Internet.

It looks like we have to substitute another pastor for Gibbs, as he has been disciplined and given a temporary suspension until the problem is cleared up. My recommendation is that the support be transferred to Rev. Joseph Otto of Yambio. I would prefer to keep it in the Yambio area so that Dachi can observe and report.

We are getting some complaints that pastors have not been paid for several months. This may very well be true. It is sometimes difficult for donors to understand how this happens. I'll try to explain by giving you the information that these weeks we have been busy preparing the LHF 2012 budget. We ask each area to send us their anticipated needs. Sudan sent us two budgets: one for the church and one for the seminary. Combined, they were over \$300,000. We told them straight out that this amount was way beyond our capability, even though it might be what they see as their need. On Thursday our Board meets to approve the 2012 budget and the amount for Sudan will be \$175,000 and that is \$25,000 more than last year.

The church is responsible for spending. We are not going to babysit their disbursements. If they decide that the amount they are receiving doesn't cover expenses and they have to disburse it as they see fit; it may mean that what they had budgeted for pastor's salary may be reduced so everyone receives at least some amount. That's their decision, not ours. It may mean that the \$100 you designated for Kazimilio is going to be only \$50 in order that everyone gets something.

This year as part of their budget process the ELCSS/S has developed a stipend scale for all workers. It is their guide for paying stipends. Even though they have that as a guide, they may not be able to achieve the levels indicated because they were not able to come up with additional funds to support their budget except for what they receive from LHF.

This would all be an easy process if their budget was met. We could easily keep track of who is getting what. Because they are not able to meet their budget, this becomes a little more difficult, especially keeping the integrity of the donor. We appreciate your willingness to support the pastors and we hope you can understand the dilemma.



We want to be up front with you in this regard. This year, as you have seen, we have been pretty outspoken in terms of groups wanting to support various individuals and projects. Unless it is authorized by the church, no projects should be undertaken. If we are the major provider of funds, we want to know what is going to be supported. If pastors find donors to build them a church or provide some other need other than what is in our budget, how will a seminary operate or how will pastors be paid, little as it might be? Unless synod and groups step up and support the budget items the church has requested, the possibility exists that the structure could collapse. It is for this reason that the consulting group has indicated that the number one decision is that all activity be approved by the church leadership.

You also asked about a group going over this summer. This certainly would be helpful if they would be geared to do some general maintenance of the buildings: painting, clearing of brush, and reconditioning tables and chairs. So far a good job isn't being done in the upkeep of property, and a volunteer group could help with that.

If you were to teach, as you have offered, what subjects or topics would you bring? Except for late summer and early fall, our teaching schedule is arranged; although you could hook on to take an hour a day or so for something you would present.

If you want to discuss any of this further, please give me a call. Always remember my "refrain" when anyone wants to discuss the situation: "This is Africa." That means not everything works like it does in the good old USofA. People have a hard time envisioning this, especially as it relates to Sudan.

God's blessings and thanks for your patience and understanding.

R. Rahn

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## February 7

From: Japheth Dachi

To: Robert Rahn

Greetings in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ who is the centre of our preaching. I am taking this time to thank the Church en mass for accepting to sponsor me, Rev. Kazimilio and Rev. Gibbs. Kazimilio is serving in Tambura about 200 miles away from Yambio in Giaara Congregation. Gibbs is in Saura. From May 2008, I was the Principal of CLIHM, and as of October 2010, I was elected to the Interim President of ELCSS/S up to last year in October, when our second bishop was elected. Both Revs. Kazimilio and Gibbs were my students.

Both are doing well except for Rev. Gibbs, who has been suspended indefinitely, so you should replace him with any of the pastors if possible.

In I Cor. 3: 6, Paul was very clear and is still clear that he planted, Apollos watered and God made the seed to grow. On behalf of all who are being sponsored, allow me to thank them for using the gifts given to them by God for a good course and that is to help in the preaching of the Gospel.

May they be blessed.

Dachi — Principal, CLIHM

## 2013

**January 5**

From: Robert Rahn  
To: Dr. William Schumacher  
Subject: RE: Yambio

Dear Will,  
Thanks for your willingness to serve.

Would it be possible for you to start on July 5 and go until the 24th? It means you would probably be leaving the U.S. the afternoon of July 3, arriving in Uganda the evening of July 4 and leaving for Yambio early on July 5th??? We could have MAF pick up your visa so you'd have to spend less time in Kampala. They have also reported that you could get a visa at the airport in Yambio, but they were pretty much in a disorganized state when we flew in there in October. We continue to monitor the best way to travel to Sudan. Bolstad is going to be in Nairobi for a few days prior to his going to Sudan, so he is going to fly to Juba and get a flight from there with a new airlines working that route. We, however, still want to use the time and tested route.

We would have Neuendorf adjust his schedule so that two classes could be held each day.

If there is an O.T. or N.T. book you'd be comfortable teaching, you could go with that also. Dogmatics III is being picked up by Simojoki later in the year. So far we have Galatians and Ephesians covered.

Thanks for working on this for us and with us.  
RR

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From: Dr. William Schumacher  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: Yambio

Dear Brother Rahn,  
Yes, I think I can arrange for those dates, though I have to be in St. Louis June 28-29 for the English District Convention. I'll have to look into getting the travel doc/visa ahead of time, since spending an extra couple of days in Nairobi or Kampala might delay things. We'll see. What would happen if I got there a day or two late, and overlapped with Neuendorf? Could the daily schedule be tweaked to make that work?

History of Christianity sounds fine for me... but is it already on the schedule for Reijo Arkkila later? I can be pretty flexible, as long as I have a little prep time. I really look forward to the opportunity!

Blessings to you as you coordinate these many moving pieces for the good of the church in South Sudan!  
Will S.

### January 7

LHF staff discusses procedures relative to the 2013 budget for Sudan. It was determined that we would be better able to ascertain the needs of the ELCSS/S if we had specific goals and objectives for the church. We will continue to pursue a prepared vision statement from the Bishop that will provide the general direction for the church.

### February 15

Plans are made by Rev. Fandrey to visit South Africa in connection with the release of the Tswana *Book of Concord* and *Hymnal*. It was determined that he would invite church leaders from the surrounding countries to meet with him in Pretoria rather than travel to each region. This included an invitation to the ELCSS/S Bishop, Rev. Wilson Noah Rule. He declined to attend due to scheduling conflicts and assigned Rev. Nicholas Louis Kumbo to attend as his representative. Rev. Kumbo was asked to bring a statistical report for the ELCSS/S that had earlier been asked for from the Bishop, with no response.

### March 30

From: Japheth Dachi

To: Robert Rahn

Cc: Jeff Rahn; Wilson Noah; Nicholas Kumbo; Bernhard Lutz; J May

Subject: DEACONESS CLASS 02

Rev. J. Fandrey, Easter greetings. I am in reference to a mail that you sent to Rev. Nicholas, who is the dean of the CLIHM students. During that time, I was still in Kenya. I do not have much to add because what he said is the truth. The first deaconess class was started in Khartoum, and since the institution was relocated to Yambio in 2005, the deaconess class was not in place. The truth is that it was started by LHF.

In Khartoum, according to what I have gathered, the students were commuting on a daily basis, paid for by the LHF. I think that the economy was booming. For this new class, they are staying at the Guest House turned Seminary. We got some little finances for doing the renovation work and now it is looking beautiful. They will have flush toilets and two bathrooms. In both 2010 and 2011, we made and sent to you our A.G.A. budget that included a vote for renovation. Starting the second deaconess class, it has been discussed several times since 2008 and in some instances, most of the visiting professors have attended the faculty meetings where such decisions are made.

As per now, we have eight students and we are aiming at ten. This is the decision of the ELCSS/S and the late Bishop Andrew wanted me to start in 2008. I beg Kate Cole to come together with Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz for an assessment on the students. The students present are:

1. MONICA JOHNATHAN
2. AKWERO JOSKA
3. FOIZA CLEMENT
4. AMINA ALJAJI
5. DALIA HAWUD
6. SARAH NYARUON
7. SARAH NYAMAL
8. EVA EMMANUEL

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Rev. Japheth Rabach Dachi — Principal, CLIHM

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The report of Dachi that funds were available for a deaconess program came as a surprise to us, and when we inquired about it we were told that a proposal had been submitted to the Synod Missions and that a grant of over \$20,000 was given to remodel and expand facilities, to assist with travel costs for the deaconesses, and other expenses.

Dr. Lutz had invited Kate Cole, an experienced missionary who had served in Lebanon, to go with him to Sudan and analyze the needs of the deaconess program. While these plans were being made it was discovered that ten deaconess students had already arrived and the program started.

We encouraged Kate to continue with her plans but to call Deaconess Pat Nuffer for background information. After speaking with Dcns. Nuffer, Kate determined it was not in her best interest to follow through on her plans.

#### **April 2**

Phil Giessler begins his two-month teaching commitment with 15 students in the class. Some difficulties in having access to the room he had renovated and furnished on his last visit to Yambio. Instructions were given that the leaders in Yambio should contact the Bishop, who had placed a lock on the door, to politely ask for permission to utilize the room, which he seldom uses. Rev. Giessler assured him that the state of the room would be much improved when he left.

#### **April 11**

Word was received from Rev. Art Bolstad that he had returned safely from his teaching stint at the Yambio seminary after suffering a bout of malaria at the conclusion of his month of teaching. His preliminary report indicated that there was unrest among the pastors as over a dozen had been removed from the ministry by the Bishop with what appeared to be indiscriminate action and failure to follow procedures outlined in the constitution.

#### **April 15**

Word was received from Pres. Russ Sommerfeld (LCMS Nebraska District) that Rev. John Deang has been appointed to go to Sudan to serve as the Assistant to the Bishop. Rev. Sommerfeld's message indicated that this had been discussed for two years and finally coming to fruition. This was the first LHF had heard of this. When Rev. Fandrey attended the consultation in Omaha in October, this matter was not reported. When Rev. Fandrey met with Rev. Randy Golter, LCMS International Mission Director, the matter did not come up. We were informed that the Nebraska District would fund Rev. Deang's service in Sudan and that he would remain a member of the Nebraska District.

This action is not in harmony with the constitution of the church, as it lays out how an Assistant to the Bishop is to be selected and elected. It seems somewhat arbitrary that this kind of decision would be made without any interaction with a group that has provided and continues to provide the financial resources and leadership to the ELCSS/S. The same modus operandi was at work when special funds were issued for a deaconess program that the church had determined should be operated in harmony with the seminary program as first initiated in Khartoum. With no consultation with LHF, we all of a sudden had a group of students arriving in Yambio wanting to be trained.

#### **April 15**

Phone call from Giessler reporting that the teaching of the students is going well and that they are a group

eager to learn. The current class now numbers 15 students. He also reported that the new classroom building is a welcomed addition and really serves well as a lecture hall.

## April 18

From: Robert Rahn  
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 11:13 AM  
To: 'John Deang'; 'Noah Wilson'  
Cc: Fandrey, Rev. James  
Subject: Seminary Program

John,

Thanks for your quick response. I'm looking forward to having you in Sudan and sending us your regular insights and observations. I will make it a practice when emailing you to copy the Bishop as well. Right now I don't have immediate plans of being in Sudan as my travel has been confined pretty much to the U.S.

Do you have any kind of job description or work expectations that have been outlined to cover the work you are to do in Sudan?

One thing I'd like to suggest is that you and the Bishop plan to make a trip to Yambio during the early part of July while Dr. Bernie Lutz is teaching there. The students in this class will be completing their second year and we had contemplated a vicarage for them next year, but I'm not sure that is feasible as supervising pastors would be required and places needed to serve. It might make more sense to have them finish a third year and then be given a congregation to serve for a year before they are ordained. This should be discussed with Bernie, Bishop, and church leaders and a decision be reached during that July session so we can recruit our faculty if there are going to be class sessions in 2015.

Your questions, advice and counsel are welcome.

Thanks again for your message.  
R. Rahn

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Subject: FW: John Deang  
Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2013 14:17:33 -0400  
From: Robert Rahn  
To: John Deang; Russ Sommerfeld

John,

I was taken quite by surprise to learn of your assignment. I was not aware that the ELCS/SS Council had considered this and I'm wondering if you have a copy of the constitution that was passed in October 2011. I think it is a document with which you should thoroughly familiarize yourself. Since it has been reported that pastors have been removed, it is especially important to review the section that has to do with the removal of pastors and the procedure that is authorized by the church.

With your presence in Sudan we may have many of our questions answered through regular communication. At this time we are relying on any information that Rev. Nicholas will be able to bring to the meeting he has

in Pretoria with Rev. James Fandrey. We have requested him to bring a parochial report from the Bishop, since the Bishop appointed him as his representative.

The Lord's blessings on your service.  
R. Rahn

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From: John Deang  
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 12:41 AM  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: John Deang

Bob,  
I am sorry that you did not know this. Yes, I will go through the constitutions and Bylaw of ELCSS/S but I have very limited say in whatever matter is happening or will take place within the ELCSS/S. I can only advise or encourage the leadership. Yes, I will keep regular communication in the area that I have assigned but not to the polity of the ELCSS/S.

Are you planning to come to South Sudan soon?

Peace in Christ!  
John Deang

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**October 29**

The fourth Sudan Consultation was organized by Rev. Russ Sommerfeld, president of the Nebraska District, and held at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Omaha. An earlier consultation was canceled when the bishop of the ELCSS/S, Rev. Wilson Noah, could not obtain a visa. It was determined that extra effort would be made to enable him to be present for this meeting. Efforts were made through contact with Congressional reps but he was again denied a visa. A request was made to the Bishop to send his vision statement for the church but none was received. Rev. Fandrey represented LHF at this meeting and also represented the LEAF Mission Society of Finland and gave the respective reports. No one was present to represent the LCMS mission staff.

**November 7**

The 2013 schedule of classes and assigned faculty is sent out in preparation for the CLIHM starting its second year of classes on February 14.

Dear ELCSS/S Partners,

This will serve as a brief update on the activities pertaining to the seminary functioning in Yambio. The third class of students began their session on January 16 with an orientation by the officials of the seminary, including Japheth Dachi, Nicholas Louis, Edward Nzeme, Wilson Noah and others.

Our first instructor, Rev. Art Bolstad, arrived on the scene on January 24 and is now settled into his teaching routine at the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry (CLIHM).



We are pleased to report that two more students have joined the class, bringing the total to the expected number of 20. Japheth informs me that there could be one more student joining this class making a total of 21.

In past consultations the participants indicated that the primary focus of activity in Sudan would be seminary education. Other high priorities included the necessity of all activities by individuals and groups to be coordinated through the office of the Bishop. This would help to avoid duplication of efforts and enable the church to strive for common goals and objectives.

We have been pleased to hear from several churches indicating their willingness to adopt a pastor or student. This certainly is commendable since we need to provide stipends not only for the students but for the pastors already in the field. We have just finished an intense effort at establishing the LHF budget for 2012. It will be presented to the Board next Thursday. Even though we are suggesting an increase in the Sudan budget, we are not able to provide the amount requested for the ELCS/SS or the CLIHM. If any other groups are making commitments for the work in Sudan it is important that Bishop Noah and LHF is aware of it. We earnestly suggest that consideration be given to support the students, pastors, and other church workers. We need this help so that LHF can get back to its primary work of translating and publishing the books and materials that are needed in the seminary and church. Students or pastors can be adopted with a monthly commitment of \$100.00.

Above all, please continue to hold up the ELCSS/S in prayer during this critical year of growth and expansion. The opportunities for growth are phenomenal. We have added manpower but we need to provide for their needs so that they can carry out important study and ministry.

The Lord's blessings during this Epiphany (mission) season.

Rev. James Fandrey  
LHF Executive Director

Rev. Robert Rahn  
CLIHM Program Director

Mr. Jeff Rahn  
LHF Director of Operations

### **February 14**

On this date the first students arrive in Yambio for the beginning of their second year of classes in the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry, Yambio, South Sudan.

### **February 19**

Classes begin but Rev. Dr. William Schumacher's arrival is delayed due to lack of space on MAF flights from Kampala to Yambio.

### **February 26**

Rev. Schumacher does a one-week intensive due to his late arrival. The class day is lengthened enabling him to cover the topic. Earlier reservations become mandatory in order that the remaining instructors are assured of connections for an on time arrival. Nothing is certain when the country is in a constant state of turmoil.

### **July 20**

From: Bernhard Lutz  
Subject: A Statement of Faith

Brothers

Greetings in Jesus! A few suggestions for ELCSS/S Statement....

Allah mahabah.

Dr. Lutz

**A STATEMENT OF FAITH  
THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF SOUTH SUDAN/SUDAN**

We, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan, ON THE BASIS OF GOD'S INERRANT WORD, boldly proclaim and affirm the articles of faith AS STATED BELOW:

**ARTICLE I THERE IS ONE LIVING GOD**

The Blessed Holy Trinity  
God the Creator  
God the Redeemer  
God the Sanctifier

**ARTICLE II THAT SIN SEPARATES AND MERITS GOD'S FULL WRATH**

God is a God of Wrath  
Man has totally ruined his life  
Sin plagues us from birth to death

**ARTICLE III THAT THE HOLY SCRIPTURES ARE GIVEN BY GOD**

Revealed Himself to us  
Revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ  
Are inerrant and true  
Are powerful  
Are the rule and norm  
Are misused and abused by many

**ARTICLE IV THAT GOD MADE US AND ALL THINGS**

Man is under God's rule  
God made the sun, moon and stars  
Man is different, God made them in His image  
There are many wrong beliefs, such as worship of the sun and other false gods  
What God created perfect is now filled with sin  
Man is corrupted by sin but God is still the Father of All  
God who has created us also redeemed us

**ARTICLE V THAT SIN BRINGS DEATH AND DAMNATION**

Sin is missing God's mark of perfection  
The evil effects of sin  
We inherited guilt from our fathers  
We believe that man's heart is corrupted  
When we are baptized we still sin and do evil  
All sins are sins against God  
God's Law exposes sin  
Only God can save man ruined by sin  
We have a call to help other people whose lives are filled with sin

ARTICLE VI THAT GOD'S LAW IS PERFECT AND IS TO BE OBEYED

There is God's Law and there is God's Gospel  
The reaction of those people who hear the Law  
The Law shows man the wrath of God

ARTICLE VII JESUS CHRIST, BEGOTTEN SON OF THE FATHER

Jesus Christ has overcome the Law by redeeming those under God's Law  
Jesus Christ is both true God and true Man  
The Father and Holy Spirit did not suffer, but only Jesus Christ  
Jesus Christ reconciled us to God  
Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and Sinful Man  
Jesus Christ has defeated all of man's enemies  
Jesus Christ has redeemed us  
Jesus Christ gives us life  
Jesus Christ is our substitute  
Jesus Christ was crucified by His own people  
Jesus Christ forgives sin and justifies sinners

ARTICLE VIII THAT MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH THROUGH THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

God's blessings can be obtained only through Faith  
Man cannot earn God's blessings  
Faith is not a good work but the hand that takes a hold of Christ and His works  
Through Faith, Man is Free from the Law of God

ARTICLE IX THAT THE BLESSED HOLY GOSPEL IS A GIFT FROM GOD TO SAVE LOST SOULS

The Gospel is God's message of Peace  
The Gospel is the message of God's Grace and Mercy  
The Gospel of Christ is an active Power in our Lives  
When the Gospel is heard, the Holy Spirit comes to convert Sinners  
Christ sends the church into the whole world to summon the lost to faith and repentance

ARTICLE X THAT THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL ARE THE TWO MAIN DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE

Both the Law and the Gospel must be preached  
Both the Old Testament and the New Testament contain Law and Gospel  
God's Gospel is superior to God's Law  
All Biblical doctrines are subordinate and secondary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ  
We are not ashamed of the Gospel

ARTICLE XI THAT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS ONE OF FAITH AND TRUST

God gives us faith as a gift  
Faith changes man and makes him different  
Without force a born-again man is eager to serve God, anyone.  
When a sinner comes to faith, he is given a new name: righteous  
Christians become New People  
The Old Corrupt nature never leaves, but the Holy Spirit daily makes war against sin in our lives  
The Holy Spirit makes us saints  
The Holy Spirit makes us disciples of Christ  
The Holy Spirit comes to us through the Gospel

The Holy Spirit Gives us love for God  
Christians do good works  
A Christian's good works do not earn God's merit  
A Christian does good work because of his love for God  
A Christian's new life is incomplete  
A Christian awaits Jesus' return to judge the living and the dead

PAGE THREE

ARTICLE XII THAT PRAYER IS A WORK OF MAN, COMMANDED BY GOD

Daily prayer is necessary  
God answers Christian prayer  
Christ brings us to the Father to pray  
The Lord's Prayer is the best of prayers  
The Holy Spirit helps Christians to pray  
The power of prayer is with God, not man  
Prayer is not magic  
Prayer is a way to express hope

ARTICLE XIII THAT HOLY BAPTISM GIVES FAITH AND BRINGS SALVATION

Repentance is required for both baptism and the Lord's Supper  
Baptism is the Word of God in water  
Baptism is commanded by God  
Baptism is a baptism into the Holy Trinity  
Baptism gives salvation  
Baptism forgives sins  
Baptism frees us from the power of the devil and even from death  
Only those who have faith in Jesus Christ receive the blessings of God in Holy Baptism  
There are many false teachings about Holy Baptism

ARTICLE XIV THAT THE LORD'S SUPPER IS THE LORD'S MEAL THAT GIVES FAITH

The true body and the true blood of Christ are joined together with the bread and the wine  
The Lord's Supper equips Christians for daily life  
Those who neglect the Lord's meal become deaf to the Law and Gospel of Christ  
The Lord's Supper unites us with Christ  
The Lord's Supper offers forgiveness, life and salvation  
There are many reasons for coming to the Lord's Table  
There are many false teachings about the Lord's Supper

ARTICLE XV THAT THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS ARE TRULY HOLY

The Holy Christian Church is the assembly of believers in Christ  
God calls people by the Gospel of Christ  
Believers fall into sin but the Holy Spirit arouses them to remember their Holy Baptism  
The Church is God's people  
The communion of saints is the body of Christ  
The communion of saints is the temple of God  
The work of the Church is to proclaim the Good News

ARTICLE XVI THAT THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH ARE GIVEN TO BUILD UP THE SAINTS

The Church sets apart special workers as guardians of the flock of Christ  
The Church is to conduct and supervise the work sharing the Word and Sacrament  
The Church may decide worship orders that are effective  
The Church remains forever  
The pastoral ministry is for men only

ARTICLE XVII THAT THE CHURCH AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT ARE BOTH GIVEN BY GOD

The government holds the power of the sword  
God Himself has given government the power of the sword  
Christians are commanded to obey the government  
The government must not interfere with the work of the Church  
Christians must obey God rather than men

ARTICLE XVIII THAT THE TEACHING OF LAST THINGS BRINGS COMFORT

Jesus Christ will return for judgment and raise the dead  
Jesus has Commanded that Christians be ready  
Jesus has instructed Christians to go and tell the Gospel  
The devil fights harder as the last days near  
The end of the world will come  
Christians reject the 1000 year rule of Christ  
Christians reject the rapture as false doctrine

ARTICLE XIX THAT THE WORKS OF SATAN ARE TO BE FEARED

Christians reject Satan, the great liar  
Christians fight daily against Satan

ARTICLE XX THAT CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY ARE GIVEN BY GOD FOR A GREAT BLESSING

God created marriage  
Marriage is between one man and one woman  
Marriage has been given for bearing children and for companionship  
Christian marriage is special  
Marriage suffers because of sin  
Sin causes divorce, fornication and other sins  
Christian faith a blessing in marriage and those living in the home  
Marriage is not commanded

ARTICLE XXI THAT GOD CREATES AND SUSTAINS LIFE

God creates life and assigns man to preserve and protect life  
That abortion is a sin  
That God alone is to end life  
That God provides the faith to sustain man in time of pain and suffering

ARTICLE XXII THAT SEXUAL DEVIATIONS ARE SINFUL AND WRONG

The Word of God sets standards for sexual relationships  
That a sexual relationship is legitimate only in a heterosexual relationship  
That homosexual practice can never please God

## July 25

Dr. Bernie Lutz was sent to Sudan not only as an instructor but as an official ambassador of the LHF. After returning he filed this report.

From: Bernhard Lutz

To: Robert Rahn

Subject: GOD'S PLAN FOR SUDAN 2013....A REPORT

Results of Visit: (1) Completed Dog VI The Church: invisible, visible; Church Discipline; The Doctrine of the Call, the Office of the Keys & Antichrist. (2) Visited with Bishop Wilson from July 9-18, 2013. Many times. He was friendly, open and he was willing to discuss the work of the church. (3) The Rev John Deang's name and work did not come up, and because of early exit from Yambio, I did not discuss Rev. Deang's work with ELCSS/S.

The following observations, conversations and discussions took place while I was in Yambio:

1. **How are the congregations keeping records of attendance, records of baptism, confirmation, marriage, funerals?**
  - a. This is a new area where help is needed for the pastors of individual congregations.
  - b. Few permanent records are being kept. Need to develop a system for the ELCS.
  - c. Record books that are sturdy, weather proof are needed to keep church records.
  - d. The seminary should equip students with knowledge and know-how of the importance of record keeping.
  - e. Annual congregational reports are not available.
2. **The State of the Church**
  - a. The church is holding its own in some areas, growing in some areas and losing members in other areas. It needs strong leadership.
  - b. Certain geographic areas are ready for new churches to be planted. For example, Yambio RD district near the airstrip is ready for a new congregation. Malakal, Nuba Mountain, Nzara, Tambura, Wau, Juba, etc. are ready for new pastors.
  - c. Pastors do not exhibit much enthusiasm for their ministry (lack of enthusiasm for most part)
    1. because of pay or family situation
    2. because of lack of assignment
    3. because of break down of leadership....bishop...deanery...local church
  - d. Overall the continued Bible Study program is a failure for ELCSS/S
    1. because of lack of aggressive leadership - deans, pastors, all involved.
    2. because of lack of materials
    3. because of illiteracy
  - e. Uncertainty, confusion, lack of enthusiasm taint the ELCSS/S ministry. Positive leadership from the top down to the laity, men and women of the local church will help make the needed changes within the ELCSS/S to aggressively "make disciples."
3. **Who is responsible for the planning and direction of the ELCSS/S?**
  - a. The bishop of the church is responsible for helping the church body to grow spiritually.
  - b. The bishop of the ELCSS/S has taken firm action regarding the behavior of many church leaders. Some leaders disciplined for alcoholism, malfeasance, dishonesty, attitude. This is positive and will help the church to regroup and reestablish itself as a viable church.
  - c. The bishop has sent workers into new areas, but some have refused assignment.



- d. The headquarters of the ELCSS/S has been Juba. This has proved to be problematic for the ELCSS/S. In July of 2013 the Bishop moved his office to Yambio as a permanent geographical center for the new church. I asked him for how long? His response, “Forever!”

#### **4. Extending the ELCSS/S in South Sudan**

- a. When the bishop, deans, pastors and mature members of the ELCS begin to plan and work together, new startups will begin. There is an urgent need for leadership in this church.
- b. The ELCSS/S needs financing to equip students, build new buildings, replace old buildings.
- c. The church needs an on-going stewardship program. Not only for pastoral candidates at CLIHM or in the pastoral ministry at this time.
- d. The ELCSS/S membership must begin to assume responsibility for leading this new church body. This means every member is concerned and committed, not only the bishop, deans, pastors, evangelists, deacons, deaconesses, and lay leaders.
- e. The bishop of the church is responsible for the direction of the ELCSS/S. In meeting with Bishop Wilson, I found a man who honestly wants the best for His church body. The work is new, the way often very difficult, inexperienced with problems that are endless, Bishop Wilson is trying to build a healthy church.

#### **5. What education programs are being used to develop a strong ELCSS/S?**

- a. Very little education is being offered in most ELCS congregations.
- b. Most education takes place with the Sunday liturgy and the message preached each Sunday.
- c. Pastors, evangelists and other leaders refuse to extend the Sunday morning gathering to include a Bible Study program for children or adults.
- d. Lutheran day schools exist in large population areas (e.g, Yambio). Small, weak and irregular.
- e. A Lutheran day school system is expensive. Salaries, books, buildings, desks etc. Assistance outside the church is required for such education.
- f. The ELCSS/S cannot wait for the development of a Lutheran day school system. The ELCSS/S can begin an effective Christian education program NOW. Little money, little training, ...all that is needed is attitude.
- g. The CLHIM is successful in training pastors and now, deaconesses. But this program has its limits too. There must be ongoing learning, growing and expansion of what is the best educational program for the ELCS.
- h. The addition of a one or two year Evangelist Training program would be helpful. Male students, interested in sharing the Gospel, could be trained and equipped and sent out after a two-year program. Requirements: English-speaking students with elementary education who have confirmed their faith in Christ. This program would be inexpensive and also help to produce mature pastoral candidates for the church.
- i. The key to church growth is the proper teaching and preaching of the Law and the Gospel.
- j. LHF has the potential to produce the necessary books needed for a successful educational program.
- k. Presently, men and women join in Bible studies and there is no difference sex wise. Men are seen as pastors only. ELCA influence is to be noted in regard to gay, female pastors. The family is a unit in South Sudan and Bible study is for the entire group. Special youth groups do meet for music and choir work.
- l. Sunday schools can be established now. The cost is personal commitment on the part of the pastor, evangelist, or a lay leader. All that is needed is a teacher and the Bible. Jesus did not have CPH.

#### **6. Stipends**

- a. Pastors and CLIHM students receive funds from LHF.

- b. Families of students do not receive a stipend.
- c. CLIHM teachers receive stipends for their work.
- d. The bishop and the general secretary determine the amount of the stipend.
- e. Church leaders exist on a stipend. Times are tough in South Sudan.
- f. If there is no financial support after 01/01/2014, some church leaders will suffer severely.
- g. As more leaders are added to the stipend list, who is to pick up these costs? The partner church body must work out a fair and just stipend, along with a reasonable plan for a realistic support program for the church body.

**7. The CLIHM vicarage program**

- a. The ELCSS/S CLIHM faculty has recommended a year of vicarage after year two at the seminary.
- b. The feeling is that the last year would be more beneficial and profitable for those students who complete a year of vicarage.
- c. The present class II needs a year of internship to mature and actually personally participate in the work of a parish pastor.

**8. Plaudits for Dr. Rahn**

- a. The faculty moved and seconded to send thanks to God and congrats to Dr. Rahn for having been asked to serve as Interim Executive Director of LHF.
- b. The faculty appreciates the work of Dr. Rahn to provide funds and professors for CLIHM.
- c. Dr Lutz is to convey the feelings of the faculty to Dr. Rahn upon his return to USA.

**9. The Concordia Bakery project**

- a. The seminary bakery project is making a small profit on its sales. It sells bread to the seminary and to the local community. The cost for one batch of dough is \$12 US. There is a profit of \$5 on each pan.
- b. The bakery does not make enough to pay for salaries and/or expansion of the business.
- c. Plans are being carried out to expand the bakery business to a series of buildings near the main road between the Yambio Lutheran Church and the Hands of Mercy enterprise. Presently many positive results have been seen and with the addition of a store (6x9 feet) and a restaurant (10x20 feet) the business will hopefully become a profit making business to help support the CLIHM program.
- d. Special need to complete this phase is an 8x10 brick security building to house all the supplies and the generator. The cost for this building has not been determined.
- e. Pascal has been faithful. His workers have been doing excellent work. The bread is on demand. Pascal's salary is \$200 (SSP) plus \$600 (SSP) for rent, bed and food monthly. Helpers receive \$200 SSP per month.
- f. The bakery project should be in the black, profit-making, in several years. Under the leadership of Pascal, the chief baker, his efficient workers and the seminary committee (Rev. Edward - Chair, Rev. Dachi, Rev. Otto, and Rev. Nicolas), I feel this business will soon be a financial asset to the ELCSS/S.

**10. The meeting with Bishop Wilson**

I met with the bishop:

- a. On Independence day, July 9 (2nd anniversary of South Sudan), Bishop came late. He refused to sit in a chair of honor for church leaders provided by the government. He preferred to sit with Lilly, his wife, about eight rows up from the governor of WES. I went over to welcome him since he and Elinama had just driven in from Juba. He was staying in the Navaisha Hotel. Frankly, I did not

know the bishop, or what he looked like at the time. His refusal to move to the front, honored chair is understandable, since leaving Lilly alone was unacceptable.

- b. I arranged for a dinner for just the Bishop and Lilly that night. It turns out Robert, Dachi and Rev. Elinama and his wife Elizabeth also came! A good meeting, just getting acquainted. By the way, the bishop took no alcoholic beverage at any time during my stay in South Sudan.
- c. The bishop had rented a house north of the market. He requested that I bless this house prior to sleeping in the new residence. I put together a liturgy for house blessing. Dachi and I went to the rental house and did a house blessing. I gave him \$200 from LHF advance money as a gift from LHF, plus other things. Things seemed to work out very well. The bishop was helpful, respectful, and considerate.
- d. The bishop spoke to my class. He was introduced by myself, and he spoke on the need for pastors to have the respect of the members of their congregation. Pastors lose respect by poor actions (e.g., laziness, alcohol use and poor judgment with women). A very good speech.
- e. I arranged for the repair of a used generator, the replacement of 11 light bulbs, and some sockets so that the bishop could have some light at night. The rented house is well built, but there are many basic needs. To name a few, a wash room in the house, a kitchen for cooking food outside, a shelter for the generator etc.
- f. I asked for a special meeting at his house, just the bishop and I, to discuss LHF, the LCMS, the state of the Church.
  1. When elected the constitution was just accepted, guidelines were no guidelines.
  2. There were many problems to deal with...among the pastors, congregations, individuals, overseas partners. It was a confusing time. It called for prayer and trust in God.
  3. I felt that there were no guidelines
  4. Finally, I feel that the church is starting to grow spiritually.
  5. There is brokenness, a lack of unity, but he feels with God's help this will be healed.
  6. The church is not the late Bishop Andrew's, but the church belongs to God.
  7. Many have criticized the bishop for taking strong action. At home and overseas.
  8. The bishop then went through each pastor he disciplined and why he did what he did.

## 11. Final points of discussion with Bishop Wilson

- a. Regarding Rev. Otto Joseph: The Bishop did not approve of asking Rev. Otto to begin a new Lutheran congregation in Yambio. I personally pleaded for another opportunity for Rev. Otto; it was given. The bishop, the Yambio dean and myself, together with Rev. Otto, discussed the beginning of a new preaching station in Yambio. Nothing has been done in the six years I have been in Yambio. Rev. Otto must now prove himself and earn some respect.
- b. The Bishop agreed to working with LCMS immediately for altar and pulpit partnership. He is presently working on this relationship. LHF will still be needed and necessary to make a transition possible.
- c. The Bishop agreed to discussing with LWR help for Nuba Mountain.
- d. The Bishop agreed to having the LCMS Laborers for Christ work on a major project in Yambio, esp. the Guest House area of the church. The bishop will work out a plan of need and desired action and submit it for consideration by LCMS-LFC.
- e. The ELCSS/S needs a formal office to do the work that needs to be done from the church leaders' office. Perhaps a Bishop/Principal Office could be designed and built soon.

## 12. Immediate needs for ELCSS/S

- a. \$2,100 for a bathroom in the bishop's house.
- b. A cooking kitchen near the rental house in Yambio - \$\$\$?

- c. A 14-passenger van for use by CLIHM.
- d. A security hut for security people at LGH Yambio.
- e. An office for the ELCSS/S bishop and the CLIHM principal.

**13. The last few words**

- a. The bishop is using the one room available in the staff/headquarters building in the LGH campus. This room will serve well until a separate church headquarters can be built.
- b. The bishop asked for and received a Statement of Faith to share with request for Partnership with LCMS.
- c. The bishop wanted to transport to the airport when departing, and offered a departure prayer.

**14. Other activity**

- a. Besides teaching Dog VI.
- b. I did pericopes two times for students, Yambio pastors and CLIHM staff
- c. Led Wed AM Holy Communion worship
- d. Preached English worship at Yambio three times
- e. Met twice with the deaconesses and discussed their CLIHM program
- f. I was asked to write up a Statement of Faith for the ELCSS/S.
- g. The faculty asked me to revise the Deaconess Curriculum into a two-year program.

**CONCLUSION**

It was a blessing to take 12 suitcases of books to Yambio. It was a joy to teach the 15 pastoral candidate students enrolled at CLIHM. It was rewarding to see nine women enrolled for training as deaconesses at CLIHM. To God be the glory, now and forever.

Please ask for any qualifications, explanations, or unanswered statements in this report.  
Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz

**July 29, 2013**

**PROPOSED-TWO YEAR DEACONESS PROGRAM**

*Suggestions to the CLIHM Faculty and Bishop  
For the Deaconess Two-Year Curriculum*

THE 2013-2014 CLIHM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEACONESS PROGRAMME

THE FOLLOWING CURRICULUM IS A TWO -EAR REQUIRED ACADEMIC PROGRAM FOR THE  
TRAINING OF ELCSS/S WOMEN TO BECOME QUALIFIED AS A DEACONESS.

CONCORDIA INSTITUTE FOR THE HOLY MINISTRY  
Yambio, WES

The prerequisites for admission to the CLIHM Deaconess Programme:

- Must be a confirmed Lutheran and have a pastors recommendation
- Be friendly and warm, with a ready welcome smile
- Must be literate in English

- Have a compassion for the poor, the sick, the dying
- Willingness to work with the pastor and congregational leaders
- Accept tasks that are not welcome with eagerness
- Be able to commit herself to the needs of the congregation regularly
- Successful completion of the CLIHM curriculum
- Successful interview and recommendation from the ELCS Bishop

The following two-year program will lead to the Office of the Deaconess, ELCSS/S:

Students will be given field work assignments to complete in their home congregation.

### THE REQUIRED COURSES LEADING TO THE OFFICE OF DEACONESS:

#### YEAR ONE

101	The Lutheran Deaconess: A Biblical Perspective	4 semester hours
102	Effective Lutheran Worship	4 semester hours
103	Christian Ethics	2 semester hours
105	The Lutheran Deaconess and Her Relationship to the Local Pastor	2 semester
106	Catechesis : The Proper Use of Luther's Small Catechism	4 semester hours
107	Christian Dogmatics	Three courses

A. DOGMATICS I. The Holy Bible (source, origin, inspiration, attributes, divisions, purposes and use and the Doctrine of God, natural and revealed, essence and attributes of the Triune God. The Doctrine of Creation, doctrine of angels and man, original, actual sin. (4 semester hours)

B. DOGMATICS II. Doctrine of salvation by grace, justification, saving grace, person of Christ, humiliation, exaltation, work of Christ, office of Christ. The Doctrine of Sanctification, conversion, faith, justification by faith, sanctification through faith, good works, prayer, Christian life, election. The doctrine of salvation through the Means of Grace, The Gospel, the Law and the Gospel, the sacraments, Baptism, the Lord's Supper (4 semester hours)

C. DOGMATICS III. The doctrine of the church, visible church, government of the church. Office of the Keys, power to remit/retain sins, church discipline, office of the ministry, the Antichrist . The doctrine of the Last Things, temporal death, state of death, Second Coming, Millennium, resurrection of the dead, Last Judgment, end of world, eternal damnation, eternal salvation. (4 semester hours)

#### YEAR TWO

201	Field Work. Advanced training for prison, hospital and home visits.	
202	The Old Testament and The Example of Faithful Women	3 semester hours
203	The New Testament and a New Criteria of the Deaconite	3 semester hours
204	Paul's Epistles as a Guideline for the Lutheran Deaconess	4 semester hours
205	Ministering to the Sick and Dying	4 semester hours
206	Teaching God's Word to the Illiterate Christian Women	2 semester hours
207	Lutheran Confessions as Foundation for the Lutheran Deaconess	4 semester

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**August 30, 2013**

From: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Old Questions

Dear Brothers,

This message has been in my “hold file” for the past seven days. I decided I should wait before sending it in case information was forthcoming relative to the report made by Bernie that Rob had carried church fellowship materials back with him to be presented to Rev. Seter, Mission Board Chairman. It brought back recollection of messages I had sent earlier seeking information to which no response was received. Could we have some information on these matters by Tuesday next week?

Dear Brothers Serving the Savior,

Today I had some exchanges with the Minnesota congregation that provided for the building funds that were squandered by the Adventis Building firm in Nairobi. Who could forget such a mismanaged company.

The church's representative hesitatingly asked if anything had come of the building and I told him that I had written and asked some questions. My message to him:

About a month ago I addressed a message to the Bishop and the leadership and asked some basic questions

- Whatever happened to the large generator that was provided years ago?
- Whatever happened to the sawmill equipment that was provided years ago to set up a lumber yard?
- Whatever happened to the two medical vans that were provided ten years ago? Could they be fixed up and used for transportation instead of asking for a Land Rover?
- Whatever happened to the brick making machine that we were going to use to make the bricks for the Rich Valley Center?
- Doesn't the UN have some heavy equipment you could request to be used to tear down the one end of the faulty center?
- Couldn't we find some individual who had construction know-how to at least build the one end of the building so it could be used for a church or school and offices?
- Is there anyone interested enough to pursue any of this?

So far no answer. But they will be asked again when we get into the budget process. Since I'm back in the “Director's Chair,” I may have to make a visit to stir up the folks.

And here is the message I sent to you a few weeks ago.....

When Dr. Lutz returned from his trip to Yambio he reported on his trip that not only included obligations as an instructor but also as our designated LHF ambassador. His report was encouraging to us even though it included the challenges you continue to face in serving the church as Bishop. We continue to pray that you will be strengthened in your task.

We were pleased to hear that you were taking up residence in Yambio in order to more centralize the leadership of the church. We were asked to provide some help so that your house could have bathroom facilities installed. To that end, we herewith notify you that we are authorizing \$1,100 for this improvement. We hope you will find a way to accomplish this with the funds we are authorizing. This amount should be taken from the last wire and the amount will be replenished in the August wire when it is sent. The transaction should be recorded in the Excel file and receipts should be obtained.



These questions remain. It is important that they be considered and possible answers given in timely fashion. These same questions are scheduled to be in a report to the LHF Board for their next meeting on October 4.

These questions become even more significant and important in view of information I stumbled across last week when it was reported that Rob Lutz had brought back with him for presentation to Rev. Seter, LCMS Chairman of the Mission Board, the ELCSS/S request for fellowship. I decided that I would wait for one week to see if any official of the ELCSS/S would report this to us here at the LHF headquarters. It was my opinion that common courtesy would have prompted that to happen, in view of the investments we have made and in view of the fact that this process for fellowship started years ago with our counsel and aid.

Now that more than a week has passed and no word about this has been provided, I am sending this as a matter of deep interest and concern. It leads us to ask the question whether when we enter the budgeting process we should simply instruct you to send your request to Rob Lutz and Bernie Seter, or would you still want involvement from the LHF at the LHF World Mission Center? This would be a good time to communicate with us and let us know if our help is still needed or wanted.

We had just discussed with Bernie Lutz the idea of presenting an offer to you of assistance in a complete refurbishing of all buildings on the Yambio site by assembling a team of construction volunteers to come in 2014. It's another question that we will now defer action.

We know that these are critical times for the ELCSS/S as they are for the LHF mission. We have untold opportunities and open doors and we are not inclined to abandon our family, but we seek assurances of cooperation and commitment AND COMMUNICATION.

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*Author's note insertion*

*During the editing process on Saturday, August 11, 2018, I took a break to water plants that were planted this spring along the east side of the World Mission Center – hostas, day lilies and fesque grass. It reminded me of a story I had heard about the famous basketball coach John Wooden of CA fame and 60's vintage. He was known to take a broom after practice once a week and sweep the gym floor. It was a lesson for life: "Don't be afraid to pick up a broom!" Watering plants, trimming trees, spraying weeds, raking up pine cones are all about that which enables a mission to thrive, a team to succeed.*

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**September 1**

From: Edward Sunge

To: Robert Rahn

Subject: Answers to Old questions

Dear Rev. Dr. Rahn,

Greetings from Yambio! We are doing well. We have started the last semester this week. I was in Kampala for almost the whole of August to train in Management and Project Planning. On coming back I got your message and I am writing to answer some concerns that you raised.

1. Application for pulpit fellowship with LCMS. Yes we did send a preliminary letter for fellowship with the LCMS church body. This idea is not new because it dates back to 2007 when the late bishop wrote to LCMS

on the same matter. This time it was just a revival of the same. The letter was sent by Rob Lutz and we asked him to inform all our coworkers over there. Dr. Lutz who was the LHF envoy to ELCSS/S at the time was quite aware of this, and he even helped us to write the statement of faith. In our last meeting with him he promised to report to you all what we discussed here. He even had a lengthy meeting with the bishop in the bishop's residence and I think they might have talked on the matter of fellowship. Having fellowship with other church bodies does not mean that we are not going to work with LHF. We have gone a long way with LHF for the last 20 years and we cannot just in a moment turn our back on LHF. There is no church body that has supported us like LHF does. So please rest assured that we are still part of LHF.

2. The other things that you asked for are all there: the generator, sawmill equipment, the medical vans are all there but are not functioning, some for technical reasons or having no spare parts. We are trying to make some work so they can generate income towards our budget of 2014.

3. The property in Baguga: the building has been collapsing and it is not safe to go around it. The Adventis Company of Kenya did very bad work. We did assessment as to how to clear the fallen and the amount needed was \$16, 000. I sent this to your end and it was not possible to raise this money and since then there is nothing we can do. You asked about U.N having equipment that can pull down. Yes they have it, but the UN works mostly with government bodies; they can work on public roads and buildings. However I will try to see if they can help and I will inform you accordingly. If they agree to clear it will need also that there is money ready for the work.

4. Volunteers to renovate buildings here: this idea was brought to us by Dr. Lutz and we welcomed it and asked him to work on it. We will be happy if they come.

I hope I have answered some of the questions that you raised according to my limitations. I will be willing to do more clarification in the future.

I think these are coming up because of lack of communication on our side. I tried to phone you yesterday and it was not possible. I will phone you this evening our time. Is August wire being delayed because of no answer to your questions? We shall soon have problem of feeding the seminarians.

In Christ,  
Rev. Edward Nzeme  
Secretary General, ELCSS/S

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**September 3**

Dear Rev,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all allow me to apologize for taking time to reply you on this very important question of vicarage. The reasons are many but I need not to dwell on them.

In all our faculty meetings since May this year, it has been agreed in union that both the pastoral class and the deaconesses will go out next year for their practical work in their sending deaneries or as the Office of the Bishop will deem it fit done. In the same meeting it was also agreed that all the teachers will be visiting all the students for encouragement and to follow up in their duties and also get confidential reports about each of them. The pastors will be writing their research papers so our presence will be needed. We also agreed that

Rev. Nicholas will come up with a budget on this and send it to your office.

As per now we are well prepared to take care of the time that Rev. Kebede will not be here. May I know if Rev. May is coming, because I wrote to him but up to now there is no response from him. And what about the pastor from Finland who is supposed to come in November?

We are doing very well at the Seminary and God bless you.

Rev. Dachi

CLIHM Principal

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert Rahn

Subject: RE: VICARAGE 2014.

Dear Brother Dachi,

Thank you for your message with information that the students will be on vicarage during 2014 as we had agreed during Bernie's time there. I'm glad you are working on the plans and budget for that. We do not intend to recruit any teaching staff for 2014 in that case. The local staff, the deans and the bishop will cover the visiting of each student. We will concentrate on sending a volunteer team to do some remodeling and refurbishing of the Yambio campus. Vicarage Commissioning will be on Nov. 28.

May the Lord bless these remaining months of seminary education for the students.

R. Rahn

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## September 6

*Taken from the September 2013 "Word at Work" newsletter:*

### **Preparing pastors in Sudan: Seminarists learn to preach the Word**

It's a pivotal moment in the life of every seminarian: the first sermon.

For the 15 men studying at the Concordia Theological Institute for the Holy Ministry in South Sudan, that moment came in August when Rev. Robert Roberts, an LCMS pastor and college math instructor, arrived in Yambio to teach them homiletics (the art of preaching).

In the beginning, it wasn't easy.

"The students' presentations at devotions were totally Law; there was no Gospel," Rev. Roberts remembers. "This is typical, because we all want a set of rules we can follow."

For the next week, Rev. Roberts spent time teaching the men how to find the Gospel in any Bible lesson, how to organize a sermon, and how to preach with minimal notes. They listened to and analyzed other pastors' sermons.

Then it was time to sink or swim.

The seminarians spent their evenings crafting their own first sermons. “One of the women commented that they’d never seen such quiet nights, when they were all hard at work!” laughed Rev. Roberts. “Some of the men were terrified.”

At the end of the course, the men took turns preaching their very first sermons before the class and their teacher.

“Every sermon included Law and Gospel,” Rev. Roberts said. “Every one of the students preached an acceptable sermon, and some of them preached really, really excellent sermons. They worked very hard.”

The timing of this LHF-sponsored homiletics class couldn’t be better, as the seminarians have only three more months of study before receiving their year-long vicarage assignments.

As they pack, the students will include the new e-readers given to them by Rev. Roberts and his wife, Eileen. The readers are loaded with various translations of the Bible, the Greek New Testament, the *Book of Concord*, and other pastoral helps.

## September 10

From: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Debriefing

Dear Brothers,

Today Jeff, Jen and I held our debriefing with Rev. Robert and Eileen Roberts and we were pleased with the report shared and the pictures presented.

Robert was highly complementary of the students ability to organize and preach a sermon by the end of the two-week session. Perhaps you had an opportunity to hear some of those sermons. I was quite pleased once again with another report on the caliber of students in the class. The fact that he tried to get them to deliver a sermon without notes was also a positive factor.

I was also pleased that he provided each student with a tablet that had some 400 books on it. This should be an invaluable tool for the students.

We peppered him with a lot of our questions and were especially quite shocked to hear his report on the number of churches and members in the ELCSS/S. You might verify this for me before we go about reporting this. He indicated there were 500 congregations and 25,000 members. I challenged him on this and he insisted that the number came from church leaders. Please verify this before we begin to report such.

Rev. Roberts suggested we hold several continuing education conferences during the year students are on vicarage. It was something Bernie and I had talked about earlier, in addition to a volunteer team to do refurbishing, rebuilding, regarding and building a kitchen.

Bob and Eileen’s background with service in China and the Philippines helped them to make quick adjustments and adapt to the situation. We provided them with a certificate and plaque for their teaching commitment, as we have done with all faculty.

We hope you have the program continuing while waiting for the arrival of the next faculty member.

God’s blessings. R. Rahn

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## October 17

While the following report is more oriented to the former Soviet Union, I am enclosing it in this history as a reminder that man's inhumanity to man exists also in Sudan, where many citizens have been forced out of their homeland and are now living in refugee camps. May this historic account of happenings in Ukraine and Cambodia speak to the atrocities at the hands of evil men in South Sudan/Sudan.

### MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN

A new monument has been built in Kiev, Ukraine as a memorial to those who died in the forced starvation of 1932-33. As I travel to areas where the LHF is at work, I like to visit sites as time allows. I have seen many of the sites in Kiev over the almost 20 years of travel to that city, including some exotic gold encrusted Orthodox churches, monks' caves and government buildings.

Bishop Slavik Horpynchuk mentioned that there was a new monument I might be interested in. I was doubly interested when I found out it was near the statue of Vladimir, one of the early missionaries in Kiev. This was of interest since Ukraine had just recently celebrated the 1025th anniversary of Christianity coming to that country. Earlier I was told that Vladimir had baptized many people in the Dnieper River on whose banks the statue stood.

All of this fit together when on a Sunday after the service we dedicated one of the latest books to be published in Ukrainian: *Luther's Works, On the Gospel of John, Chapters 1-4*, the first in a series of four volumes covering the Gospel of John.

We walked over to the monument going past St. Michael's Monastery where at the entrance there was a painting of the forced starvation that was famous in itself. Now the new monument stood on the hill from which you could overlook the Dnieper River.

We entered the somber area where two angels were sculpted out of stone with heads bowed. The artist depicted them as "THE CRYING ANGELS!" Would they not weep when seeing the sin carried out at the hands of evil men? Walking a little further you came across another stone sculpture, this one of a young girl. Here at this place you swallowed hard as you see a figure about the age of your own granddaughter, but one who clearly looks famished — skin and bones.

Then in front of you is the monument, some 60' high designed in the form of a burning candle. Beneath this monument are housed the historic tools, utensils and elements of this cruel act of an atheistic government. Scenes from the starvation are flashed on the circular wall in a continuous video display. Farming artifacts, old machinery, cooking stoves and utensils, wagons, shovels and brooms are prominently displayed. Around this circular space there are books placed on lecterns that can be opened, and there you will see displayed name after name of those identified as victims of the forced starvation.

The information stated that 4 million people were starved to death. Bishop Horpynchuk, a historian in his own right, says "that is the public relations numbering." The real death total was closer to 10 million. In the center of the circular display is a place where candles are burning as a memorial to the victims.

We depart with a heavy heart and stop to take more pictures of the girl. It is then that I notice something I hadn't seen when entering. The little girl is holding five heads of wheat in her small hand. I now see what I later read in the descriptive folder that this represents the "law of the five." This was the law that said anyone having more than five heads of wheat will be executed. Your heart begins to beat and you don't quite know if it is hate against those who perpetrated

this evil deed or if it is a feeling of deep regret over what these people had to endure.

In later speaking events I used this as an illustration as to why we need to publish books and materials that demonstrate the love of Christ Jesus.

I also use this as a reminder that we dare not become too smug in looking upon this evil, as we in America have our own holocaust to encounter — the holocaust of abortion that has taken a similar number of lives in a gruesome and indescribable fashion.

I now remember an interview I conducted with Mrs. Martel in Bozeman, MT some years ago, who was very reluctant to speak about the topic. You see, she was a survivor of the Ukrainian Forced Starvation. I remember parts of her story that fit into this monument explanation. She informed me that she recalled seeing the piles of wheat that were stacked everywhere, symbolic of the fact that there was wheat for bread. The only problem was that those piles of wheat were guarded by communist soldiers. These same soldiers had forcibly entered homes and destroyed any semblance of food that was found in the kitchen or pantries, thus contributing to the quick starvation of the millions.

Mrs. Martel sadly speaks of the death of one of her own young children. She said they didn't even have enough money to buy a little lumber to build a coffin and wondered what they were going to do. As she left her house the next morning there in the path lay enough money to buy the lumber so a decent burial could be conducted.

She tells of her escape by night with the family, running and dodging soldiers here, there and everywhere, and finally with bleeding feet getting to the place where they could be taken to shelter and safety. She told me the story from her kitchen table punctuated with her tears. She could remember.

This visit reminds me of another memorial and monument I visited in Cambodia, built depicting man's inhumanity to man. This was at the "Killing Fields" of Phnom Penh where thousands of people were killed by the infamous despot Polpot. The monument is very similar in shape and size. The only difference is that the Cambodian monument has shelf upon shelf, from top to bottom, of the skulls of people — men, women and children — who were shot and buried. The graves have been dug up and the skulls placed in the glass-encased monument so that we remember.

These monuments help us vividly and starkly to remember man's inhumanity to man. The question we need to address to ourselves is if we will remember? Will we remember when the rule of Sharia law is the order of the day? Will we remember when one member of the family points out the believing member and an execution takes place? It has happened in Somalia, Sudan, Indonesia and will we remember when it happens here and future generations can only ask, "How could it have happened?"

Let us remember that these are monuments that give reason and purpose to the mission we are engaged in: to bring the Word of Truth to the world so that the love of Christ can penetrate the deep recesses of hearts now claimed by the devil. The books we print are meant to bring the Truth to the nations. As missionary Thomas Brooks once said: "Books may preach when the author cannot, when the author may not, when the author dares not, yes, and which is more, when the author is not." Or as Rev Ted NaThalang stated: "Missionaries come and go, but a book like Luther's catechism will be around for generations to come."



**October 19**

From: Robert Rahn

Subject: RE: for Rev. Rahn, re: donating my deceased father's pastoral vestments

Marion,

Good to hear from you. Emails are coming via a circular route. Yes, all of the items you mentioned will be a tremendous asset for our pastors in Sudan and the 15 students who are going out on vicarage will be able to use those items. The stoles can be given to pastors already in the field serving among the 150 congregations and 40,000 members.

I'm scheduled to be in Fort Wayne on October 30 and will contact you before leaving. May have to arrange coming to your place as I'll probably stop when returning late afternoon or evening. Unless I leave on Thursday, still to be determined.

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**October 28**

The report below is included here as a way to demonstrate various ways the LHF has tried to help the church of Sudan to become self supporting. A number of projects have been introduced and failed, but the bakery/restaurant project currently operating is one of the more successful ventures and we wanted to show you specifically what is entailed in such a venture, including financial statistics that we first contemplated being eliminated as being too boring. Pascal is an interesting part of the story as LHF sponsored his education and training in Uganda in the field of hotel management. It was discovered that he had a talent for making bread and rolls that were in high demand, so we put him in charge of the bakery upon his graduation. The unique thing, how the Lord works, that in 2018 he became part of the new class of seminarians who elected him as president of the class. Here he tries to be accountable for his work and expenses.

From: Kungbowia Pascal

To: Jeff Rahn

cc: Robert Rahn; Bernard Lutz

Subject: Accountability and new budget for worker's salaries, July to Dec 2013

Dear Jeff Rahn,

This report has been long delayed from the time we had the meeting with Rev. Dr. Lutz, because I gave the budget for the proposed shop for one engineer to make and up to now he has not yet submitted it to me. I decided to send this one, so I will send that one any time he submits it.

In case of any questions on the report or the salary budget, let me know so that I may clarify.

In Christ,

KUNGBOWIA Pascal.

BeCe, Concordia Bakery- ELCSS/S Yambio

Dear Jeff Rahn,

Re: Accountability for the funds for the bakery project WIRED March 2013

The amount of 5,000 USD, an equivalence of 20,000 SSP was received and budgeted as follows.

1	Salary for mgr./ baker, Nov 2012- June 2013	1,600 SSP
2	Rent, feeding and laundry expenses	2,060
3	Salaries for other 2 workers	2,000
4	Staff welfare	1,000
5	Ingredients	2,500
6	Source of heat and light	1,200
7	Restaurant equipment and utensils	3,120
8	Maintenance and expansion/market strategies	4,000
9	Incentives to the bakery committee	500

ADDITIONAL CASH FROM DR. LUTZ IN JULY

10	Timber	531
11	Iron sheets	1,170
12	Nails	120
13	Labor	150
14	Grand total	21,971 SSP

After putting all these strategies in place, a gross profit of 7,000 SSP was realized from the initial capital of 4,600 SSP which was directly injected in to production. On 17 June 2013, unfortunately robbers broke into the kiosk and took cash 1,850 SSP which was meant for buying merchandise for re-sale. They also took cash from the day's sales, cash 204 SSP, plus a box of powdered soap and a box of sachet powder milk, all worth 482 SSP.

From the month of Aug to date however, the status of the business is as follows, in summary:

1	Gross profit	8,230 SSP
2	Running costs on generator and other administrative work	1,235
3	Cash Balance B/d	6,995
4	Value of goods currently stocked	1,903
5	Total current assets	8,898 SSP

As a result, the committee sat together with Rev Dr Lutz in July and recommended the following:

- Aid the bakery in payment of salaries to the workers for 6 months;
- Provide funds for the construction of a concrete shop building to ensure the safety of the goods.
- Provide funds to enable us buy the main ingredients (flour) in bulk, whereby it will be cheaper.
- Provide funds to buy a tricycle for transporting and distributing the products
- Recruit 2 more bakers so work can be in shifts and increase the quantity produced. And in case a worker is sick, work can continue.

In a related event, the workers tabled their complaint to me about some salary increment, citing that their current salary figure can hardly sustain or provide them with some basic needs over the course of a month to a another month (mainly soap, medication, feeding and also clothing, among other things). So that these do affect performance at work place, I recommend some percentage increments for each individual worker respectively.

# **BUDGET FOR WORKER'S SALARIES FOR 6 MONTHS WITH PROPOSED % INCREMENTS**

S/N	Details	Number	Current Salary	Proposed % increase	Total per month increase	Total in SSP	Total in USD
1	Mgr/ baker	1	200 SSP	150 SSP	350X6	2,100 SSP	553 USD
2	Ass baker	1	200	120	320x6	1,920	505
3	Chef	1	180	60	240x6	1,440	379
4	Ass. Chef	1	150	60	210x6	1,260	332
5	Alternative bakers	2	250		250x2x6	3,000	789
6	Rent for mgr	10mths	80/mth		80x10	800	211
7	Feeding	10mths	300/mth		300x10	3,000	789
8	Laundry	10mths	250/mth		250x10	2,500	658
9	Worker's welfare	6 p'ple	35/mth		35x6x6	1,260	360
10	Overall	6 pairs	150		150x6	900	237
11	Total					18,180 SSP	4,813 USD

## **OTHERS:**

S/No	Description	Unit No	Unit Price	Amount in SSP	Amount in USD
1	Wheat flour	25 bags	60 x 25	1,500 SSP	395 USD
2	Tricycle	1	9,500		2,500 USD
3	Fuel for transport from Juba to Yambio	30LTR	6X30	180 SSP	47 USD
4	Transport charges on wheat flour	20 / bag	20x	500 SSP	132 USD
	Total			11,680 SSP	3,074 USD

## **BUDGET STATEMENT**

This budget comes with some new things which are deemed necessary as featured, such as salary increases, some allowances, etc. This will motivate the workers and in turn improve performance aimed at increasing the profit margin.

The project has developed from an infant stage to another level and now it is able to sustain, with exception of some needs and requirements such as salaries, expansion, and capacity to satisfy the reach and consumers.

That is why the committee recommended more aid for the project to implement the necessary strategies as to make the project more dependable. I and the committee will be glad for your positive and quick response to this proposal.

Sincerely,

KUNGBOWIA Pascal.

Mgr/ Baker.

Be Ca Concordia Bakery, Yambio.

## **October 31**

Below is a message written to a group of about 50 people who are on a Rev. Rahn mailing list with the title "Potpourri." This is a regular mailing that features humor, politics, religion, and miscellaneous items. This was a reflection on a Reformation theme.

Let's let the potpourri today rest from its "too often" theme of politics and "reformat" it to reflect the day's primary emphasis: Reformation.

Now it's true there are political efforts going on in the church, even Lutheran churches, to re-format, or to give the Truth a re-"formation" that is nothing more than a lie or a degrading of the Truth. Today is a good day to be reminded if we weren't during the last Sunday's celebration of Reformation, to reflect on the passage from John 8: 31,32: "If you continue in MY Word, then you are My disciples indeed, and you will know the Truth and the Truth will set you free." Verse 36: "And if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

Now aren't those the two most popular words in the area of politics and religion - TRUTH and FREEDOM. We are so interested in freedom and have given carte blanche to the voice of freedom, so much so that we are in deep slavery and don't even know it. Slaves to sin, all of us are. And many preachers today, especially popular ones on TV, would not so much as to mention the word "sin." It gives open opportunity to live in the debauchery of homosexuality, the destruction of the family, same sex marriage, drugs and alcohol. We have so much freedom and most of it coming to us under the infamous, and highly touted new vocabulary term, TOLERANCE. You give up your Truth, thank you very much, and I will be able to keep myths and lies that I have built on my own interpretation of the Truth.

We don't need a re-formatting or re-formation of the Truth. We need the blessed assurance "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

So, I encourage you to celebrate over the fact that we have the greatest gift when we realize that truth and freedom are ours through faith in Christ.

What a great blessing that is. May we never squander it, trample it under foot, or re-format it to fit our needs or itching ears.

God's Word is our great heritage And shall be ours forever;  
To spread its light from age to age Shall be our chief endeavor.  
Through life it guides our way, In death it is our stay.  
Lord grant, while worlds endure, We keep its teachings pure  
Throughout all generations. (#333 LW)

Happy Reformation and if you want to throw a little of Halloween into the mix, try this about the pumpkin! And make it a great Halloween also. From one pumpkin to another!

A woman was asked by a coworker, 'What is it like to be a Christian?'

The coworker replied, 'It is like being a pumpkin.' God picks you from the patch, brings you in, and washes all the dirt off of you. Then He cuts off the top and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate, and greed. Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see.'

This was passed on to me by another pumpkin. Now it's your turn to pass it to other pumpkins. I liked this enough to send it to all the pumpkins - and all the Reformation Truth holders!

## November 1

The report below covers the intended repair of two medical vans that were converted to buses.

From: Edward Nzeme

Subject: Bus Update

Dear Jeff,

Greetings from Yambio. I am writing in reply to questions that you raised about the bus situation. It has taken time to reply because I was not in office last month.

*Would this repair work be covered by a warranty and if so for how long? What is “Sob sober front/rear” and “Cronner Complete”?*

It will be covered by warranty for at least one year. The other part of the question is concerning the spare parts and this was given by the mechanic here.

*Are the materials to make the repairs available in South Sudan and how long would it take to complete the repairs?*

Yes the materials are in South Sudan and it will take 5-7 days to complete the work.

*How would the bus be used to generate revenue for the church and how much would be generated per month? What would the additional running costs be to keep the bus running such as fuel, oil, repairs, licensing, insurance, etc.*

The bus will be used to transport passengers to nearby towns in order to generate money. The estimated daily income will be SSP 600 and this will be used to buy fuel and other repairs, and there will be some money to be kept for other church activities.

This bus has operated in past and there was some revenue from it that catered for church needs.

In Christ,

Rev. Edward Nzeme

Translation and publication - update on translation and publication.

The following translation projects are now in progress:

1. *Zande Hymn Book*: Typesetting is finished and proofreading has started. We hope to complete this work in first quarter next year.
2. *Luther's Small Catechism* in Acholi: Translation and proofreading is finished. This work was done by pastors in central and eastern Equatoria deanery. We have not paid them for the work of translation, typesetting and proofreading. The work is ready for layout design and printing. We aim to print 1,000 copies.
3. *Acholi Hymn Book*: This work was done by the same group of pastors who translated the *Luther's Small Catechism*. We also plan to print 1000 copies.
4. *Luther's Small Catechism* in Anuak: This is a new project which is still at the translation phase.

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**November 5**

Dear Marion Meilander,

Thank you once again for the robes, stoles and communion sets you provided that are now part of your Dad's legacy. The use of these items in Sudan will be desired by many of the "old or new clergy" members.

When they actually get to Sudan is still a question, since next year is a vicarage year for the 15 current students and we don't have pastors and professors being sent over at various intervals to teach. It is possible that I might be going over in February. It is my hope that however they get over there that we would be able to get some pictures when the distribution takes place.

I know this contribution was a little difficult for you to make because of memories that were attached. It is, however, in your father's honor that his ministry is in a way perpetuated, as we continue to use what he at one time used himself. Because someone is going to be able to make good use of these items, it will be a testimony to your father's ministry being carried on.

May the Lord bless you now and always.

Gratefully in Christ,  
Rev. Robert L. Rahn

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From: Marion Meilander  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: donation for use in the Sudan

Dear Pastor Rahn,  
Thank you so much for this kind message. It was a pleasure to meet you and your wife last week, and I am grateful that you took the trouble to come through Marshall.

Although you are right that I felt emotional about relinquishing these things that were so much a part of Dad's life, I am indeed very glad to know that my father's vestments, pectoral cross, and communion sets will be used to carry on pastoral work in Sudan.

God's blessings on your travels and the work you do through LHF. I will keep you in my prayers.  
In Christ,  
Marion Meilaender

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**December 5**

From: Albert Collver  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: ELCS/SS Working Agreement

Dear Bob,  
Advent greetings. The CTCR reviewed a letter from Bishop Noah Wilson requesting fellowship with the



LCMS. I thought you might be better able to answer some of the questions that arose.

1. Bishop Wilson's letter mentions a working agreement from 2001. I do not have record of this. Do you?
2. As the chairman of CLIHM, do you have a course listing of the classes taught? Syllabi? And any other information about the seminary? Number of students et al.

Would appreciate any information you can provide.

Thanks,

abc3+

Rev. Albert B. Collver, Ph.D.

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### **December 13**

On this date, the LHF Board met and interviewed the final two candidates for the office of Executive Director. Rev. Ralph Patrick, Fort Collins, CO, appeared in person before the Board, and Rev. Matthew Heise was interviewed by Skype since he was in Germany at the time. The Board chose Rev. Heise after the search committee interviewed a total of 22 candidates and narrowed it down to the two. Members of the search committee were Mark Angott (chairman), Rev. Walter Otten, Rev. Rick Nuffer and John Wittenmyer. Mark Angott owns a company that features searches for business candidates, and the search committee had use of all his modern technology that enabled each candidate to make a personal video as they answered the questions posed by the committee. The committee was highly praised for their thorough work and their use of the technology.

This was the message that was sent to international co-workers:

From: Robert Rahn

Subject: LHF Calls Executive Director

Dear Co-workers,

It is my privilege to announce that the LHF Board in a meeting on Friday determined to issue a call to Rev. Matthew Heise to serve as Executive Director.

Rev. Heise is currently completing his service with the Office of International Missions of the LCMS and will be moving back to his home area of Detroit, MI.

At this time we ask that you remember the LHF and Rev. Heise in your prayers as the call is deliberated.

Cordial greetings during this Advent season. In the Name of our Advent King,

Rev. Robert L. Rahn

LHF Interim Executive Director

## **2014**

### **January 7**

Board Update from Rev. Robert Rahn:

There have been questions on the situation in Sudan. Today I heard from our ELCSS/S General Secretary giving details on some of our members and pastors serving there. It sounds like a rather severe situation and it will take government intervention to quell the disturbance. The question is if the government will take further action than already done. There is a United Nations compound right in the village of Yambio where we are centered, but probably a bigger unit in Juba where a lot of the disturbance is taking place. From the sounds of things, not even cash sent over would help as the supplies are scant. And if you did try to ship something it would be stolen by the rebels.

It's a call for prayer for sure.  
RR

### **January 7**

From: Edward Sunge  
To: Michael Rodewald  
Subject: South Sudan Report

Dear Dr. Mike and others,

Greetings from Yambio. The situation in our country South Sudan is not stable. Our church has been badly affected by the events in the country.

In Juba, all our church members who are from the Nuer ethnic group are in UN compound because they cannot move freely in Juba. Rev. Peter Chol is with the group in the UN compound. In telephone conversation with him this afternoon, he said they have very little food to eat for the whole week.

Yesterday night in Juba, Rev. Emmanuel Bafuka was robbed at gunpoint in his house. They took a laptop, camera, mobiles and other valuables. In Malakal, the house of Rev. Simon Gatluak was attacked and up to now we have no any contact with him. The Deputy Bishop, Rev. John Jock, has left Malakal and is outside the city in hiding.

In Western Equatoria in Yambio there is no much problem, but there is no fuel or even mobile airtime, so we shall soon be cut off from the rest of the world.

I ask all of to pray for us.

In Christ,  
Rev. Edward Nzeme  
General Secretary, ELCSS/S

### **January 9**

Rev. Matt Heise announces at the LHF staff devotions that he is accepting the Call to become LHF Executive Director. His service will start on April 1, giving him time to recuperate from his upcoming minor surgery. He writes to the Search Committee on January 13:

Acceptance Letter to the Board of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation:

It is with great joy that I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Lutheran Heritage Foundation for the

kindness and consideration shown to me in extending this call to serve as Executive Director. I am honored by your prayerful confidence, and am writing to you to say that I will accept the call to be the next Executive Director of LHF. Pursuant to our discussions during the call process, I anticipate being able to begin my service on or about April 1, 2014. May the Lord guide our steps as we move forward in spreading His Word to the nations through the profound, Spirit-given wisdom conveyed to our Lutheran forefathers. God's blessings to you all!

Rev. Matthew Heise

### June 13

From: Peter Anibati

To: Jeff Rahn; Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise

Subject: Printing of Zande Catechism and Hymnal

Dear Jeff,

Greetings from Yambio in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I have been asking around for the printing of the above books and i have found out that they can actually be printed in Juba, South Sudan. There is a printing press in Juba called "Universal Printers Company Limited" which prints books, brochures, magazines etc. When I consulted them, they said they could print A5 size (which is the size of the catechism and *Hymnal*), full color book 70 GSM paper and RKS binding for 78 SSP which is about \$20. They are willing to negotiate the price if we want to print from them, depending on the number of copies we want.

If we print these books here, it will save the cost of transporting them from another country to South Sudan. It will also be easier for us to monitor and see that the final format sent to the printers is correct, and in case of any errors, they could be easily rectified since one of us would be present to verify the books before they are sent to the printers. The other reason is that we badly need these books as soon as possible...many of our congregations hold divine services without the Lutheran liturgy simply because they do not have the Service book. May I please know what you think about this?

Thank you very much and the entire organization of LHF which makes possible for us to have access to this literature. We really appreciate the way you have supported our church for all these years and we look forward to working even better in the years to come!

Blessings+

Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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### June 20

Jeff Rahn wrote:

Peter,

Thanks for the information concerning the possibility of printing the Zande books in Juba. Has anyone personally visited the printer and witnessed the equipment and other jobs in progress along with finished samples?

Initially I can say that the pricing you mentioned is considerably higher than what we would expect to pay.

A *Catechism with Explanation* with hardcover, printed on good paper, with good binding, can typically be printed for \$4 - \$6. Even when taking into account transportation-related costs, we would still be considerably lower in price, thereby allowing for more copies (or titles) to be printed.

What kind of quantities are needed for the catechism and hymnal – 1,000/2,000/3,000 copies? You could ask the printer for his lowest possible price and see what he says.

We are also interested in getting these volumes printed as soon as possible, but it may be necessary to wait a few more months in order to obtain a very good quality at a reasonable price. We were planning to print these 2 titles along with 3 other titles at the same time in order to lower printing costs and economize on the shipping costs.

Let us continue to dialogue on this topic.

Blessings,  
Jeff

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From: Peter Anibati  
To: Jeff Rahn; Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise  
Subject: Re: Printing of Zande Catechism and Hymnal

Jeff,  
Thanks for your response concerning the Zande books. I have visited the printer myself when I went to Juba and have seen the type of work they do. They do quality job...no doubt, I think the only problem could be their price. We need 2,500-3,000 copies for each title. When I talked to the printer this morning about printing 2,000 copies of each book, he said he could do that for 27 SSP per book which is about 6.75 USD. It seems the many books we print the lesser the price becomes.

Please find attached the copy of the invoice the printer sent me. Ignore the title “Bible”; when the catechism was taken to him today by our vicar Celestino, he saw it like a small Bible.

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**July 2**

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Jeff Rahn; Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise  
Subject: Re: Printing of Zande Catechism and Hymnal

Jeff,  
Thanks for accepting that we print the catechism here. Would you like us to print the catechism first and then the hymnal? I am asking because initially we had talked of printing both, but now you have mentioned only the catechism.

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Jeff Rahn; Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise  
Subject: Re: Printing of Zande Catechism and Hymnal

The printer cannot go below the quotation you were sent; they said that was the lowest they could offer for 2,000 copies. However, I do think that if we do this first project with them, we could win their confidence and perhaps it could make it easier for price negotiation in the future. Yes, the printer has assured us that they will deliver the finished copies in 10 working days and I am confident that Rob will be able to carry some copies to you in the U.S.

However, the printer will not deliver the copies to Yambio but they are willing to transport them to any location in Juba free of charge. This means they will deliver them to Juba congregation, and then we will have to hire a vehicle to transport them to Yambio. The cost for transport will depend on how many cartoons of books we will have. Give me time to find out about this.

We have a big container at the Lutheran Guest House in Yambio where the books will be kept, although only for a short time because we need the books for use and not for storage. As soon as the books are in Yambio, we will organize for launching them on a day where representatives (pastors/evangelists or vicars) from all the different congregations will have to come and attend. When these representatives will be returning to their respective areas they will return with the copies for their congregations. I think it would be good to have a representative from LHF too, or if not Rob Lutz could take the pictures of the distribution for LHF, perhaps?

If you have suggestions on how the books should be distributed please let us also know. The Copyright/sponsorship information will be included on the first page as you have requested. Do you want me (or the printer) to send you only a pdf of the front page of the catechism with this information or the whole catechism with the information on the front page for approval?

Thank you very much and God bless+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Jeff Rahn  
To: Peter Anibati; Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise  
Subject: RE: Printing of Zande Catechism and Hymnal

Peter,  
Thanks for your detailed reply. We will print the catechism, and if the quality is satisfactory then they can print the hymnal next. Please have them prepare a quote for the hymnal so we have an idea of the cost.

If you are able to, you can send the whole translation with the copyright/sponsor page. Please also begin to plan for a distribution/introduction event such as the one you described below. Perhaps this can be done in connection with the vicar seminars that Rev. May will be leading in a few months.

As soon as I receive the file to review the copyright/sponsor page, I will send the funds for printing.  
In Christ,  
Jeff Rahn

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## NEW HYMNAL FOR ZANDE PEOPLE OF SOUTH SUDAN

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan–South Sudan (ELCS/SS) now has a hymnal for their Zande-speaking congregations, thanks in part to a grant from the LWML North Wisconsin District. “Hymns preach, teach, lead us in prayer and praise our Creator,” said Rev. Matthew Heise, LHF executive director. “The importance of a hymnal in the life of a church cannot be overstated.”

### October 28

From R. Rahn  
To: Richard Ondicho Otiso  
Subject: Reformation Greetings

Dear Richard, Greetings to you in this week of the Reformation. Here is a message I submitted for our church newsletter as a matter of encouragement in the Truth:

*“God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved.” Psalm 46:5*

Reform or reformat is the question this month as we celebrate the 497th anniversary of the Reformation. I would assume that this same question is the one that Luther faced in his time. No matter what the age or aeon, there are always those who are calling for a reformatting of our doctrine and practice.

One of the principles of the Reformation was the truth that the Word of God is efficacious. That means it is reliable, trustworthy, and effective. What the church proclaims (the Word of the Church) also has divine power and efficacy, but always only in so far as the Church remains true to its commission and proclaims only God’s Word. The Church has no word of its own. Whatever is not taken from the Scriptures is not the “Word of the Church,” but what Luther bluntly calls “prattle.”

What too often is forgotten in our pious efforts to “make the church relevant” is the fact that the Word has power; it’s effective. If we are calling for changes in the church, are we sure these changes are based on the Word of God or simply on our frail human reason? Wholesale reformatting of Truth is taking place in modern day churches. In these cases, a new call for Reformation is definitely in order.

Let us celebrate the Reformation by clinging to the Truth that comes as a precious heritage. Let us be slow to suggest the Word needs any of our contrived reformatting.

If God remains in our midst, the Word will not be moved.

It has now been several weeks since the church manipulated her constitution yet once again and failed to expedite a convention for whatever the reason might have been. It certainly wasn’t on the basis of Truth but possibly more on the basis of expediency. Not even government offices can agree and practice truth; it always has to be falsehood. “The whole heart of man is evil from his youth.”

Here we earnestly strive to work in the arena of truth — truth of product, truth in handling of finances. We are criticized by those who receive our funding for treating them like we were FBI agents when we challenge them on their stated needs. Such is the case in Sudan where we are attempting to hold seminars for the



vicars. Leaders were caught inflating budget needs and they became upset when we challenged the estimated costs. It seems there is a feeling we should just send the money. Perhaps they have come under the influence of Obare and expect practices as carried out by LCMS; although Collver maintains that no funds have been sent to Obare for over a year. Could it be? Maybe some other entity is sending funds. I'm waiting to hear from the bishop of the ELCSS/S about their request. First they attempted to criticize James May, but I told them if they want to blame anyone they should blame me because I called for a second opinion on estimated travel costs as the one item questioned.

I trust that all things are going well for you and that your attendance is holding up, maybe even finding a new person or two to be worshiping with your congregation. Have you seen Martti Simojoki lately or is he out on the waters? I haven't heard from his dad for several months. Did you get to his birthday celebration in October?

Our new executive director plans to make a visit to Helsinki on Thursday, Reformation Day and be there until Nov. 2 visiting with Risto and also with Juhana. I think he will be in Juhana's service on Sunday. I will ask him if he plans to visit with you. He has several other people he's visiting, related to Mongolia missions.

What will your emphasis be this Sunday, Reformation or All Saints? This Sunday, my congregation has its final 150th celebration service with the district president preaching and a catered dinner for 400, the capacity of our gym facility. This past Friday night we had a concert by the Concordia University - Chicago Wind Symphony and Orchestra as part of our year-long special events.

Our friend Carla has now moved to Grand Rapids but may come back this weekend for our festivities. We miss her here. Her trip to Thailand and teaching English was a great venture for her and our translation team over there. In those lines, are you able to teach in Sudan for two weeks next year? I have a couple of openings left.

God's blessings to you and your family.

RR

## October 31

Dear LHF Partner in Mission,

Two significant dates are rapidly approaching that are infamous for Lutherans: October 31 (the Reformation) and November 10 (Luther's birthday). Allow me to add a third significant date tied closely to those dates: the birthday of LHF.

Around a dining room table in my home on November 10, 1992, eight members of a Board determined that the name of this organization would be Lutheran Heritage Foundation. Its mission would be to perpetuate Reformation truths in printed material that was Christ-centered, Bible-based and Reformation-driven. God has blessed this mission beyond anything we ever envisioned when LHF was brought into existence.

During that first year, our major goal was to go to Russia and help restore Lutheranism, which had been beaten down for 70 years by an atheist, communist form of government that attempted to choke off all Christian beliefs. The wall came down, and LHF went in with a side-by-side (English-Russian) New Testament "to test the concept of freedom of religion."

We sauntered down to Red Square on a day that Reformation actually fell on a Sunday. There

on the Square, a truck delivered our copies, along with several Russian tracts and booklets. Several hours were spent distributing the materials, including the boxes in which the materials came. Two policemen came by and Konstantin Komarov, our Russian translator, took them to a corner and explained the Biblical concept of freedom with which they should become familiar. They were seen walking off with the Bible and the literature. Not so the case with the two Russian Orthodox priests, who were seen tearing up the tracts handed to them.

After everything had been distributed, I personally walked around Red Square and checked every garbage can. Not one book or piece of literature was found anywhere. I don't believe this would be possible today on Red Square, to say nothing about an American square in this day where the cry for tolerance seems to be the venue, especially for Christians. We can, however, be thankful as our LHF Executive Director, Rev. Matthew Heise points out, we now have many other open avenues today to get LHF books distributed.

Rev. Heise's teaching is yet one more example of why the Lutheran Heritage Foundation name is so significant and relevant for the present age. While calls are sometimes received asking for funds because LHF is a "foundation," we explain that it is our Lutheran faith that is our heritage, built on the foundation of truth. Our mission is not to distribute monetary funds, but the books that open up the Word of God, translated so that all the nations may read and understand. For 22 years, the LHF has sought to preserve this great heritage, and with your support, good Lutheran books have been printed in 86 of the world's languages.

What a birthday gift that has its roots in the basement of my home, first in Avon Lake, Ohio and then Sterling Heights, Michigan but now in the beautiful, debt-free World Mission Center in Macomb, Michigan! Happy birthday to the Lutheran church of the Reformation, to Martin Luther of "Here I Stand" fame, and to the Lutheran Heritage Foundation.

Rev. Robert Rahn  
LHF Founder

## November 27

### A November Meditation

Dear Workers in the Harvest,

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." Matthew 9:27, 28*

As I write these lines I'm waiting for a flight in the Omaha airport. I have completed a week of travel through parts of Nebraska and Kansas and witnessed the ambitious harvest activities taking place.

Because of timely rains and auxiliary moisture provided by irrigation systems, it looks like crops will exceed anything seen in the past five years. New semis were hauling beans and corn to new gleaming storage bins to accommodate the generous yields. We even heard talk of a shortage of railroad boxcars to haul the grain to various shipping enters.

"The harvest is truly plentiful." It leads us to note that this is true also in many areas of Africa, Cambodia, Indonesia and many other areas where laborers are few. Not only are workers needed, but also books and materials in various languages.

LHF is ready to work in the harvest fields by teaching, preaching and printing. We are doing a major project of publishing two volumes in Amharic, the main language of Ethiopia. Ethiopia has five Lutheran bodies with some six million members. The *Book of Concord* is at the press; 7,500 volumes are being printed. At the same time, we are preparing to print 20,000 copies of a confessional booklet in Amharic and English containing the *Augsburg Confession*, *Small and Large Catechisms*, three Creeds and portions of the *Formula of Concord*. The *Book of Concord* will be distributed to the 3,000 Lutheran pastors and the Confessional booklet to 3,000 church leaders and to 17,000 church officers and key members. These are projects costing over \$100,000. An Iowa farmer, who manufactures grain bins worldwide, has generously supported the projects.

What a harvest this will produce!!

What does this mean? HE WHO PROVIDES IS WORTHY OF WORSHIP.

PLENTIFUL HARVEST= ABUNDANT THANKSGIVING!

It is a word not just for farmers, but a word for all at Thanksgiving.

Gratefully in Him,

Rev. Robert Rahn

## 2015

**January 15**

*Taken from the January 2015 "Word at Work" newsletter:*

### **"I fear for my physical safety"**

#### **LHF translator continues work in Muslim-dominated camp**

Okach Omot Opiew lives with his wife and young children in the Dadaab Refugee Camp, located in Kenya near the Somalia border.

Dadaab recently made U.S. headlines when members of Al Shabaab, al Qaeda's affiliate in Somalia, opened fire on non-Muslims living in the camp.

Unfortunately, such shootings aren't out of the norm in Dadaab, which, with its population of more than 425,000 residents, is the largest refugee camp in the world. Okach describes life in the camp this way:

"Life here is very dangerous, especially for Christians, because Dadaab is dominated by Muslims," he says.

"Christians are not allowed to live as Christians. When we go to the market or when we are in the bus, they blaspheme us by calling us 'gahal,' which means pagan.

"Our women are forced by the Muslims to cover themselves. If they go to market and they are not wearing clothes like Somali women, they will be abused as our children are also abused on the way to school, even in class. They are forced to wear the Somali cloth in school, and some of them who refused were dismissed.

"They also force our children to contribute for their mosque construction in the school, but for us Christians, that is forbidden by the First Commandment." Under this pressure, "some Christians become Muslim by force," he concluded.

Yet it is in this setting that Okach perseveres in the work he feels God has called him to do: translating

Luther's *Small Catechism* into the Anuak language, spoken by his people.

Okach and his family are members of the Anuak tribe, which numbers about a half million people living primarily in Ethiopia and South Sudan. Thousands of Anuak are now displaced in refugee camps, having fled ethnic cleansing by the Ethiopian government in 2003. About 5,000 Anuak are refugees to the United States, settled mainly in Minnesota and Maryland.

Most Anuak are Christian, and Okach was born into a Christian family. He first learned of the Lutheran faith in 1993, while living in Ethiopia. Okach is determined to see that Luther's *Small Catechism* is translated into the language of his people.

With very little Christian literature translated into the Anuak language, "Anuak churches have no strong foundation of faith. We have a lack of educated theologians and have only about 20 pastors," Okach says. "Anuak churches are growing, but with a very shallow knowledge of God. It is as wide as an ocean, but one inch deep.

"The *Small Catechism*, translated into our Anuak language, will help our community of churches greatly with access to this wonderful, sound Biblical doctrine. I hope that the catechism may pave the way to open more Lutheran churches in our community."

Okach has nearly completed editing the Anuak catechism, which will then go to the press in the coming months.

Though he fears not only for his own safety, but also for the safety of his wife and children, Okach continues with his work, trusting that his Heavenly Father will guide and protect them.

"Here in Dabaab, twice they have attempted to burn the church I pray in, but God has protected His Church," Okach says. "By God's grace, it is my hope to carry out the great task of expanding God's kingdom by attending seminary, perhaps in South Africa or the United States. If I can get this additional knowledge, I pray that I may one day help translate the *Book of Concord* into the Anuak language, too."

## January 17

A behind-the-scenes look at what goes into the printing process:

James,

Thanks for the printing update. I need to receive the .pdf's of the copyright/sponsor pages for the 4 books. Please send these as soon as possible.

Ted is heading to Thailand tomorrow. I spoke with him this week and he is getting the quotes from the printer in Bangkok, Thailand. This is the company that printed the Somali books. Ted may be able to share some additional information concerning Amity Press.

If we do print in Thailand, can you also send the Nuer catechism text to Thailand? How about the Anuak catechism? Just trying to economize on the shipping as much as we can. You could also get quotes for printing the Dinka, Nuer, and Anuak in Juba.

Concerning Latvia, we also have printers that we work with in Latvia and could have our contact be in touch with them if necessary, but let's first see what Ted comes up with from Bangkok.

Blessings,  
Jeff

### March 1

Dear Members of St. John,

“Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; how blessed are all those who long for Him.”  
Isaiah 30:18

Keep in mind these words were spoken to the people of Judah. They had just considered plans to enter an alliance with Egypt. “Woe to you rebellious children, declares the Lord, who execute a plan, but not mine, and make an alliance, but not of My spirit, in order to add sin to sin.” The people of Judah didn’t like what the prophets were saying: “Speak to us pleasant words, get out of the way, turn aside from the path, let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel.”

God is gracious and just and speaks the words in verse 18. Compare that to the words of the Koran, where Allah calls on followers to kill the infidels. And haven’t we seen this being carried out in way too many places in our world today? In Nigeria, Syria, France, Jordan, Somalia, Sudan, and a whole host of nations the infamous jihad is being carried out. This has gone too far. But it is compatible with a religion that wins its converts by the sword and not by the Sword of the Word of God. As if beheading wasn’t bad enough, now we are called to witness the burning of bodies.

“To the shores of Tripoli” — remember the phrase from the Marine Hymn? Know what it means? Tripoli was one of four Islamic nations that seized American ships and enslaved American citizens. Bribes were paid and when Thomas Jefferson became president, he was disgusted with the payments that amounted to 20 percent of revenues in 1800. He sent the Marine Corps and after four years of war, the bravery of the Marine Corps led to the line “to the shores of Tripoli.” They were known as “leathernecks” for the leather collars of their uniforms, designed to prevent their heads from being cut off when boarding Muslim ships.

Our God is a God of compassion. Allah is the god of vengeance. Muslims persecute their own if they do not condemn infidels. It has happened in Iran and many Iranians have fled to Germany — and here LHF comes on the scene in an interesting and unique way, helping those who have compassion on those fleeing their own country. Would you believe former Muslims, now Lutheran, filling Lutheran churches in Leipzig, for instance, asking, “Why are the Lutherans giving up these beautiful churches and their unique doctrine?” LHF is helping German Lutheran pastors by publishing a side-by-side German/Farsi Catechism so that more Iranian (former) Muslims can fill the pews of empty German Lutheran churches. This is the evidence of the compassion of our God, the one Who is gracious.

And with your support of the LHF, we are bringing the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD and publishing the words of Him Who longs to be gracious.

Let us swing the Sword of the Spirit by which we can quench the fiery darts of the wicked all the way to the shores of Tripoli.

Rev. R. Rahn — LHF Founder

### March 3

Dear Bothers,

Greetings to you in Jesus name at this Lent season.

I would like to bring to your attention that after the vicars’ seminar that was held in the second week after the

official opening of the seminary in January this year, there have been other local teachers who are teaching some subjects to the pastoral students and the deaconess class, and their name and subjects are as follows:

1. Hon. Monoko Leon teaches Christian Leadership to pastoral students.
2. Rev. Peter Anibati takes Greek with pastoral students and Lutheran Confessions in both classes.
3. Mr. Fred teaches Fundamental Accounts II to pastoral students and English in both classes.
4. Rev. Nicholas Kumbo teaches African Christian Theology in pastoral class.
5. Rev. Japheth Dachi teaches History of the Deaconess to the deaconess and Acts of the Apostles in both classes.

There will be other social studies also in the second semester.

And thanks.

Rev. Nicholas Kumbo

## March 15

### **The suffering of a Christian**

*by Rev. Matt Heise*

In the season of Lent, we in the West often “give up” something for the 40-day period.

It is not a bad spiritual exercise to undergo a little suffering in order to discipline our bodies. Paul did likewise, as we read in 1 Corinthians 9:26-27: “So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.”

But for many Christians in the world, suffering is not the exception but the rule in their daily Christian lives.

In the news recently, we read of the 21 Egyptian martyrs who died at the hands of ISIS with the name of Jesus on their lips. It is a sobering thought as we work with our Christian friends who carry on with the translations of African tribal languages, or Persian or Arabic, under very trying circumstances.

LHF works with many dedicated translators who put their lives on the line in order to proclaim the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Islamists are threatening our own brother, Okach Opiew, who lives in a Muslim-dominated refugee camp in Kenya, for being a follower of Jesus Christ.

This reality does make our spiritual exercises look rather weak in comparison. But perhaps that is helpful in keeping us from thinking that our own spiritual actions contribute anything to our salvation.

What is most important during Lent is to meditate upon the suffering and death of Jesus. Our sacrifices cannot compare to His, the One who took upon Himself the sins of the entire world for our salvation.

This message is one that brings comfort to our Christian brothers and sisters, too. Where can they hear it? Through the books and materials LHF translates and prints into their own languages.

In regions of the world where Christians feel threatened and alone, God speaks through His Word to tell them that they are His beloved children. When our brothers and sisters in Christ read a book like Luther’s Small Catechism, provided through your generous gifts, they know that



they are in your prayers and that they are not alone. God's Word, faithfully proclaimed in the books LHF publishes for them, will bring comfort and peace for generations to come.

This Lenten season, please remember Okach and other Christians who serve LHF and our Lord so that others may know the Name to which every knee shall bow, both in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

### March 19

Staff meeting to discuss public relations on numbers. Results:

100 Languages — the number we are currently working in

83 — Total number of countries being served by translation and distribution

744 — Number of titles published thus far

### March 21

A note on how LHF made *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories* more user-friendly by eliminating some stories and adding others, by adding maps and helps and other items as indicated below.

Summary of LHF Changes to CPH's *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*:

Bible Story changes and/or omissions from the CPH original edition

- 1) The Offering of Isaac (CPH page 28) – omitted in countries where child sacrifice occurs. Need to educate before sharing this lesson.
- 2) David and Absalom (CPH page 59) – omitted for space, so other essential lessons could be included
- 3) The Young Man of Nain (CPH page 102) – omitted for space
- 4) The Sick Man at the Pool (CPH page 106) – omitted for space
- 5) The story of the First Sin and Promised Savior have been combined (CPH pages 16-19)
- 6) Title of “The Ladder to Heaven” changed to “Jacob and His Dream” (CPH page 30)
- 7) Image of Golden Calf replaced with image of Moses and the Commandments (CPH page 48)
- 8) Title of “The Golden Calf” changed to “God Gives His People the Ten Commandments” (CPH page 48)
- 9) Title of “The Lost Son” was changed to “The Merciful Father” (CPH page 116)
- 10) The story “Judas Turns Against Jesus” was replaced with “Jesus and His Disciples Celebrate the Pass-over” (CPH page 128)

Bible stories added to the CPH original edition with illustrations:

- 1) God Gives His People the Ten Commandments (page 49 of LHF English edition)
- 2) The Baptism of Jesus (page 92 of LHF English edition)
- 3) Jesus Teaches His Disciples (page 98 of LHF English edition)
- 4) The Holy Spirit Comes (page 146 of LHF English edition)
- 5) Saul is Changed (page 148 of LHF English edition)
- 6) Paul Teaches About Jesus (page 150 of LHF English edition)

Other material added to the CPH original edition

- 1) Numbered Table of Contents
- 2) Scripture reference with each title of story
- 3) Questions added to the end of each story
- 4) Maps added at end of book
  - a. The World of the Old Testament
  - b. The Land of Israel in the Old Testament
  - c. Paul's Travels

## April 5

Time for an update on “what’s happening” at the LHF front. Earlier, I alluded to the trip I’ll be making to Ethiopia right after Easter. That Ethiopia trip will pack a lot of events into it:

- Bringing the Bishop and Dean of the Seminary from South Sudan to Addis to meet with Dr. Al Collver, Special Assistant to the President of the Synod, whose responsibilities include dealing with matters of church fellowship. For ten years we have tried to get fellowship established between the LCMS and the ELCSS/S together. For many, South Sudan seems like a difficult place to visit, so we are bringing church leaders from Sudan to Ethiopia, where LCMS church leaders are meeting.
- Attending the Mekane Yesus Church Convention. This is a church body with 6 million members and there will be 5,000 at the convention. Rev. Matt Heise, LHF executive director, and I will address the convention and release/distribute copies of two books: *Book of Concord* and *Catechisms, Creeds and Confessions* (7,500 of the former in Amharic and 30,000 of the latter in Amharic/English side by side). This is historic for the church that has never adopted the entire *Book of Concord*.
- Meeting with Mohamad Gurhan, a student we are sponsoring at the Westfield House, Cambridge, England (connected with Fort Wayne seminary) and who is going to plant a Somali congregation in Ethiopia. Somalia borders Ethiopia and there are many Somalis who escape to Ethiopia. Gurhan has land for a church to be built and even while he attends classes in England, he will go back and forth to care for the congregation. He’s a wonder and reminds me of Andrew from Sudan, who was a great entrepreneur.
- Traveling to Gambela, Ethiopia where there is a Sudanese refugee camp with some 700,000 refugees. Three of our vicars from the Sudan Seminary ended up here after they were forced to leave their congregations due to tribal conflict in the Sudan region where they were serving congregations. They were part of the class of 14 on vicarage. We now have to determine how we will provide classes for them so that they can graduate and be ordained with their class. We will be sending instructors to Gambela as part of their service to the Sudan seminary. We will also obtain pastors from Mekane Yesus to do some teaching. We will be in Gambela to meet with the students and to find a suitable place for classes. The class also includes one deaconess and a local Sudanese pastor.
- Meeting with three other Lutheran bodies to provide them with the books being released.
- Meeting with the LHF Ethiopian translation team to determine our translation/publishing schedule for 2015-2016. Our translation team represents all four Lutheran bodies in the country, one of them Wisconsin Synod.
- Visiting a souvenir shop to bring back some Ethiopian religious art pieces.

Yes, I too wonder how we are going to fit it all in during the nine days we are in the country. There will be no grass growing underfoot. We thank God for a rare opportunity and challenge.

The Mekane Yesus was more closely associated with ELCA until the ELCA began to accept homosexuality in their clergy. Mekane Yesus then came to us asking for a closer tie with a more conservative body. Early on, LHF provided a sampling as to where our church stood in matters of doctrine. It was seen in the books we published, including an earlier edition of the *Book of Concord*, but with limited copies.

An item of interest:

In the last issue of the LHF newsletter, we featured the work of Okach Omot Opiew while living in a refugee camp dominated by Muslims. He helped with the translation of the catechism in the Anuak language of Sudan. He adopted the Lutheran faith while living in Ethiopia and hopes one day to become a pastor. Below you get a little glimpse into what Lutherans are enduring while remaining faithful. More and more, we in America are learning how easy it is to be Christian as compared to many under the domination of Islam and the Muslim faith. From the message you get a little insight into the “peace loving” approach by Muslims. We

are thinking of bringing Okach to Nairobi for safety and for preliminary study before he enters a seminary program.

The Anuak catechism is at the printer and should be ready in about a month's time. Refer to our last newsletter for a feature on him on the front page. He asks for prayers of protection for him and his family.

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Sharing with you a Facebook conversation between Okach and Matt Heise this morning. Please pray for him and his family.

**Okach:** Hello, Rev. Heise, how are you? Last month there were two Somali who came to me to convert me to Islam. They asked me a lot of questions about my Christianity and they asked me also where there are pastors in our community or not.

They said that they will come again to me. So now my life in risk. I have experienced the work these people. If they want to convert someone they will not stop until they convert her/him. If they can not succeed that thing, they will plan the way to attack that person. Now I am fearing for both my life and the life of my family. So I am requesting you or LHF to find a safe place for me and my family. Secondly, I am requesting you for seminary that I may study theology.

**Matt:** What is happening, Okach? We will talk when I get to Nairobi. James May should be able to get you there. We will discuss moving you, if we can find the support, to Nairobi. Let us pray about that. For now, may His holy angels watch over you and your family! That is my prayer to our Heavenly Father.

**Okach:** The reason they come to me because they heard that I am a person who teach volunteer in primary school with CRE (Christian Religious Education) and I am among these who preach in the church.

**Matt:** Please talk to James May, too. He should have come back to Nairobi yesterday. Meanwhile, we will pray...

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Well, that certainly doesn't cover the waterfront of LHF activity, but it gives some insight into the church in action. Let it suffice for our Easter greetings to you as loyal followers, prayer warriors, and partners in this mission movement.

A blessed Holy Week and a joyful Easter.  
Robert L. Rahn  
LHF Founder

**April 13**

A report from Rev. Nicholas Kumbo, dean of students at CLIHM:

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN INSTITUTE FOR HOLY MINISTRY (CLIHM)  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan/ South Sudan (ELCS/SS)  
13th- 14th April 2015

Subject: Report on the Activities of Concordia Lutheran Institute For Holy Ministry (CLIHM), Yambio, South Sudan

To: The Executive Director of LHF, Rev. Matthew Heisse; Dr. Robert Rahn the Founder and first Executive director of LHF; and Dr. Albert Collver, the Executive Director for church relations of LCMS.

### **1. Introduction**

In the name of the Triune God,

Allow me to take this opportunity on behalf of the Bishop of the ELCSS/S, Bishop Wilson Noah, and on behalf of the CLIHM staff to greet and welcome all of you after the long trip that you have made from USA up to Africa. Indeed it is our pleasure to come from South Sudan up to this place in order to meet with you because we believed that this is an important meeting that we have been praying and waiting for, for a long time, and today God has made it possible we meet and discuss issues pertaining to our church. It is also our conviction that this meeting is going to strengthen our relationship and produce a great impact and fruits that will help the ELCSS/S to grow more strongly.

We really acknowledge the continuous effort of the LHF for the translation work they do all over the world and to our young church in South Sudan/Sudan and the support we get for training our seminarians at the seminary. We want to thank you very much for coming and for facilitating our coming to participate and share our opinion with you about the work we do in South Sudan. May God continue to bless you abundantly with the efforts you do for His people.

### **2. Brief Historical Background of How the Seminary Started**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan is a national church established on November 23, 1993, to first meet the spiritual need of the Sudanese people through the right teachings of the Holy Scripture as written in the *Book of Concord* and other Lutheran confessional books, and secondly to meet the social demands of the people by creating services such as education and health program for the needy. The church wishes to witness the Gospel of Christ alongside sister Christian churches, as the South Sudan/Sudan have a pagan Muslim population which the Gospel has not reached.

In order to strengthen the doctrinal position and religious practices as confessional Lutheran church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan then decided to open a theological college in 2000 to prepare young men who would become priests, deacons and deaconess for the ministry.

The college was established in Khartoum and later on to Western Equatoria where the church's head office is located and it was given the name of Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry (CLIHM). It started with a good number of pastoral students, deacons and deaconess who graduated as the first bench in 2005. There was second intake in 2009 which graduated in 2011, and we have the third bench that started their studies in 2012 and will be ready for graduation at the end of this year, God's willing. The church intended to prepare these categories of church manpower in order to face the challenges of the third millennium and advanced world of science and other technologies.

### **3. Objectives**

The objectives of having the institute could be summarized as follows:

1. To prepare theologians to master the Bible and the ministry of our Lord.
2. To impart knowledge and social skills which will enable the candidate to prepare for pastoral work among members of the Sudanese communities.
3. To introduce candidates to disciplines which are relevant to their working environment within the country and outside.
4. To produce theologians who will be able to teach God's Word in its purity and protect the church to

remain a confessional Lutheran Church from any false teaching.

5. Admission Requirements:

In order to enter into the seminary a candidate must have the following qualifications:

- a) South Sudan certificate or its equivalent with credit in Christian Religion, English and History.
- b) Evangelist who has had courses in religion for a minimum of 3 years and with a recommendation from his church.
- c) Should not be a new convert.
- d) Should be recommended by the congregation into the seminary.

4. **Present Administrator of CLIHM:**

A) The seminary is running smoothly by the help of God and the local staff that are on the ground, but we always receive visiting professors from USA and Finland who come for short period and return back. All the arrangements for the teaching staff is being coordinated by Dr. Robert Rahn and Dr. Bernard Lutz in the USA. The local staff we have on the ground face a lot of problems because the seminary is not able to pay them stipends, but they have volunteered to help the seminary. Therefore, as we know very well that teaching is not an easy task, we really appeal to the Executive Director of LHF to see how these teachers can be motivated. Their names are as follows:

1. Rev. Japheth R. Dachi: (Kenyan) Principal of the seminary
2. Rev. Nicholas Kumbo: Dean of students
3. Rev. Peter Anibati: Academic dean (newly appointed)
4. Rev. Elinama Jacob: Teaching staff
5. Hon. Monoko Leon.       “
6. Prof. Fred                       “
7. Mr. William Stephen Dangu: Teaching staff
8. Mr. Joseph Michael Kanido:       “

B) There are three cooks and one cleaner.

C) We have 11 pastoral students and 5 deaconesses who are now present in the seminary, but there are three seminarians and one deaconess who were not able to come to the seminary this year due to the current political conflict in the South Sudan, and they are at Gambela, Ethiopia.

D) Our aim is to have a continuous educational system and training in the seminary, but we don't know if there will be intake for new students next year because there are so many challenges that the seminary is facing. We also want to upgrade the level of the seminary or affiliate it with a higher recognized institution, but again we cannot do it because we cannot meet the requirements needed by the Ministry of Higher education. In order to meet the requirement and standards, we need to have the following:

1. Good seminary premise with concrete buildings.
2. Good library with enough books for reference.
3. Well trained national professors.

5. **Challenges:**

- Insufficient funds.
- Lack of enough books for the library.
- Lack of national teaching staff who are well trained.
- Inadequate seminary concrete buildings.
- Lack of exchange visit program for the teaching staff to other Lutheran theological seminaries.
- Lack of transport for the seminary.
- Lack of family support for the seminarians.
- Lack of tractor to facilitate agriculture program for the seminary. (Food items are becoming very expensive in the market and we can produce enough food for the seminary if we have the tractor.)

6. **Future plan for CLIHM:**

It is our wish that the seminary could continue next year (2016), but this will depend on the financial



position if we get enough funds from LHF, or if LEAF and LCMS could come in with their supporting hands or any other good wishers. It is worth mentioning that LEAF has paid some funds as family support for the students and for vicars' seminar in 2014 besides what we get from LHF, which is not enough to meet all the needs or demands of the seminary. Therefore, if the seminary will not open next year, we plan to do the following in preparation for other coming years:

- a. Send some pastors for further studies that can qualify them to teach well in the seminary.
- b. To organize three months seminars and workshops for the old pastors and Evangelists at the seminary.
- c. To organize workshops in all the deaneries of ELCS/SS in order to train people stewardship.
- d. Work on translating some books like the book of Concord etc.
- e. Need a Missionary to come and stay with us and help in education program.
- f. To open a farm for the seminary.

#### **7. St. Luke Medical Clinic (St. LMC):**

Before I conclude this report, I would like to bring to your attention that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan has been involved in providing medical services to the people as the second priority following the central objective of preaching the Gospel. The church operated a hospital in Khartoum known as "St. Paul Lutheran Charity Hospital." That hospital helped so many sick people and the poor who couldn't afford to pay for their treatment in the expensive private hospitals. At that time also, the church was running a mobile clinic in Western Equatoria State, Yambio. These two health facilities helped very much to save the lives of many people.

With the separation of the South Sudan from the Sudan in 2009, it was not possible for the church to bring down the facilities, and the mobile clinic which was in Yambio could not continue because there was lack of medical personnel to run the clinic. The one medical assistant we had passed away, and the nurses scattered.

To tell you the truth, there are so many death cases in South Sudan in general and in particular Western Equatoria State. People are dying from minor sickness or diseases like malaria and diarrhea that cannot kill people in other countries. The death cases of maternity (pregnant) women and children is so great and our government is doing very little to address such problems. It is really very difficult for the sick people to travel from Yambio to Juba for better treatment on the rough roads; sometimes they die on the way before reaching to their destination. It is the same situation we face as a church and also our seminarians as well. There are a few clinics that are around Yambio town, but they charge a lot of money and are so crowded.

Indeed, South Sudan is new country and it is confronted with so many challenges, and as church we need to response to this critical situation. Therefore, the Church has decided to revive the clinic with a new name called "St. Luke Medical Clinic" in order to rescue the situation, because it is much better to preach the Word of God to a soul in a healthy body and environment, and also to reduce the death rate cases in the State and have a better place where we can treat our seminarians when they fall sick.

We have found one medical doctor from Congo and some nurses who are willing to work with us and we are now working on finalizing a work permit for the doctor to start operating.

Although LHF is overwhelmed with the translation work, it will be of great privilege for us if it can become our advocate and talk to people who can sympathize with us and supply the Clinic with any kind of medical support.



In conclusion, I want to thank you once more, and may God bless you.

Rev. Nicholas Kumbo Louis

Dean of Students, CLIHM

## **April 28**

TO: Rev. Matthew Heise, Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn

“Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant.” Matthew 20:26

I am happy to acknowledge and to inform you that all our meeting organized to open our partnership with the LCMS in Addis Ababa ended with success and brotherly affections. I am grateful to the leadership of LCMS and that of LHF for their concern in handling the matters regarding the church fellowship with us. Specific contributions you rendered to us in order to facilitate our trips from Yambio, Juba, Addis and back to Juba and Yambio are the great indications that you strongly care for us in ELCSS/S. Our sincere thanks and gratitude are in place for the LHF under the wise leadership of Rev. Mathew Heise and in the person of our elder Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn, who made it possible for us to meet Rev. Dr. Collver in order to assure us of their commitments in LCMS to have us as fellowship partners so that our church can grow in faith just like the Lutheran churches in America.

Allow us together with Rev. Nicholas Kumbo to extend further appreciation to you in particular over all the expenses you incurred so as to make our meetings with you come to success and with fruitful results. We commend the tireless efforts and fraternal love shown to us by Rev. Dr. Collver; in educating us to understand how can we reach in full partnership with LCMS, though one priest representing LCMS in Kenya voiced a contrary view during the meeting, we assure you that we did not take it for bad; since in all societies such opposing views do occur in order to let people take the right direction. We are extremely happy of what we encountered in Addis, and above all the positive contributions we got from Rev. Dr. Collver have made us strong both in faith and in love.

May God bless you all to serve His faithful people all over the world!

Rt. Rev. Wilson Noah Rule

Bishop, ELCSS/S

## **May 8**

From: WILSON NOAH RULE

To: Russ Sommerfeld; Albert Collver; Matthew Heise; Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn;

Subject: LUTHERAN CONFESSIONAL CHURCH

Dear Rev. Russell Sommerfeld,

Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life and there is no salvation through anyone else. He is the fullness of all divine revelation, which lives fully only in His Church. Our faithful must believe as true all our Evangelical Lutheran Church doctrine. This faith “is necessary for salvation,” especially for those who are aware of it.

I am writing to alert you that some of our South Sudanese priests who are working with you as missionaries in the LCMS of Nebraska District had been confusing our Evangelical Lutheran faithful in Malakal, and now

they are continuing with this similar practice in the refugee camps in Gambela in the Federal Republic of Ethiopia. Those pastors with you do send money for their relatives and friends to break away with intention to form other churches within the one family of the Lutheran believers among the refugees.

We are evangelical Lutherans of the confessional order; we practice one faith and one doctrine. Now which one are they trying to form or introduce? We in Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan are grateful to you the President of LCMS in Nebraska, together with your faithful who have done a lot and still are doing to let our Church grow in faith similarly like your Church in America. Watch carefully on the pastors who are doing such misleading practices in order to divide or tear apart our faithful who are suffering in faith and carrying their crosses in following Jesus Christ.

Dear Rev. Russell, some of these pastors do take advantage of the suffering of our people in the refuge [camps] abroad and in the displaced camps in the country; with sending them some little money like \$ 300 or \$500 (which is a big amount here) and instruct them to form or begin new sects of Lutheran believers within our Church. They are trying hard to split our congregations in the refugee camps into many churches. As you have experienced it happening in the developed world, so some of our faithful shall be called “Lutherans what, Or the Evangelical Lutherans that,” and so forth. Some do come to the displaced camps to ordain pastors for other branches of Lutheran churches that have broken away from the Confessional Evangelical Lutherans; and with no permission granted by the local Bishop or the authorities concerned, and with no prior notice given to the local church authorities either.

The clear example of this is found happening among our church congregations in the refugee camps in Gambela, Ethiopia; whereby two churches have emerged already among the Nuer congregation, leaving the people in battle with each group as reported by Rev. Nicholas Kumbo who has just come back from Gambela on the mission of empowering our vicars who fled to Ethiopia from the Greater Upper Nile Region. We do not identify exactly who was architect of this division or split? But some believers do tell us that the cause of the division seems to be coming from outside. And especially the words of encouragement they receive from their brethren in Diaspora in places such as America, Canada or Australia and so on.

I say this because some of the pastors do work as missionaries in America or elsewhere; and when they come home here in South Sudan, [they] do not normally distinguish between the Church Administration and the government policies or politics; nor do they understand the differences of doctrine that exist among the numerous Lutheran church branches or groups. For them everything is the same; and with this they are indeed confusing the believers. Let us not force people to live the way we want, but to instruct them to believe like real and authentic Lutheran Confessional and Evangelical Christians.

Rev. Sommerfeld, concluding, I am not writing so that you are compelled to act in your capacity as the president, but a sharing of information and above all, the sharing of views so that we get to know what is happening in our Churches. We have spent quite a long period of time without exchanging correspondences and for this, I seize this opportunity also to wish you well in your administration. I was in Ethiopia last month to meet Rev. Dr. Albert Collver of LCMS on the issue of seeking partnership with you and it was very good. I gratefully thank LCMS and LHF of their joint support in facilitating the meeting to be very successful.

We were able to share important ideas with Dr. Collver, Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn and Rev. Matthew Heise (the executive director of LHF) all based on the command and instructions we received from Jesus or the Great Commission to “go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all the truths” for conversion through baptism for the greater glory of God and of His Kingdom among us. For it is the duty of the Church leadership to call the faithful to the truth about the faith in the sacred doctrine in Scriptures with a freedom

that all works of valid plurality must safeguard the unity of faith in its doctrinal truthfulness and in its totality. I pray that God may reward you with faith and wisdom in the administration you are rendering to the faithful people under your leadership. Convey my best wishes and regards to all those who work day and night in search for peace to return to our homeland. Greet all the South Sudanese people serving in your District, and tell them to keep us or the entire South Sudan in prayer, so that one day we will thrive over Satan and enjoy peace and harmony forever and ever, Amen.

Yours sincerely,  
Rt. Rev. Wilson Noah Rule  
Bishop

**November 30**  
*Sudan Trip Report*

I have just returned from a trip to South Sudan and herewith provide an update on events that may be of interest to you.

First of all, this goes to all those who were faithful servants in teaching members of the current class graduating from the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry, Yambio, South Sudan. Each of your names were read at the graduation service as a tribute for your ministry to the Ev. Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan. Rev. Japheth Dachi stated, "Reverend, guest of honor sir, Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn, allow me to name them to show that CLIHM cherished their endeavors." Your name was then read.

Graduation ceremonies were held on Saturday, November 21, for the ten members of the class in a special five hour service attended by some 300 people, a group overflowing into a tent to accommodate all participants. Rev. Dr. Bernard Lutz preached for the event using 2 Timothy 2:8 as his text and theme, which begins with the words: "Remember Jesus Christ." He pointed out that the Word of God is powerful and that it cannot be chained. The students were called to "endure all things so that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory." (verse 10)

The students will be enduring the prospect of being without ordination. Bishop Noah Wilson Rule explained the dilemma the church is facing in regards to a shortage of funds, and he doesn't want to place a student until there is a guarantee of support for the ministry. He hopes that the delay for ordination will be short. Several of the students will be going to Ethiopia to obtain advanced degrees.

Each of the students was given a laptop computer with a solar blanket. Dr. Lutz promoted the project with donors from California and time was spent after the graduation ceremony in teaching the students how to use the computer. Various individuals contributed funds so that a special clergy cross could be provided. LHF provided a special ultra thin copy of the NKJ Bible.

The "Plan for Sudan" effort promoted by Dr. Lutz also allowed gifts of albs, stoles, clergy shirts and black socks. The five deans received from LHF baptismal napkins, communion wafers and a Luther seal lapel pin. Earlier Rev. Mark Oien sent each student a copy of the *Lutheran Study Bible*.

Present to speak after the service were representatives from the State Ministry of Child and Social Welfare and a representative from the State Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Following the service, the LHF provided a dinner of chicken, beef, rice and bread.

The next day (Sunday, November 22), a service of thanksgiving and commissioning was held. The church was celebrating its 22nd anniversary, and as part of the service, five deaconesses were commissioned. I served as the preacher for this event using Acts 8 as my text, the story of the Ethiopian eunuch. We pointed out that the story shows that “the Word works.” I pointed out the action verbs in the story and asked: “Who is in your chariot?” Even as the eunuch responded, “How can I understand unless someone guides me,” even so we are called to step into chariots and explain the Scriptures. It is what the church is called to do; it is what ministers are called to do, what deaconesses are called to do. Phillip “preached Jesus to him!” It is what we are called to do. The eunuch’s call for baptism shows that the Word works.

The commissioned deaconesses received gifts from LHF, including LHF tote bags, Luther seal lapel pins, and a special stainless steel cross based on Matt. 14:30 where Peter walking on the water begins to sink and cries out “Lord, help me!” Engraved in the crosses upright are two hands, one reaching up and one reaching down. I told the deaconesses to let it remind them that help is available because of the cross of Christ on which Jesus reached down for them and saved them. Each deaconess wore a special uniform that was designed by Dr. Lutz and sewed by a local tailor.

The convention of the ELCSS/S preceded the events from November 18-20. The primary agenda item was a revision and updating of the church constitution. The only election called for was the general secretary and treasurer. Since the constitution calls for a paid Treasurer, the process was outlined for selecting a treasurer. An acting general secretary was appointed to provide time for names to be submitted for consideration. Receiving much discussion on the convention floor was the official name of the church. Since there was some confusion as to how and where South Sudan and Sudan should be noted; a motion passed to henceforth use this designation: ELCSS/S.

The dilemma of finances was debated at length in the context that the subsidy from LHF is gradually declining by design. Rev. Peter Anibati, acting treasurer, commended LHF for all of its help and called for the church to begin seriously the effort to stand on its own two feet. There was some concern that the funds of the church need to be centralized and not held in several accounts.

The ELCSS/S is awaiting word on its application for fellowship with the LCMS. The Bishop had been invited to attend the meeting of the ILC in Argentina but visa problems prevented his attendance, which he regretted. Some discussions in regard to fellowship will be discussed at a sub-committee meeting of the CTCR on December 10. The convention noted that the ELCSS/S will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2018 and that preparation should be underway as soon as possible.

The convention also called on the LHF to help conduct seminars for all church workers during the year 2016 when the seminary will be out of session. During the convention Dr. Lutz gave an introduction to stewardship but time was limited for him to complete the topic.

Other participants in the convention/ graduation/commissioning were Dr. Reijo Arkkila, Rev. Lassie Raty and Rev. Antti Saarenketo, all from Finland and the LEAF organization. Rev. Antti was serving in Juba until the war broke out. He plans to return to Juba next year.

The woes of travel included the attempt to get six suitcases to South Sudan along with the 10 taken by Dr. Lutz. Our pleas for humanitarian aid consideration were heard and some breaks received. In Addis my attempt to use a credit card was thwarted and a \$600 cost loomed. I laid out the total cash I had in the amount of \$460 and pleaded for grace. The fourth supervisor granted

leniency and lowered the weight to a \$430 level. The cargo included 15 laptop computers with solar blankets, clergy albs, graduation gowns, shirts, baptismal napkins, communion ware, clergy crosses, ultra slim Bibles, communion wafers, desk crosses, and many other items.

In the new year we will begin lining up the faculty for the start of the next school year in January 2017. Now is the time to volunteer your services.

On December 13, Rev. Japheth Dachi and Rev. James May will be in Gambela, Ethiopia to conduct the graduation service for the three students who were driven out of South Sudan during their vicarage and ended up in refugee camps. LHF provided special training for them with classes both in Gambela and in Addis. Rev. May spent two weeks with the students teaching the book of Revelation. Dr. Lutz had also spent a month with the students prior to going to Yambio.

## **December 10**

PHONE CONFERENCE CALL: SUB COMMITTEE OF CTCR  
SUBJECT: ELCSS/S CHURCH FELLOWSHIP WITH LCMS

Only question with regards to doctrine was whether I knew of any doctrinal issue that would prevent fellowship. My answer: “absolutely none.” I reported that this church from its very beginning has been built on the foundation of the confession and doctrine held by the LCMS. All training of Sudan pastors has been by sound confessional pastors, mostly from our two seminaries and from the clergy ranks of the synod.

I asked if they had seen our report on “The History of LHF Involvement in Sudan” that was sent to Dr. Collver. It was distributed to them. I told them that they then noted the names of prominent members of the LCMS, including high synod officers starting with Dr. Scott Murray, the first instructor in the seminary program. Men from both seminaries taught in the CLIHM.

I pointed out that the curriculum for the seminary had been worked out in cooperation with faculty members at Fort Wayne: Dr. William Weinrich, Dr. Timothy Quill, Dr. Rick Nuffer and under the advice from Dr. Bernie Lutz.

*Q: Do you think the ELCSS/S can thrive without the major support from America?* My answer: Having just attended the convention of the church a few weeks ago, I was pleased with the discussions held relative to stewardship and the discussion on the premise that it is time the church took seriously its obligation to be prepared to stand on its own two feet. While that will be a challenge for them, I believe they are heading in the right direction relative to finding ways to be self-supporting.

*Q: Do you think that there is an assumption that fellowship equals funding?* I pointed out that this matter was discussed at our meeting with Dr. Collver and Rev. Shaun Trump in Addis last March. Bishop Rule at that meeting pointed out that money was not the issue as they sought fellowship with LCMS, but that the first interest was to be association with a church body that had similar convictions, doctrine and confession that the ELCSS/S had. They sought fellowship because of this primary concern.

*Q: Is there any connection/discussions between the Lutheran groups in Sudan?* Well, this is a new phenomena as we only heard about other Lutheran churches in Sudan in the last year or two. No, there is not a lot of interaction. Why? Well, three years ago when I was in Yambio I saw electrical poles; this last trip I saw electrical poles and electrical lines strung, but there is no electricity. This depicts a difficulty in communication. Even though it seems everyone has a phone, it still isn't easy to communicate. And it is even worse traversing the roads to get from one place to another. For instance, the road between Juba and Yambio — a mere dis-



tance of some 150 miles — is unsafe, if not for the ruts, then the bandits waiting to hold you up. Bishop Rule has had limited discussions with the Bol group.

*Q: Have you heard of the interest by the Anglican church to become part of the LCMS? I only learned about this today when I received the PR release from Dr. Collver and the pictures showing Bishop Elijah meeting in St. Louis with officials of the LCMS. I find it strange, however, that with our principle that the bishop of a local area is the primary contact, that this matter was never discussed with Bishop Rule or any meeting held between them in Sudan.*

*Q: We have heard rumors that Bishop Rule is charging a fee for pastors to be ordained? Could you confirm or comment? Bishop Rule has decided that he would not ordain the current class of 13 candidates until there is assurance that they can be supported in their assigned parish. He doesn't want to place them in a congregation and then find that they have left because they had to find support by working another job. I can see, however, how such a rumor could get started because of Bishop Rule's delaying ordination. I would categorically say it's nothing more than a rumor.*

*Q: What about the size of the ELCSS/S? I had asked the Bishop to provide an up-to-date statistical report in preparation for this meeting, but it has not been received. The last report indicated there were 140-150 congregations and 40,000 members.*

*Q: This is quite a bit smaller than the Anglican group; although the ELCSS/S has been in existence for almost 25 years? I would say that the Anglican numbers are somewhat inflated unless the members are out there hiding in the bush! You would say that the numbers are inflated, then? Yes.*

At one point I did allude to the fact that it was on August 31, 1999 that a request was made by the late Bishop Andrew, addressing the question of fellowship with Dr. Al Barry and with each president serving the LCMS. Offers were made for meetings to take place in Nairobi with Pres. Kieschnick but the scheduled meeting was canceled.

I would respectfully urge you to take action on this fellowship question as quickly as would allow. I don't know your procedures but I would hope that this question might come before the convention in 2016, although Dr. Collver in our discussions in Addis felt that it may not happen until 2019. Thank you for providing this avenue for discussion.

Meeting Summary by Rev. Robert Rahn

### **December 15**

This is how things start for a program to provide continued theological education when the seminary is not in session during a given year, such as in 2016. During this time, pertinent seminars are to be held for all professional workers in the church and the lay leaders.

Subject: RE: Getting Ready for 2016

Robert/Eileen,

Thanks for giving this prayer time in preparation for a possible trip to help with the seminars.

I'm not sure what is in mind for the 5-7 days but I have some suggestions in the interest of cost saving. I would say they be five days and the sessions include everyone in maybe three to four locations if you have a



month's time for South Sudan. Perhaps on Saturday morning you could have a sermon study session with the pastors and evangelists. Something should be figured out as to what could be done for the north region and where it could be done, since Khartoum seems to be kind of a hot bed for persecution of Christians.

Scheduling these in mid-May would give the needed time for planning. Maybe we could schedule another session in July or another agreed upon time with one of our clergy coming or having Giessler for a month if his health permits. Or Lutz coming to finish his stewardship topic. All this in the "mulling" stage.

You can work out with John Jock just what the program would be in Gambela.  
RR

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From: Robert Roberts  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: Dachi

Just a quick reply; it would seem that a seminar in February would best be presented by someone who had already prepared material on the chosen topic — e.g. Bernie Lutz might be ready to lead a seminar on stewardship.

Eileen and I might be interested in leading a seminar in June in Central and Eastern Equatoria if the venue were favorable. A hotel in Juba would be prohibitively expensive, for instance. I have taught Worship and Liturgy cross-culturally, and things might be combined with materials on music and hymnody, areas in which Eileen has a certain competence. I might alternatively be interested in presenting something on, for instance, the *Small Catechism* as a confessional document, or on discovering the Gospel in Old Testament preaching texts. How long are these projected seminars?

September would be a difficult time for me to get away, if I am to teach the fall semester at SVSU — which teaching would provide the bulk of the expenses for the trip. But August would be doable, and this might be combined with some exploration of lay leader training possibilities, following up on Eileen's conversations with John Jock and James May about "local deaconess" training programs. This would not be conducting such training, but discussing/working/workshopping with a select group of half a dozen or so about developing materials for this purpose (training). All this is just bouncing ideas off you, looking for your reaction as one who has experience in such matters.

Thank you for thinking about us.  
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## December 21

Subject: Getting Ready for 2016  
From: Robert Rahn  
To: Nicholas Kumbo Louis  
CC: Matthew Heise, Jeff Rahn

Dear Brothers/Leaders of ELCSS/S,

Here we are thinking about seminars for 2016 and the following is a response from Robert Roberts who is willing to come in June or even August, rather than September. How would his proposed topics fit in with your overall plans? We could maybe have him go to more than one area, if each session were four or five days. What about lodging in Juba? Is there somewhere besides the hotel at \$120 per night, as that would be prohibitive? Maybe they could even start in Gambela? What would your reaction be?

RRahn  
CLIHM Program Director

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From: Nicholas Kumbo  
To: Robert Rahn; Noah Bishop Wilson  
Cc: Japheth  
Subject: Re: Getting Ready for 2016

Dear brothers,  
Merry Christmas and happy new year to you.

As we are getting ready for work next year, there is no objection if June and August fits in the schedule of Rev. Robert Roberts to come and teach in the seminars in Gambela and Central & Eastern Delaney. For the seminar in central and Eastern Equatoria Delaney, it can be done in Juba in if we would get a cheap hotel for accommodation; if not, we shall do it in Magwi county in Eastern Equatorial State. We aim to have two groups for the seminar at the same time (group of pastors and then evangelists and some key church elders) for at least 5 to 7 days. We still don't know what we will do for Khartoum to benefit from those seminars? But for those of Wau Deanery, they can come to Western Equatoria Deanery in February where it can be cheaper to accommodate them.

Let us continue to plan and ask God for His will to be done. I wish you all the best.

Rev. Nicholas Kumbo  
Dean of students CLIHM.

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**December 22**

From R. Rahn  
To: Robert Roberts  
FW: Getting Ready for 2016

Robert/Eileen,  
From the Nicholas message, it looks like you could schedule yourself as you see fit and they would work it into their schedule, and they would try to find the most inexpensive venue in Juba or in the area.

You would be responsible for your travel and we would be responsible for any expenses for the seminar.

Give it your prayerful consideration and let me know. We will schedule other seminars after you select your

date and topic. I assume it would be liturgy and hymnody, as in the area Eileen could also provide input.

Appreciate your willingness to return to the Sudan scene. God bless your Christmas preparations.  
RR

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**December 23**

From: Robert Roberts  
To: Robert Rahn  
Cc: Nicholas Louis  
Subject: RE: Getting Ready for 2016

Rev. Rahn,

We will be giving the seminar(s) much thought and prayerful consideration. We will need to get more information about the length of the seminars. For example, does the 5-7 days mean pastors all day for a week, followed by another week for evangelists and lay, or does it mean just one week with pastors half-day, and the evangelists half-day? Or would there be a couple of these one-week sessions in different places?

The other thing we would be wondering about is going to Gambela either before or after Juba/East. In Gambela, what we would really like to do is more of a workshop. Rev. John Jock wanted some courses developed for the lay women (they call themselves deaconesses, but not like the commissioned ones). We think we would have two courses ready to sit down with about 5-6 pastors from the Gambela area and 2-3 lay women, and then by "teaching" the women, figure out what needs to be written down so that the pastors could then teach these classes. We would be available from mid-May on and would be available to stay in Africa for as long as needed to complete the task.

Eileen and Bob

## 2016

**January 29**

From: Jake Gillard  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: Gillard - Mission - Prayer Blast snakes, scorpions, and stickers

Yes, the prices have climbed here, too, as a result of the ever-plunging exchange rate. But if you do the math, it actually brings the goods (e.g. sugar, soda, etc.) into line with Uganda or Kenya prices. The problem on this side is lack of jobs, so lack of money to buy at any price. I don't know what's going on in Yambio. Fuel is hard to find.

Here's what I wrote in my journal last week: "The economy is collapsing. It is a struggle to get by. In September the official exchange rate was about 3 South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) to 1 USD and the unofficial exchange

rate was 12 SSP to 1 USD. In the new year of 2016 it is now 23.6 SSP to 1 USD. US dollars are scarce. Here in this border town of Nimule some people prefer to be paid in Ugandan Shillings.”

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Jake Gillard  
Subject: RE: Gillard - Mission - Prayer Blast snakes, scorpions, and stickers

Jake, got the report yesterday on prices of food that have escalated during the fighting. All is calm these days.

About the electricity in Yambio, I was told a firm from Cairo was there to work on it but when fighting broke out, the construction firm went back to Cairo. Hopefully there will be more normal conditions so that they can return. When we went to Yambio for the graduation of ten students in November, we brought 15 laptop computers with solar blankets. The mistake was that we should have brought them at the beginning of the school term, not at the end, as there wasn't a lot of time for training and using them.

Blessings on your Kingdom work.  
RR

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**February 9**

From: Simon Gatluak  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: greetings

Dear Brothers in Christ,  
Receive the greetings from Gambela, Ethiopia. We in Upper Nile South Sudan and Gambela congregations of ELCSS/S remember you always and the good work you did among us of planting the good seed by giving training to these young men Simon Lul, Peter Koryom and Gabriel Padoch. All of them now are doing well and have expanded God's Kingdom. Through them, many come to the faith and we thank God for that.

We also ask your prayer so that they are ordained and serve the people of God. As the pastor in the area, these men are qualify for the work of the holy ministers.

We pray that one day you will come back to upper Nile and Gambela.

May the Lord of hope be between us and you.

In Christ,  
Rev. Simon Gatluak

From: Robert Rahn  
To: Simon Rev. Gatluak  
Subject: RE: greetings

Dear Brother,

It was good to receive your greetings and well wishes. I am returning your message and at the same time testing the address I place in my address file for future communication.

It would be a great pleasure returning to the Upper Nile and Gambela regions, but plans need to be made in the context of health and ability. Even though I just recorded a milestone birthday with a surprise 80th birthday party sponsored by my wife and son, Jeff, the Lord has granted good health and stamina and it is my prayer that it continue to allow for travel and the pressures connected therewith, especially when you carry six extra suitcases.

Now we are attempting to find out what happened when the Bishop failed to show for the important meeting in Juba with synod officials relating to fellowship. No one represented the ELCSS/S.

I trust that all things are going well in the Upper Nile Deanery.  
RRahn

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From: Simon Gatluak  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: greetings

I thanks God so much. I know the Lord will bring you back to Upper Nile and we pray that your health will be okay.

Everybody keeps you in his mind, remembering the time you walked from the church pulpit and you led the Sunday School carrying the stick cross. That reminded many that Jesus will lead millions people to the cross and to eternal salvation forever. We keep you in prayer. We were disappointed that the Bishop failed to meet someone from LCMS.

Let keep in touch with the LORD and also with one another.  
In Christ,  
Rev. Simon Gatluak  
Dean, Upper Nile

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Simon Gatluak, Asst. Bishop ELCSS/S  
Subject: RE: greetings

Dear Brother,

I wasn't going to bother you with another message, but you brought to mind the event that stays with me all these days: the "children's march" with the made-up song verses with the chorus "I Want to Follow Jesus." I have to say it was an inspired event and truly a responsive one that lingers in the heart.

Thank you for demonstrating that it isn't something just lingering in my mind, but in yours as well.  
May the Lord bless.

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**February 10 — A troubled church...**

From: Charles Kazimilio  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: LETTER OF APOLOGY

Dear Father Lordship Rev. Rahn,  
Sorry for the inconvenience.

Will you forgive the new church like ELCSS/S with its new pastors of 2010? We are the only ones left, 6 out of 14. And we still stand confessional Lutheran. We need relationship with you, LCMS in USA, a confessional body. We need more to grow spiritually through further studies, to equip our church too. A young church like this should not be just left on the way like this because of one person like this. How do you look for its futures?

We the young pastors, we are like grass dying for nothing because of one elephant beating down the grass while feeding only the stomach, with no mind for the church future. Forward this message to Dr. Collver from LCMS that we are down here apologizing for that, as some of us were not aware. We would have gone to meet him to greet him and to represent our Church because we need partners. Will you forgive the church? No pride can serve God, but humility. And humbleness is ours in the church as we look forward to get what we hope for.

Phil:3:12-13 Humility and humbleness is ours as we live. Philippians:2:15

With blessing from God,  
Young Pastor From Tòmbura County, 183 km from Yambio  
Giara Lutheran Church Parish. W E S  
Rev. Charles Undo Kazimilio

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**February 11**

From: Matthew Heise  
To: Noah Bishop Wilson  
Cc: Nicholas Kumbo Louis; Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn  
Subject: Hello from LHF in America

Hello, dear Bishop Wilson,



We have received word that you may have had surgery in Khartoum, so please accept our prayers for a speedy recovery.

As you remember, last year we met in Addis Ababa with Dr. Al Collver, the representative to the President of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Pastor Rahn and I were hopeful that this meeting might be the beginning of fellowship talks between Missouri Synod and the ELCSS/S.

Therefore we were very surprised and saddened to hear that when Dr. Collver arrived in Juba this week, there were no talks with your church.

You were not there. Could not someone have been delegated to speak for you if you were unable to come to Juba? We are afraid that a wonderful opportunity has been missed.

This brings me to a more painful statement. We receive little communication from you personally despite our efforts to support the ELCSS/S. We are troubled by this lack of communication. This week I had a meeting with the Board of LHF. They asked me many questions about the ELCSS/S, many of which I could not answer.

They are concerned that LHF is spending a disproportionate amount of its budget in South Sudan/Sudan. Pastor Rahn is trying to find ways to make the church more independent. The bakery is one of those projects. But our primary task, as you know, is to translate and print Lutheran books. If we receive little information, it is difficult for us to help you. Please understand that LHF cannot continue to support the ELCSS/S with large amounts of money and little idea of how it is helping the church.

We pray God's blessings upon you and especially for your healing.  
In Christ,  
Rev. Matthew W. Heise, LHF Executive Director

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Dear Pastor Heise, Greetings in the name of our Lenten Savior and Lord!

This letter contains information concerning the Sudanese Lutheran Mission Society (SLMS) and the break-away group, the South Sudanese Lutheran Mission Society (SSLMS).

The information in this letter came as a result of speaking at the SLMS' Annual Conference held on November 7, 2015 at St. John Lutheran Church in Storm Lake, Iowa and an email from Rev. Wichiang T. Wetnyan-gran that came today..

As I was visiting previous to the November SLMS meeting I was made aware of this other group in conversation with Dr. Jeffrey Thormodson and others. From the conversation I gathered that Rev. Matthew Wichluol Both (who is listed as the President of the SSLMS), Rev. James Gatdet (Gadet), and others have begun this alternate Sudanese mission society – the South Sudan Lutheran Mission Society (SSLMS). One of the main reasons I was told for this breakaway organization was that they believed that the Lutheran Heritage Foundation had supposedly given a huge sum of American dollars (\$300 million according to Wichiang – and amount far in excess of LHF's actual budget for everything) to the Bishop of the Sudanese Lutheran Church in South Sudan — Rev. Wilson Noah Rule — and he had used these funds inappropriately. The SSLMS has also started a breakaway LWML patterned after the LWML of the SLMS.

The Sudanese Lutheran Mission Society is served by President Rev. Wichiang T. Wetnyangran, who serves at Peace Lutheran Church in Hurst, Texas. The Sudanese EIIT student I am mentoring (Vicar Gatluk Reat) was supposedly “elected” to be one of the SSLMS Board of Counselors, but he is not. At the November meeting, he was elected as the treasurer of the SLMS. Gatluk and I have had a number of conversations about this other organization and those who have broken away from the SLMS in hope of establishing a counter organization to SLMS and to support those opposed to Bishop Rule in South Sudan.

I am sharing this information because LHF is accused of having contributed to this division which we did not do since LHF doesn't have the kind of money we supposedly gave Bishop Rule. Because of the supposed role of LHF I am sharing this information with you because you should know about this.

I would encourage you to visit with President Sommerfeld and Dr. Thormodson at the seminary about this situation since Bishop Rule has been in contact with President Sommerfeld & I learned of this situation from Dr. Thormodson..

Further, I am concerned about the divisive effects this has already had on the church in South Sudan. They have had enough conflict thanks to the civil war there. They don't need to have the members of the church divided against one another as well. I am not sure if any of this division is related to the conflict between the Nuer and the Dinka in South Sudan.

I have been told that there will be a meeting in St. Louis about or between these two groups on March 17 & 18. Wichiang has asked that I be there because I am on the LHF board and I have worked in the Sudanese community. Does LHF have someone in St. Louis who could attend? Should I consider doing this? I think that a better representative for this meeting would be you!

I can send you hard-copy of the email from Bishop Rule to President Harrison as well as the SSLMS officer sheet if you so desire.

The Lord's continued blessings be with you.

In Christ,  
Rev. Dr. Armand J. Boehme

### **February 15 — When difficulties arise in the church's leadership...**

It was on this date that problems surfaced relative to unaccounted expenditures in the ELCSS/S, and the effort began to determine how major funds were received into a Juba account and how those funds were expended. The following exchanges took place, indicating that these were serious problems and if they were not handled or information provided, the Bishop should resign. This major event demonstrates the difficulty of managing funds when they aren't reported.

Here I have recorded all details, all correspondence that took place relative to the problem, and upon reviewing the length of this material I determined to eliminate some 25 pages of detail. These have been filed in the LHF archives. Below I record several messages that simply give the reader the scope of the problem.

For a full year we attempted to get answers, but all we received was silence and evasive tactics that finally resulted in the election of a new bishop as related below. These events are kept in sequence in regard to this problem, and as a result there will be an intended discrepancy in the dating of events that follow.

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From: Bernhard Lutz

To: Peter Anibati ELCSS; Nicholas Louis; Elinama Jacob Bisi; Al Collver; Japheth Dachi; Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise

Dear Leaders of a Christian Church: Greetings in Jesus!

My heart aches as I read and re-read the recent catalog of failures pronounced upon the Spiritual Leader of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Sudan and Sudan. We all are aware of the power of Satan who opposes all that is holy, decent, good and God-pleasing. This year will be my eighth visit to the people of South Sudan. Only God knows if He wills this forthcoming visit to assist the leaders of the Church to grow strong in His precious and holy Word.

We are praying that the Holy Spirit will give all of you the courage, understanding and wisdom needed to deal with a difficult and dangerous problem. Asking someone defiant and self-willed to resign from a lucrative position will be challenged and rejected, even with the evidence that is demonstrated by the facts you have listed in the request for Rev. Rule to resign.

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord! His Word is powerful and filled with love. May the Triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, guide the leaders of the ELCSS/S. It has taken many tears and much love for God and His Word together with the fear of reprisals to reach your position.

On the basis of the evidence you shared, you the leaders have my prayers, hand of support, and continued assistance to maintain CLIHM as a responsible and effective educational component to train and equip servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. To God be the glory!

In this Lenten Season, these 40 days of time for prayer, fasting and repentance, may each of us see our personal need for a loving and gracious Savior. With His Word and Spirit to guide us, let us be confident that God will guide us to success in dealing with the tensions that surround us in so many ways. So we daily pray: Thy will be done! Allah mahabah. God is love.

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On the above date, the LHF Finance Committee passes a resolution to suspend all funds going to ELCSS/S except those to be used for translation and publishing projects. It is an indication as to how an individual creating a problem causes difficulties for the innocent. It means pastors in Sudan receive no support, but it also means that the LHF leadership having freedom to operate on the basis of what is passed in a budget will now come under closer scrutiny and all matters will be monitored by committees. This will make the daily operations more cumbersome and time-consuming. And this is what is known as the fallout — when one person creates uncertainty for all. And what is even more serious is that the preaching of the Gospel is curtailed. God cannot be pleased when the Great Commission is thwarted in this manner. The LHF Board carries out its responsibility, the leadership carries out its responsibility and there is need for transparency that isn't there from the receiving agency such as the ELCSS/S. It is a case where everybody loses.

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Dear Peter,

I thank you, Peter, for including me in the group of recipients of your serious message! I still treasure the memories from Khartoum and Yambio in the 1990s and during the early years of the new millennium when we together and under the late Bishop Andrew Mbugo Elisa were building the ELCA in the North as well as in the South. We had so many reasons to be grateful for God's work and rejoice in the Lord. We should also keep in mind that God always tests individual Christians as well as His entire church in the purpose that everything which is not built on the solid foundation of the Word of the Lord would collapse. Moses was denied access to the Promised Land. David lost, by terribly sinning, all eventual self-confidence and had to pray for mercy as we can read in the wonderful Psalm 51. Peter fell and was forgiven. What pleases me in your appeal to Bishop Noah is its humble but resolute spirit.

What I can do is to greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ with the promise that I willingly join the chain of those who beseech the Lord for the rescue and renewal of ELCS.

Personally, I still treasure the pleasant memories from your study-time when we met and worked together at Tschwane, South Africa. Your church in the Sudan is now in dire need of all the knowledge and wisdom you drew from the well of God's revelation and Lutheran theology.

Be safe in the Lord and richly blessed in the name of Jesus.  
Daktari Anssi Simojoki

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Suggestions were given to the leadership of the Sudanese church in regards to dealing with problems that have surfaced.

From: Robert Rahn  
To: Peter Anibati; Bisi, Rev. Elinama Jacob; Nicholas Kumbo Louis; Heise, Matthew Rev.; Rahn, Jeff; Lutz Bernie; Giessler  
Subject: The church moving forward

Dear Peter,  
Cordial greetings on this Lord's Day when we have confessed our sins and heard the absolution. This is also available to the good bishop and should be offered.

So when the bishop comes to defend himself, he should be given an opportunity to address the main issues that have been raised, and he should be asked if he is willing to address these issues and declare what his program of correction will be in regard to, first and foremost, the issue of finances. Will he abide by the convention resolution that all finances be brought into a central treasury of the church? This would be the first area where the bishop could show good faith by outlining a procedure that will be immediately followed to combine the treasuries. It should be accomplished within a matter of maybe two days. Account closed!!

He should then be asked the second obvious concern, how was the money spent? This disclosure should go back to the time the first rental agreement was signed and when the first payment was received from the Minnesota South Sudanese Mission Society. This commitment should be made immediate and a written report filed within days. Any other funds that have come into the Juba treasury should also be considered, be they from Finland or elsewhere. A full disclosure should be made.

Those would be two very important areas that the church has already addressed as a body. There can be no accusation that this is something contrived by a group of dissidents. This was the Church asking. Emmanuel knows well that he did not provide, not did the Bishop encourage him to provide, the report the convention asked for. I was there to witness this request as it was made. Now I am also accused of not liking the bishop. I'll like the bishop even more should he repent and follow the steps of full disclosure that you, your church leaders, our Finance Committee and the LHF Board of Directors is requesting.

After this matter is addressed and resolved, the bishop can then be asked for a written six-month, one-year, two-year and even five-year plan of action for the ELCSS/S. This would include a time line to implement the resolutions of the convention relative to elections, ordinations, job description and hiring of a treasurer.

Given his good faith intended resolution of all these matters, he could remain in office and eventually a service of repentance and absolution be conducted for all involved.

It would be a day of rejoicing and renewal, if the bishop would take the lead and demonstrate that he is interested in being a true servant of the Lord, elected into office by expectant people. If it is a case of continued shifting of blame and refusal to assume responsibility, he thereby demonstrates an inability to lead as the shepherd of the church. His intent must be to confess that he, being the first and foremost of sinners, calls the church of sinners to repent and in forgiveness move to be the church Christ called it to be.

Will he do it? Will he be led by the Spirit to do it? Will he declare his intent to do it as the appointed head of the church? It is in his hands.

By the time the first two options are addressed and completed, you will know if resignation procedures need to continue. What a time of rejoicing it would be if responsibility is taken and commitments made to work together to bring a new harmony and direction in the church.

Our foremost interest is repentance and restoration upon commitments made.

Seeking restoration through repentance and renewed commitments,  
R. Rahn

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## February 26

From: Jeff Rahn  
To: Nicholas Kumbo Louis

Nicholas,

I am addressing this message to you as acting treasurer of the ELCSS/S and including Peter as the former treasurer, the Bishop, and the general secretary. The LHF Board of Directors has suspended all transfers to the ELCSS/S due to a lack of financial transparency surrounding the Juba rental arrangement. This also extends to other individuals who were planning to send support to the ELCSS/S through LHF for specific projects.

During the budget process, we have routinely inquired if there were other sources of support, including but not limited to church income-generating projects and amounts coming from other partners. LHF has worked

tirelessly over the years to obtain grants/gifts for projects that would help the ELCSS/S become self-supporting and less reliant on LHF for support for salaries and church operations. This would enable LHF to continue to focus on translation and publishing projects and the seminary program.

The information that has been received relative to the rental property in Juba is utterly disturbing in that it was never disclosed to LHF as to the extent of revenue that was being generated by this arrangement. Correspondence dated 24/06/2014 from G4S Ordnance Management indicates a \$9,000 per month rental agreement contracted for 3 years (2014-2017) paying a total of \$324,000. A letter dated 15 April 2014 from G4S states in part “we have now been your tenants for seven years” indicating that this arrangement goes back to around 2007-2008. A copy of the rental agreement for September 1, 2013-September 1, 2014 indicates a monthly rent amount of \$10,000. Based on the information provided in the correspondence (relevant copies attached) I have determined that the total amount of revenue generated by this arrangement during 2007-2017 amounts to potentially \$876,000 USD as shown below:

We are pleased that the church has access to this revenue source and pray that it continues in order to support her operations. Please, however, address the following questions surrounding this arrangement.

- 1) Please explain why the extent of this rental arrangement was never disclosed to Lutheran Heritage Foundation.
- 2) Please confirm how much has been received from this arrangement and the time period covered, if the above information is incorrect.
- 3) Please provide copies of all rental agreements/documentation for this arrangement going back to 2007.
- 4) Please indicate who was aware of this rental agreement and the amount that was being generated by it.
- 5) Who are the current signers on the Juba bank account ending in 9290, into which the rental funds have been deposited?
- 6) Please indicate the dates/dollar amounts/purposes of disbursements from these funds.
- 7) What is the current balance in this bank account?
- 8) When will the funds from this Juba account be combined with the central account, per resolution of the last convention?
- 9) In 2013 who authorized John Deang to sign the agreement? Is he an elected official of the ELCSS/S? Where is John Deang now?
- 10) What other amounts have been deposited into this account, where did they come from, and what were they for?
- 11) Please provide bank statements for this account going back as far as possible.
- 12) Other than this rental agreement, please identify all other income generating projects of the church and indicate how much is being generated, where the funds are being deposited, and how the revenue is being used.

Please treat this matter and the questions raised above as serious and urgent. We look forward to receiving your detailed and timely reply so that the LHF Board can further review and discuss this matter.

In Christ,  
Jeff Rahn  
Director of Operations

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## March 1

It is understood that the list below constitutes the rental income received since the year 2007.

From: Nicholas Louis  
Subject: Re: ELCSS/S Finances

Dear Jeff,  
Greetings to you from Yambio in the blessed name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Thank you very much for addressing the message to me as the acting treasurer of the ELCSS/S with your questions and concerns for the information that has been received relative to the rental property in Juba.

1. I was assigned as the acting treasurer of the ELCSS/S account in Yambio, not of Juba last year 2015 in December after the general convention. These three months I have completed in the job cannot qualify me to give a correct financial reports of an account that I am not signatory to. But what I know is that these are two different and separate accounts, and there are people in Juba who are signatory to that account and they can be asked to give a correct accountability for that account, not any member of the ELCSS/S. Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn knows and is aware that there are two different accounts in the ELCSS/S, and he can witness to you by himself how people during the last convention pleaded with the dean of Central and Eastern Equatoria to give a report for that account but it was not given. If that information was disclosed to the people during the last convention I think any person who attended the convention could be in position to say exactly what he/she had heard.

2. The rental arrangements and how much has been received for the time period covered up to date, who are the signers on the Juba account ending in 9290, what is the current balance in this bank account, what other amounts have been deposited into this account, where did they come from, and for what purpose they were sent, and who authorized Rev. John Deng to sign in the agreement, are good questions, but I am sorry that I am not capable to answer them because I don't want to lie to you and to God. It is only the bishop who can answer those questions because he worked as a pastor and dean of Central and Eastern Equatoria deanery before becoming the bishop of ELCSS/S, and he knows the genesis of how the account was opened. And he is also the right person who can provide you with all the rental documents going back to 2007 and the bank statements for this account going bank as far as possible.

3. Regarding when the funds from this account when it will be combined with the central account in Yambio per resolution of the last convention is something that people have asked for and are waiting to hear from the bishop when he comes back to Yambio. He will be the one to tell them when exactly.

Let us continue to pray for ELCSS/S so that God's will may be done.

Have a blessed day, and please don't hesitate to ask any question if you are not satisfied with this answer.  
Rev. Nicholas Kumbo.

This ends my references to the problem created by the bishop in his failure to account for funds. As stated above many additional pages of this history have been filed in the LHF archives.

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**May 24**

From: Jeff Rahn  
To: Anibati, Peter  
Subject: Wire

Peter & Nicholas,

This afternoon I wired \$9,500 to the account as follows:

\$4,500 Roberts South Sudan Seminars Budget  
\$3,600 Pastor Stipends  
\$1,400 Operating expenses

Please confirm receipt of the wire upon arrival.

This wire was authorized by the LHF Finance Committee on Monday with the stipulation that no further funds will be provided until the church in convention has resolved the financial transparency problems. The Board meets on June 21 and expects a detailed update on the matter, at which time the Board will decide if stipends will be continued for the remainder of 2016.

Blessings on the seminar and convention preparations and I trust the bakery project is also moving forward.

In Christ,  
Jeff Rahn

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**September 13**

From: Peter Anibati  
Subject: ELCSS/S ordinations in Gambela & Yambio

Dear brothers in Christ,

Greetings to one and all at the LHF. We are always thankful for the generous help you at LHF are ready to share with the ELCSS/S. Our unique partnership has been created by God and you at LHF have really gone beyond your mission statement to create a viable and active Gospel centered church body the ELCSS/S.

While we respect and cherish our partnership with the LHF, we would like to respond gently, lovingly but firmly regarding the ordination of the vicars who were prepared and qualified for the call into the active ELCSS/S ministry.

While any pastor can duly ordain another pastor, the ELCSS/S in good faith agreed to reserve this noble task of ordination for the office of the bishop. However, the *Book of Concord* rightly advises that when there is malfeasance of office, the faithful have the right and God-given duty to ordain pastors into the Holy Ministry. So, this is exactly what we have done with the vicars who have been certified by the faculty of CLIHM and have received calls to work in the congregations of the ELCSS/S.

We rejoice greatly that our brother professor, Dr. Lutz, was with us at that time. We were honored to give him the esteemed duty to ordain the ten qualified vicars who are greatly needed in the mission of the ELCSS/S in all South Sudan and Sudan. We are pleased that he accepted our invite to ordain the vicars. We pray and hope that this will not cause problems in the work of LHF. As we indicated earlier, the decision to ordain these men did not come from the LHF, nor did Dr. Lutz request for it, but it was a decision taken by the ELCSS/S executive leadership which comprises the deans, pastors and the laity.

We at the ELCSS/S rejoice greatly as we now move forward to start new mission fields as well as repair the brokenness caused by the poor leadership from the office of the bishop. In this regard, we request the LHF to support us to move out of this confusion! The ELCSS/S has had a successful beginning, but since the unfortunate election of Rev. Wilson Noah Rule as bishop of the ELCSS/S, the church has been in confusion. The elected spiritual leader has neglected to assist the deaneries and congregations of the ELCSS/S. In many ways the bishop's performance has lacked integrity, love and humility. We now have no bishop to lead us spiritually.

Satan has used this situation to try to destroy the ELCSS/S, but we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ who is the church's one foundation. Brothers, we desperately need a leader to help us get back on our feet and begin once again doing the evangelist's task. For this reason, we sat after the ordination and Dr. Lutz was here with all the pastors who came for the ordination and the council members and resolved the following:

- 1) Extra ordinary convention to be held at the end of October 2016 to elect a new bishop for the ELCSS/S. Rev. Wilson will be invited to come and answer the questions which the previous convention has raised in 2015 about the rental property in Juba. If he fails to come, any decision taken will be final.
- 2) Three representatives would come from each deanery and international delegates would come from LHF, LEAF, LCMS and other Lutheran church bodies in Africa.
- 3) Thirdly, it was resolved that we request the LHF to help finance this mini convention since Wilson has refused to release funds from the UN rental.

In, conclusion, we wish to inform you that Rev. Wilson tried by all means to sabotage the seminar on stewardship as well as the ordination service. He had written letters to the government officials and had specifically instructed the national security to make sure that the occasion did not take place, but the government refused and said it was not their mandate to prevent the church from having its programs. As, a result, many government officials came to attend the ordination and they all appreciated the work of the ELCSS/S. They advised that we call a meeting soon and resolve the issue with Bishop Wilson; they even said if Wilson does not come, they will be there to witness the election of the new bishop. About a thousand people attended the service on September 4, 2016. Will share some pictures from the ordination service later; it's difficult to upload photos this side due to lack of faster Internet!

On behalf of the leaders of the ELCSS/S,  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Bernhard Lutz  
To: Peter Anibati ELCSS; Robert Rahn  
Subject: Come Follow Me!

Peter et al: Greetings in Jesus!

Thank you for the email. God bless South Sudan, its government, Christian church bodies and especially members of the ELCSS/S. People need Jesus. Without Him there is hopelessness and despair, failure and fracture of family, friends and all else. God give to all of you sailing in troubled waters the faith to know that the whitecaps of danger will not and cannot harm you! Let each of us ever remember and apply Psalm 46, “God is our Refuge and Strength, an ever-present help in trouble!” Trouble indeed — trouble with health, trouble with family, trouble with fellow church members, trouble with Satan’s daily attacks! Let us ever remember... He is an ever-present help in TROUBLE!

As a young, struggling Church, the ELCSS/S is vulnerable to Satan’s attacks! He is attacking, and viciously! Be strong as you choose a theme for your convention in December 2016. Be wary of strange and devilish attacks and trickery that you dreamed would take place. Be ready for a very difficult convention. Quarrels with Satan are never easy, but having and staying on track with Jesus always brings victory. Jesus never fails! God guide your choice of a faithful, dedicated, man of God to be the spiritual head of the ELCSS/S.

In Luther’s day, Luther’s chief complaint was...the Roman Catholic Church asked and taught its members to “do penance!” Luther was aghast! Do penance? No way, Christ has done it all. Good works are done always out of love to God and not to earn anything, especially His special favor. His love - our response. So then, let us depend upon the guidance and direction of the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us ever walk with Jesus, follow His example pure! On Christ the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand! Let us not think of our good works but of the good works of Christ, who has atoned for our sin, who has taken our guilt away. A fitting theme for the December convention might be “Jesus, Jesus, Only Jesus!” Acts 5:12.

May the Lord bless all of the committees working hard to get ready for this very special convention. May God bless all of the church leaders of the Church, giving to you the courage, wisdom and understanding necessary to lead in the name of Christ. Know that the leaders of LHF and its partners are keeping you and the work you have been called to do, in our daily prayers.

I will be awaiting the ELCSS/S invitation letter for visa application. May God keep you safe from harm and danger.

Allah mahabah. God is love.  
Dr. Lutz

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## October 11

Dear Peter,

I am back from an extended trip to the western part of the U.S. and am now getting ready to head for Wisconsin and then at the end of the month to Minnesota and Iowa. It would be important to get your update on plans for upcoming events. I know that you have provided an invitation for being present in November and I am getting ready to deal with that.

Will the extra ordinary convention be held the weekend of October 28? It would be good for you to act without the LHF presence at the convention so that we are not accused of fabricating and directing the election of a new bishop.

I have talked to Bernie Lutz and as soon as I confirm your plans we will make plans to be present on November 13 for the consecration of the new bishop.

Is there a bishop you will invite to do the actual ceremony of induction into office? Please respond as soon as you can as our planning will have to begin almost immediately. We have a meeting this afternoon to discuss this matter further.

In Him,  
R. Rahn

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From: Nicholas Louis  
Subject: Update

Dear Dr. Rahn,  
Thank you for your message. We received a copy of a letter from the government office of Gbudue State which was addressed to the bishop asking him to call an extraordinary convention before the end of November 2016. We don't know what he is going to tell the government yet, but we have to go ahead with our own preparations for the convention.

We will give you the updated date very soon, but we hope to hear is going to respond to the government's letter very quickly.

Thanks.  
Rev. Nicholas Kumbo

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**October 19**

From time to time we receive these kind of requests to assist people who find themselves in distress:

From: Wetnyangran, Wichiang  
Subject: Emergency assistant request

Grace and peace to you from our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Brothers in Christ, I am sending you this emergency assistant request for three of our pastors who have been in the refugee camps in Ethiopia due to the ongoing war in the South Sudan. Those three pastors who were ordained two months ago were called to attend training in Kenya and they went there through Ethiopia to Kenya. As they finished the training, they were given their tickets to fly back to Ethiopia and to the refugee camps where they are ministers. They were told that they will get enter visa at the Ethiopia airport. Unfortunately, they were told at that the airport that they will not be given visas; therefore, they will be sent to South Sudan. They told the security that they cannot go because they will be at risk since the security in South Sudan is very bad and many of the Nuer are being targeted by the government. The Ethiopian security told them they will not allow them to enter Ethiopia, but we will send you back to Kenya where you came from. They sent them to Kenya and the Kenya Security arrested them, and after that they were deported to South Sudan. Luckily, they were picked up at the airport and was taken to Unmiss Camp (UN camp) in Juba, South Sudan. Now, we are working to get them out from there. They are now terrified because one of them was killed when the war broke out in 2013. We need your prayers and your assistant at this difficult time. Pray for them and their families, and

pray also for the church in South Sudan. The assistance needed to get them out is like this:

Each person needs \$50 for entry visa and \$600 ticket from South Sudan to Kenya and from Kenya to Ethiopia. This make the total to be \$650 per person which is \$1,950 for three (3) of them. They already have their passports. Their names:

Rev. Gabriel Padoch Chuol  
Rev. Peter Puot Koryom  
Rev. Simon Lul Liem

I want you please to share this info with your congregations and anyone who can help at this crucial time. If you have any questions, feel free to give me a call and I will be glad to talk to you. I want us to coordinate this and have the result by this coming Friday, which is October 21, 2016. Thank you for serving together and God bless you.

Wichieng T. Wetnyangran  
Associate Pastor of African Immigrant Ministry (A.I.M)

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**October 26**

Rev. Bernard Lutz sends a message of encouragement to the leaders and the ELCSS/S people pertaining to the Reformation.

From: Bernhard Lutz  
To: Peter Anibati ELCSS/S  
Subject: Thank God for Martin Luther!

Rev. Peter, Pastors, Evangelists, and Members of ELCSS/S: Greetings in Jesus!

Why is it the Dr. Luther is able to find so many more wonderful, helpful, blessed teachings in a Bible passage than so many of us, who are students of the Bible? For instance, I read Psalm 46 and say, "Boy, this is a powerful Psalm." Luther reads and studies it and then writes a whole hymn on Psalm 46! What a blessing the Christian Church received through the work of one man, Dr. Luther! As Reformation Day comes, shame on all those Christians who fail to thank God for Luther's great work of bringing the Law and the Gospel into correct focus, and for stressing the blessings of the Gospel. Thank God for Martin Luther.

May the Triune God be with the ELCSS/S and its leaders as you focus on hosting a convention, and may God bless the committees as they work on the schedule for the convention. And God bless Wilson as he returns to the ELCSS/S synod headquarters located at Yambio and attempts to reestablish his integrity, honesty and humility as the spiritual leader for Christ's Church. As we all pray, "Thy will be done." Luther writes, quoting Matt 7:6, "Do not throw the Gospel before the swine and dogs" and "Anyone who has the Gospel correctly must certainly agree with us and be one with us, insofar as we are already sure that what we have is the true Gospel and the pearls." We cannot accept dishonesty, Godless pride.

May the Holy Spirit guide each of us as we all uncover our wrongs, forgive one another and with God's help, set a new plan of action with a Spirit blessed vision for the ELCSS/S and its future. Certainly we must "walk in step with the Spirit!" (Gal 5:25) We cannot walk — dare not walk! — any longer in the slimy pit that has



involved and captivated the ELCSS/S and so many of us for the past five years.

What joy filled my heart as so many fine, qualified, dedicated young men were ordained and now newly installed in the ministry of the ELCSS/S. May the Holy Spirit bless each new pastor with a strong, growing faith, as they “tend the flock” that they are now responsible for as a under-shepherd of Christ. I truly felt a thankful calm and a wonderful peace while serving with you in Yambio this past September.

May the spirit of the Reformation be a powerful healing salve for the wounds that are now present. May His love surround each of us as we faithfully obey His Word and share the message of the Risen Christ!

Allah mahabah. God is love ... Arabic.

Dr. Lutz

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#### **November 4**

From: Simon Gatluak

To: Robert Rahn

Subject: greetings

Dear friends in the Lord,

We are doing fine in Greater upper Deanery our church in refugee camp, South Sudan and Gambela. The Lord is using men and women to tell others about Jesus who suffered for our salvation. Many people are coming to faith, and we give glory to the One who brings them to the Lutheran church to accept the Biblical doctrine of the Christian faith.

We are asking your prayers to pray for the peace in South Sudan and the church in South Sudan to have a lasting peace forever, that the devil work can come to an end.

In HIM forever,

Rev. Simon

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#### **November 7**

From: Elinama Jacob

Subject: RE: Update

Dear Rev. Dr. Rahn

Greetings to you in the blessed name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am so happy to feel your concerns about ELCSS/S, the church which you started watering and it began to grow and reach to where it is now. It is real true you cannot stand seeing it suffering in the hand of somebody who just came in by mistake and is interested in self progress, not the Church. Thank you very much.

I am giving you information that the minister of Education and Religious affairs has just called me and informed that they have received an email from Wilson Noah, and they are going to write an official letter to

us soon. I am asking all of you to pray for us and the letter from the government. Once we receive the letter I will scan it and send it to you.

Our proposal time for the extra ordinary convention is the first week of December.

With best regard,  
Rev. Elinama Jacob Bisi  
Chairman/ Interim Committee

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: 'Elinama Jacob'  
Subject: RE: Update

Dear Friends in Christ,

It was good to get a report from you relative to the fluid situation in which you find yourselves. It is good to keep working towards the goal of a special convention, and unless there is repentance, the election of new leadership for the ELCSS/S.

Should the convention be held in early December with the resultant election of a new bishop, I would recommend that plans be made to have the inaugural/installation event on January 8 so that Bernie and I have time to obtain visas and flights. You should also be thinking of inviting a current bishop to participate, be it Thomas Asiago of Kenya or Risto Soramies from Finland. Last time it was the Nigeria bishop, but it seems to me that travel would be difficult to arrange for him out of Nigeria.

Just some preliminary thoughts as you await some information from the Minister of Ed and Rel Affairs.

Keeping you in prayer,  
R. Rahn

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**November 10**

This being the date for the founding of the LHF, back in 1992, it marks our 24th anniversary and ushers us into our 25th year when LHF will have a special celebration coinciding with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. During this year there will be planning meetings in regard to how and when the special 25th will be observed.

**November 18**

Now in these next messages I would like to switch gears and share some correspondence that stems from people who served as volunteer teachers on the foreign field of Ethiopia and South Sudan. We have many such volunteers who teach basic theology courses in places like Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, South Sudan, and Uganda. Rev. Robert and Eileen Roberts are both degree-holding volunteers, and like many other volunteers, their help goes beyond what they may have done in a classroom (keeping in mind the classroom might have been in the open under a tree).

There is so much more that could be said about these brave souls willing to encounter flies, scorpions, snakes and the heat of the day. I'm only using this correspondence to highlight what so many have done for LHF as volunteer educators over the past 25 years. Keep in mind also that the people being addressed are three vicars who graduated from the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry in Yambio, South Sudan and had to flee from their homes when conflict arose. They ended up in a Gambela Refugee Camp with some 250,000 refugees. While there, they still served and started a Lutheran church. LHF provided a number of seminars for them and other pastors and lay leaders. The Roberts are doing what they can to provide further education in an area with limited educational opportunities and little or no literature. I think you will get an idea from the correspondence as what this is all about.

From: Robert Roberts

To: Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn

Subject: Questions about funds to use in Gambela, Ethiopia

I am including the message from Rev. Simon below along with my original correspondence with him. Because we printed our handouts for the workshops in May in Gambela at a local business center there, we had several discussions about costs and what the Gambela pastors might be able to do and/or finance and how they move money around. Sometimes someone has a cow in South Sudan that can be sold, and they share the money around. Other times, if someone like a relative might visit from the States, money can be sent to the relative and then brought in. Since they generally cannot have paying jobs in Ethiopia, cash isn't always easy to come by, especially if they are trying to print multiple copies.

What I was wondering is if money in small amounts like \$50 or \$75 can be run through Dereje to help offset their costs. However, I don't want Dereje to have to run to Bishoftu all the time to get it there, and I don't know how you run budgets and whether money transfers would allow for this. As you can see below, I was careful not to tell Rev. Simon that I would send him money, but from the hours spent talking about this kind of thing last May, I think he gets the subtext. We would, of course, have to find trustworthy couriers, but so far our experience has been pretty good with pastors we have worked with there. Given the level of our donations this year, we have no need of this being tax deductible on our part. I suppose another question could be what it would cost in Addis. We are not talking making books like the Nuer picture catechism, but something more like a term paper — 10 pages stapled together.

Again, my main reason for sending them these materials is to help them figure out how to get the catechism and Bible stories into logical, teachable units. They really do not have much, if any, training on this, and certainly no printed materials. Any advice or ideas will be appreciated.

Eileen

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Robert Roberts wrote:

Dear Rev. Simon,

Greetings in Jesus' name. We are very glad to hear that Dereje was able to contact you and that you have arrangements for getting the simple English catechisms. We are hoping to hear from him soon about the possible costs of printing the Nuer picture catechisms. I will be writing to Rev. Rahn at LHF to see if he has heard anything yet.

Attached is another selection of memory verses (it is 10 pages and made for A4). They are organized ac-

cording to the catechism, so you will see the name of the catechism part and a Bible story to illustrate that part, followed by several Bible verses. Some of the verses are short. Some are a little long. I do not know how difficult they are in Nuer. I got the ideas from the book I used as a child (ages 8-11) in my Lutheran primary school. The pastor did not teach those classes when we were young; it was just our regular Lutheran teachers. The idea was that if we already knew the commandments, Creed, Lord's Prayer, and things about baptism and Holy Communion at the younger age, the pastor could teach us the deeper meanings when we were old enough for catechetical instruction. When we were young, we just memorized the shorter verses and also the basic parts of the catechism. As we were a little older, we learned the longer verses and more of the explanation to the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

I am also planning to email some material (maybe it will take a couple weeks for me to prepare) that perhaps will help teach the younger children (as young as 3 or 4 up until 7 years). It will follow the church year (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and so on) and will have an outline including a story for the particular Sunday, a memory verse or two, and a hymn for the season. I will try to pick hymns that teach good doctrine. Perhaps some of the pastors will want to practice translating the English into Nuer and making a suitable melody so that you can sing the hymn. Then, if we are able to visit next year, we together with the pastors can look at some of the translations and hear about how they work.

Are you able to print the materials I am sending you by email so that you can see if they are useful? Do the business centers have electricity to print? How expensive are the costs when you want to make copies for some of the pastors to look at?

Praying always for you and the work among the Nuer, as well as all the many peoples of the ELCSS/S that God will bring peace both physically and spiritually. God keep you safe in all that you do.

In Jesus' name,  
Eileen

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From: Simon Gatluak  
To: Robert Roberts  
Subject: Re: catechisms and new memory verses

Dear friends in the Lord,  
We are very grateful for your concern about the church in Upper Nile and the entire church of South Sudan. We get the books because of you and we pray that God will open the door for catechism to be printed in Addis so that we can have very simple way of getting the books. Our people are willing to learn, but no materials they can use, and they need to hear God's Word from people who have good knowledge and have some understanding from the Bible. But no one is coming.

We pray that God who brought you that time will bring you again. We know God will bring lasting peace to the people of South Sudan. We are ready to translate the hymns in to the Nuer and hopefully become a book we will use in the church. We can print the 10 pages Living Memory for the teaching and I will show it to other pastors. They really need copies to use it in their congregations.

There are business centers in Gambela where we can make copies for every pastor. We have 25 pastors who

need copies all and each page 5 birr × 10 pages=50 birr ×25 Copies =1250 birr equal to 70 US dollar. This is how the costs are.

In Christ,  
Rev. Simon

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On this date, we also received a requested update on the progress of the bakery, in anticipation of submitting a final report on the project to the foundation that initially gave us a grant to repair two buses and convert them to taxis. One of the buses was irreparable and the request went to the foundation to request that half of the grant be permitted to be used to build an expanded bakery. The result was that the local leaders became innovative and built a combination bakery/restaurant on the Yambio church property. Peter reported that the income has been registering a profit. This was an intended result with proceeds to be used for what they considered the most urgent church needs. It actually must be recognized as one of the first successful projects to benefit the church body.

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: bakery report

Dear Dr. Rahn,

The bakery has been doing well, as you can see from the records I have attached. I have only attached the pages indicating the total income per month, expenses and how much is carried forward. As you know, most of the grant money was used to set up the bakery and the restaurant. The capital invested into the business was small, but I am glad the business is progressing. Most of the income we received has been used to improve on the bakery and purchase some equipment which was missing. A few weeks ago, I posted some structures that we have erected at the bakery; perhaps you might want share those pictures with the foundation that provided the grant. At the end of September, total income was 70,218 SSP and the expenses were 31,326 SSP and 38,892 was carried forward. At the end of October, total income was 62,982 SSP, expenses were 24,251 SSP and the balance carried forward for that month was 38,731 SSP. From this I can say the bakery is a success and it is my prayer that it grows. (\$1.00 is equal to around \$100 Sudanese pounds SSP).

It's my hope that at least by December, the bakery will be able to pay some bonus to the ELCSS/S staff for Christmas celebration. I do not mean the bakery will be able to pay the whole ELCSS/S stipends, but at least the bakery will be able to contribute something to the ELCSS/S stipends. Please extend our gratitude to the foundation for giving us this grant. I will write more on some of the thoughts/plans I have for the bakery later.

God bless+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Peter Anibati  
Subject: RE: bakery report

Dear Peter,

Thank you for the bakery report. It is refreshing to receive this positive information indicating that the bakery/restaurant is creating some income for the use by the church. It is our prayer that it will continue to flourish and produce revenue. Please continue to keep us posted. I'm sure the foundation from which the grant was made will be pleased to receive our positive report.

That takes me back to the repaired bus. What has happened with the bus? Is it still available for runs to the airport and for other functions? I know it had the broken windshield, but what about its running condition? It would be good to keep that in a running condition, lest we be guilty of wasteful spending.

How are plans coming for the convention? I suppose you are patiently waiting for the end of November, which was the posted deadline given by the Minister of Religious Affairs, the date by which the bishop was to have responded.

I may begin my process of obtaining a visa for January in the next days, assuming that a new bishop will be elected and that there will be an inauguration/installation January 15 or 22. The 22nd happens to be my birthday, but it is not a high holy day unless there is a bishop consecrated.

Here we are preparing for the National Day of Thanksgiving, which will take place on Thursday, so the office will be closed Thursday and Friday for the holiday. Thanks again for the positive report on the bakery. We thank God for the progress. Please give our regards and thanks to Pascal.

R. Rahn

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## **November 25**

From: John Riay  
Subject: Extra-ordinary Convention

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Greetings in the Lord. I am writing about upcoming ELCSS/S Extra-ordinary Convention. Brothers, I would like to say to you once again that we will not attend our convention as we have been telling you.

We would like you to accommodate our opinions as the meeting is for the ELCSS/S. We suggest a few points:

1. Amend the position of assistant bishop by stipulating his duties to make this post active. I am not talking about John Jock as current assistant bishop, but the post itself, whoever occupies it.
2. Endorse more dioceses. One or more than one. ELCSS/S has been one diocese for long time. If other deaneries are not ready for dioceses, you would endorse Upper Nile as diocese. It is no longer Noah's job to create



more dioceses as he calls for that.

3. We have congregations in Ethiopia as we have congregations in Sudan. But the name of our church doesn't include that church in Ethiopia. Discuss it.

Things that you discuss now in our absence will benefit our church as a whole now and when peace returns.

In Christ  
John

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: 'John Riay';  
Subject: RE: Extra-ordinary Convention

Greetings John,

Thank you for your message. Sorry you are not able to participate in the convention. Your thoughts and suggestions certainly worthy of consideration. Looking forward to hearing from Peter this week regarding the plans for the convention so that on our end Lutz and I can make plans for a January inauguration.

Meanwhile, here in America we celebrate the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend. Today we celebrate with one of our staff members who 20 years ago had a liver transplant and has been cancer-free for these many years. Worthy of thanksgiving for sure.

God bless, R.Rahn

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**November 28**

On this date some messages are exchanged between Rev. Rahn and Rev. Bol, who is the president of the South Sudan Evangelical Lutheran Church (SSELC). In this exchange we are trying to encourage a unity among the two Lutheran church bodies of South Sudan. The initial effort of fellowship or even amalgamation failed due to the lack of interest shown by Bishop Rule, causing the Bol group to go their own way. Perhaps this exchange might lead to the beginning of some closer ties between the two church bodies.

From: SOUTH SUDAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Greetings and Inquiry

Dear Robert,  
Greetings in Christ's name. It has been a while without hearing from each other. So how are you doing? Any news about the church in Yambio, especially how Bishop Rule and his pastors are moving on? Any reconciliation made between Bishop Rule and his pastors?

Things are moving on well with SSELC, though the current economic crisis in South Sudan is causing prob-

lems in all aspects of life. Our church is growing well in South Sudan and in the refugee camps in northern Uganda.

Pastor Bol

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Dear Brother Bol,

A blessed Advent! So good to hear from you and to know of your desire to stay in contact.

I'm including Peter and Nicholas [on this email] as I desire them to be in contact with you so that the Lutheran churches in South Sudan/Sudan will be in harmony and possible partnership down the road.

In regards to the current situation in the ELCSS/S, I can report that there has been no reconciliation on the part of the Bishop, as he has not confessed his wrongdoings. Therefore, the church is moving ahead with an extraordinary convention to be held in the early part of December when it will be determined if it will be necessary to elect a new bishop. The church is receiving some guidance from government officials to make sure all is done in decency and in order, following the church constitution in the matter.

It might be good to have you or a representative of the church to come to the convention and bring greetings as fellow confessing Lutherans in the country. Perhaps the officials of the ELCSS/S may consider this and relate to you. "How good it is when brothers dwell together in Christian unity."

The plans are that Bernie Lutz and I would be present for the inauguration of a new bishop if elected. We are proposing this to take place in January. Perhaps you would be invited to that event as well.

God bless your Advent celebration. He is coming soon!!

R. Rahn

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From: SOUTH SUDAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

To: Robert Rahn

Subject: Re: Greetings and Inquiry

Thank you very much Rahn for this comprehensive report and for trying to connect us (SSELC) with our brothers and sisters in the ELCSS/S. It has been our desire in the SSELC to work together in a way with our brothers in Yambio, but our brother who is Bishop Rule disowned and dispelled us, calling us a breakaway Anglican group and that has discouraged us so much. After several unsuccessful attempts to approach him with an intention of working together, we just decided to operate alone because there was nothing else we could do to turn that situation around for the better, as we could not crash his gate and offend him in the name of unwelcomed working together.

So we have no problem to have contact with our brothers and sisters there in Yambio to harmonize relationship between the confessing Lutheran Churches in South Sudan as you put it .

Pastor Bol

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**November 30**

In messages from the leadership the officials of the ELCSS/S, dates for the extraordinary convention are announced. Plans for this possible convention that will consider the state of the bishop's office will be decided and these plans discussed for at least six months, the church being careful to follow the articles of their constitution. It was also time allowed for the current bishop to confess his sin.

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Jeff Rahn; Matthew Heise; Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: ELCSS/S Wire

Jeff,  
The wire has been received. Thanks. We have already made reservations/bookings for the delegates who are coming for the convention. Some delegates will arrive by the weekend and others early next week. The meeting is scheduled to take place from Dec. 8-10.

God bless+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: Visa

Dr. Rahn,

Thanks for your message. Will be sending the letter of invite soon. Keep us and the ELCSS/S in your prayers especially for the upcoming convention.

Bishop Wilson has responded to the government that he is not willing to call the convention and he has accused the Minister of Education of taking sides with the church in Yambio. We have heard rumors that he wants to use security officers to sabotage the upcoming meeting, but it seems the government is not on his side anymore. He has also refused the invitation we sent him to come for the convention. We will see what happens in the following days.

Anyhow, we have bought tickets already for those who are coming by flights to Yambio and send funds for those who are coming by bus. I will keep you updated with the developments.

God bless+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

From: Bernhard Lutz  
To: Peter Anibati  
Subject: Xtra Convention

Leaders of the Church of ELCSS/S: Greetings in Jesus!

Martin Luther found great strength in reading and meditating upon the Psalms. Psalm 46 was one of Luther's favorite Psalms. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though the waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Selah. Therefore the Psalm states ....as a result of faith in a living God, there will be no fear. We have reason to have hearts that fear these days in ELCSS/S. Satan is blowing a storm that threatens to get at the heart of the Lutheran Church of South Sudan. Let us then, as the Spirit guides, remove all fear, and place our trust in the living and loving Lord Jesus Christ. God bless the Xtra Convention with men and women who are filled with a faith that believes that God truly is our refuge and our strength!

Psalm 46 would be a good theme for the convention that meets to discuss the "Present condition of ELCSS/S Church Leadership!" It would also give God-pleasing advice to follow up after the Xtra Convention. Verse 11 closes, "The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress!"

God be with all of you, clergy and laity, as you, through prayer and counsel, seek to find the best way to restore the ELCSS/S with God-pleasing leadership for the sake of all, the chosen as well as those to whom we are sent to share the Gospel.

We will be praying that the Holy Spirit will fill the Xtra Convention with a new spirit, a spirit of oneness, forgiveness and love.

Allah mahabah. God is love. Arabic!  
Dr.Lutz

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**December 6**

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: updates

Dear Dr. Rahn,  
Greetings to you in Jesus name on this busy day on which we are looking forward for the ELCSS/S xtra convention with hope for a bright future.

It has not been easy lately. We have been moving from office to office because Wilson continues to cause problems for the church. Rev. Elinama and I were summoned two days ago to the security office and we were ordered to stop preaching and all the pastoral duties that we carry in Yambio. But we told them that we are going to have a convention to solve all the problems and Wilson has been invited and a ticket is already paid for him to come.

Today, Wilson ordered the arrest of 5 delegates who were traveling to Yambio from Juba airport. The delegates were detained for half an hour and were released later because the security found no reason for arresting them. These delegates have arrived safely in Yambio, including the legal adviser who will preside over the convention. The legal adviser is an attorney and is currently the president of the law society of South Sudan. It will be interesting to see how he will go about this. The delegates from Malakal and Khartoum will arrive tomorrow and the convention will kick off by Thursday at 9 a.m. with a Confessional Service led by Rev. Nicholas and Dachi.

I will keep you posted on the outcome of the convention. Please let me know what MAF says about the dates of your flight. Also send us the message that can be read to the delegates during the convention. Now we need more of your prayers than ever because the devil is seriously attacking us at these last hours.

Moving forward in the Lord,  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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### **December 6 - Staff Meeting**

A staff meeting was held December 6-8 primarily to ascertain the current status of various projects and to consider proposed projects for 2017. In addition to Rev. Heise reporting on Eastern Europe projects, Rev. Rahn reported on African projects, Rev. NaThalang, our SE Asia Director, spent nearly two days going over all the projects under his supervision. It's not only the translation projects of Asia but all the printing jobs from other parts of the world that are done with our primary printer in Bangkok. This then also includes shipping arrangements to make sure the books are delivered to the various countries. Much time was spent on preparing a large shipment of printed books that are destined for Ethiopia. New custom regulations, new regulations on religious materials coming into the country, new tariffs and making sure shipments are insured, are all part of the preparations involved. These are all some real issues that are addressed behind the scenes, even though what you see is a nice long list of some 850 titles that have been printed. Rev. NaThalang, who speaks a number of those Asian languages, spends a lot of time in the middle of the night on Skype calls directing our personnel in the Bangkok LHF office. One can hardly begin to explain and detail all the behind the scenes between Ted and Jeff to maintain a correct record of all the projects.

### **December 8**

#### **GREETINGS TO ELCSS/S CONVENTION PARTICIPANTS 2016**

*"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 15:58*

Cordial greetings on the occasion of the ELCSS/S Extraordinary Convention. As I think of your agenda, my thoughts immediately go to the words of Scripture in 1 Corinthians 15:58, words often heard in connection with a charge to church officers or leaders as they assume positions of leadership in a congregation. These are words of encouragement, but also words that underscore commitments to a task with the promise of the Lord's strength.

As you have witnessed in your troubling situation, the Lord certainly requires steadfastness, especially in the face of adversity.

When we face circumstances where the Word of God is trampled upon or abused by leaders in the church, the temptation is to throw up our hands in despair and disgust and give up, yet the Lord calls us to stand fast, to be immovable. It's a call not to give up the faith or abandon our hope. Like a ship in a storm, sometimes it is best to steer directly into the face of the storm and be unmovable, remaining firmly on course.

The call of this convention is to abound in the work of the Lord, to remain in the work and the Word. Keep on laboring, working, and be assured that your work is not in vain. It is not in vain when the work is centered in the Lord.

Too many people's faith has experienced shipwreck on the rocks of the devil's making. You, however be steadfast, be unmovable, be abounding, be working, for your work is not in vain. Keep your eyes on the cross, gaze intently on Jesus and healing and health for the soul will be ours.

God bless your abounding labor in the Lord at this convention.

Steadfast, unmovable, always abounding; labor, and know your work is not in vain.

In the Grip of His Hand,

Dr. Robert L. Rahn  
LHF Founder

## **December 8**

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: updates from the xtra convention

Dear Brothers,

I am writing this short note to inform you that all our delegates arrived for the convention. The meeting started today with a confessional service lead by Rev. Nicholas and Dachi was the preacher. The first item on the agenda was the petition which was written against Wilson to resign. He was expected to answer the 8 accusations which were labeled against and to as well answer the 12 questions which the LHF sent concerning the missing money in Juba.

As you know Wilson refused to come for the convention despite receiving the invitation and the air-ticket to come. So the convention decided to remove him from the seat of the bishop. In other words, Wilson has been voted out; he is no longer the bishop for the ELCSS/S. When the vote of no confidence was conducted, there was no delegate who was against it.

The rest of day was busy with reviewing of the constitution and this will go on tomorrow, and next tomorrow will be elections for the new bishop and the general secretary. The church council at the level of the ELCSS/S will be formed, the finance committee and also a treasurer will be chosen.

Please pray for this important decisions which are ahead of us.

Rev. Peter Anibati Abia



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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Peter Anibati  
Subject: RE: updates from the xtra convention

Peter, your short note was most encouraging. It certainly falls into the category of 1 Cor. 15:58 that was sent as our greeting to the convention. With the decisions made, You can surely know that “your labor is never in vain in the Lord!” Blessings now on the decision you have yet to make. We were pleased that the decision relative to the bishop was unanimous.

RRahn  
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### **December 8**

#### **ELCSS/S CONVENTION:**

Some thoughts shared with the delegates and guests at the church convention.

#### **WALK IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT Galatians 5:16, 25**

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh...If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

#### **JOY**

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

“JOY WALK” How is it? Your walk in joy?  
100s of “walking,” even more “joys”

Joshua 22:5 — Be very careful to observe the commandments and the laws which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and hold fast to Him and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

John 13:35 — Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you...While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.

Ephesians 4:1 — Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.

Ephesians 5:15 — Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

Colossians 1:10 — Walk in manner worthy of the Lord.

Colossians 1:23 — Continue in the faith, not shifting from the hope of the Gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

Colossians 2:6, 7 — Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with joy.

Colossians 2:8-15 — A Fitting Word of encouragement and direction for all... read it

Young man going off to college

Young man finishing ministerial training

Young church/new members/new leaders, looking for philosophy of life, rules for living, guidance

Colossians 4:5 — Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunities.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8, 12, 13, 14 — Our ministry

Philippians 3:17-21

Walk - active

Two ways

Way of righteousness

Way of unrighteousness (devil, evil, enemies of the cross)

Requires

Press on 3: 12, forget what lies behind

Press on 3:14, goal=prize

Hold on to what is true (standard) 3:16

Count it all loss 3:8 compared to knowing Christ

Rubbish vs. gaining Christ

Value/worthy where is it?

JOY 2:2

2:5, 6, 7 Emptying so that there can be a filling

2:8 Name above all

Knee bow

Tongue confess

## **December 10**

From: Peter Anibati

To: Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn; Matthew Heise

Subject: updates from the ELCSS/S Extraordinary Convention

Dear brothers in the Lord,

I take this opportunity to inform you about the outcome of the xtra convention which has just ended today with elections. The following have been charged with the responsibility of leading the ELCSS/S.

1) Rev. Peter Anibati Abia, Bishop Elect (from Western Equatoria Deanery)

2) Rev. Simon Gatluak, Asst. Bishop (from Greater Upper Nile Deanery)

3) Rev. Thomas Gaaniko, General Secretary ( from Bahr El Ghazal, Wau Deanery)

4) Rev. Ogiki Benjamin, Asst. General secretary (from Central and Eastern Equatoria Deanery)

Also the Church Council was elected from the five deaneries of the ELCSS/S as well as a Finance Committee.

I will be sending a full report later.

God bless+

Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Peter Anibati  
Subject: RE: updates from the ELCSS/S Extraordinary Convention

Dear Bishop Elect Anibati,  
Congratulations on your election as the Bishop Elect. We receive this news with great joy and anticipation for the church to once again move forward with competent leadership. The Lord bless you from on high and give you wisdom and understanding with humility to lead His body, the ELCSS/S.

At the same time, we congratulate and wish God's blessings on all those elected to leadership positions. Yours will be a challenging task. Will January 22 be an acceptable date for your induction? We look forward to the report forthcoming on all details of the convention.

In the Name of our Advent King,  
R. Rahn

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From: Bernhard Lutz  
To: Peter Anibati  
Subject: The Election Result

Coworkers: Greetings in Jesus!

I was touched with the results of the Xtra Convention to elected a new bishop. May God bless all of us, each and every one of us and may we give thanks to God for leaders who are willing to serve, for the LHF for its eagerness to partner with the South Sudan church, for the pastors and men and women who have come to faith. Congratulations Peter. You are bishop elect. You did not seek this office, the Spirit has led you to willingly serve as a candidate. The votes are in, the votes have been cast. You prayerfully have been chosen to serve God and His Church in South Sudan and around the world. May Joshua 24:15 be your daily prayer: AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE WE WILL SERVE THE LORD! To you Simon, to you Thomas, to you Ogiki... you have a special charge. Be faithful, be humble, be supportive of the bishop, work as a team. To all of us who are on the outside, may God keep us faithful to His Word and may the ELCSS/S move forward, walking in step with the Spirit!

The slimy pit remains. New leadership is now being called upon to lead the ELCSS/S out of these difficult days. There is much organizing to do. There are areas of church leadership that are deplorable; we need to do a lot of repair work. The seminary, the education system, the stewardship and evangelism departments, and so many areas need help. God is giving us an opportunity to learn from the past and to face the future with a

vision strategy that will please God and be a blessing to His Church.

Today, I am humbled, deeply moved to join with all of you to thank God for the success of the Xtra Ordinary Convention. Thank all of you who have labored so hard and so long. Dachi, Elinama, and so many other church workers! God bless you!

Allah mahabah! God is love in Arabic.

Merry Christmas! A blessed 2017!!

Dr. Lutz

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**RESOLUTIONS OF THE ELCSS/S EXTRA ORDINARY CONVENTION HELD FROM 8<sup>TH</sup> -10<sup>TH</sup> DEC 2016  
YAMBIO COUNTY, GBUDUE STATE, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN.**

**Theme: "God is our refuge and strength an ever-present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan and Sudan (ELCSS/S) after several failures has finally held an Extra Ordinary Convention to address the critical issues which had crippled the church for many years. To mention a few, lack of leadership, mismanagement of church assets, lack of accountability and embezzlement of church funds.

The Extra Ordinary Convention as the supreme authority of the ELCSS/S in accordance with article nine, section (2) of the ELCSS/S constitution 2011, amended 2015 resolved the following:

- 1) Bishop Wilson Noah Rule will not continue as the bishop of the ELCSS/S with effect from the date the convention voted him out of office due to his failed leadership, lack of accountability and misappropriation of church funds.
- 2) Review and amendment of ELCSS/S constitution since there has been several versions of the constitution and some inserted provisions which were not part of the original constitution.
- 3) Passing of the constitution with the necessary amendments as proposed by the delegates.
- 4) Election of the entire cabinet of the ELCSS/S for the smooth running of the church.
- 5) Rev. Peter Anibati Abia from Western Equatoria Deanery was officially elected and declared by the legal adviser James EL-Taib as the Bishop elect for the ELCSS/S and Rev. Simon Gatluak from the Greater Upper Nile Deanery was elected and declared as the Assistant Bishop.
- 6) Rev. Thomas Gaaniko from Bahr El Ghazal, Wau Deanery was elected as the General Secretary deputized by Rev. Ogiki Benjamin from Central and Eastern Equatoria Deanery.
- 7) The convention agreed to advertise the position of a treasurer in order to employ a competent person to be the custodian of all the ELCSS/S finances and a chairperson for the ELCSS/S Finance Committee in accordance with the provisions of article twenty two of the ELCSS/S constitution.
- 8) All finances of the ELCSS/S must be centralized and as such a finance committee was formed with one member from each deanery of the ELCSS/S present.
  - 1- Mr. Justin Masin, Western Equatoria Deanery
  - 2- Mrs. Sarah James, Wau Deanery
  - 3- Rev. Lazarus Obuti, Central and Eastern Equatoria Deanery
  - 4- Rev. Stephen Daniel, Greater Upper Nile Deanery
- 9) Church Council was formed from all the deaneries of the ELCSS/S, each deanery contributing five members from the following categories of people: 1) Dean, 2) Deanery Council Representative, 3) Evangelists Representative, 4) Women Representative, 5) Youth Representative.





- 10) The outgoing Bishop, Rt. Rev. Wilson Noah Rule and his old cabinet should willingly and voluntarily hand over the office and assets/properties of the church to the newly elected leaders of the ELCSS/S.
- 11) The newly formed finance committee will go to Juba to review and audit all the documents related to Juba land which has been on rent for more than eight years. It was also agreed that the outgoing bishop must be stopped from using the ELCSS/S bank account 5500249290 with KCB in Juba. No transaction must be carried out on this bank account before the committee arrives.
- 12) The Inter Church Committee in Yambio, South Sudan Council of Churches, civil authorities in Gbudue State and at national level, friends and partners of the ELCSS/S must be informed that Rt. Rev. Wilson Noah Rule is no longer the legitimate leader of the Evangelical Lutheran church in South Sudan and Sudan and as such, should not be accorded the privileges which he use to get in the name of the said church.
- 13) Should the outgoing Bishop realize that he has wronged the ELCSS/S and repents, he will be forgiven and accepted and will be due for all his privileges as a retired bishop.
- 14) The convention also agreed to seek legal procedures should the outgoing Bishop refuse to comply with the resolutions of the convention.

igned by legal Advisor James El- Taib:



igned by all the delegates for the Extra Ordinary Convention in Yambio Municipality, Gbudue State, Republic of South Sudan, on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand and xteen.



**December 12**

From: John Riay  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Inquiry

Rev. Dr. Rahn,

I appreciate your assistance and cooperation that led to the election of our Bishop Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati and his team. We would be glad to hear from you that the LCMS recognizes our bishop. That is very important because the former bishop, Noah, may run a parallel ELCSS/S which is bad. Recognition of the bishop-elect is the ultimate termination of Noah's parallel leadership.

In Christ,  
John

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: 'John Riay'  
Cc: Peter Anibati; Nicholas Kumbo Louis; Elinama Jacob; Matthew Heise; Jeff Rahn  
Subject: RE: Inquiry

John,

Beyond the monitoring of the government officials and lawyers, it is now incumbent upon the leaders to once again take up the fellowship question with the LCMS. Perhaps a report from church officials to the LCMS President giving details as to how the election process took place, including the part the government officials played, would be in order.

The sooner that is done, the better it will be. The official message should be to President Harrison with a copy to Dr. Al Collver.

R. Rahn

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## **END OF ERA**

The above messages relate to the action taken by the special convention of the ELCSS/S in regard to the discipline of Bishop Wilson, and this then brings the end of an era. The church must continue to face the attacks of past leadership, but it is determined to move ahead and open a new chapter in the life of this relatively new church body.

## **THOUGHTS ON SUDAN**

Going back

Start in Russia, the hot button, wall came down and many were interested in supporting something in Russia.

1. Russia cooled and Andrew came into the picture with the Sudan flavor.
2. His entrepreneurial spirit and untiring work led to spectacular results in growth of church.
3. Translation efforts resulted in *Prayerbook*, *Hymnal*, *Zande Small Catechism*, *Nuer Small Catechism*,

*Bible Stories in Pictures*, Zande devotional books, more recently Dinka and Anuak *Small Catechisms*.

#### THE QUESTION CLARIFIED

- Is the question: How much money is being spent, or
- Is the question: How much money is being raised because of the strong interest in the programs going on in Sudan

#### WHAT ARE THE PROGRAMS?

- Program of ministry. Pastors/professors as faculty.
- Raising up translators in what was a non-Lutheran country
- 140 congregations, 40,000 Lutherans
- If we were to equate funds spent as to souls equaled, what value can be placed on souls? If we were to withdraw seminary support how many souls will be consigned to hell and eternal death?
- Persecution's toll – Gambela
- Seminars with Roberts and Lutz this summer
- New class beginning 2017 (unless ban)
- A church given birth, a church not nurtured (easy way)

In regard to restricted funds received for the South Sudan seminary, we received the following amounts:

- 2013: \$44,232
- 2014: \$33,958
- 2015: \$38,241

In addition to these amounts, the following amounts were received for the overall work in South Sudan/Sudan:

- 2013: \$55,926
- 2014: \$84,441
- 2015: \$64,578

#### **December 21**

From: Robert Rahn

To: Nicholas Kumbo Louis; Peter Anibati; Japheth

Subject: FW: funds for printing Nuer materials

Dear Co-workers,

Recently I received a message indicating a desire that the new seminary classes would begin on February 4.

The message to Eileen Roberts gives our reaction and rationale for our position that activities during these months center on getting the church realigned to its primary task and focus. We therefore strongly suggest that the opening of the new seminary year be delayed to give full opportunity to the church leaders to restore the mission of the ELCSS/S during these early months of the year for reasons cited below.

Bernie and I will be willing to discuss any concerns you may have while we are there for the installation of Bishop-elect Anibati.

May the Lord so guide and direct the church so that it once again becomes a growing dynamic body showing growth and stability in the capable hands of new leaders and the evident power of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct. We believe the delay in starting the seminary program will result in a stronger program and a more screened student body.

In the interest of serving the Lord and His Church,  
Robert L. Rahn — CLIHM Program Director

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Dear Eileen,

Today we had a discussion on Dachi's suggestion for a start-up of the seminary on February 4. We are not in agreement on this and prefer that their energies remain fixed on the repair of the church structure rather than adding the burden of a seminary starting to function. In view of the fact that the old bishop is still engaged in his make-believe endeavors of a bishop, the newly-elected team will have to make sure the transition is taking place. If necessary, permitting him to live in his fantasy world while the genuine, true elected leadership establishes their position among the members. This may mean a massive visitation program by the bishop and leaders. While there are some pastors who would probably like to see seminars and teaching, we are proposing they focus their attention on getting all things in order. One big project will be getting the U.N. to recognize the newly-elected leaders and assuming control of the property. Hopefully this will not become a situation where we have to remove the U.N. from the church premises and lose the income that the old bishop was pilfering.

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From: Robert Roberts  
To: Robert Rahn  
Cc: Matthew Heise; Jeff Rahn  
Subject: funds for printing Nuer materials

Rev. Rahn,

Some weeks ago I wrote to you asking about how I might help Rev. Simon Gatluak with the costs of making copies of the materials I had emailed him. You said it might be possible for you to take funds to Addis and get them passed along to Rev. Simon so that he could make copies of them for the pastors in the Upper Nile deanery. This money would not go through LHF accounting. My assumption was that I would write a personal check to you for about \$100 and you would take the cash, similar to what we did for the deaconesses in Yambio with their stole project. I do not know if this is still a good idea. I don't know if Rev. Simon is getting help from other places for making copies of materials. I also don't know what is happening with the Nuer picture *Small Catechisms* that MLP provided and for which Dereje was going to get estimates of printing costs. I have that one communication from Rev. Simon about trying to make arrangements for printing through something called SIM, but I don't know what that is and I don't know for sure if that is about the picture catechisms or not. I also don't know whether or not any of those small booklets are a part of the LHF budget or might be in the future. If Rev. Simon doesn't need the money for making copies in Gambela, I would be perfectly happy to see it used to make some copies of the Nuer picture catechisms so that they could be field-tested to see if they are at all helpful/useful.

The teaching materials that I have been producing and emailing Rev. Simon are what I would call in the early field-test stage. That includes the hymns I proposed and will be proposing in January, for translation. Working on the assumption that we will be able to go at least to Gambela, and hopefully to Yambio (and maybe other places), we should be able to do some face-to-face assessment on what works and what doesn't.

Christmas blessings,  
Eileen

From: Japheth Dachi  
To: Peter Anibati  
Subject: A LUTHERAN CONGREGATION IN KOBOKO, UGANDA

Peter Anibati, Christian greetings. I got a telephone call from our Deaconess Amina Bako that her family has moved from the Democratic Republic of Congo and are now residing in Koboko, Uganda and that they have started a Lutheran congregation there and asking you to for a spiritual care by sending them a pastor or paying them a visit. As you are aware, I am not in any position to help them in this. They only used me as a medium to make you know that there is a Lutheran congregation in that refugee camp, composed mainly by the South Sudanese and some from the North.

Thank you,  
Rev. Japheth Rabach Dachi  
Principal, CLIHM, Yambio

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From: Japheth Dachi  
Subject: CLIHM

Rev. Dr. RR,  
I wish to inform you that the decision to call the CLIHM 04 Students was a decision of the faculty and my responsibility was to inform you about the same. It is my hope that we will discuss the same in January next year 2017 and already the process is on from the Office of the Dean of Students, Rev. Nicolas Kumbo.

Thank you,  
Rev. Japheth Rabach Dachi

## 2017

### January 2

From: Robert Rahn  
To: Peter Anibati  
Subject: The Office of Bishop

Dear Peter,  
The celebration of New Year's Day was subdued and I spent some time during the sleepless hours of the night thinking about the situation for the anticipated ceremonies of installing you into office. At this point it seems very probable that we will have no bishop celebrating with us and the question might be WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? We know that there is greater concern over this office in your church than there is in ours where the office of bishop is not a matter of concern.

In thinking about this matter, I have come to the conclusion that a bishop need not be present for the ceremony as the continuation of the succession is still in the office. In your election you did not cut off the succession but you transferred the office from an errant bishop to a newly-elected bishop. What we will be doing is transferring the office to you as the newly-elected bishop. If there is some question about this, a confirma-

tion of the bishop's office can be given through another bishop at your next installation, should you be elected to a second term, whenever that may take place. Because the office was abused, the office was given to another and in the installation on the 22nd we will simply confer/transfer the office of bishop to you.

This is the approach I am taking to assure you that the office of bishop continues as it was bestowed and then abused. The church has rightly removed the office from one and granted it to another.

Of course, my thoughts in the sleepless hours were also concerned about the possible interference of an old bishop in our festivities. Given the climate for conflict in the country as a whole, he could cause a disturbance and use the tribal conflict to inflict damage on the festivities. As you had some available police on duty during the convention, I suppose you have already concerned yourself with this matter and are requesting some kind of protective presence for the event.

At any rate, Bernie and I, along with church leaders, will conduct the rite of installation with some appropriate changes in the rite to reflect the thinking above, the transfer of title or the conveyance of the office that was violated by an old bishop and the transfer of the continued office to the newly-elected bishop.

I trust that this is of agreement to all involved. It might be something even alluded to in the sermon that will be preached for the occasion, wherein the rubrics are stated as to the duties of a man in such a position, according to Paul in Timothy and Titus. I welcome your comments.

Peter, in preparation for the installation service, would you want me to prepare a service folder? A limited number of copies would be made for those who can handle English. Some local known songs and choir numbers can be inserted as deemed necessary.

As we enter this new year, may peace be brought to the church and to the country through the hand of the Prince of Peace.

RRahn

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From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: The Office of Bishop

Dear Dr. Rahn,  
Thanks for sharing your thoughts with us. I agree and think that we can go that way for the installation. Please go ahead and prepare the service folder.

We will have government police keeping watch at the Lutheran compound. The government here is in full support of what we are doing. They also deployed police when we had the convention.

In Christ,  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

### **January 17**

This was the date I was scheduled to leave on a trip to South Sudan and Ethiopia. Due to visa delays as a result of the increased travel activity connected with the installation of the new President of the United States, Mr. Donald Trump, and the Washington D.C. embassies being closed for Martin Luther King Day, the visas were not able to be delivered on time. Since there was only one flight to Yambio, South Sudan from Kampela, Uganda, we determined it would be best to cancel the trip. Dr. Bernard Lutz was able to secure his visa and covered the events that were scheduled.

Also contributing to the cancellation was the word received that my sister had died, and this allowed me to schedule an LHF Mission Sunday in connection with the funeral in Alexandria, Minnesota.

### **January 22**

Rev. Peter Anibati was installed into office on this date as the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan. Peter uses a title to his article that Dr. Bernie Lutz used for his sermon, which in turn I had provided. It was based on the Great Commission: “Go and Lead with His Power, Plan and Presence!”

The above words were used as the theme for the induction of Rev. Peter Anibati Abia as Bishop of Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan and Sudan and other officials of the church on January 22, 2017 in Yambio, Gbudue State, Republic of South Sudan.

There were nearly 3,000 people present at the occasion. Included were government officials both at national level and in Gbudue State, representatives of all the churches in Yambio, even members of the Muslim community joined the ELCSS/S in rejoicing for the new leadership! There were representatives from the Central and Eastern Equatoria Deanery, Greater Upper Nile Deanery, Western Bahr el Ghazal (Wau) Deanery and the Greater Western Equatoria Deanery. There were also representatives from the USA, Ethiopia and Kenya who participated in the installation.

The ceremony was presided over by Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz and Rev. Dr. Kebede Yigezu, the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ethiopia (LCE). Rev. Dr. Lutz preached on Matthew 28:18-20. The procession started at the Lutheran Guest House at 10:40 a.m. and the Divine Service began at 11 a.m. and ended at 5:00 p.m. with different choirs singing. Bishop Peter Anibati Abia conducted two baptisms, 17 confirmations and installed the church council, finance committee, general secretary (Rev. Thomas Gaaniko Raimondo) and his assistant (Rev. Ogiki Benjamin Martin). After the service, there was entertainment by choirs and presentations of different gifts to the new bishop.

### **Bishop Peter Anibati Abia addressing the congregation:**

What is the vision of the new leadership? We plan to establish a strong Confessional Lutheran Church in South Sudan and Sudan that will meet the spiritual and social needs of our people through the right teaching of Holy Scriptures. We intend to strengthen the spiritual basis of the existing centers, congregations, parishes and deaneries of the ELCSS/S and to empower them in administrative systems and to guarantee their continuity and thereafter, to create more dioceses with more bishops for effective leadership, administration and management of the church since our country is vast.

### **Jesus Never Fails!**

The priorities for the new leadership is to stabilize the church and our strategy is to make visitations to the different deaneries of the ELCSS/S, holding seminars and workshops. After this, we intend to open the sem-



inary in the second quarter of the of year with the new intake and toward the end of the third quarter of the year, we plan to have a retreat for all the pastors. The biggest challenge of course will be the financial resources. We hope and pray that trust will be restored and different Lutheran groups around the globe will continue to support the work of the ELCSS/S.

### **Plans for the next five years:**

- Strengthen the basis of our church through proper training of lay people, Sunday School teachers, youth workers, women's groups, evangelists, members of the church council at all levels, deacons and deaconesses. This also includes vocational training for youth, men and women.
- To increase the number of people in our congregations through effective evangelism programs.
- To improve and develop our existing schools and open more primary and secondary schools where a strong foundation for Christian teaching can be laid, aimed at preparing men and women for further studies at the seminary and other institutions of higher learning.
- To improve the standards of pastors by creating opportunities for post-seminary studies both locally and overseas, and continuous education program for pastors and the laity through seminars and workshops.
- To continue translation work, publishing and distribution of Lutheran books with support from the Lutheran Heritage Foundation so that our people can learn the Word of God and understand the Lutheran doctrine in their own native languages.
- To work and establish a media ministry in South Sudan as a tool to reach out to many and through which quick evangelization and teaching can be attained. This will include preaching the Word of God in the various languages of South Sudan and Sudan and production of Christian song videos by our choirs.
- To expand Concordia Bakery & Restaurant into a full business center with services like Internet cafe, halls for seminars/workers, barber shop, grocery shop, etc. and to create more income-generating projects, development and care-giving ministries at the head office as well as at congregational levels upon which the church can support herself.
- To build and expand the capacity of our seminary and introduce the faculty of Education and Management so as to prepare Christian teachers who can teach at our schools as well as trained managers who can manage the projects and the assets of the church.
- To build and expand St. Luke Medical Clinic into a full hospital that will serve the people of this state and the Republic of South Sudan at large.
- To revive our congregations which have been closed and to plant more churches particularly in areas which are neglected.
- Expand our evangelism programs into the neighboring countries, particularly DRC and Central Africa Republic which have no Lutheran churches at the areas closer to the borders of South Sudan except deep into their big cities.
- Construct the office of the church at the headquarters in Yambio to reserve the Guest House for the purpose for which it was built.
- To revive the Baguga construction project by building a church, offices, library, classrooms on the foundation which is already there for the seminary because our long term goal is to move the seminary from Yambio to Baguga which has a conducive environment for learning. Eventually, this seminary will be developed and expanded into a Lutheran University with different faculties to meet the educational needs of the people of this state and the Republic of South Sudan at large.

### Challenges:

- Lack of enough trained personnel at all levels of the ELCSS/S.
- Lack of proper infrastructure (offices, church buildings, schools etc.)
- Few friends and partners overseas to support the work of the ELCSS/S and shortage of funds to cover the expenses of the ELCSS/S.
- Lack of means of transport for pastors, evangelists and even the bishop.
- Lack of investment and income-generating projects to support the work of the church.
- Most Christians are unable to support the church financially, due to poverty caused by the long civil wars and internal conflicts in South Sudan and Sudan.
- Lack of proper communication facilities for pastors and the ELCSS/S offices (for example, lack of Internet at the ELCSS/S headquarters).
- Few pastors but many congregations.
- No salaries to the pastors serving because our congregations are unable to support their pastors. For all these years, LHF has been paying stipends to our pastors, but this year we are not sure of what will happen.

### How can you help the ELCSS/S?

- Pray for the new leadership of the church and all the ELCSS/S members.
- Volunteer and visit the ELCSS/S to offer training through seminars/workers to any of the following groups: Sunday school teachers, women, youth, evangelists, deacons & deaconesses, pastors etc.
- Tell people around the world about the work of the ELCSS/S
- Partner with the ELCSS/S in reaching out to the lost
- Donate to support the work of the ELCSS/S and to help us overcome some of the challenges listed.
- Volunteer to work at our medical clinic in Yambio or help to get medical supplies for the clinic

### January 28

A message from the newly-elected Bishop of the ELCSS/S that dispels rumors sent out by the former unseated bishop by his ghost writer Odek.

From: Peter Anibati

Subject: Response to Odek's letter

Dear Co-workers,  
Greetings in Jesus!

I have been forwarded a letter from Mark, condemning the God-ordained event which took place in Yambio last weekend. This is not a surprise at all; as the benefactor of the funds stolen from the Juba property, it was expected of him. But I must stress, the Juba property belongs to the ELCSS/S and no one will ever claim its ownership. Soon the new administration will be taking serious measures...the old regime and their supporters will have to purchase their own property and perhaps start their sect where they can satisfy their narcissistic ambitions.

Secondly, the list of pastors provided that they are in favor of the old leadership is contradictory. If the im-

pression given is true, why didn't the pastors/evangelists/deaconesses sign against their names? I must say some names provided on the list are very new to me; I presume those of you who have been closer to the ELCSS/S will notice that. I have provided some pictures of all the pastors who attended and participated in the consecration and installation. Those of you who know these pastors personally will identify them and will judge for yourselves whether the list provided by Odek is true or not. Another issue is that Rev. Charles Undo of Tombura and Jackson Afash of Maridi who assisted in distributing Holy Communion during my installation have been listed as those standing in favor of the old leadership. If any of you is interested in finding out the facts, please call or email Rev. Charles Undo.

Thirdly, it would be good for Odek to review scriptures and find therein where the Bishop's office is of divine origin. I think it's very clear that the office of bishop is a man-made position, only utilized because it's the tradition of the church. So, you do not need the "Pope" to install you in order to become a bishop! The Bible and the Confessions are clear: the efficacy of the WORD does not depend on anyone but on Christ alone. It's a shame to see that those who claim to be clergies of the ELCSS/S do not know the history of our church. Who installed the late Bishop Andrew as Bishop? It was Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki from Finland. Did Simojoki have the title Bishop? No! But was the installation valid? YES because it was done in accordance with God's Word! So, there is no need to make an issue where there is no big deal. Perhaps the big problem is lack of understanding of the Lutheran doctrine.

By the way, it was not only LHF which was represented at the occasion. The Lutheran Church of Ethiopia was also represented by the President himself, as were many other Christian churches and organizations in South Sudan. Also remember not all countries use the word bishop for their spiritual leaders; others prefer the word President meaning the same thing as bishop.

Lastly, the information sent does not reflect the views of the majority in our church; rather, it portrays how the benefactors of the Juba project feel. They are afraid of losing their empire in Juba, simply because it's self-enriching. But a time is coming when it will be determined who is the true owner of the property. Is it for the church or some individuals?

Now a word to all those to whom Odek wrote his letter. We live in Africa where there is a lot of corruption, abuse of power and misuse of public funds, property and etc. This is the environment in which the church in Africa finds itself. You have the role to help us be the true church of Christ! There is no way that you who know Scriptures well can just turn a blind eye to the serious offenses committed in the ELCSS/S just because it is Africa! This will be condoning sin...even the church in Africa must be the Light of the World and the Salt of the Earth.

May the Lord help us all to be faithful servants of the Gospel+

Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan (ELCSS/S), Gbudue State, Yambio

### **January 28**

Once again the leader of the ELCSS/S petitions the LCMS for discussions on fellowship. These requests have been given on numerous occasions more than 20 years. When the previous bishop was deposed because of malfeasance in office, the efforts that had been made had to now be revisited in hopes that a decision could be made at a forthcoming synod convention. Bishop Peter Anibati begins the process.

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Fw: Greetings from the Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan

Dear Dr. Rahn,  
Below is what I wrote to the LCMS leadership.

Blessings+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia  
From: Peter Anibati  
To: Matthew Harrison  
Cc: Albert Collver  
Subject: Greetings from the Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan

Dear President Harrison,  
Greetings in Jesus!

In this year of the 500th anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther, we Lutherans around the world loudly and boldly proclaim Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide. We thank God for the leadership He causes to come forth and make possible the Gospel light that announces eternal salvation freely, fully and finally!

Although the ELCSS/S is a very small, humble body of small number, we are proud to join the Lutherans around the world to share the inerrant Word of God and proclaim Christ crucified.

I have heard whispers about partnership between my church the ELCSS/S and yours the LCMS. Now that the Holy Spirit has anointed me as the Bishop of the ELCSS/S, I would like to pursue this matter quickly and fully. I believe that God gave LHF the privilege of helping to create the ELCSS/S. As Bishop, I feel that we need to assess the present situation carefully and, with God's help, determine the best God-pleasing direction we must go as a church body.

President Harrison, as the bishop of the ELCSS/S, I would appreciate an open dialogue with you. I feel that we both could benefit by creating a church pulpit and altar fellowship. I would humbly ask you to consider this matter and I would appreciate any suggestions or recommendations you make.

The ELCSS/S has already requested application for partnership with the LCMS. Let us pray for a path that will lead to a quick and full God-pleasing union so that we together may continue to bring the Gospel to all nations.

Blessings,  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia  
Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan (ELCSS/S)

### **January 30**

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: Greetings from the Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan

Dear Dr. Rahn,

Thanks for the compliments...I hope the LCMS leadership will respond to the letter. Another thing I must share with you is that I am planning to visit the LCMS office in the U.S. I think it would make a difference if I could go and visit President Harrison or Dr. Collver and talk to them personally about the work, plans of the ELCSS/S. I had talked to Dr. Lutz about this and I requested him to find out what time could be best to visit.

Another issue is that we are pleading with the Board of the LHF to revise their decision and consider giving the same kind of support they have been giving to the ELCSS/S until the church is settled. We do not have access yet to the UN funds. I have written letters to the UN and also the bank in Juba to freeze the funds. I am expecting the a response this week. But for us to have full control and access to the funds, all legal procedures must be fulfilled. Wilson had opened a case in court against the church in Yambio of disposing him at the extraordinary convention. This case will be discussed on Feb 6 at the Court in Yambio. I have heard from our legal advisor that the case will be dismissed because the decision to remove Wilson from office was taken by the convention, which is the supreme authority of the ELCSS/S, and secondly this decision is spiritual and the court has no mandate to revise it.

After dismissing the case, our legal advisor will then open a case against Wilson in Juba for refusing to hand over the office and to have Wilson account for the rental money he has misused before the court. This process will be long but we at the ELCSS/S must keep working and doing what the Lord requires of us. For this reason, we appeal to the LHF Board to revise their 2016 decision. The wire Jeff sent, more than half has been used as legal fees. It will be cheaper when the case will be handled in Juba because it will not involve air tickets and lodging for the lawyer.

Will keep you posted with the developments.  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

**January 31**

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: CONDEMNING HERESY IN THE CHURCH

Dr. Rahn,

Magwi is east of Juba. We had five pastors from there who came for the installation. These men are not in support of Wilson. Some of the evangelists and deaconesses mentioned are not familiar to me. I think the writer just wanted to give the impression that there are a lot of people behind Wilson, which is not true.

I will take as many pictures as possible when I meet with the Anglicans. I am glad Pastor Bol from Bor Town wants to meet with me in Juba. I will offer him the position of dean and would consider Bor as a deanery of the ELCSS/S, and later this will be upgraded into a diocese with a bishop, because constitution allows for more dioceses and archdioceses with the presiding bishop. For the Anglicans, I will see to it that they become part of the Juba deanery since many of them seem to be in Juba. For both groups, I will offer them an opportunity to study at CLIHM and encourage the LCMS leadership to support their studies.

I think it will be great to have you here when these groups will be joining the ELCSS/S.  
I will write more later.

## February 1

From: Rev. Simon Gatluak  
To: Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise  
Subject: About the commissioning of Asst. Bishop

Dear brothers in Christ,

We thank you for the faith our Lord gives and keep directing you for the glory of His church and expansion of His kingdom. The church in South Sudan thanks God for you, for the times we resist the devil tackles and you stand firm until today. To our Lord be glory forever.

The upper Nile congregations thank LHF for the support of installation and commissioning of bishop and assistant bishop. The people praise Christ during the function. As the church, we remain good friend with LHF.

We thank the LHF Board for helping most of our church activities and the coming of Dr. Lutz two times in Gambela. This opens many gates for properly understanding the Gospel and Lutheranism. The time Dr. Roberts came and gave a teaching, many came to the church and confirmed to be come a Lutheran members. We thank the LHF Board for standing with us always, and that led to reunification of some of our congregations that left the church because of wrong leadership of Rev. Noah.

We are working with the direction of God's plan and Christ's church moving forward through evangelism and stewardship. Our church need a lot of repair work in which the first priorities will be training. We love to work with you to expand God kingdom in South Sudan and beyond.

In Christ,  
Rev. Simon Gatluak  
Asst. Bishop ELCSS/S

## February 3

From: Bernhard Lutz  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Two Weeks of Amazing Grace!

Dear Family and Friends: Greetings in Jesus!

Two weeks of safely chasing the sun in Uganda, Ethiopia and South Sudan have evaporated and I am back in the saddle in Waddell, Arizona chasing gophers! God granted safe travel, successful consecration of Bishop Peter Anibati, installation of the Assistant to the Bishop in Gambela, Ethiopia, teaching a Seminar "Christian Leadership" to South Sudan pastors and MAOR Seminary in Bishoftu, Ethiopia, addressing two hundred pastors, deacons, evangelists in Addis Ababa.

The community of saints in South Sudan are very pleased and feel blessed by God to have new leadership, and are accepting God's challenge to be faithful to his Word. The Lutheran Church of Ethiopia is taking steps to be more aggressive with sharing the Gospel in a truly evangelical manner. The journey was a spiritual merry-go-round and very warm and emotional in so many ways! Like when 100 or more children sang in Gambela (a refugee haven) and the mothers were weeping as the children sang about going back home to the



Upper Nile, but that really, heaven is our true home!

May the Lord richly bless you and yours with good health, a strong faith in Christ our Savior, and the joy of serving the Master! And thank you for your prayers!

Allah mahabah. God is love.

Bernie

## **A REPORT: THE 2017 LHF EAST AFRICA MISSION PROJECT**

*January 17 to February 2, 2017*

Key Mission Projects:

- Consecration of Rev. Peter Anibati Abia, bishop of ELCSS/S
- Installation of Rev. Simon Gatluak, assistant to the bishop
- Teach pastoral seminar: Christian Leadership — South Sudan/Ethiopia
- Preach at each event scheduled
- Dedication liturgies for the use of bishop's chair, staff, ring, chasuble and cross
- Present a LHF address for Mekane Yesus pastors' meeting in Addis Ababa

### **JANUARY 16 (Monday)**

Today was a national holiday. Banks were closed. I had planned to obtain extra money for the trip to East Africa. I had to leave early Tuesday morning, so my cash availability was very low. I was hoping to use my Visa credit card for any emergency demands that may appear along the way.

The flights were all well planned and I was able to meet the proposed schedule in South Sudan, Gambela, as well as Addis Ababa and Bishoftu.

Dr. Robert Rahn, founder of LHF, and I were to double up on many of the projects scheduled for this important and very historic mission adventure. Due to Visa complications, Rev. Rahn was unable to make the visit to East Africa.

### **JANUARY 17 (Tuesday)**

Leave Phoenix, Arizona for Entebbe.

### **JANUARY 18 (Wednesday)**

Arrive Entebbe, Uganda on the evening of January 18. Meet up with Rev. Dachi, principal of CLIHM seminary, at the Entebbe International Airport. Driver is Brian Arimpa - friendly, helpful, efficient. Rather costly. I like George better. Arrive at Soser Hotel in Kanjansi. Nice, clean. Dachi and I share one room. Eat breakfast at hotel and plan to be at the Kanjansi Airstrip at 7 a.m. I protest. We need to be there at 6 a.m. No, Brian insisted, 7 a.m. will be just fine. Pay \$180 USD for hotel and partial taxi service. Owe \$40.

### **JANUARY 19 (Thursday)**

We arrive at the MAF airstrip at 7 a.m. — just in time to see our flight taxi on to the MAF airstrip. Brian tries to abort the flight...it is too late! Now serious travel skills are required. How can we get to Yambio, South Sudan, anytime, for the consecration of Rev. Peter Anibati Abia Sunday? We lack the money and the plane ticket. We spent the morning scrambling about, seeking money from banks all over South Uganda. No luck with ATM machines, and no better luck with travel to South Sudan. Ethiopian Air had seats to Juba. Finally

I was able to get about \$200 USD and have just enough to for two tickets for the flight to Juba, arriving in mid-afternoon.

It was very frustrating to undergo these needless travel pains. Unnecessary.

At Juba, we were met by a terrific security airport agent by the name of Penni, a man well worth the money for successful and safe travel through the rather antiquated Juba airport. We were taken to the Anglican Guest House in Juba for the one overnight. An ancient, well used guest house, needing paint, order and whatever guests need for comfort. Dachi and I met up with Kebede, enjoyed a fish soup dinner with water and went to our rooms for a hot evening in Juba.

### **JANUARY 20 (Friday)**

Peter had booked our flight with a small airline named South Supreme. We were to have breakfast at the Anglican Guest House but everyone was sleeping, so no breakfast available. Penni had taxi ride scheduled to the Juba International Airport and he met us at the airport. We sat on chairs in the shade as he and his team took care of everything the law required. Juba airport is a big, dirty mess, but Penni took care of everything and all the three of us had to do was wait for boarding the South Supreme airplane for the one hour flight to the not-so-safe airstrip at Yambio. We were taken to the plane seated on the back of a small Toyota pickup truck!

We arrived Yambio about noon; there was no one meet us as we stepped down and onto the gravel runway of the dusty airstrip. A damaged dusty DC3 was off to the side, the one Robert Lutz was on board that missed the runway at Yambio. Soon a vehicle appeared and Peter, Nicolas and Elinama came to greet us and pick us up at the airstrip. A large bus came carrying 30 young choir members, and the choir group made a straight line. I thought, "Boy, some lucky person is being greeted royally today!" When these little angels started singing "He's Alive! Amen!" tears rolled, because I knew they were there to meet the three of us! I brought the tune to South Sudan from Nigeria, and people enjoy singing the song.

We went through customs, and then on to the Lutheran Guest House. We stopped at the main church building, where many had gathered for a warm welcome for the three of us. There was a devotion, speeches and a warm welcome. We received colorful leis to make the occasion special indeed. I was assigned the White House Room, where visiting professors stay in the administration building of the Lutheran Guest House.

Before I had a chance to unpack, I was leading the beginning "Introduction to the Christian Leadership" course I was to teach for pastors and leaders of the ELCSS/S. It was a wonderful day!

### **JANUARY 21 (Saturday)**

This day was packed with many activities, especially to prepare for the Consecration Service for the ELCSS/S bishop on Sunday. A bull was slaughtered, classes taught, assignments given, tensions were high as Wilson was pulling all stops to stop the consecration service! Wilson's attorney was in town pounding on the governor's door, trying to obtain the power to stop the consecration service. Members of the ELCSS/S were alarmed and security police was obtained for the weekend.

I was asked to write five dedication liturgies for the dedication and consecration of the bishop's chair, staff, ring, cross and chasuble. It was a joyful and blessed day as I prepared for a sacred and holy day of doing a special work for a national church body in East Africa. The work I was called to do was truly very special, and the task very humbling.

Hundreds of guests had traveled long distances to take part in the consecration of the new bishop. People

were sleeping just outside my room, on the cement, with a towel or rag for a pillow. They did not want to miss this very special day.

### **JANUARY 22 (Sunday)**

The big day for the ELCSS/S had finally arrived! The mood was festive! Everyone was happy and filled with a thankful heart. The road to this point had been long, rocky and difficult. Wilson had put road blocks in the way wherever possible, desperately trying to maintain his bishopric leadership for the ELCSS/S. Wilson's grip for holding on to the leadership role of this young, struggling church body was fast waning, and he was about to be a small part of the churches history.

The procession began on the Lutheran Guest House campus, headed with a cross, the Bible, two flags (the South Sudan flag and the Christian flag), followed by choirs, pastors, leaders and ending with Rev. Peter being the last person of the procession. The procession did not take us through the town and market area. It was a short procession, but certainly one that was filled with singing and joyful expressions of thankfulness to a gracious and merciful God for making possible a new church leader. 2,500 people welcomed the festive procession into a yet unfinished brick church building 20 years old. The members of the ELCSS/S had been waiting patiently for this moment, and there was a joyful eruption of sweet joyful music I will remember for a long time.

The Consecration Service lasted eight hours. Besides the consecration of Rev. Peter, the Lord's Supper was celebrated, 17 youth were to confirm their faith, two children were to be baptized and the government officials were present to give their speech of welcome to the new bishop of the ELCSS/S. Many local clergy were present for this important worship service. The decorated church with banners and strings of colorful aluminum filled the church. Hundreds of plastic chairs had been rented for the special occasion.

The text used for the message of the day was taken from Matthew 28:18-20. The theme taken from the Great Commission text was "Go and lead with God's power, plan and presence!"

Missing indeed was a warm welcome from the leadership of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to encourage and support Bishop Peter as he was to begin a challenging leadership role for this young church body. Also missing was any greeting from LEAF, a traditional ELCSS/S friend and supporting church agency from Finland. A letter from the Executive Director of LHF was read by yours truly, bringing prayers, best wishes and encouragement to the ELCSS/S.

The Procession started at 10 a.m. and the guests were just finishing the banquet dinner furnished by the LHF at 6 p.m. The activities continued well into the evening as many native cultural dances were presented, representing the people from many areas of the South Sudanese church body. It was a marvelous day indeed BECAUSE IT WAS SPIRIT-FILLED! Those doing the dancing presented gifts to the new consecrated bishop of the ELCSS/S.

### **JANUARY 23 (Monday)**

Monday came quietly. People still could hardly believe what had just happened within the ELCSS/S on Sunday. Many people left on Sunday, but there were still many people around to rejoice and give thanks for what God had wrought for the church. Monday was used by the leadership to regroup and make plans for the future work of the ELCSS/S.

Bishop Peter had made an early visit to the governor's office, there to find Wilson's attorney looking for a ride to the airstrip. Bishop Peter was kind enough to give the wanting attorney a lift to the airstrip. God used this

time for Bishop Peter to personally discuss the issues and plant some positive seed into the corrupt and negative spirit that has come bubbling out of the Wilson people.

Church leaders spent the day wrestling with details and tying loose ends. I was not asked to continue the Christian Leadership seminar on Monday, as there just wasn't time for scheduling a block of time for this important work.

Included was a noontime luncheon at the Tourist Hotel in Yambio. Along with Bishop Peter was Dachi, Nicolas, Elinama, Kebede and myself. The luncheon was a very good start for the leaders of the ELCSS/S. Many details were discussed regarding the future of the church, the CLIHM academic schedule and new class and the role of the Lutheran Guest House. It was decided to begin the new intake class in June 2017. Presently 13 students have made application for enrolling with CLIHM for study. It is possible that 10 students may apply from the Uganda Anglican Church and perhaps ten more students from the Anuak people of the Upper Nile area. It looks as if there could be a class of 30 students beginning in June 2017.

Rev. Nicolas and I were appointed to evaluate the CLIHM curriculum and to make recommendations to the CLIHM staff.

Other topics discussed:

- The move of CLIHM to Baguga ASAP. Use the basic foundation for a two-story building.
- There is desperate need for library books for CLIHM. How to get them to South Sudan?
- The teaching staff: Dachi, Nicolas. Part-time: Bishop, Andrew, Thomas
- Funds are badly needed to repair the deteriorating Lutheran Guest House buildings - paint, repairs etc. This to be done prior to beginning of class in June 2017.
- Continue present academic plan of a four-year program.
- The school year to begin Feb. 1 (with exception of 2017 starting in June).
- A research project assignment to be a major project, to be given on vicarage year. During Year I and II, Research Methodology would be offered to students.
- The need for a stipend to support students during their four-year studies at CLIHM.
- The need to build and support families of married students with housing at Lutheran Guest House area.
- The need to replace beds, mattresses, sheets, pillows and blankets.
- The need to offer desks, shelves and electric lighting for students, mosquito nets
- The need for funds to help the CLIHM staff to better themselves academically

Monday was a good day to begin to pull everything together, make short-term and long-term plans for this young struggling church body.

#### **JANUARY 24 (Tuesday)**

I was asked to lead a timeblock for Christian Leadership on Tuesday. About 20 pastors and leaders remained on campus and were able to attend this lecture on leadership. We were able to accomplish a good share of the contents of the Christian Leadership booklet provided by LHF.

Rev. Nicolas and I met to discuss the curriculum that would affect the incoming class of 2017. We glanced through the present curriculum and found it solid in every way in the preparation of pastoral candidates for the Holy Ministry. We suggested a number of new courses that would help the CLIHM student to be better prepared for the ministry. The recommended new courses for the CLIHM staff to consider:

Computer Science  
Communication Skills  
Psychology  
Agriculture I  
Music I  
Biblical Geography

Project Management  
Cultural Anthropology  
Sociology I  
Basic Accounting & Bookkeeping  
Philosophy of God

### JANUARY 25 (Wednesday)

I arranged a meeting with Bishop Peter Anibati Abia to discuss his plans for the ELCSS/S. The following is a summary of this lengthy visit:

1. Bishop Peter is planning to visit each of the five deaneries of the ELCSS/S.
2. Bishop Peter would like to begin preparations for a visit with the President of the LCMS to
  - a. Share the present position of the ELCSS/S
  - b. Share his vision for the church
  - c. Share the blessings of a partnership with the LCMS
  - d. Arrange for details to form an altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS
3. There is a need for a central church office. Would like this office to be adjacent to the present ELCSS/S church building in Yambio. \$15,000 to complete this church office building.
4. Complete the present church building in Yambio. Add a tower to make it worshipful.
5. There is a need for a security wall around the new church office building.
6. Install an Internet service in the new church building.
7. Move CLIHM to Baguga and restore the Lutheran Guest House as a money-maker.
8. Find the funds to build necessary buildings for the seminary in Baguga.
9. Very important: Renovate the Lutheran Guest House located in Yambio.
10. New start ups:
  - a. Nazaro: Plant a new church
  - b. Akrabji (Yambio area)
  - c. Torit (Acholi language)
11. Add a two-year evangelist training program to CLIHM
  - a. Students would have to know English well
  - b. Students would work as evangelists for a time and some would apply for pastoral training.
12. The need for evangelism training and equipping. Plan workshops.
13. Expand Concordia Bakery. Build a large hall for community to use for special events. Money maker. Bakery could supply food for banquets etc.
14. New areas of translation needs for the ELCSS/S
  - a. *Augsburg Confession* (Asande)
  - b. *Luther's Small Catechism* (Acholi)
  - c. Moru language near Juba
  - d. Hymnal in Moru language
  - e. *Luther's Small Catechism* in Balanda language (Tambura area)
  - f. Acholi hymnal and prayerbook
15. There is a need to find funding for the transfer of church workers in a church body that is spread far and wide
16. There is a need to make CLIHM a degree-granting institution, as well as sending gifted students on to other higher level universities for training for the work of the church.
17. To expand the St. Luke Clinic now on campus of Lutheran Guest House to a new site, to free the development of Lutheran Guest House services to the Yambio community.

### **JANUARY 26 (Thursday)**

Today MAF is to come to Yambio to pick me up. I spend the morning packing, visiting, giving things away. The weather is good, dry, blue skies so chances are good that the MAF plane will arrive around 12 noon. At 10:30 a.m., Bishop announces time to leave for the airport.

The attitude of those around the Lutheran Guest House is positive and everyone seems in a good mood and happy. Many come with petitions for money or some special need. The church seems very ready to move forward with a new leader and a new spirit.

Say the "Good byes!" Board the MAF plane for Juba, Arua, Uganda and Kanjjansi! Yambio was truly an emotional and moving weekend. Memorable.

Arrive 4:45 p.m. Deliver special letter from Educational Hon Phillip Pia, Gbudwe State to his wife in Entebbe, Uganda. Put the letter in my camera case and forgot about it! Thank God his wife met me at Kanjjansi and asked if I happened to be Dr. Lutz! Then I remembered!

Took Brian Arimpa's Taxi service to Entebbe and driver reminded me I still owed him \$40. Easy to forget these kind of things!!

No trouble with security at Entebbe and it was sit down and wait for the Ethiopia Air to Addis. Kebede meets me at BOLE in Addis and it was off to Bishoftu for the night. Arrive around midnight for a meal of scrambled eggs and macaroni with hot tea that Ganet had prepared. Sleep came soon.

### **JANUARY 27 (Friday)**

Up early. Get ready to teach first lesson of "Christian Stewardship" at Bishoftu. We had 25 students turn up for the first lesson, held in the new classroom area of MAOR Seminary.

Finish teaching at 5 p.m. so Adama students can return to their homes at a reasonable time of the day. Draft a few notes for the LHF speech for Dereje Tilahun, LHF representative in Addis. Work on the message for Gambela for Sunday.

### **JANUARY 28 (Saturday)**

Up and ready to go to Addis Ababa at 6:30 a.m. Kebede and I walk to find an EA ticket office and Kebede gets ticket for Gambela for today and return on Sunday. Kebede needs haircut, so accompany him to barber shop and I decide to have a trim as well. Barber did a decent job and the cost was minimal too.

Back to the Mekane Yesus historic church at 9:45 a.m. About 200 pastors and evangelists were meeting with Dereje for an evangelism meeting. I was given 15 minutes to speak about the work of LHF. After the presentation, Kebede and I had to leave for BOLE for flight to Gambela.

Flight to Gambela was short, an hour and half. Gambela is area of huge refugee camp. United Nations has lots of planes and lots of workers in the Gambela area. The Upper Nile Deanery of the ELCSS/S has thousands of Nuer people living in the refugee camp. The church is growing fast and strong under the leadership of Rev. Simon Gatluak.

The purpose of the trip to Gambela was to install Rev. Simon as the newly-elected Assistant to the Bishop of the ELCSS/S. About 3,000 people were counted for the celebratory service!



The town church, Gambela Lutheran, had separated from the Jabjab congregation over the failure of Rev. Wilson to do the work of bishop. But now, since Bishop Peter had been consecrated, they had chosen to join with Jabjab and everyone was very happy that Gambela was now one in spirit and seeking reconciliation with Jabjab. I was asked by Rev. Simon to make a visit at the Gambela congregation on the way to the worship service at Jabjab. It was an emotionally high time for the members of the Gambela congregation. We sang a few hymns, we prayed, we shared Scripture and left for the Jabjab congregation for the installation of Rev. Simon Gatluak.

It was a very busy, but very fulfilling Saturday. The bed felt very comfortable and sleep came soon.

### **JANUARY 29 (Sunday)**

I was up early! It would be a very busy day. At 8 a.m., Kebede, Simon and I were in a bajaj headed for Gambela Lutheran Church, a church body that was ready to be one with Jabjab! People and choirs everywhere! We gathered inside the church building for song, the Word and a message. Everyone was happy that the fracture was healed and there was one united spirit. The consecration of Bishop Peter had made a huge difference. Rev. Wilson was not liked by many in the Gambela community.

After a short prayer time, we were back in the bajaj and headed for Jabjab and the installation of Rev. Simon Gatluak as the Assistant to the Bishop of the ELCSS/S. Everyone was filled with joy! It was a great day.

Kebede and I did not have a lot of time today. We needed to be at the airport by 2:30 p.m. These special services can be rather long in time. We finished about 2 p.m., enjoyed a plate of food with the 3,000 people who had come to celebrate the success of the ELCSS/S in electing new leadership.

We arrived at the Gambela Airport, about 17 miles from Gambela, just as they were checking in for the flight to Addis Ababa. The flight back to Addis was smooth and short. The Bishoftu taxi was right on time and we returned to Bishoftu for a pizza and beer at the Limo Hotel on main street.

Personally, I was exhausted. The last two weeks were very busy, although very blessed and rewarding. What remained was three days of classes, an installation service and packing up for the flight to the USA.

### **JANUARY 30 (Monday)**

Up early, prepare for the "Christian Leadership" class. About 25 students attended each day, some from Bishoftu and some from Adama, a city about 30 miles to the east of Bishoftu. All students are registered to work toward some kind of academic degree. The lesson went well, starting at 8:30 a.m. and continuing through 5 p.m. The day was very long, but very successful.

### **JANUARY 31 (Tuesday)**

Up early. Prepare for the day's work. Kebede assigned me to preach for Matthew and Celestino's installation services, scheduled for 4 p.m. So the previous evening included work on the message and also a closing, appropriate prayer. I provide \$100 for some soft drinks and sweets following the installation service.

The day's lessons went well and we all relaxed a bit as the special worship service was scheduled.

### **FEBRUARY 1 (Wednesday)**

Up early. Begin classes at 8:30 a.m. Kebede asks me to finish the seminar by 12:30 p.m.; I completed the seminar at 12:30 p.m.

I was able to have a fairly easy afternoon packing and saying the goodbyes to Kebede and the students. Kebe-

de asked me to go out for a pizza at the Limo Hotel on Main street. We enjoyed a meal. The taxi came at 8 p.m. and we left for BOLE International Airport, arriving at 9 p.m. We met Dereje with a suitcase filled with Amharic books, Luther's *Small Catechism*, the *Book of Concord* and Robert Preus's edition of the *Augsburg Confession*.

The workshop, consecration, installations were all completed. All that remained was a 22-hour flight home to Phoenix. I checked through security, went to the toilet and headed for the Lufthansa check-in desk. I discovered I did not have my U.S. passport! I had lost it after passing through security. I ran back to the security check-in, and there a security agent was going through my passport! Relief indeed.

The rest of the journey to Phoenix was as scheduled. Safe. Long. Uneventful. Elly was at the Terminal 2, door 7 on time and soon we were back at Waddell, Arizona for a good night's sleep. Elly had been sick for five days. We learned Friday morning that she had pneumonia!

Thank God for the privilege to serve Him for two weeks in East Africa. I believe that the ELCSS/S is on the way to a positive and God-pleasing direction that will lead to church growth and the spread of the Good News.

Submitted: Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz

## February 9

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Report on Church Account

Thanks for the information. I will be leaving next week Tuesday for Uganda to be with the Anglicans and will stay for a week.

Yes, the discussions I will have with the Anglicans will include having them to become part of the ELCSS/S officially and to have some their students study at CLIHM. Your suggestion is good. We can have an official service for them in June, and I would like to extend an invitation to Dr. Collver to come or perhaps send a representative.

I just heard from our legal adviser that a letter has been sent by the Public Attorney General in Juba to the bank to freeze the Juba account, and the bank will be sending us a letter this afternoon to confirm that they have frozen all operations of the account. In this way Wilson will have no access to the account, but we are yet to find out what balance is in that account. The next step will be to have Wilson answer for the missing money before court because he is not willing to handover voluntarily. It seems we will have control over the account when all these legal procedures are completed. I guess we have to be patient...I do not how long it will take.

The court case Wilson raised in Yambio did not work for him, so, he appealed it again to the high court in Juba but it's obvious that the response from Juba will be the same. Will you include in the next wire the legal fee of \$1,500? What has the Board decided about our request for stipends for 2017?

Blessings+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan (ELCSS/S)

## February 17-21

On the above dates Rev. Peter Anibati, bishop of the ELCSS/S, traveled to northern Uganda to meet with and participate in a catechism seminar held for leaders of the Anglican Church, which is interested in becoming part of the Lutheran church in South Sudan. There are 12 bishops who are leading the Anglican church body with many pastors (including women), with a membership of around 1.5 million across South Sudan. Many of them are currently in refugee camps in Uganda and have started churches there.

Bishop Anibati presented the history of the ELCSS/S and explained the doctrinal position of the church. He alluded to the *Book of Concord* as a confession we accept. The participants in the seminar were especially thankful for the Dinka *Small Catechism* published by LHF, as many of the pastors were not able to handle English. Three of the participants want to enroll in the seminary to receive more training in Lutheran doctrine.

Bishop Anibati stated, “The objective of the mission to Uganda was to get to know the Anglican group better. I believe this overall objective was achieved, but questions remain when they will be ready to become part of the Lutheran church. I think this will take a while. More time is needed; they need to be taught properly the Lutheran doctrine through seminars and workshops and even seminary training. We are willing to partner with the LCMS to train these people to become Lutherans and eventually part of the ELCSS/S.”

## February 28

Efforts continue to establish altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS. Bishop Peter acknowledges a message from Dr. Al Collver, LCMS director of church relations.

From: Albert Collver

To: Peter Anibati

Subject: Re: Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan Fellowship

Dear Peter,

Greetings on the Transfiguration of our Lord! Grace and Peace be with you!

Congratulations on your election as bishop of the ELCSS/S. I hope your election brings peace and tranquility to your church. I pray that the Lord Jesus give you strength and wisdom to serve as bishop.

During the time of Bishop Wilson Noah Rule, there was a request for altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS. Is this something you would like to continue pursuing? I have copied Mr. Darin Storkson who will follow up with you.

Blessings in Christ,

Abc3+

Rev. Albert B. Collver, Ph.D.

Director of Church Relations/Executive Secretary for the International Lutheran Council

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From: Peter Anibati

To: Albert Collver

Subject: Re: Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan

Dear Rev. Dr. Collver,

It is a great joy to receive your message and I thank God for all that He is doing through you to reach out to the lost with the precious Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I would like very much to continue pursuing the request of altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS. It is my prayer that God would make this become a reality.

Thank you kindly for your message and may our Good Lord continue to bless your endeavors for expanding His kingdom here on earth.

Blessings+

Rev. Peter Anibati Abia, Bishop, ELCSS/S

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## March 22

Preparations for travel to the far country of South Sudan and the challenges connected therewith...seen in the exchange below between Rev. James May and LHF Executive Director Rev. Matthew Heise.

From: James May

To: Matthew Heise

Subject: Re: Travel to Bor Town, South Sudan?

We will be in Bor from Monday to Friday. We can travel in the morning. They usually know early on if the airspace is hostile and planes are taken. If so, we can get a car right away.

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Matthew Heise wrote:

How many days are we planning on being in Bor? I am guessing flights to Juba and Bor will take up most of Monday. Then Tuesday, Wednesday...and.. Thursday? Or is that travel day?

I've had bumpy rides in the night through Siberia, so, I have a little experience in that regard. Whatever works for getting back to Juba is ok with me.

Matt

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From: James May

To: Matthew Heise

Cc: Jeff Rahn; Robert Rahn

Subject: Re: Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LUT02)

I think the seminar will require \$250 per day to feed everyone. Hotels are expensive since only United Nations people stay in them, and they are crappy. They are about \$100 per night. They usually include "breakfast." We can eat other meals with them. Then a taxi is needed each day to the church and back. Figure \$10 per day. To get back to Juba is going to be tricky. If we can catch a flight it is \$150. Otherwise, if planes are

taken (even if you bought a seat like I did last time), we will need to hire a private car at \$250 — yes, unfortunately more than a plane ticket and the drive will be more than 6 hours and bumpy and a bit unsafe, but not too bad during the day.

I will take care of you in Kenya, so no money needed there unless you want to go out to eat one night. All other meals will be at the mission center/construction site.

Blessings!  
James

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From: Rev. James May  
To: Jeff Rahn; Matthew Heise; Robert Rahn  
Cc: Herbert Gore  
Subject: Fwd: Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LUT02)

Hi Jeff. Please find the MAF tariff sheet attached. I went to their offices today to find out how we can get the majority of books to Bor Town.

What they suggested is best is that Rev Nathaniel Bol would travel to Juba with a letter of Gift Certificate, which would exempt the books from customs taxes in Juba. I would fly on a commercial plane from Nairobi to Juba because it is cheaper, \$500 round trip. I would join the charter in Juba because we get the entire plane. We could even add another passenger, possibly from the ELCSS/S if they wanted to attend the training and introduction seminar. There are no additional costs for the charter. We can load up the plane to the limit and the price is the same. BUT we would not charter it back out of Bor. We would either take a taxi or commercial flight.

In regard to a charter to Dadaab, there are two options, both are charter flights.

1. Three seater with 180 kg of cargo for \$1200
2. 7-seater with 700 kg of cargo for \$2200

We wouldn't take all the Anuak catechisms to Dadaab because the larger number of Anuak Lutherans are in Gambela, Ethiopia. Let me know how you would like us to proceed.

Blessings!  
James

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**March 23**

From: John Riay  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: FW: Holy Week Greetings

Rev. Dr. Rahn  
Grace and peace to you in the previous name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I appreciate your being so

kind and generous to all your brothers and sisters in Christ. I personally benefit a lot from the knowledge which the Lord gives you, and you share it with us. I am blessed to learn from your annual messages.

In Christ,  
Rev. John Jock Riay  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan and Sudan

### **March 27**

This is a report sent to us from Bishop Anibati of Sudan. It demonstrates the tremendous openness to Lutheranism in that country, their dire needs and how they are coping.

#### **Visitations:**

At the beginning of this year, we stated that our first priority was to make visitations to the different deaneries/congregations of the ELCSS/S. The purpose of these visits are: 1) To oversee the work which the pastors are doing in the different congregations and to know their plans for the future, 2) To know the conditions under which the pastors are working and the challenges facing the churches 3) To introduce the ELCSS/S new policy and action plan for 2017–2021, and 4) To revive the congregations which had closed down and to look for opportunities to start up new churches in areas where there are no Lutheran churches.

Although the ELCSS/S is struggling to make ends meet, I am happy to share with you that by the help of God, we have been able to make some of those visitations and we intend to visit the remaining churches which we have not visited. As it is said, God's work done in His way will not lack His supply; surely He will provide for the needs! Our principle for this year is "Do more with less."

On March 4, 2017, I visited Maridi State, the hometown of the former bishop, where there were previously two Lutheran churches and a primary school. Unfortunately one of the churches closed down, including the primary school, as there was no one to take care of the congregation. I went with 1) Rev. Thomas Gaaniko 2) Rev. Elinama Jacob Bisi 3) Rev. Nicholas Kumbo 4) Rev. Japheth Rabach Dachi 5) Rev. Kibongo Henry and 6) Vicar Emmanuel Enosa. We arrived in Maridi at 4 p.m. and were taken to the house of Rev. Jackson John Afash, the pastor in charge of Maridi Lutheran Church, and there we had a wonderful meal. After the meal we drove to the Anglican Guest House where we were accommodated for two nights.

On March 5, 2017 we had a short visit with the commissioner of Maridi County. He welcomed us to his house and served us with tea. The commissioner stated that it was his first time to hear that there was a Lutheran church in Maridi, and he appreciated very much our coming and expressed his willingness to support the programs of the ELCSS/S. After meeting with the commissioner we went to Mongua, an area where the Lutheran church is located in Maridi. Before we got to the church, we met a group of kids together with Pastor Jackson Afash singing praises, and we stepped out of the car and joined them in singing and together we marched to the church.

We were warmly received by the Christians and all the invited guests and we started the Divine Service at 11 a.m. In the service, I preached on Matthew 4:1-11 with the theme: "The first Adam failed and failed all, but the second Adam – Jesus – won and won for all." After preaching, I installed Vicar Emmanuel Enosa to be in charge of Ibba congregation, one of the churches which had closed down. After prayers, we had lunch together with all those who came to worship that day among whom were senior government officials. Thank God the minister for physical infrastructure was among them and I got the chance to put our request before him for a bigger plot for the church.



After lunch, I had a meeting with all the members of the Lutheran church in Maridi while Rev. Nicholas and Rev. Dachi were conducting interviews for pastoral students who would like to be part of our seminary program in June 2017. Two sat for the interview, which is basically Bible knowledge and English. The members with whom I had the meeting highlighted the following concerns:

- Lack of pastors. In the whole of Maridi State, there is only one pastor.
- No income generating projects for the church.
- Pastor Afash has opened a school for teaching kids, but he uses the same worship place as classroom.
- No church building and no built classrooms.
- Lack of school materials.
- The current church plot is very small, and it needs to be extended because Pastor Afash would like to have a full Lutheran Primary School, church building, a house for the pastor next to the church and a guest house to generate some income for his church. Pastor Afash also wants to plant more Lutheran churches in Maridi state.
- The members in Maridi need workshops and seminars and regular visits from the head office.
- The women's group requested the head office to provide them with a grinding mill as an income-generating project for the church.
- No means of transport for pastor and evangelists. They need bicycles for evangelists and a motorbike for the pastor.

On March 6, 2017, we were set to return to Yambio, but first we had to meet with the highest authority of Maridi State, so we went at 9 a.m. and met with the Honorable Governor of Maridi State, who received us very well and welcomed us into his office. They brought tea and water for us and as we were drinking, I introduced my delegation to the Honorable Governor and briefed him on all that we had come to do in Maridi, including the future plans of the ELCSS/S which he appreciated. We had a brief meeting with him together with his deputy after which we prayed, a group photo, and we started our journey to Yambio.

On March 9, 2017 we took another trip to Tambura State and arrived at about 7 p.m. The accompanying delegation included Rev. Thomas Gaaniko, Rev. Nicholas Kumbo, Rev. Elinama Jacob Bisi, Rev. Kibongo Henry, Rev. Mosoro George, my wife Jecinta and my little Moses! On March 10, 2017 which was a national prayer day, I joined all the clergies and Christians and we had a procession to the freedom square, where we had prayers for peace and stability in South Sudan. After prayers we were invited to the house of Rev. Charles Undo Kazimilio for lunch, and our supper was provided by the women of Tambura church. On March 11, 2017 we went west of Tambura town on the road to Wau to see the grave of the father of Rev. Thomas Gaaniko, the general secretary, and there we met so many people who would like to start a Lutheran congregation in that area. We had a short devotion with them and distributed some Zande hymnals and catechisms printed by LHF. There were more than 400 people who attended devotion, and Pastor Charles was assigned to be providing pastoral care for these people.

We returned to Tambura town and in the evening we had a meeting with the members of Ezo, S/ Yubu, Tambura and Giara who had all gathered at Nazareda Lutheran church in Tambura. They raised the following concerns:

- Training for youth, women and all members of the Lutheran Church in Tambura to know more about the Lutheran church.
- They need more classrooms for the primary school at Nazareda Lutheran Primary School. There is only one double classroom, but the school is from nursery (1-3) to primary 7.
- Means of transport for pastors and evangelists.

- They plan to build a guest house as an income-generating project for the church
- Solar kiosk for charging phones as income-generating project for the church.
- Women's group wants sewing machines for making clothes and church vestments to sell to the churches.
- Uniforms for youth and women choirs.
- Borehole for church and the school.
- They need a grinding mill.

On March 12, 2017, we had a joint prayers at Nazareda Lutheran Church under the trees because the church building was too small for the crowd that came that day. In attendance were government representatives, representatives of other Christian denominations including the Muslim community. I preached on John 3:1-17 with the theme: "God's Love." In the service, Rev. Charles Undo was installed to be pastor-in-charge of Nazareda Lutheran Church, assistant dean of Western Equatoria Deanery/acting dean for Wau. Rev. Evaristo Gima Kazima was installed to be pastor-in-charge of Giara and in charge of evangelist training in Tambura church and Rev. Mosoro George was installed to be pastor-in-charge of S/Yubu church and coordinator for Lutheran Schools in Tambura State. One child was baptized. After the Divine Service, we had meals together with all the invited guests. Lastly Rev. Nicholas interviewed seven young men who would like to study theology at CLIHM.

On Monday March 13, 2017 we visited Giara Church, which is located outside of Tambura town. At Giara, we had a morning devotion with the people and there were about 400 who attended and I preached on John 3:16. Some of the needs raised were:

- They need their pastor to be next to the church so that they can have access to his office regularly. That means a house should be provided for the pastor within the church plot.
- Training of evangelists who can be helping the pastor.
- Workshops and seminars on Lutheran doctrine for the members of Giara church.
- Uniforms for the primary school in Giara and more classrooms.
- Support (salaries) for teachers of the primary school.
- Registration of the Lutheran Primary School in Giara with the government.
- Purchase of land lease for the church plot in Giara.
- Grinding mill for the church as income-generating project for the church.
- Sports materials to support the football team at Giara.
- More teachers for the primary school.
- Borehole to provide clean water for the people.
- Means of transport for pastor and the evangelists.

At Giara church, we were served with lunch and we departed to S/Yubu church at midday. At around midday, we left for S/Yubu or Rii-Yubu, two hours drive from Tambura on rough roads. We arrived at around 2 p.m. and we went straight to the government office to introduce Pastor Mosoro George as the pastor responsible for S/Yubu. We were warmly welcomed and after a short meeting with the authorities, we went to the place where our Christians had gathered to wait for us. Some of the needs they presented were:

- They need a church building and a house for the pastor.
- Borehole for clean water, since water sources are far from them.
- Primary school for the kids. Government schools are far away, and they also need a secondary school because there is none in S/Yubu.
- They need a health centre.
- Means of transport for pastors.
- Restroom to be completed.

We were served with meals and immediately we were on the road returning to Tambura.

On March 14, 2017, we started our journey from Tambura back to Yambio, and we arrived safely at around 7 p.m. On March 19, I was at the headquarters in Yambio and I preached in the second service on John 4:5-26 with the theme “God’s Generous Gift to the Thirsty.” In this divine service, I installed Rev. Mariano Joseph Bamuke as pastor-in-charge of Yambio parish. On March 26, I preached in the English service in Yambio on John 9:1-42 after which I visited Saura parish and installed Rev. Alison Zebedayo Zebe as pastor-in-charge. I conducted three baptisms (two infants and one adult) and confirmed one person. Some of the concerns raised at Saura church were:

- House for the pastor next to Saura church on church plot.
- Means of transport for pastor and evangelist.
- Planning to open a Lutheran basic school since the kids in that area have to walk long distances to attend government school.
- They need pews and alter vestments for the different seasons.
- Training to members, Sunday school teachers, youth, women and men about the Lutheran church.
- Borehole for the church and the community at large; water sources are very far from Saura.
- They need income-generating projects for Saura church.

During the visits, I learned one thing: the people love the Lutheran Church and they need the WORD more than anything! Praise be to God that in the midst of adversities, the WORD is spreading and many are being brought to faith. God continues to do miracles even in our midst today through the preaching and the Sacraments, and the power of His WORD continues to amaze us! Our next visits will be to Juba, Magwi, Maban, Gambela, Khartoum and Wau.

## April 11

Back in January, Robert Rahn had written:

A note to all who have been waiting for the Anuak edition of the *Small Catechism*...We expect delivery of 800 copies here in the next week. They have come from printing in China and are in New York at this moment, waiting for shipment here.

I have gone through my files and noted with whom we have had conversations relative to this project. Anyone wanting copies of this Anuak edition should be in touch with us and giving us a proper shipping address and the quantity desired. When we ship your copies, there will be no charge but they will come with an envelope for a free will offering. Our hope is that we will at least recover the shipping cost from here to your address.

A portion of the shipment is also going to Lutheran Heritage-Africa in Nairobi, Kenya from where copies can be carried to South Sudan. There are also Dinka catechisms, a limited number in Macomb but greater supply in Nairobi. The Nuer catechism is in revision and will be reprinted later this year. Please be in touch with any questions or concerns with which we can help you.

R. Rahn

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From: Craig Cooper  
Subject: Re: Anuak Catechisms

Pastor Rahn,  
Rev. John Bakou distributed 30 Anuak *Small Catechisms* to the Anuak in Austin, Minnesota on Saturday, April 2. They were so grateful. I attached a couple of pictures.

DCO Craig Cooper

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From: Craig Cooper  
Subject: Re: Anuak Catechisms

Pastor Rahn,  
The Anuak here in Sauk Rapids received the 120 *Small Catechisms* with great joy!! They will be distributed here in Minnesota. They contributed \$100 today to cover the shipping from Michigan to Minnesota. This was contribution was made on your website.

Blessings on your most important ministry!!  
Craig Cooper, DCO  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Sauk Rapids, MN

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During this same time, Rev. Heise and Rev. James May made a trip to Bor Town, South Sudan to distribute copies of the Dinka *Small Catechism* to a large group of Dinka Lutherans and to conduct a seminar on the catechism. Rev. Heise also spoke to the group about becoming a part of the ELCSS.

## April 11

Rev. Jacob Gillard, LCMS pastor, serves with the World Prayer League of Minnesota and writes about his survey trip to South Sudan.

From: Jake Gillard  
Subject: Gillard - Mission - Prayer Blast: Home Safe

*We have heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all of God's people. For this reason we never stop thanking God for you and always remember you in our prayers (Ephesians 1:15-16, GOD'S WORD).*

In our last week in South Sudan, we felt like we were holding on by the skin of our teeth. Jake was recovering from malaria. Amelia had swollen lymph nodes and a rash. Michelle had a stomach bug. The political and economic climate continued to languish. A strong storm flooded the porch of our house and damaged the roof of our neighbor's house. The refrigerator was still broken. It was harder to sleep at night and cope in the day. In the midst of strife, we were eager for the Easter Joy just around the corner. Thanks to your many prayers everyone has recovered and we are now safe at home in Minnesota. Jake has resumed his work in

the home office of the World Mission Prayer League. The girls are continuing with homeschool and have resumed equestrian team and music lessons. Michelle continues to manage the home front and is seeing the Holy Spirit bless her Indian friends.

We have mixed emotions as we walk away from South Sudan and the many new friends who were gracious to receive us. We were asked dozens of times to return, so it seems that we had an impact on some level. It is always difficult to leave once you become aware of just how great the need is. Many claim to be Christian but few understand the precious Good News that we are saved by Grace through Faith. This is at a time when many missionaries are fleeing South Sudan due to ongoing civil war.

The greatest opportunities are in the area of education, theological training, and medical missions – especially eye care. It was our distinct privilege to blaze the trail. The way is open for others to follow. Please pray for Kingdom workers who will do so!

We prayed for safety, health, opportunities, and a positive experience. God answered all these prayers and so many more. Every single prayer – from small to large – was answered in the past three months. It was amazing to see God work. We even sold our car to the perfect family at just the right time.

THANK YOU for partnering with us in this important work for the Kingdom of God in South Sudan. If we have learned one thing it is that His Kingdom is even more pronounced in the midst of instability and chaos.

We have a saying in East Africa: If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together. God has been glorified in our journey together so we praise God and thank you!

Your Missionaries: Jake, Michelle, Amelia (11), and Evangeline (9)

## **April 15**

From: Richard Beinert  
To: Jeff Rahn; Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: Anuak Shipment to Winnipeg

Easter Greetings Brother Robert!

Just a quick note to let you know that the shipment of Anuak catechisms has finally arrived safe and sound in Winnipeg. We will now begin planning for a special service of thanksgiving to God for this gift within our local Anuak community.

In the meantime, however, I have misplaced the shipping invoice for the catechisms. Could you please re-send them so that I can begin to process to return payment to LHF? Please & thank you in advance!

Blessings,  
Rev. Dr. Richard A. Beinert, pastor  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Winnipeg MB

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Dear Jeff,

Thank you so much for your generosity. We do plan to have a dedication service for the catechisms next Sunday within both our English as well as an Anuak church service. I will definitely make sure that there are some pictures taken to share. I have also left a copy of the catechism with our Lutheran Church—Canada Nation Church office and will be distributing one copy to each of our two Canadian seminaries for them to have available within their libraries and Mission Studies Centers.

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Richard A. Beinert  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Winnipeg MB CANADA

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## April 21

From: Herbert Gore Lutherans in Africa -Kenya  
To: Jeff Rahn

Hi, Dachi went for a follow-up on his operation as he was not feeling completely fit. The doctor found out that there was a problem with the place that he had been operated on in Sudan and that another operation is needed as per attached. The operation will cost \$3,400.

Regards,  
Herbert

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From: Japheth Dachi  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: A FOLLOW-UP ON THE BUDGET THAT I SENT TO YOU

Dear Rev. Rahn,

I am writing to you to make you know that I was discharged from Coptic Hospital yesterday at 4 p.m. East African time. I am reminding you that I made a candid budget and sent to you eleven days ago, but to date no reply has come from you. Indeed when I sent it, it refused to go and for that reason I forwarded it you. As per now I am not able to sit and write much and for that reason I am requesting you to send the same to Mr. Hebert so that I don't starve in Nairobi and not go to Coptic Hospital for check-ups.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Japheth Rabach Dachi  
Principal, CLIHM, Yambio



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Dachi,

We are glad to hear that you are recovering and will continue to pray for your healing and strengthening. I am sending \$3,700 to the Kenya account to cover the medical procedure that you underwent. I will also include \$300 for your budget to cover the other expenses for an even \$4,000.

Please understand that it is unlikely that LHF will be able to provide this kind of financial support in the future. I would encourage you to take necessary measures to save for future emergencies that may arise so that you can also contribute toward the expenses.

In Christ,  
Jeff Rahn  
Director of Operations

### **April 29**

From: Matthew Heise  
To: Peter Anibati; Robert Rahn; Nicholas Kumbo  
Cc: Jeff Rahn  
Subject: RE: Final budget

Good evening, Peter and Nicholas. First, many thanks to you both for navigating the ELCSS/S through some difficult waters at present. We are happy to provide for the seminars this year to assist the church. The Board has not approved the stipends as of yet, and you would have to ask Rev. Rahn about the bakery funds.

As I mentioned in a previous letter, LHF's intention is to discontinue stipends by the end of the year. Apparently this has been planned from even before I came into the office of executive director two years ago. I have learned that this information has been stressed for several years, but now our Board is quite insistent upon carrying it out. LHF does not provide stipends for pastors in any other church, so it was bound to end. So please do not think this decision was taken in response to the bishop's actions.

Of course, we will continue to support the work of translating and publishing, as well as holding seminars and conducting classes for CLIHM. It is even possible that we could talk about providing temporary stipends for recent graduates, discontinuing them after one or two years when they find jobs or support. And perhaps, if the Lord wills, the United Nations rental agreement could provide assistance as Bishop Andrew once hoped it would. We have learned that the Anglicans do not provide stipends for pastors in South Sudan, and so Dr. Lutz's book on stewardship becomes all the more important. We can discuss ways in which pastors can be faithful to their congregations and yet receive income from other work or support sources among congregation members.

Again, our thanks for your faithfulness. You remain in my constant prayers, praying that the Lord will lead Bishop Noah to repent and will guide you in all of your doings.

In Christ,  
Matthew

## May 7

From: Robert Roberts  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Children of Hope

After church today, we were able to spend some time talking to Rev. Simon about Children of Hope and how he has an account that one could donate to. We also met Rev. Hank Young from Kitchener, who is frantically working on the orphans' place here, trying to come up with additional funds to get enough housing for the 234 orphans who are staged in South Sudan at the border, just waiting for there to be shelter for them. This all works under Children of Promise International.

Rev. Simon says that he does not know the Lutheran church in Gambela that you (Jeff) sent me information on. He noticed that the name of the president looked Anuak and said that he will ask some of the pastors here who know the Anuak community better if they know the place.

We will have a week with 30 women (and pastors who want to “see” what is going on). Then Bob will work on the hymn translation part for the other two weeks, including figuring out about liturgy and what they might want in a hymnbook. Somewhere in that time we are looking at spending some hours with the orphans. Rev. Simon is still mulling over how to do this but is thinking that going for a couple hours at a time on at least three different days might be good. The kids were in church today. Total attendance was 350, so it was crowded. With all of the speeches and greetings it was a standard “normal” service for here. Took almost as long to shake everyone’s hand when it was over also.

Hint for the day: squeegees are excellent for picking up millipedes, the kind here that are 3+ inches long. Just slide the squeegee to the millipede, get slightly under him and he will curl up right onto the squeegee which can be rapidly moved to the toilet, dumped, flushed and the problem is solved. My score is three, so far!  
Eileen

## May 8

On this date Rev. Robert & Eileen Roberts, Bay City, MI, started classes for members of the Lutheran Church in Gambela, Ethiopia. Most of these people come from the refugee camp inhabited by 250,000 Sudanese, who had to flee their homeland. Included in these numbers are many members of the ELCSS/S, including a number of pastors.

## May 16

From: Jeff Rahn  
To: Anibati, Peter; Louis, Nicholas Kumbo; Kungbowia, Pascal  
Subject: Bakery Project Funds Transfer

Peter, Nicholas, and Pascal,  
This afternoon we transferred \$7,500 to the account representing the remaining restricted grant funds we previously received for the bus project. Please confirm receipt of this amount upon arrival. The granting organization has approved the use of this amount for the bakery project since it is also an income generating project. No further funds will be available for the bakery project, and any further improvements/expansion will need to come from the revenue generated by the project.

We will need pictures and regular progress/financial reports so we can report back to the entity that provided the grant. Our first report is due in the coming weeks.

This amount, along with the expenses, can be included in a separate ELCSS/S Excel file. Sales revenue should also be recorded in this report. We pray that this amount will be used to generate income for the ELCSS/S.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

In Christ,  
Jeff Rahn

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From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Bakery

Dear Dr. Rahn,

Greetings from Yambio. It's a public holiday here and all offices are closed. The 16 of May is celebrated every year by the government as a day on which the liberation struggle against the Khartoum regime began.

The email from Jeff about the bakery funds was received but we are waiting until tomorrow when the offices, banks will be open to confirm. However, I talked to Pascal today to start clearing the site for the bakery. This work will kick off tomorrow.

On another note, there are cries all over for stipends, especially from our brothers in Malakal and Gambela who live in camps since their homes were destroyed by the war. Many depend on this support to provide daily bread for the families. It's very unfortunate that many have to suffer because of Rule's actions.

We are aware that the stipends were bound to end, but I would like to request that since it was not intended for this year, please let the LHF consider the condition of our pastors. We have seen the messages from Rev. Matt about the effort being made to keep stipends coming until the end of the year but we don't know when to anticipate the stipends. For Bishop Rule, he has the Juba funds at his disposal while many of our pastors and their families go hungry...Please talk to the LHF Board on our behalf.

Before the Roberts arrive in Yambio, it would be good to have the seminar funds so that we can finalize the arrangements and purchase the necessary items needed for the seminars. Also note that the budget is strictly for the seminars, but there will be extra cost for the instructors and we intend to cover that from the operations of the church which normally comes with the stipends. The assumption was that the issues in the ELCSS/S would be resolved before the seminars and the LHF Board would lift the ban on the funds so that the approved budget for this year can start coming. As things stand, I don't know what will happen. Can you raise this with LHF Board? The instructors must be taken care of when they are in South Sudan. The seminar funds will cover part of the budget, but what happens on days when there will be no seminar? Also Rev. Dachi is coming and needs a full board at the guest house.

Blessings+  
Peter

## May 18

Below is an exchange with Rev. Simon Gatluak, relative to concerns about the special convention being held on June 15. Simon lives in the Gambela refugee camp, having been driven from his home and church in the Upper Nile Region of South Sudan. He indicates that it would be too dangerous for them to attend the convention in Yambio for whatever the reasons are. It obviously has something to do with the ongoing tribal conflicts that I do not understand and for which I have no answers. It's a matter that has to be worked out between the factions and the government's intervention. This is very frustrating for us and we can only imagine how frustrating it is for the Lutherans of South Sudan. We have tried to accommodate the pastors by bringing training to the Gambela region in order to keep them at the level of their classmates who attended classes in the Concordia Lutheran Institute of the Holy Ministry of Yambio, South Sudan. We present his message as Simon wrote it.

From: Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: About the meeting

Dear Simon,  
Thank you for sharing your concerns to the brothers. I'll have to admit that it is impossible for me to sort this all out as I'm not on the ground there and don't know situations and backgrounds. All I try to do is keep a seminary functioning. I will have to leave all this in the hands of the local clergy and pray they can do what is best for the church.

Prayers continue to be raised for the ELCSS/S.  
R. Rahn

From: Simon Gatluak  
Subject: About the meeting

Dear friends in the Lord,  
Greetings in the Name of our Savior Jesus Christ who died and rose again for our salvation. We received the letter from the Secretary saying that there will be a meeting in Yambio and Upper Nile people will be picked up in Malakal. It looks to me that some people are not aware about the problems of this country, and it seems to me that others among us do not care about the church and lives of other believers. We left Malakal because war, and others claim that you should go to Malakal and be picked up there.

Brothers, you did that convention and chose the Secretary, and no one even wrote to us or explained to us. We have questions. As the church, does the secretary belong to you or all of us? We need to know because we are a part of the ELCSS/S.

You all know many brothers from you came here like Peter, Nicholas and others through Gambela. For us we love this church and the unity of believers. We want you to see us as brothers and sisters, having one Lutheran Church in our beloved country.

This meeting, we need to be there. If you agree that we are part of you, the meeting will not be in Yambio. It will be in Juba, and we will not be picked up in Malakal – some in Kodok and the others in Pagak in South Sudan. If that cannot work, better to postpone it.

Why do we say we are part of the church and one of deaneries of ELCSS/S, having 21 parishes and 25 pastors

ordained by the ELCSS/S? We want you to share all the hardship we have gone through, but not because we love to be refugees. For the unity of our church, let all come to the meeting.

In Christ,  
Rev. Simon Gatluak Geng  
Dean Greater Upper Nile Deanery, South Sudan

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From: Robert Roberts  
Subject: Re: Gambela

Current statistics for Upper Nile Deanery (included refugee camps, Nuer and Shalluk, mostly Nuer):

- 12,000 communicants
- 25 ordained pastors, spottily trained
- 45 congregations
- 90 evangelists, mostly untrained, lead worship and preach in the absence of the pastor
- 900 preaching points — mostly very tiny, one or two families, visited by pastor and/or evangelist

They once had a Bible school, but the land became valuable and was sold by the national church/bishop. The three vicars are now in charge of congregations in South Sudan, their families still in refugee camps. They preach and lead worship, but they are not allowed to celebrate sacraments, bless marriages, or confirm. Generally, only pastors teach confirmation classes — five months a year, with one year for adults and five for children ages 10-15. The camps are changing the culture, providing education for girls.

Vicar Simon's daughter is heading for a one-year nursing program at a local university, postponing marriage (she's 20) and intending to serve as a public health worker.

Mostly, I'm writing this to make sure we still have email connection.

## May 20

Bishop Peter Anibati reported extensively on his trip to various locations, including a stop at the refugee camp in Gambela, Ethiopia. This is a portion of his report and highlights the needs of the church.

### The Mission Trip to the Greater Upper Nile Deanery of the ELCSS/S

On April 20, 2017 I left Yambio and traveled to Juba, the capital of South Sudan. That evening, the ELCSS/S legal advisor, Advocate James El-Taib, organized a coming together dinner which many of the government dignitaries attended. The fellowship was just marvelous.

On May 21, 2017 I traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to meet with Rev. Matthew Heise, the executive director of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation, and Rev. Dr. Prof. Richard Nuffer, one of the Board members of the LHF. I was also privileged to be invited to attend a theological symposium, which was conducted at the Ethiopia Evangelical Lutheran Church. It was great to meet Bishop Roland Gustafsson from Sweden, the missionaries from the Swedish LEAF, SLMS-USA, leadership of the Lutheran church of Ethiopia and our friends the LHF.

The Assistant Bishop Simon Gatluak Geng and I had a two-day meeting from April 25-26 with the LHF representatives and we presented to them the following concerns and needs of the ELCSS/S:

- CLIHM start up is important for the ELCSS/S because there is greater need for pastors. Most congregations are served by lay leaders called the Evangelists.
- Church office being constructed to free the Guest House (funds needed to complete the building, put fence around and complete the Yambio church).
- The Medical Clinic initiated by the ELCSS/S is progressing well, but it needs support (building, equipment and medicine supplies).
- Bakery project is bringing some income but the high inflation in South Sudan is affecting the business. More income-generating projects need to be initiated (e.g Internet center to be established).
- Request for stipends to support pastors of the ELCSS/S, especially during this time of famine in South Sudan.
- The need to revive the Baguga project intended to be the Lutheran Mission Centre in South Sudan.
- Renovation of the Guest House in Yambio. The ceiling board has started falling down.
- Plans to open a secondary school in honor of late Bishop Andrew Mbugo Elisa (Bishop Andrew Mbugo Academy for Science & Technology).
- Means of transport for pastors and evangelists for mission work (motorbikes, bicycles and car for Bishop).
- Printing of Acholi *Hymnal*, Nuer hymnal and Nuer revised catechism. Continuation of translation work by the ELCSS/S.
- Life-Saving Relief needed to help the humanitarian situation in South Sudan. (Malakal, Magwi, Nuba MTS, Yambio, Wau and the IDPS in Juba.) Proposal submitted.
- Support for building and roofing of ELCSS/S churches.
- Financial support to the ELCSS/S to work among the refugees in Gambela, Uganda and Kenya.
- The need to upgrade pastors' education, especially those who have the academic capability so that they can become Lutheran teachers at CLIHM.
- More seminars needed for pastors and lay leaders of the ELCSS/S including women, youth and Sunday school teachers.
- The issue of clean water is a problem in South Sudan. The ELCSS/S is seeking support to dig some wells where they are operating both a church and school.
- The new leadership of the ELCSS/S intends to visit the leadership of the LCMS to update them with the current situation of the ELCSS/S and to follow up on the request for fellowship. The ELCSS/S also intends to make connections with all the confessional Lutheran bodies around the globe and to partner with them in spreading the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

## June 2

From: Simon Gatluak

Subject: appreciations about the coming Robert

Dear Rev. Dr. Robert,

We thank you so much for the coming of Robert to us and your commitment of making them to come and give a right teaching at the right time. As the Church, we thank you so much.



We also thank you for the communion cups you brought for Gambela congregation and bread for the communion. May the Lord bless you as we work together in His Kingdom in Christ forever.

Rev. Simon Gatluak

### June 5

Rev. Robert & Eileen Roberts wrote from Yambio, South Sudan, where they were commissioned to lead seminars for pastors, church leaders and deaconesses. Eileen wrote:

So, we didn't go to Ezo after all. Interesting story behind that. We had to go visit with the director of the National Security Agency. One more good story for when we get back. Wau does seem very unlikely, but lots of people go back and forth to Ezo all the time. So instead we will have a couple of seminars in Yambio while we wait for things to settle. The first should be lay people and evangelists with catechetical review as the main topic. The second week is set for pastors and vicars with the topic being hymn translation. We will probably try to get a lot of new hymns from LSB into their heads, too.

Games are definitely being played over here. We feel totally safe with Peter and Nicholas. Rob Lutz came yesterday, earlier than he had planned. Very good to see him again. His plane actually crash landed. The pilot landed in about the middle of the runway and therefore couldn't stop in time, crossing a road and ending up in a garden. No injuries — to God be the glory for that.

We weren't feeling all that tired when we arrived in Yambio, although with only three hours sleep the night before, I know that in reality we were. Since we couldn't go to Ezo, we have pretty much caught up on rest. We did get to attend a funeral on Thursday at the church, the burial near the school, and then on Friday, the final service after the tomb was finished. There is more to the elderly lady's death than I want to write here. Very sad...

We do appreciate the prayers.

Eileen

### June 9

From: Nicholas Louis

To: Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise, Jeff Rahn, Peter Anibati

Subject: Re: Intake for CLIHM 2017

Dear Dr. Rahn and the rest,

Greetings to you in the blessed name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I would like to inform you that we have done all the necessary arrangements in order to get some young men who are interested to join the seminary this year. 31 applied but 23 of them have been admitted. We are waiting to hear from you before we send to them admission letters. We propose to open on January 7, 2018.

The number may eventual increased to 30 students because there are other deaneries that have not submitted their application yet.

Thanks,

Rev. Nicholas Kumbo — CLIHM Dean of Students

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Nicholas Louis; Matthew Heise, Jeff Rahn, Peter Anibati, Bernie Lutz, Rev. David Bolte, Rev. Daniel Grams, Rev. Karl Bollhagen, Rev. Richard Nuffer; Rev. Robert & Eileen Roberts  
Subject: RE: Intake for CLIHM 2017

Dear Nicholas,  
Thank you for your message. It is timely in that there is an LHF Board meeting on Monday and I suggest that Matt announce the start up of the seminary for January 7, 2018 and that the report be made of the tremendous interest and opportunity we have to strengthen the church and seminary, now that it is under new leadership and is showing great signs of growth in the midst of war and famine, and that it is worthy of full support and commitment from all of us. This will also have a great impact on translation of books and the distribution of books and the utilization of the books published.

Upon their understanding and upon informing them of the plan, and there being no objection, I will inform you of their support and begin the development of the program and the recruitment of faculty for the new school year. May the Lord bless the plans and the initiation of the program. I will consider being there for the opening the Epiphany Opening Service.

Rev. Robert Rahn  
CLIHM Program Director

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From: Matthew Heise  
To: Robert Rahn  
Cc: Jeff Rahn  
Subject: RE: Intake for CLIHM 2017

This sounds like it will give us time, Bob. I agree. I have included pictures in my PowerPoint of Peter's work in the regions, plus the difficulties of working there now (famine, tribal conflict).

Despite all of this, the Lord is working there mightily. The promise of South Sudan is great. The numbers of interested students is a testament to that, as well as Peter's reports from the field. It is not a time to give up on them, so I will push for continuing the stipends until the end of the year (don't know if that will fly, but I'll try!).

Plus, I will inform them that Collver has regular correspondence with Peter now (through Storckson), about three or four letters concerning ILC membership. And lastly, we are quite hopeful that the UN property rental will be turned over to the REAL ELCSS/S before the end of the year.

Wilson is yesterday's news, as Peter's dinner with government officials and TV interviews show. Wilson has no access to these folks.

**June 18**

From: Robert Roberts

We finished the second seminar this week. It ran for 4 days, as Monday was a travel day. Bob worked through his materials with the pastors (and vicars) on hymn translation. I did a crash course on music theory, playing a keyboard (one finger to find a tune) and playing a recorder. We also tried to learn some psalm tones and the Nunc Dimittis so they can sing it with the rest of the liturgy that they use in Yambio from LW. Nobody really managed to learn how to read notes, but they did get over their fear of touching a keyboard and most managed to find real notes on the recorder.

No convention. No word of a possible date. Dachi arrived safe and sound on Tuesday, having begged a ride from Ibba from a fellow passenger on the MAF flight. There was no petrol available in town to send the seminary vehicle so they sent two motorbikes instead, but there was a nice lady with a car and driver who was heading to Yambio also and willing to give him a ride. They flagged down the motorbikes and had them turn around.

Should I tell you the funny story of the rats? Last week around 9:30 p.m. I was going to lock the front door of the guest house. There was no power so I just had my flashlight. As I left the hallway and entered the lounge, there was a thud followed by a lot of scratching, scurrying noises. Once I was sure they were going away from me and not toward me, I tried to see what was making all the noise. About 4 rats were desperately trying to “hide.” They could not get traction on the very slippery flooring and were literally rolling over each other trying to run. Once they got to the far wall, they tried to play “possum” under the chairs, hiding against the wall. Then there is the one who regularly visited our room during the night. He hasn’t been back since I smacked him off the plastic bag I had sitting on top of my suitcase. That was in the middle of the night. It is amazing how powerful one feels when sitting inside a mosquito net. Then there are the large bats in the ceiling over our room..... A small one tried to land in Bob’s hair while teaching in the church. One of the pastors jumped up, whacked it where it had fallen on the chair, and kicked it out of the building before grinding it into the dust. Gotta love Africa!

If we can get permission from the authorities on Monday, we hope to go to Ezo on Thursday and return Tuesday, all subject to change on a moment’s notice. Nothing seems that bad here to justify the lack of permission. People came to the workshop from that area. Their only complaint is the poor quality of the roads, making for slow travel.

Eileen

**June 26**

From: Robert Roberts

Subject: Youth seminar/workshop

No trip to Ezo. Pastor Thomas traveled back to Tambura on Tuesday (roads weren’t really passable on Monday, due to heavy rains all morning). His group was held up near the road going off to Ezo. He did not have anything taken (maybe was wearing his collar?), but the others did. No one was hurt and all allowed to continue. Rumors abounded that the soldiers in Yambio were going to shoot up the market because they haven’t been paid and they need supplies also. Nothing happened, but the basic thought was that with too many armed people moving, we should not be traveling, so a youth/young adult two-day workshop was organized

for Friday and Saturday. We had a total of 19 different participants. We will do another workshop for women on Monday and Tuesday. These workshops are catechetical review and a Bible study on Law and Gospel. I have also been working with the English choir, teaching them some new songs. That will continue this week also until we leave. We have also heard that a very big tree was put across the road going to Ezo (conclusion being that it is good we were not there, trying to return). Wau is now in the hands of the “armed youth,” not just bows and arrows but high-powered guns. So, interesting times and lots of prayer for this country. People were worried about Rev. Philmissio, who was returning to Ezo. They have finally heard that he got there safely.

As to the rats, they still abound. Dachi says that there is a good poison available that we should ask Nicholas to buy. I have tuna fish packets which would supply the “smelly” fish that Dachi says is good at attracting them. Most of the time they go in and out of the bishop’s office, when they are not touring the rest of the building or checking to see if I am friendly (NOT). I have been stuffing some very stiff cardboard in the space around our door they can move through. So far it seems to have greatly reduced nocturnal visits. One learns to pause when leaving the room, however, to give them time to scatter.

Sorry to hear about Gordie Howe. He was quite the legend. Are we still on for meeting Rev. May later in the day on July 6?

Torrential downpours really cut church attendance today. The noise on the roof was so great that even through Celestine moved to the congregation and shouted, we really couldn’t hear his sermon even though he was 5 feet away.

Not sure at this point if we will be able to do email once more on Wed. We hope to try but one never knows if things will be working. Thanks for keeping all here in prayer.  
Eileen

## A MEDITATION IN JULY

*(NOTE: As stated, these Meditations were originally written for the monthly newsletter of my home congregation – St. John Lutheran Church, Fraser, Michigan. This Meditation that was actually written way back in 2002. I use it to show the mission efforts in refugee camps, at the time in the north part of Sudan. And at that time, our LHF office was in the capitol city of Khartoum, Sudan.)*

June 2002

On June 30, I will have the opportunity to conduct the Bible class and report on the mission work you are doing around the world through the Lutheran Heritage Foundation. Our focus will be to report on my last trip to Sudan and the unbelievable blessings of God upon the Evangelical Lutheran Church In Sudan. My report will be aided by slides and video.

Awe and humility were the orders of the day as we had the privilege to see God’s hand in daily events. I could never have envisioned the opportunity that would be mine over a four-day period. During that time, I conducted five services — the shortest of which was three hours and the longest seven hours. I wonder if any church official has ever, in a short four-day period, presided and preached for three church dedications, performed 60 baptisms, confirmed adults and celebrated the first anniversary of a seminary’s founding.

Most of the services were in straw thatched huts or mud block structures. These were in the camps of the displaced. There is no water and no electricity. In one of the villages we visited, there is no education of any kind. We hope to provide some. All three churches dedicated were too small and plans were being made for expansion.

When the African style singing started, we had people coming from all corners of the camp. Young children were peering in the windows and adults stood on the periphery. I had the privilege to preach to all and I'll confess that the messages were not what I intended. You folks were praying and the Spirit of God was working. Perhaps you will hear parts of those messages in the video that emphasized the wonderful grace of God and the salvation He has prepared for all.

One cannot visit these places without being humbled by the simple faith and hope these people possess. Here it is a case of whether there will be food and water tomorrow.

We met with high government officials and we are proposing to dig a well as a joint venture, if funds are available. Wouldn't you consider this if you knew people were paying \$1.25 per day for water and had an income of \$70 per month? Do you know who suffers when the crunch time comes? The children suffer. I'd like to provide water and the Water of Life for the thirsting soul.

I can't drink a glass of water without thinking about the people in these camps. We can provide the books, but in many cases they can't read. We are going to provide pictures with audio tapes in their language. They can look at the pictures and hear the Word.

Many plans, many opportunities, many challenges. God helping us, we can go.

Dr. Robert L. Rahn  
LHF Executive Director

## July 4

From: Nicholas Kumbo  
To: Bernie Lutz  
Subject: Re: The Meeting!

Dear Dr. Lutz,  
Greetings to you in The name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Time is drawing very close for the seminar in August and we would like to speed up the final arrangements for it.

My first question is would you like to go to Khartoum Deanery? If the answer is yes, then we need to begin the process now, and that is why I have copied the Bishop Noah Rule so that he can help to communicate to the Sudan Council of Churches to send an Invitation letter that will help while applying for the entry visa to Sudan.

Another thing is that you had wanted to go to Wau, but for me, I think we better suspend it for now because of security reasons. You can think about doing the seminars in Yambio, Gambela, Sudan and Juba (Magwi county) or Tambura.

I will be willing to teach Pastoral Care and Counseling, and Rev. Peter can teach another subject.

Thanks.  
Rev. Nicholas Kumbo

## July 5

From: Bernhard Lutz  
To: Nicholas Louis; Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: The Meeting!

Louis: Greetings in Jesus!

Brother, please have Wilson send a Letter of Invitation immediately. I assume that you, Peter, Dachi, and Bisi agree that a session be held in Khartoum. If you do not feel that way, let us ignore Khartoum and work out the best schedule possible for ELCSS/S.

I am at your disposal. I will do what you feel is needed. Let me know. Soon. I will have two courses ready to teach for each session, Hermeneutics and Advanced Christian Stewardship. Both courses will be bound and in book form for teaching CLIHM students. Let me know what CLIHM needs me to bring with me next month.

My ticket is now written for leaving the USA August 12 and arriving at Addis Ababa on August 13. You can make the rest of the plans.

I have to be in Addis Ababa on September on Saturday the 10th to meet Elly, my wife, who will be teaching in Bishoftu for Kebede. I will be teaching Advanced Christian Stewardship and Hermeneutics there as well as in South Sudan. Let me know if there are any questions. Again, you make the plans, I will try to do my best to serve the ELCSS/S .

To God be the glory!  
Allah mahabab. God is love.  
Dr. Lutz

## July 10

Dear Dr. Bernie,  
Greetings from Yambio. We (Dachi, Nicholas, Bisi, Rob, Bernard and Peter) had our faculty meeting for CLIHM on Friday, and one the issues discussed was the seminars that you are coming to hold. We agreed that the venue will be Gambela and Yambio. It's almost impossible to go to Khartoum with church mission, and in Wau there is fighting going on there. Probably you have also heard about the recent fighting in Juba. Because of these problems you will conduct the seminars in two places. We proposed the below schedule:

Gambela seminar August 15 - 26

Yambio seminar August 29 - Sept 9

We will have representatives come from the different deaneries of the ELCSS/S to Yambio for the seminar. In that regard, i will be sending a budget tomorrow (Nicholas and I have to finalize). For the Gambela seminar, Dr. Rahn can share with you how much the Roberts spent for their seminar, and that would probably give an idea of how is needed? If there is funding, two of us would like to join you for teaching in Gambela. If you have questions please ask.

Blessings as you prepare to come+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia



**July 12**

From: Peter Anibati

Subject: CLIHM

Dear Dr. Rahn,

Greetings from Yambio! I am writing to inform you that we are safe in Yambio despite the fierce fighting which broke out in Juba. Many have been killed during the fighting but we have not heard yet of any who is a member of the ELCSS/S. We pray for those who have lost their loved ones in this senseless war.

We thank God that a ceasefire was declared yesterday, and since then Juba has been relatively calm. There has been no report of fighting today. We pray that this can continue so that people can go back to their normal businesses.

The message from Jeff about the wire was received but we have not been able to confirm because the banks here have been closed due to the fighting in Juba. Perhaps they will be open tomorrow.

I also wish to inform you that we set in our faculty meeting for CLIHM and it was agreed that the seminary resumes next year as planned. So, this means you can go ahead to recruit teachers for 2017 academic year. The application forms will be sent by the weekend to the deans for eligible candidates. Rob will take some forms to the Anglicans in Juba and we will send some to Pastor Bol to send us students for next year. Rev. Dachi will send you the details including the date on which the seminary is expected to open.

I know we have not responded to your previous email that you addressed to the leaders of the ELCSS/S. Work is being done and will get back to you in a separate email but about the bakery. I am glad to inform you that by next week it will be functional. Soon you will have the pictures of the facility, staff and the different types of bread from the bakery.

Keep us in your prayers as you have always done. Next week Tuesday, the leaders in Yambio will sit to discuss and decide how the church will move forward after the failed convention. This will be done in consultation with other deaneries. Hard decisions will be taken because it's doubted if there will ever be a convention. It seems the game is obvious "delaying tactics" so that people can forget everything.

Kyrie eleison+

Peter

**July 24**

From: John Riay

To: Robert Rahn

Subject: RE: Appreciation

Rev. Dr. Rahn,

Greetings in the Lord. It is a good question. I know that you might not understand the situation in South Sudan unless you live in South Sudan.

The main cause of the war was for the regime to eliminate the entire Nuer ethnic group in South Sudan. If you are a Nuer, you can't cross what the government call the red line, that is, unless you remain with the government since the beginning of the war. Those who fled to neighboring countries can't travel across South Sudan. The war will not stop as long as Kiir is in power. Insecurity will continue under his government until

his last day in power, and the main target is Nuer, even though murdering spread to other ethnic groups in South Sudan.

So it is still unsafe for us to travel to a government-controlled state. That is the hurdle. Let that emergency convention take place to remove that bishop because as time goes, the situation can change at any time. If you ask any pastor in Gambela, he can tell you the same thing. After the fighting in Juba on July 8, the situation remains tense not only in Juba, but throughout South Sudan.

Yes, I am still in Kenya. When you mentioned the ordination of the graduates in both Yambio and Gambela, I sent you an email asking to let me attend the ordination in Gambela. But I received no response yet. I would like to conduct that ordination with Rev. Bernie if you help me to reach Gambela.

In Christ,  
Rev. John Jock Riay

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From: Bernhard Lutz  
Subject: A New Day is Dawning!

Pastor Kebede: Greetings in Jesus!

Great is Thy faithfulness! What a phrase from Lamentations that explains and extols the Mighty One, Jehovah God. Elly and I await the New Day to dump on many the many hours of preparation in completing the three syllabi! We can hardly wait to impart the classroom info found in “The Importance of Christian Education in the Home,” “Biblical Hermeneutics,” and “Advanced Christian Stewardship.” We are bubbling with excitement; hopefully MAOR Theological College is getting ready for a long week of sharing these important truths. Thank you for getting the MAOR College ready for this short but important theological shot in the arm!

You say there is no problem with obtaining a visa for entry into the country of Ethiopia. Elly will need help with traveling from your compound to MAOR College each day. Please let us know what extra expense there will be in this added fee. Elly is healthy, but has a walking problem. Otherwise she is a fireball of energy!

We will bring 80 booklets to hand out to students of the three classes. That should cover the class, with a few left over for some Christians who may be interested in these MAOR classes. You will email an address to send things to you in Ethiopia. Thank you.

I leave Minneapolis-St. Paul on Friday the 12th...I overnight at the airport in Addis (BOLE) and head for Gambela the next morning, a Sunday morning. If you come to Addis that night, I can give you some of the books and things I have brought with me from the USA.

I will teach in Gambela for two weeks. Then I will fly to Yambio for two weeks. Elly arrives from the USA on the 10th. I will have to be there to meet her. If I can't meet her for some reason, can you possibly meet her and get her to Bishoftu? She is flying into BOLE Lufthansa arriving at 8:35 p.m. We will appreciate any suggestions from you that will make the arrival and work more complete.

May the God of all, black and white, rich and poor, bless each of us with a strong, active Christ-filled faith to

answer His divine call...who will go and work for ME? May we answer, boldly, loudly.....Here and I....Send me!

Allah mahabah. God is love Arabic.  
Dr. Lutz

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Bernie,

Did you find out yet how you will get to Yambio from Gambela? Is there a route avoiding Juba? Maybe you are still waiting to hear from Peter.

I just packed four boxes of my books, as my library is headed for James May in Nairobi and the Bible School (eventual seminary) that he is building. I will ship the books, mine and a lot of others I have been collecting, to Houston where a layman will include them in a container he is shipping with building materials. It's a little nostalgic cleaning out the book cases.

Let me know when you find out the itinerary to Yambio.  
RR

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From: Peter Anibati  
Subject: Bakery

Dear Dr. Rahn,  
Greetings from Yambio South Sudan. I am pleased to inform you that the set up for the bakery and restaurant has been successfully accomplished. The facility is now functional, as you can see from the pictures below. Please extend our sincere gratitude to the Concordia Ministries which provided the funding. At the end of this month, I will be able to inform you about the income that will be generated.

I had requested Rev. Dachi to dedicate the facility and I think he did a good job! Once again, thanks for your effort in establishing the bakery for the ELCSS/S.

Blessings+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Meeting

Dear Dr. Rahn, I would like to share with you some resolutions of our meeting in Yambio with the church council.

It's very unfortunate that Wilson and his supporters in Juba continue to ignore the truth of the matter. The

recent email by the General Secretary blaming us in Yambio is very discouraging, but we decided not to respond because we thought would be responding to someone who does not know the genesis of the ELCSS/S. I don't know if you aware that the General Secretary is not a Lutheran...He has not attended any Lutheran college or basic Lutheran theology that can qualify him to be a Lutheran pastor. So, Wilson just allowed him in and promoted to that position for his own agenda, which he is now implementing.

In our meeting, it was agreed that 1) Dr. Bernie should ordain the vicars when he's in Gambela and Yambio, 2) No orders will be taken from the impostor bishop as per now, 3) Legal procedures will be taken to unify the accounts of the church, so that the next rent is not paid into Juba account, 4) General Secretary must write a letter of apology for his recent email in which he has belittled the leaders in Yambio and accused LHF of trying to split the church and 5) a committee of 5 people to go and inform the relevant government authorities in Yambio about Wilson's behavior so that they can understand the truth.

I will send you the contact info of the person who is in charge of the United Nations agency renting the property in Juba. I suggest that you contact him as the one who sponsored the purchase of the property in Juba for the church. I think they need to be made to understand that there is a problem because the funds they have been paying have not been helping the church, but few individuals only. They must only understand that the bishop Wilson and his friends in Juba do not own the property in Juba, but the church which Wilson has cheated for all these years.

We are busy now trying to effect the above resolutions and will inform you accordingly.

Trusting the Lord alone,  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Nuffer, Richard  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: Yambio

Bob--She (Pat) did not go to Yambio. The government is not allowing MAF to fly directly into Yambio. MAF is allowed to fly there via Juba, which it is doing. However, Juba is a dangerous mess right now, especially around the airport. Charles, who flew via Juba to Arua to pick up 14 suitcases from Pat, confirmed that. Apparently it is not armed forces fighting each other that is so much the problem, but all the robberies and assaults by malefactors of all stripes. Charles says that it is not safe to go more than ten miles or so from Yambio, as the roads are where all the car-jacking, robberies and other crimes are occurring.

So, Pat visited with a few Hands of Mercy (HOM) "clients" that she has gotten to know in Kampala, and then flew on to Arua to meet Charles. Pat has spent some time in Arua with Bob Ulig, a layman from a Boston LCMS congregation who is an architect and very interested in third-world micro-finance. (Not exactly HOM's area of work!). She arrives home in Detroit on August 20 — a short stay this time.

Pat is worried about HOM's compound of seven buildings. She has an operating agreement with the ELCSS/S that says that the church owns the buildings, but HOM has exclusive use of them as an agency of the church. What happens if the church splits? She feels very strongly, in a negative way, about Bishop Rule, and doesn't want him to get the buildings. Her allegiance is to the Yambio folks. I told her that agreements don't mean much there, so we just need to pray that Wilson not get these and disrupt the work of HOM — which now is

almost self sustaining and operates on a daily basis.

Well, all of this is second-hand info, so take it with a grain of salt. I just hope Bernie doesn't have to go through Juba on his way to Yambio. Who knows whether they will even get the right fuel into the plane's tanks!

Many Blessings,  
Rick

### September 3

To: Peter Rev. Anibati  
From: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Ordination Greetings

Peter,

Perhaps our message can be read during the time of greetings. We regret very much not being able to be with you. I am giving some thought to coming in November for a visit of encouragement.

Dear Brothers in the Ministry, Members of the ELCSS/S and Friends,

"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of a pastor, fulfill your ministry." 2 Timothy 4:1-5

On behalf of Rev. Matthew Heise, LHF executive director; Mr. Jeff Rahn, assistant executive director and myself, we greet you warmly on this solemn occasion of your ordination into the Holy Ministry, qualifying you to be proclaimers of the Word, administering the Sacraments, visiting the sick and ministering to the dying. It certainly is a solemn duty to which you are called and a responsibility you will not be able to fulfill on your own. You do, however, have the promises of God that He will be with you and guide you in all your ways. You also today will hear the assurance of the church members that they will support you with their prayers and with their financial support.

I'm sorry that I cannot be with you for this event, but we are pleased to have Dr. Bernie Lutz representing the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and participating with you as you are ordained. The above words from St. Paul to the young pastor, Timothy, is but a small segment of some important instructions he provides to pastors throughout both of his letters to Timothy. I urge you to read these two letters Paul wrote to Timothy in the next days and receive strong and pertinent advice and counsel for your service to the Lord of the Church.

On this day of ordination, you will be promising to continue doing what you have already been doing: preaching, teaching and reaching. You are doing this during some turbulent times for the ELCSS/S, but we realize that the leadership we need is that which comes from the Lord Himself and through His holy Word. Our strength comes from Him Who reveals Himself in the Word. It is true that we are often disappointed in human leadership, but whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.

May the Lord bless your ministry to the people under your care. To Christ alone be all honor, glory and praise for the great things He has done.

Even though absent in body, we are with you in spirit and congratulate you on this significant occasion. With your families, with your congregations and with the entire ELCSS/S, we at Lutheran Heritage Foundation celebrate your achievements.

To God be all glory.

Yours in Christ  
Dr. Robert L. Rahn  
CLIHM Program Director  
LHF Founder/Ambassador

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From: Nicholas Kumbo Louis  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Re: Ordination Greetings

Dear Dr. Rahn,  
Thank you for this words of encouragement and the efforts that have made to make this happen. We used a lot of resources and energy in order to train these vicars to become pastors to help the church, and we can't just leave them like that while people need their services. Therefore, it's our pleasure to see these young men entering into the public ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, something that could have been done since last year but "Pharaoh" refused.

Now the church is going to have manpower for the great task of preaching God's Word and administering the Sacraments. Thanks be to God. But we are still appealing to the office of the LHF for financial support so that we can use it to bring some representatives of the deaneries into one place and get a final solution for this chronic problem of the Bishop. And if you are coming in November that will be great.

Thanks,  
Rev. Nicholas Kumbo

### **September 6**

The LHF Board met on this date and considered a number of items, chief of which was a discussion of the support that would be provided for the Sudan seminary (CLIHM- Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry. When troubles erupted on the church front in Sudan because of an errant bishop, the Board requested that the new seminary class be delayed for one year. When the new Bishop demonstrated the kind of leadership the Board was looking for, they authorized the seminary program to be reinitiated in January, 2018 with the prospect of 30 students entering.

A budget for the operation of the seminary was submitted by the ELCSS/S in the amount of \$110,000 but LHF staff considered it too high and asked for a revision. The program will begin with Dr. Bernie and Dr. Elly Lutz to serve as instructors for the first three weeks of operation. Rev. Rahn will recruit the needed faculty for the remainder of the year as he has done for the past 20 years.



It is hoped that with the ELCSS/S asking for fellowship with the LCMS that some support might be provided by the synod. The CLIHM is one of the largest international seminaries in operation at this time. Even more students would be interested in attending if budgets would allow.

The current class will include five Anglican Pastors who want to serve in the Lutheran Church. Discussions are taking place with the Anglican Church and their desire to become part of the ELCSS/S. A number of the pastors have been taken through a seminar on Luther's Small Catechism.

### **September 14**

The message below details the dangers in which Lutheran ministry is carried out in South Sudan. There are dangers that threaten the church and the citizens every day. Pray for the persecuted church.

From: Peter Anibati

Dear Rev. Matthew,

I have prayer request: Last Sunday, prayers were disrupted in the Yambio church because fighting broke out between one notorious rebel commander and the government soldiers. Just after the first reading was announced, serious shooting began. This rebel commander who has been terrorizing the people was killed in the fighting, and one of his soldiers was shot dead at the compound of the Yambio church. We were instructed by the army to lie down inside the church as the fighting was going on. It lasted for about 30 minutes, and we were ordered to evacuate the church building. No one from the church members was wounded or killed.

Now relative calm has returned to Yambio. The government has indicated that this fighting was intended to kill this particular rebel leader because he has been behind the unknown gunmen who have been killing many innocent people in the area. I had candidates to be confirmed that Sunday, but it was not possible so I have rescheduled for this coming Sunday. Please keep us in your prayers as usual.

Blessings+

Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

### **September 21**

Subject: extraordinary convention

Dear brothers in the Lord,

Greetings from Yambio, the Headquarters of the Evangelical Lutheran church in South Sudan/Sudan in the name of Jesus our Lord and Savior.

We rejoice greatly that the Lord has added 16 more workers into His vineyard the ELCSS/S. Three pastors were ordained in Gambela, Ethiopia and on September 4, 8 vicars were ordained into the Holy Ministry in Yambio and two of the suspended pastors (Rev. Mariano Joseph and Rev. Alison Zebedayo) were restored to their pastoral duties and 3 evangelists were commissioned. Despite the difficulties that the church is undergoing, there is also some good news that in the midst of all these mess, the church is moving forward.

It's worth mentioning that many of the government ministers, honorable members and advisers attended the occasion despite Rev. Wilson's attempt to have them disrupt the church's activities in Yambio. They all showed solidarity with the church and promised never to interfere with the church programs and in addition, they said that they have instructed all the security organs to stick to the government policy! Therefore, we thank

God for having such God-fearing men and women in the government of Gbudue state, and we pray that God would inculcate the same spirit in all our leaders of South Sudan.

After the ordination ceremony, all the pastors together with the church elders who came for the occasion sat down and came up with a way forward to solve the problem in the ELCSS/S. The meeting resolved to have a mini-convention at the end of October, the Reformation week. But later the date was changed to the first week of November to fit the schedule of our important guests from overseas (shortly we will send the invitation letter with the exact dates).

Secondly, an Interim Committee was formed from the five deaneries of the ELCSS/S and the members are the deans. These five deans were mandated to be running the affairs of the ELCSS/S until the convention.

Thirdly, an organizing committee was formed to plan and budget for the convention. Find details in the letter attached and addressed to the minister of Education, Gender and Social Welfare who is also in charge of Religious Affairs in Gbudue State, South Sudan.

As many of you have received emails and phone calls about the so called “pastors’ meeting in Juba” scheduled to take place from the 23rd to 26th of this month, please note that it is not the convention which the church has agreed to call. That meeting is private and will not solve the problem of the ELCSS/S. and many of our pastors will not attend — perhaps a few who are attached to the “King’s Palace” in Juba. We all are focused on the convention where the real issues will be tackled.

Continue to pray for the ELCSS/S.  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

### **September 23**

From: Zereda Elisa  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: Greetings

Dear Rahn,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hope my email finds you well in good health? Am doing great by God’s grace, struggling and not giving up in life! Am back to Kampala after being to Juba for one week. The country is still in crisis and not yet to normal.

Congratulations once again for the ordination which has been done recently in Yambio. That’s a good move and most people are happy that the church doing well now. May God continue blessing us.

I’m aware about the arrangement which is going on for convention, which will be taking place by next month. I would like to be part of it, if there is any team will be going to attend. I will be grateful to join. It’s my request to you?

Thanks,  
Zereda Andrew Mbugo Elisa

## September 26

From: Bernhard Lutz

To: Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise

Subject: A Brief Overview, August 12 to September 25, 2016

I am tired, and torn, but here comes my report to the LHF. August 12 to September 24. Drs. Bernie and Elly Lutz.

### OVERALL REPORT

It was a joy to serve the Lord in a very unique way this year. Thank you. Unique because the tasks that were required were varied and so different, and also Elly and I were able to do a unit together in Bishoftu, Ethiopia.

The Work in Gambela, South Sudan and Ethiopia is going very well. Presently, good leadership is willing to organize and use strategies that are shared and consequently are bringing great successes to the Lord's Church. The Dean of the Upper Nile Deanery is doing a very fine job. He is honest, hard-working and a good team man, Dean Simon Gatluak. The ELCSS/S is doing very well in its scramble to plan and initiate an extra ordinary convention to elect a new bishop. The ELCSS/S is ready to join hands to elect a new bishop soon. The nucleus of pastoral leaders is strong, able and willing to take on this new task. The leadership of the ELC is fantastic, and under the hand of Dr. Kebede Yigitzu, a talented and gifted leader. The ELC is small, but viable and growing. It is very Biblical and Gospel-centered.

We found all three geographic areas that the LHF assigned to us (Gambela, ELCSS/S and Ethiopia) were moving in a positive and God-pleasing direction under positive Christ-Centered leadership.

### SPECIFIC DETAILS: *THE GAMBELA SEMINAR*

The refugee camp has become a positive haven for preaching the Gospel! Dean Simon has invested his life to assist and to help develop a truly Christian church body in the Gambela area of Ethiopia. He spends long hours assisting pastors and evangelists to do the work faithfully and well. The two week seminar went very well. A group of 30 men and women gathered for six hours each day under some shady trees as Hermeneutics and Advanced Christian Stewardship classes were taught. The church is off by itself in a developing area of the city of Gambela. Not an ideal location for a developing new church.

Two men were ordained and three men were consecrated and commissioned for work as pastors of the ELCSS/S. On the day of ordination, I was privileged to baptize 15 children. The day of ordination was very special for the members of the ELCSS/S as it was a service long prayed for by members of that church body. The acting bishop had neglected and refused to implement the God-given charge to ordain qualified and equipped men, and so the leaders of the ELCSS/S confidently assumed responsibility for this joyful and meaningful service. At first I refused to be the officiant as per our conversation on the telephone on August 14. You, Dr. Rahn and I had just completed the call, when Dean Simon knocked on my hotel door to insist that I perform this duty on the August 21. Having knowledge of the *Book of Concord* on ordination, I humbly accepted his prayerful request, boldly and confidently because this special service needed to be completed knowing it was God's good and gracious will since the bishop of the ELCSS/S had grossly neglected his duties as God's servant.

Because of the Lord's blessings, good leadership, the ELCSS/S mission in Gambela is making great headway in building the church as a part of the Upper Nile Deanery. When the time comes

for the Nuer to return to their homeland in the Malakal area, a strong church will remain to proclaim the Gospel. We find here God's blessings greatly witnessed through the great and severe persecution and poverty these people were forced to endure.

### **THE YAMBIO SEMINAR**

Travel to and from the ELCSS/S headquarters in Yambio is not easy, and it was not a simple challenge for me either. I traveled early, cutting the two week seminar into a one week one day seminar at Gambela. Travel to Addis, then to Entebbe, Uganda. Then to Kajjansi, and the MAF service to Yambio. I arrived at Kajjansi at 2 a.m. and was up at 4:30 a.m. to meet the MAF boarding request. All went well. Arrive Yambio at noon on August 23. Confusion, no one came to pick me up right away! Dachi and Peter had assumed pick up charge and neither came! On the way to the Lutheran Guest House I was asked to put on my clergy clothes and meet with the Governor of WES! The Governor was in Juba for meetings, but the Deputy Governor was in and he would see us. It was a long meeting discussing Bishop Wilson's false accusation's that the church was wrongly handling his official work as bishop of the ELCSS/S.

The governor's office heard our report and was favorable toward the extraordinary convention plans in November. It was late evening now and on the way to the Lutheran Guest House, Rev. Peter asked me to develop a confession and absolution service for the next morning, Wednesday, August the 24! No sleep for two days and now this! I fell asleep with pencil in hand about 9 p.m. The Confessional Service went well, but no wine for Holy Communion, so we did not celebrate the Lord's Supper. After the service, while getting ready for the teaching, Rev. Elinama asked me to do a presentation service on reconciliation between the government and the rebels of WES on Thursday morning.

Meanwhile, Bishop Wilson was sending several official letters from his office to the government of WES charging all of the leaders with conspiracy and derelict of duty. The Education Minister Honorable Pia Phillip requested a meeting with his office at the Lutheran Guest House on Thursday night. Bishop Wilson had not labeled Dachi and me as rebels! The Honorable Minister was patient and attentive to the charges. He asked for a constitution of the ELCSS/S and requested that the leaders follow the constitution to the letter. He was considerate, helpful and very Christian in his comments to the leaders of the ELCSS/S.

All the government officials were patient and very helpful, supporting the plans to call for an extra ordinary convention to deal with the election of a new bishop. Bishop Wilson's pleas for government support were met with a negative response. The bishop was desperate in his attempts to regain control of the church that he was now quickly losing any respect or love as the faithful of the ELCSS/S were guided by the Holy Spirit to take serious action through a special convention.

Rev. Nicolas had been in Uganda with his wife and family, as they were forced to leave the area because of the rebel chaos in the Yambio area. I took him aside and told him, "Nicholas, everyone here thinks that you are in the pocket of the bishop. If you want to gain the respect of the church and its people, you alone will have to show where your feelings are at this time. You are either with the bishop or with the ELCSS/S leadership. It is up to YOU!" He understood, took the advice and was received as an equal by Peter, Dachi, Elinama and Andreas Bernard. Personally, I believe that Rev. Nicolas is a faithful pastor and was caught between the bishop who was to be in control and those who rejected the bishop because of his outright neglect and failure to serve the Lord and His Church as an elected bishop.

It is said that the bishop paid voters of the Upper Nile Deanery \$500 SP to vote for his election as bishop but even then, he did not have the votes to be elected, but the attorney being used by

the convention, convinced the voters at the convention that Wilson had enough votes to become the bishop of the ELCSS/S.

The seminar went along very well, despite the many things that tended to detract and cause schedule problems. It was tiring and exhaustive at times, and the bed felt very welcome each night!

I was impressed by the faithfulness of the leadership of the ELCSS/S. They were strong, prayerful and patient in dealing with each of the issues that would arise. The thing that impressed me most was their new confidence in what they were doing was God-pleasing. They appreciated so much the support and prayers of the LHF and LCMS. Not just the money that comes each month, but the prayers and the advice that comes with the partnership that is so strong in the Lord! It was my joy and privilege to be on the scene as these young Christian warriors faced so many battles in the name of Jesus.

The Sunday of ordination went very well. The leaders took full responsibility for every part of the service. They asked for advice and then went ahead with the plans. It went very well! Even the banners were done by a committee and Bernie didn't have to cut letters for the banner! Amazing. Eight students from CLIHM were recommended for ordination. One student was suspended for the time being, dealing with a marriage problem. Besides these CLIHM students, there were three evangelists who were commissioned by Rev. Elinama and two pastors who were re-instated as active pastors. The service was long, well attended, about 800 people were worship that beautiful Sunday. The meal was excellent. The day was very special for the members of the ELCSS/S. A new day had arrived! God was in charge, not Bishop Wilson.

The bishop sent out letters to all churches that the ordinations were to be rejected and condemned as false, and that the newly-ordained were not to be accepted as Lutheran pastors. The problem is this: the bishop has lost all respect, and even though he will send Rev. Emmanuel of Juba to ask the congregations not to accept the newly ordained, most congregations will ignore the bishop's request! All the ordained are confident that the area congregations will accept them as their shepherd and leader.

I was to depart September 6, but MAF canceled their flight. I was able to purchase a first-class seat, the only seat available on Kushi Air to Nairobi and then Addis. I was really uptight as I had to meet Elly's flight on Saturday, Sept 10. I made it to Addis on the 8th, went to Bishoftu and organized our room for the next two weeks. Elly missed a flight out of Frankfurt and came in early Sunday morning, September 11! But I was there to meet her, although her suitcases did not arrive. One suitcase went to Copenhagen and the other to Capetown, South Africa. All her medicines were in the luggage! Fortunately, three days later the case with the meds arrived from Copenhagen; however, the one from Capetown arrived the day we left Ethiopia!

### ***BISHOFTU, ETHIOPIA:***

Dr. Kebede is a man with a dream! He works long and hard to make his dream come true! He is blessed with a beautiful wife, Genet and a wonderful family. His marriage is strong, sound and filled with love! The living conditions were a bit tough and challenging, like bathroom visits in the dark of the night. The bed was small, but all in all, the Church Leaders seminars went very well. There were 30 registered for the three courses: "The Importance of Christian Education in the Home," "Hermeneutics" and "Advanced Christian Stewardship." Elly took the first segment and I followed with the next two. The schedule was well planned and organized, but the schedule did vary from time to time. Instead of starting at 8 a.m., it was more like 8:30 a.m. Then I was asked to do a homily on the Bible readings each morning!



Dr. Kebede was pleased with the three courses and he will continue the courses with further study and special assignments. A number of students were working on their Master of Theology degree, but most were working towards a Bachelor of Theology degree. It was a very, very busy week, but we were able to complete the courses on Saturday, September 17. We left Addis on September 19 for Frankfurt, Germany and a visit with Lutz relatives in the Fulda, Germany area. We boarded passage for Minneapolis on Saturday the 24th, arriving 7 p.m., without one suitcase — the one that went to Capetown, South Africa!

The financial situation for the ELC is critical. The WELS has determined to restrict funds to only a few selected mission activities, and there is a \$30,000 loan due in November of this year. A special letter will explain the financial problem. He has asked that Elly and I try to find some road or way to assist the ELC over his huge obstacle. The ELC treasures the LHF, its support and its work very highly.

### **SUMMARY COMMENTS**

The government of South Sudan has encouraged the ELCSS/S to proceed with electing a new replacement bishop, but using the constitutional guidelines of the church. The ordination services were both awesome and Spirit-filled. No doubt, the bishop is causing problems, many problems, even canceling signatories at the KCB bank in Yambio. Rather foolish, since the money comes from LHF. New signatories were named and the LHF acted quickly and professionally in every way. A special meeting was held on Monday night to discuss the need for a special convention. About 40 people were present at this meeting. An Interim Committee and a Convention Committee were named to deal with the November convention. Candidates' names will be selected and plans for the convention will be determined and promoted among ELCSS/S church members. This committee requests the presence of Dr. Robert Rahn and other leaders from Africa to attend this convention. The convention dates will be determined by when Dr. Rahn can attend this important meeting of the ELCSS/S. I called Rev. Dr. Rahn and he was available November 13, 2016.

The ELCSS/S members have made many efforts to reconcile the differences that have arisen between the leadership of the bishop and the needs of the Church. They have used emails, letters and telephone calls, but the bishop has refused to deal with the situation and refused to call a June convention, which the LHF would finance.

The reasons given for the election of a new bishop are many. But the lack of leadership, honesty, faithfulness to the Word, the bishop's quick temper, refusal to listen, lack of personal discipline, he is above reproach, quarrelsome are some of the reasons given for the replacement of a new bishop.

Some of the complaints given were he suspends pastors, does not counsel them, never visits deans or deaneries, doesn't encourage, is not a good listener, selfish, egotistical, poor leader, no vision or mission plan, refuses to carry out duties of a bishop are some of the common reason given for seeking a new and more faithful bishop.

Finally, as I reflect on the past five weeks I have had so many special highlights. Even though expenses were high, the work done was fantastic, and only by God's gracious hand! The ordinations at Gambela and Yambio were exciting and Spirit-filled. The three men colloquized at Gambela (Michael, James and Gabriel) brought tears to my eyes. Plus the challenge of preaching at both the Gambela and Yambio ordination services! Baptizing 15 children was also exciting and a joy! Meeting with the Governor's office as well as with the Minister of Education and National Security Head was helpful. Writing and delivering a Confession and Absolution Service for the ELCSS/S was a challenge, as was delivering a special Reconciliation Message for the gov-



ernment and rebels in Yambio. Leading the Seminars for LHF was a challenge and a privilege. Thanks. To God be the glory.

## October 1

The anniversary edition of the LHF newsletter, "The Word at Work," carried an article about the Founder.

### LHF founder looks back at 25 years in mission

"I'm here to raise a banner for the Lord, and I'm looking for people who will stand with us on the truth of Scripture."

"It's not something I talk about very much, but as I look back on it, it's clear that the Lord had a path arranged for the Lutheran Heritage Foundation from the time I went to my first call as a Lutheran pastor," recalled Rev. Robert Rahn, who together with a Board of Directors headed by Rev. Robert Preus, founded LHF on Nov. 10, 1992.

It was a time of amazing opportunity. The atheistic Soviet Union had collapsed and for the first time in 70 years, doors were open to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people living behind the Iron Curtain.

A picture in the article showed a team distributing Bibles in Russia's Red Square, where such literature had been forbidden just a year earlier. Rev. Rahn seized the opportunity by traveling to Moscow, where he and a few friends distributed Russian-English Bibles and tracts in Red Square.

"It was Reformation Day 1992, and we decided to test the degree of religious freedom in Russia," he said. "It was a smooth operation. What was most significant was that after the literature was distributed, we checked every garbage can in the Red Square area, and we didn't find a single Bible or discarded tract. Everything disappeared!"

During his time in Russia, Rev. Rahn saw a hurdle to telling the people about Jesus: there was very little Lutheran literature available in the language of the people.

So from the basement of his home, Rev. Rahn started LHF, a mission organization that 25 years later would be translating and publishing confessional Lutheran literature for people in more than 80 countries and 100 languages.

Though the organization has gone through many changes throughout its growth, one thing has never changed: the commitment to solidly confessional Lutheran teachings, most simply put forth in Luther's *Small Catechism*.

"When the Baptists and Pentecostals and the Russian Orthodox come to us and ask, 'Can we have this book,' well, we've never seen anything like this!" Rev. Rahn exclaimed. "And why shouldn't they want it? It's the best tool available for explaining Scripture and the faith that is ours. It's certainly worthy of being shared not just in Luther's Germany or our Lutheran churches in the United States, but everywhere, for all people."

As he has stepped back from the daily leadership of LHF activities, Rev. Rahn expressed confidence in Rev. Matthew Heise, who has been LHF's executive director since 2014. "Matt has brought a wealth of mission experience and connections to the mission, and this bodes well for the future," Rev. Rahn said. "My vision for the next 25 years is for LHF to be at work in all areas of the world where the Truth needs to be taught and demonstrated. There's a hunger for the understanding of Scripture, and we have the materials that can fill that gap. We're not interested in just feeding somebody's stomach, but to feed people's souls with the Word of God."

This newsletter featured articles by international pastors/missionaries commending the work of LHF. Countries included South Sudan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South-east Asia countries, Vietnam, Mongolia, Dominican Republic, Peru, Denmark. Go to the web page to read each article from Volume 24 Number 5 (September-October 2017) edition.

## **LHF: Looking to the Next 25 Years**

Who would have guessed what the Holy Spirit had in mind?

In the spring of 1994, Rev. Robert Rahn was guest preacher at Guardian Lutheran Church in Dearborn, Mich., where the people were bidding a fond farewell to one of their members about to become a missionary in Russia – Matthew Heise.

To Rev. Heise, now executive director of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation, this chance meeting was just one more example of God's plan he's witnessed in all his mission work. "This is nothing we're putting together," he said. "God is way ahead of us!"

After more than a decade as an LCMS missionary in Russia, Rev. Heise now uses his experiences in Eurasia to lead LHF in serving other missionaries and church bodies.

"I saw firsthand people reading LHF's materials, such as Luther's *Small Catechism* and the *Book of Concord*, and it made a change in them," Rev. Heise said.

As LHF continues its work of translating and publishing books like the catechism, Rev. Heise sees a need for even more basic materials.

"Sometimes missionaries are going to people where there is no established Lutheran church, or even a Christian church! We need to be able to give them some basic, easy-to-read pieces for people who are beginning to investigate the faith," he speculated.

In looking to LHF's next 25 years, Rev. Heise said he's most excited about LHF's new work beginning in Asia and Africa.

"The idea of Christianity moving to the southern hemisphere really is true," he said. "There's an explosion of faith in those areas. For example, there's a chance we might be able to get LHF's books into Chinese bookstores. Can you imagine? That would be huge! Where the Holy Spirit leads, LHF will go."

## **October 3**

From: Peter Anibati

Subject: RE: August Report

Hello Jeff,

It has been long now since we received the ELCSS/S wire. I know it's because of the problems we are facing in the ELCSS/S. I urge you on behalf of the brothers here to please help us to send the funds for the stipends.

They know that it will be different next year, but for the remaining months of this year, our pastors and workers are still expecting to be supported.

Waiting to hear from you soon. God bless+  
Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

From: Jeff Rahn  
Subject: RE: August Report

Peter,

Thanks for the update. The first step was utilizing a different account that could be accessed and it appears that the account I used last week will work. We also do not want to give any appearance that we are “buying votes.” As you state, it has been our position for many years that the stipends needed to end in order for the church to become self-supporting. As long as there is transparency about this, no one can accuse LHF of using the Bishop’s tactics of buying votes. Aside from the Bishop, and perhaps the General Secretary, who else is not receiving a stipend due to the current circumstances?

We have also been in contact with a group in Australia following Matt’s recent visit called Asia Focus. It sounds like they sent \$1,500 to support the work in South Sudan and the current situation. Did you receive this amount or was it sent to the account the Bishop is trying to control?

Blessings,  
Jeff

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Jeff Rahn wrote:

Greetings,

I have tried resending the \$1,700 wire after several phone calls with our bank. This time I used the instructions we had on file for the church account which only referenced Kenya Chartered Bank in Nairobi (KC-BLKEX). With previous transfers we did not reference a Juba or Yambio bank, but only the bank in Kenya.

I also listed the names on the account as Peter Anibati Abia and Rob Lutz. I did have phone calls from our bank yesterday requesting full names of the beneficiaries, address in South Sudan, and purpose of the wire. I am still not seeing the wire as released from our account so it may still be under review.

Will let you know if I learn anything further. This amount covers the following:

\$1,200 from Mark Oien for the Baguga school benches

\$500 Bernie Lutz ticket reimbursement, bank fees, remainder for account.

Blessings,  
Jeff Rahn

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From: Peter Anibati  
Subject: RE: August Report

Dear Jeff,

The issue with the Yambio bank account is not settled yet.

Bishop Noah keeps making it more difficult for us to access the account or to open a new. This problem needs a lawyer but we can’t afford one. It seems the issue will be solved only when we get a new leader. So,

the church here for the time being is requesting you to send the school funds from Rev. Mark and the ELCSS/S wire to the below account to help the situation.

Account Name: Abia and Rob

Account No: .....

This account is a joint account which we opened in Yambio with Rob Lutz for his projects, but I have access to it when Rob is not in Yambio. If funds are sent via this account we will receive it. Please let us know if this option can work for the time being. If not, advise us on a better one.

Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

## **Christmas 2017**

### **DECEMBER MEDITATION**

*Copy of news release on LHF 25th Anniversary*

## **Macomb mission organization celebrates 25 years**

It's easy to drive past the unassuming brick building located near 23 Mile Road and Romeo Plank Road in Macomb, but what goes on inside has influenced hundreds of thousands of lives all around the world.

The Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) is a global mission organization celebrating 25 years of spreading the Christian message to people in more than 85 countries. The Macomb organization was founded in 1992 by Rev. Robert Rahn to translate and publish books of the Lutheran faith for churches around the world.

When Soviet Union fell in the early 1990s, LHF's mission work began in Russia, where the atheist government had destroyed churches, executed pastors and denied Christians good jobs for practicing their faith.

"I lived through the times here in the United States when we had the Rosenthal trial and when we practiced drills in school for when the Russians might attack. Those are the things I remembered about Russian relations in our country," Rahn recalled. "Then, to have the Soviet Union open up and to know that once there were once strong Lutheran churches there that had been basically destroyed, I thought, 'What can we do to help restore Lutheranism in that land?'"

As Rahn traveled throughout Russia, he saw a great need for books that explain the Bible to be translated into the people's language. Thus, he founded LHF and today, the organization has translated and published nearly 1,000 titles in more than 90 languages.

Additionally, LHF's work has led to the creation of two new Lutheran church bodies: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan, which has 150,000 members, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cambodia, which is made up of more than 2,000 people.

"For a new believer – especially someone who isn't well educated – the Bible with its hundreds of pages can seem overwhelming," said Rev. Matthew Heise, executive director of LHF. "The books that help explain what the Bible teaches, including Bible storybooks for young children, are so important to help them see the love of Christ, in a language they can read and understand."

"My vision for the next 25 years is for LHF to be at work in all areas of the world where the Truth needs to be taught and demonstrated," Rev. Rahn said. "There's a hunger for the understanding of Scripture, and we have the materials that can fill that gap."

(Release by: Jen Bagnall, LHF Public Relations)

## December 1

The correspondence that follows lets you listen in to a voice from a pastor in the Gambela, Ethiopia refugee camp where he and 250,000 displaced Sudanese are living after escaping tribal conflict in South Sudan. Observe how outward focused he is in spite of the circumstances. Souls are won, churches are started and encouragement is given. How could we not want to visit and give them the encouraging hope of the Gospel?

From: Simon Gatluak  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: confirm and welcome

Dear RR,  
Grace and peace from God our Father and our Savior Jesus Christ.

It becomes a joy to the members of ELCSS/S for your coming to Gambela to meet with the South Sudanese refugees displaced by war. I will arrange all the necessary needs, meeting with all different groups, church leaders from Upper Nile and Anuak Christians leaders. I will work out how you can reach the refugee camp.

We have made the quotation for printing of Nuer *Small Catechism* with pictures for children and sent to LHF, but we were waiting for yes. For the Nuer *Small Catechism with Explanation*, we are facing a lot of challenges. The editing was done in the Mekane Yesus of Ethiopia church in Gambela. They have people and have Nuer vernacular in their computers and need some amount for their work.

The training that will be conducted by Roberts will help and encourage the Christians in how they should remain in their faith in this time of trouble and many hardships. The call of Dr. Lutz for some leaders to attend his training in Addis is part of expansion of the missions of Christ, and when they come back they will help and train others.

Translation of LHM tract and Good News will help many Nuer to understand many about Christ in their own language. Now the church in Upper Nile and the people who come to the refugee camp are strong and happy to hear people talking about Jesus.

We see more guns are shot, and the Word of our Lord is preached tirelessly without fear. Many coming turn to our Lord. Let us rejoice for the souls who come to our church and get confirmed, and many children in Upper Nile Deanery. Every month 20 to 25 children get baptized. Our pastors are working and Christ is using them everyday.

Pray for our congregations who remain in South Sudan displaced camp and those who are in refugee camps so that they continue trusting God our Savior. We ask for prayers for them because they use under trees as their churches.

Let the Lord of peace bless LHF.  
In Christ,  
Rev. Simon

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On this same date, a message was received from Rev. Richard Ondicho Otiso in Finland. We had encouraged him to start an English-speaking congregation in Helsinki and with help from Carla Niemeier, we had sup-

ported his efforts. When later he was called to a mission position with the LEAF Mission Society, we continued to provide books and materials. He is a successful missionary and reports on his work in reaching out to Muslims. We reported earlier that when we sent a shipment of used Sunday school materials, he indicated his wife wept upon seeing what we sent. Even growing up as a Lutheran in Finland, she had never seen such beautiful material. What we take for granted would be considered a luxury in many parts of the world. The Bible was provided in order to simplify his work.

From: Richard Ondicho  
To: Robert Rahn  
Subject: RE: Mission Update

Dear Dr. Rahn,  
Greetings from Finland in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I wish to share with you the fact that our mission work has continued with the help of LHF materials. I finally got a connection to Demark where Mr. Knud has finally sent me very many of Luther's *Small Catechism* in Arabic and Farsi. I first received 170 books and was able to share with others here in Finland who do not have such books. I shared with LEAF's congregations, which have some Arabic and Farsi Speaking members.

Today I received two more boxes full of Arabic *Small Catechisms*, which is timely since I am traveling to-morrow morning to Western Finland where LEAF has a Bible school. I will be speaking to people attending LEAF's mini-mission course people there tomorrow and Saturday. I already received requests to bring with Luther's *Small Catechism*, so I am taking with me 80 pieces to help those people who don't have this blessed book.

I was able to in contact with LHF Executive Director Matthew Heise while he was in Denmark. It was so nice to have this kind of contacts that you have connected me to. I totally appreciate all that you are doing to make this possible for our Muslim converts. I have baptized over 70 Muslims, where LHF has been the provider of all these kind of translated work.

I had requested Rev. Matthew Heise to help me with large-print Lutheran Study Bible with thumbs but he sent me the ordinary and now sincerely want to implore you to help me get one. I find it challenging when I am teaching here looking for specific Bible readings in hurry and so I will be very grateful to have one kindly.

I am now rushing to a place called Espoo to teach a group of Muslims there because I have groups here and there in Helösinki, Vantaa and Espoo towns. So at a time, I feel that I am getting a burn-out in some way because I have too much work and I am alone in taking care of this work. Although I can't complain, but fatigue is there anyway.

Rev. Richard Ondicho Otiso  
Pastor & Missionary for Immigrants  
English-Speaking Congregation at LEAF's Luther-Church, Helsinki



## 2018

### A NEW YEAR MEDITATION

Happy New Year & Happy Epiphany,

“Arise, shine, for your light has come...Nations will come to Your light, and kings to the brightness of Your rising...Because the abundance of the sea will be turned to You...His glory will appear upon you. They will bring gold and frankincense, and will bear Good News of the praises of the Lord.” Isaiah 60:1-6 (selected verses)

When will it happen, when will the light come, when will nations come to His light, when will His glory appear, when will the bearers of Good News be singing the praises of the Lord?

It's happening today in Germany and in Sudan. As you read this I will be in South Sudan to preach for the opening service of a new seminary class of 30 students. The classroom is unable to accommodate the number and we will, among other things, be breaking ground for a classroom addition that will allow space for 30 or more students. The Light is shining in South Sudan as we break ground for a new congregation being started. People will be hearing the Good News in a typical six-hour service. His glory is appearing in this church body as a new office/administrative office will be dedicated.

In Germany the abundance of the sea is turning to the glory of the Lord as Muslim immigrants from Iran and Afghanistan are beginning to fill up the empty churches in places like Leipzig, Wittenberg and Berlin and using the Farsi catechism and the recently published Arabic edition of *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. Rev. Hugo Gevers of Leipzig was a recent visitor asking for more books and materials to reach out to these Farsi speakers. They are becoming bearers of Good News of the praises of the Lord.

Yes, Epiphany is happening in these places and many others as Christianity is spreading and the Light of the Gospel is penetrating and removing the deep darkness of the people. “Nations are coming to His light.” Epiphany is happening now.

In His Light,  
Rev. R. Rahn

### January 3

Rev. Rahn, Dr. Bernie Lutz and Dr. Elly Lutz embark on their trip to Africa loaded down with 23 suitcases, mostly filled with theological books for seminary students.

### January 6

Travelers arrive in Yambio, South Sudan minus 23 suitcases, which arrive four days later by cargo plane from Juba.

### January 7

Rev. Rahn preaches for the opening service of the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry. A six-hour service recognizing the 25 new students enrolled, also included a pre-service dedication of two motor bikes, an administration building and an Internet center (enabling the church to have a reliable Internet connection and one that the community can use for a fee that will help fund the church/seminary budget). In his sermon, Rev. Rahn referenced the visit of the Magi. To a church filled mainly with subsistence farmers, Rev.

Rahn preached that “one of the greatest lessons of the Epiphany stories is that Jesus came for the poor, lowly, destitute, discouraged, hopeless people of the day. He came for the common people. He came for the sinner. He came for you and me.”

“It’s been truly breath-taking to make this visit to a church that is on the move,” reflected Rev. Rahn. “It’s been so refreshing to see so many improvements and additions made to the facilities under Bishop Anibati’s very capable leadership this past year. It’s a privilege and a joy to work with a church that shows this kind of strength and vitality, this kind of forward-looking zeal and enthusiasm!”

### January 8

Dr. Bernie and Dr. Elly Lutz conduct an orientation session for new seminarians and officially begin the instruction process in the back of the Yambio church while they wait for the completion of the new seminary classroom, which is being built to house 35 students. The first structure, built for 15 students, has been designated as the seminary library center.

### January 9-20

Rev. Rahn spends these days visiting Nairobi, Kenya and three areas of Ethiopia. In Kenya, he was hosted by Rev. James and Tiina May and he visited the site of the Lutheran School of Theology where he had donated his theological library to be part of the new LHF library/translation/ distribution center there. As deeper theological training is becoming a greater need throughout Africa, Rev. May is building facilities to house and train students and pastors in advanced theology. A guest house and dormitory have been built, and Rev. May’s home on the campus is being completed. Other buildings will be built on this site, featuring solar electricity, garden plots with drip-type irrigation, a well and the building of a dam.

The trip included travel to Gambela, the site of three refugee camps with over 300,000 refugees, mostly Nuer people from South Sudan who had to flee their country because of tribal wars.

There is a demand for theological education and help to assist in providing for the 24 new churches that are in this general area serving the refugees, many of whom are already Lutheran (including two pastors who were trained at the seminary in Yambio, South Sudan). The common invitation requesting Rev. Rahn’s return was heard. That we show interest and provide encouragement for these people is something which is far more important than we realize.

We traveled to Bishoftu, Ethiopia, where we met with Dr. Kebede Yegezu, who has started a theological school and wants us to send the instructors we have in Yambio to include a week-long stop for teaching at the Maor Theological College, Lutheran Church of Ethiopia. The proposed four-story building has one floor completed. When completed, it will also house a facility for the church worship. Dr. Kebede utilizes the Amharic works that are published by LHF.

Rev. Dereje Tilahun, LHF Ethiopian translation coordinator, used the vehicle we provided to travel to Owliso, about 2 ½ hours south of Addis Ababa, where we conducted a distribution event. Presentations were made by our translation team and then we distributed to the 125 pastors three volumes in Amharic: *The Book of Concord*, *Luther’s Small Catechism* and *Luther The Reformer*.

While in Addis, we also visited with Rev. Muhammad Gurhan, LHF’s coordinator for Somali translations. He has started several Lutheran churches and does a lot of travel in regard to Somali Lutheranism. He is being interviewed by the Minnesota South District as a possible missionary to the large Somali population in Minneapolis. He is a sought-after seminar speaker on Lutheran outreach to Somali Muslims. A rather rare

Somali Lutheran pastor who is highly a highly proficient evangelistic personality and lecturer. LHF, through the efforts of Dr. Anssi Simojoki, brought him to the Lutheran faith, for which he was persecuted by Muslim authorities and causing him to emigrate to Holland to avoid the persecution.

The trip could be summarized by a stewardship statement heard from an Ethiopian pastor: "Christ builds His kingdom not on our achievements, but on our sacrifices."

#### **February 14**

The interest of the Anglican Church of South Sudan continues. This is a message Rev. Heise sent to the bishop of the church, indicating that LHF would provide copies of the Dinka *Small Catechism*.

Dear Archbishop John Thon, Anglican Church of South Sudan:

It is with great pleasure that we are able to send along several copies of Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* in the language of your people, the Dinka. We are grateful to Dr. Curtis Peters for making the delivery of this important exposition of the Christian faith and for his teaching. We are also grateful to Pastor Nathaniel Bol for making the translation of the catechism.

The Lutheran Heritage Foundation was founded 25 years ago by Pastor Robert Rahn in the state of Michigan, with the express purpose of translating, publishing, distributing and introducing books that are Bible-based, Christ-centered and Reformation-driven. We began in Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union, but soon other countries beckoned. Among those countries, in Sudan an Anglican by the name of Andrew Mbugo Elisa contacted our founder in 1995 in order to learn more about the Christian faith through the catechism. Since that time, LHF has been deeply engaged in Sudan, and now especially in South Sudan where we help support a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan in Yambio.

We are privileged to be able to share with you this resource and want to let you know that this year we anticipate publishing a children's Bible story book and a Law and Gospel booklet, translated into Dinka. May the Lord bless you and your church as you receive these materials that we believe provide a succinct and compelling explanation of the Christian faith!

God bless you, Archbishop Thon!

In Christ,

Rev. Matthew Heise

#### **February 15**

The LHF Board meets to issue a Divine Call to Rev. Dr. Dinku Bato to serve as the LHF African Coordinator. He presently serves an Ethiopian congregation in Minnetonka, Minnesota.

#### **February 19**

On this date the Bishop of the Anglican Church and the Bishop of the ELCSS/S were in Uganda at a seminar for Anglican pastors, going through *Luther's Small Catechism* in preparation for membership in the Lutheran Church. A year ago the Anglicans made an overture indicating interest in becoming part of the Lutheran community in South Sudan. In preparation for this church to be received, her pastors are being confirmed in the Lutheran faith, and this is another step towards the amalgamation of these two bodies. The Anglican church body supposedly has over one million members.

Much of the interest developed as the Anglicans saw the materials that were provided to pastors of the ELCSS/S and the doctrine that was taught at the seminary. How soon this process will be completed is not

known, but the steps for membership are being taken. Eventually, the selected Anglican pastors will be entering the seminary for further theological training.

## **February 20**

Bishop Peter Anibati reports in the ELCSS/S newsletter on the state of the church:

### ***The Hosanna Building***

For a very long time since the headquarters of the ELCSS/S was moved from Khartoum to Yambio, South Sudan, there was no church office building. The headquarters of the church and the seminary (CLIHM) was being hosted by the Guest House. Later on, St. Luke Medical Clinic was also added into the same Guest House and really the facility became much crowded. The church had no seed money to build a separate administration building but God worked a miracle!

In early January 2016, the church started a local initiative, raised some funds and bought a few thousand bricks and laid the foundation for the ELCSS/S headquarters office. That is all we could do — the foundation — and as we were stuck, the AFA (Asia Focus Australia) came in and bought some more bricks and cement and we were able to raise the wall halfway. That was a real push, but still God worked another miracle through a friend, Rev. Dr. Bernhard Lutz who visited the ELCSS/S headquarters and saw the need. He saw some few bricks laying around and as I explained to him the plan, he prayed with me and all he said was, “I do not have the money but when I go back, I will try to raise funds for the building.”

There, the miracle started. In a few months, money started to come in and now the building is completed and furnished and was dedicated on January 7, 2018. The church offices have now moved from the Guest House next to the church building. The office building is called the “Hosanna Building,” which means the Lord saves, and in fact the Lord has rescued the ELCSS/S by providing this administrative building and more importantly He has saved us from sin, our sinful flesh, Satan and hell through His Son Jesus Christ. Praise be to Him now and forever more. Amen!

### ***The ELCSS/S Installs Internet***

One of the challenges that the ELCSS/S has been facing is lack of Internet service. Church officers have always depended on commercial Internet cafés in town, which are not always reliable to access emails, send or retrieve messages/reports. Those who have visited South Sudan know how difficult it is to communicate to the outside world and how hard it is to get access to Internet, but thanks be to God that this service is now available at the ELCSS/S. This tool of communication is to facilitate the work of the head office and to help the seminary students have access to e-books for research purposes and also to help guest professors keep in touch with their loved ones at home while teaching at CLIHM - Yambio. Hopefully, professors who may not have time to come to Yambio can use this to lecture, and students can follow from here. To sustain the project, the ELCSS/S has introduced a café which is open to the public to help pay the cost of the service.

Now the ELCSS/S provides the fastest Internet service in Yambio which connects not only the church to the world, but the entire public of Yambio and Gbudue state at large, making the world a bit closer. All these have happened because of the support that the ELCSS/S receives from its partners and especially Immanuel Lutheran Church of the LCMS, which has funded this project through Pastor Mark Oien.

### ***New Seminary Class Begins***

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan started a theological seminary way back in 2003 in Khartoum. This seminary was started to help train locally pastors, deaconesses

and other lay leaders for the ELCSS/S because it is very costly to train church workers outside the country and difficult to find sponsorship. The cost of training one pastor overseas can train more pastors in South Sudan. For these reasons, the ELCSS/S started Concordia Lutheran Institute for Holy (CLIHM) which has had three graduations so far, the most recent in 2015.

By the grace of God, this year (2018) 25 men have joined the seminary from all over the deaneries of the ELCSS/S, representing many of the different tribes of South Sudan/Sudan. The seminary was officially opened on January 7, 2018 with seminarians from the Nuba Mountains, Magwi, Maban (Malakal), Magwi, Awingbul, Torit, Anuak from Kakuma refugee camp, Maridi, Ibba, Yambio, Ezo and Tambura. Unfortunately, others were expected to join from the Anglicans but the candidates, due to family problems, could not make it on time. Hopefully they will be able to join the next intake.

The opening of the new seminary class was marked with many other activities: the dedication of the ELCSS/S headquarters office, the Internet Centre and two motor bikes dedicated and distributed to Rev. Evaristo Gima in Tambura and Rev. Kibongo Henry in Yambio. Many important guests were in attendance, including international guests like Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn who was the preacher of the day, Rev. Dr. Bernhard Lutz and Dr. Elly were the first professors who started teaching the new class.

Still on the seminary, the visiting instructors' building have been improved and well furnished and with good toilets inside. Because the current number of seminarians is double the previous classes, a bigger classroom is under construction, and the old classroom is being used as a library.

### ***New Churches Planted***

Although the ELCSS/S is faced with many challenges including few pastors and wars that have left many displaced and destitute, the church continues to grow and expand in the midst of these difficulties. Last year two congregations were planted in the refugee camps (Bidibidi and Lamwo) in Uganda and several others in Gambela Ethiopia. At the very beginning of this year, three churches have been planted 1) Magwi - Obbo Congregation served by Pastor Mark Okullo, 2) Nzura - Trinity Chapel served by Pastor Andrea Bernado, and 3) Tambura - Zion Lutheran Church served by Pastor Matthew Kurakpio.

### ***House of Hope Orphanage***

The ELCSS/S in her endeavors to make disciples for Christ has established the House of Hope Orphanage where kids who have lost both their parents (as a result of the civil wars in South Sudan, HIV/AIDS or any other reason) can be cared for, educated and brought up in a Christian way. This orphanage is still under construction and is supported mainly by Robert and Paula Lutz and faithful Lutheran Christians in the US. You can also participate in giving hope and a brighter future to these helpless children by giving to support the project. The following are needed: 1) plaster of the buildings and floor, 2) doors & windows & finishing, 3) gate, 4) beds and mattresses, 5) bed sheets & blankets, 6) utensils and others.

### ***Hands of Mercy***

Hands of Mercy is a training centre opened for people with disabilities and is located in Yambio, Gbudue state. It is an outreach ministry of the ELCSS/S to a people who are normally neglected by the community. At the centre, registered members come daily to attend classes on Luther's *Small Catechism* and learn different skills like tailoring, small business management, hygiene, English language and many other skills. They have a shop and saloon intended to generate some income that can keep the centre moving, but the high rates of inflation in town and the famine in the country do not make it easy. The center still needs support from outside to cover



its expenses. Thanks to Dec. Patricia Nuffer who is a backbone of Hands of Mercy. Recently the centre has initiated another project called “Christ Care Centre.” It is a building with several rooms which will be rented to people, and the rent will help pay some of the operation costs of the centre.

### ***St. Luke Medical Clinic***

The St. Luke Medical Clinic is a local initiative of the ELCSS/S started in 2014 to help address the health situation of the people of South Sudan. There is too much malaria (caused by mosquitoes), typhoid, goiters, hernia, HIV/AIDS and many other diseases. The church has been inviting professional doctors from the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo who come to assist in areas of surgery. The Clinic has proved to be very helpful to the community as many cases are being treated, but it is difficult to get medicine! More support is needed to get the Clinic from the guest house and have it built since the church has more land. Also other necessities include medicine, beds, mosquito nets, upgrading the theatre, getting professional workers, nurses, doctors etc. The church is looking for volunteers who would want work with the Clinic or support it.

### ***Outbreak of Fire Leaves Many in Baguga and Saura Homeless***

The two villages of Baguga and Saura have been burnt down. It is not known how the fire started or who started the fire, but many residents have lost all their belongings – homes, farms, clothing, food are all gone. It's an emergency. The situation of the people continues to deteriorate. They need help. Rains are about to start but they have no roofs over their head, no warm clothes; children have lost all their school books and uniforms and have no food to eat. What can the ELCSS/S do? We are limited in so many ways, but I have announced to church members asking if anyone has an extra shirt, blanket or any kind of support, they should consider helping the fire victims. I also appeal in this letter to all the friends of the ELCSS/S to consider helping the Baguga and Saura people. The ELCSS/S actively works in these areas. We have two churches and schools there, and the members are very much affected. Let us know if you are willing to help!

### ***A big thank you to all the supporters and friends of the ELCSS/S***

I take this opportunity to thank all those who are supporting the ELCSS/S to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost. Your labors are not in vain!

The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia  
Bishop, ELCSS/S

### **February 21**

The report below was filed by Eileen Roberts. She and her husband, Rev. Robert Roberts, spent a month teaching at the seminary in Yambio, South Sudan. Her report helps us to appreciate the challenges the instructors face as part of their commitment to train men for the ministry.

Prices in the market are high. For things like detergent, toilet paper, paper, pens, etc., I am paying the same or more in dollars than I would in the USA. The students didn't get soap to do laundry until after we were here. Power situation remains the same. If the hospital doesn't take it all, we might have some solar power in the daytime, but the batteries don't hold charge much, so evenings remain dark - a huge problem for homework. New batteries have been coming from Uganda for almost the whole time we have been here. Word was received that the vehicle bringing them has reached Democratic Republic of Congo, but the big trucks are all stopped on the road with no one moving and no one knows why.

English competency is a major problem for some. They can have a simple conversation. They can read some-



times. Practice helps as there are many words they don't know and even more that they cannot pronounce. Bob had them doing Gospel readings the first week (in class). This week they each had to lead their class in a psalm. Little things like how to direct people to the correct page had to be explained (with explanations and exhortations to do it that way often ignored). The idea of leading the congregation on the responses seems to be incomprehensibly alien, no matter how often Bob or I demonstrate personally how it helps. Despite that there is improvement. Their oral English in such things is overall getting a little better.

Knowledge of English grammar is lacking. I have actually had to teach how to write the letters in English, capitals and small letters. They have never learned this (except for a couple). Even the placement of the period has had to be taught (they prefer it halfway between lines). Subjects, verbs, objects (all really useful for learning even a little Greek) are brand new ideas and not easily understood. I have had them write small compositions for me (so far about 6), mostly 6 sentences or more if they like. They are getting better at starting a sentence with a capital and ending with a period, and not just stringing things together with "and." For some it is really hard. Others have a certain fluency, but need help with vocabulary choices and verb tenses. Many randomly capitalize words, particularly nouns. I have said some things about "proper nouns", but they really need practice. I am giving lots of examples not to make fun of them, but to let anyone coming in the next few months know the challenges the men are facing when trying to take in all the things being taught. At least half struggle and give up trying to take notes in the New Testament Intro. They don't know the words in general and have no idea how to spell them if not written out. They are also very, very slow at taking notes, almost as though they were drawing the words, which with the Greek they are.

None of the above is a complaint. We suspected it might be like this. New students in the Philippines often could not write in English either, so the experience is not a new one. We see progress although it comes slowly, slowly.

Eileen

## February 26

Today there was a meeting of the Finance Committee, made up of four members of the LHF Board of Directors along with staff members, Rev. Heise and Jeff Rahn. The responsibility of this committee, which meets on a monthly basis, is to monitor the spending and to harmonize it with the budget adopted for the year. It also has the responsibility to review any investments which need to be made.

The correspondence below with the Bishop of the ELCSS/S typifies the many facets of the LHF translation work, even the tedious work of trying to make sure the language people refer to has the correct spelling according to the international ethnologue catalog. Then there is the matter of getting the schedule of publishing targeted and setting aside the funds to cover such a project. It gives you a look into what activities take place behind the scenes.

From: Jeff Rahn  
To: Anibati, Peter  
Subject: South Sudan Translation Projects

Peter,  
A few additional follow-up questions on the planned translation projects.

Please confirm that the 3 Catechism projects are the *Small Catechism with Explanation*.

In the Ethnologue, I am seeing the languages spelled as Belanda Bor for the Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State, Wau, and Jur River counties and Shilluk in Upper Nile State, Malakal and Panyikang counties among other locations. Are these the languages you are referring to as Balanda and Shuluk?

I am not seeing Atoro, but there is a listing for Otoro in Sudan. For each of the 5 projects listed below we need to know how many copies would be printed and when the texts would be ready for printing.

We are also planning a reprint of the Nuer *Small Catechism with Explanation* that Simon is working on, along with some smaller Nuer booklets from WELS. We are also planning to print 3 Dinka projects that Nathaniel Bol is working on: *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*, *Law and Gospel: The Lutheran Difference*, and *Augsburg Confession: Told for Young People*. These will most likely be printed in Bangkok, Thailand.

In Christ,  
Mr. Jeffrey R. Rahn  
Assistant Executive Director/Director of Operations

REQUIRED CURRICULUM  
CONCORDIA LUTHERAN INSTITUTE FOR THE HOLY MINISTRY (CLIHM)  
YAMBIO, SOUTH SUDAN

CLIHM REQUIRED COURSES FOR A FOUR-YEAR SEMINARY CURRICULUM FOR THE YEARS  
2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 AND 2022

A minimum of 90 semester hours shall be successfully completed, with a 2.0 point average or higher. To graduate with a diploma, all assignments must be successfully completed. Each student is required to individually receive the CLIHM faculty approval to be a candidate recommended for the pastoral ministry of the ELCSS/S.

The CLIHM curriculum is critically evaluated each time a seminary class is accepted for the preparation for the holy ministry. The present seminary curriculum is taught by qualified volunteer instructors who come from Sudan/South Sudan and other countries of the world.

Neither the semester nor the quarter system is practical for CLIHM; however, what seminary students achieve is the equivalent of a Bachelor of Divinity.

The Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Macomb, Michigan is a major factor in financially maintaining the funding, supervision and staffing of Concordia Institute for the Holy Ministry. CLIHM is thankful to Dr. Robert Rahn for his insight and vision for the generous support LHF has provided. Without this support there would be no CLIHM.

Special thanks to the LHF Executive Director Dr. Matthew Heise and Assistant Executive Director Mr. Jeff Rahn and the LHF staff for this unique and very important mission outreach programme. We note the LHF Board of Directors and the unquestioned support they have given to provide the financing to maintain CLIHM.

# CONCORDIA LUTHERAN INSTITUTE FOR THE HOLY MINISTRY (CLIHM) CURRICULUM

## YEAR ONE 2018-19

### SEMESTER ONE

<u>CREDITS &amp; COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>PROFESSOR</u>	<u>DATES</u>
4 Dogmatics I & II		
3 Introduction to New Testament		
3 Introduction to Old Testament		
2 Biblical Geography	Rev. Dr. Lutz	
2 Remedial English		
3 Liturgics and Lutheran Worship		
2 Research and Reference Methods		
3 Law and Gospel	Rev. Dr. Lutz	
<u>2</u> The Fruit of the Spirit - God's Gift	Dr. Elly Lutz	
24 SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS		

### SEMESTER TWO

4 Dogmatics III
3 The History of Christianity I
3 Introduction to New Testament
3 Philosophy of Christian Education
2 Remedial English
2 Homiletics I
<u>2</u> Introduction to the Old Testament
19 SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS

## YEAR TWO 2019-20

### SEMESTER ONE

<u>CREDITS &amp; COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>PROFESSOR</u>	<u>DATES</u>
3 Dogmatics IV		
2 Methods of Christian Education		
3 History of Christianity II		
3 Luke		
2 Introduction to the Computer		
3 Teaching Luther's <i>Small Catechism</i>		
2 The Lutheran Liturgy and Church Music		
3 Hermeneutics	Rev. Dr. Lutz	
<u>2</u> Homiletics II		
23 SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS		

## SEMESTER TWO – YEAR TWO

<u>CREDITS &amp; COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>PROFESSOR</u>	<u>DATES</u>
3 Isaiah		
2 Evangelism & Church Planting		
2 The Lutheran Confessions I		
4 Dogmatics V		
3 History of Israel		
2 Teaching Pastors to Teach		
3 Pauline Epistles		
3 World Religions		
<u>2</u> History and Theology of Islam		
24 SEMESTER hours credit		

## YEAR THREE 2020-21

### INTERNSHIP/VICARAGE YEAR

Includes a Major Research Paper.

The Internship or Vicarage year provides a hands-on ministry for the CLIHM student. While the Field Work programme helps equip the CLIHM student for an effective ministry, the Vicarage programme of the seminary places the student in a situation that parallels the actual ministry. The CLIHM student is under the supervision of a Lutheran pastor and receives a final evaluation grade as part of the Year Three vicarage year work.

The assignment given to each student is to return to his home congregation to complete this assignment.

In special cases the CLIHM student may be assigned special ministry activity that relates to the office of the Holy Ministry.

## YEAR FOUR 2021-22

### SEMESTER ONE

<u>CREDITS &amp; COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>PROFESSOR</u>	<u>DATES</u>
3 Dogmatics VI		
3 Church Administration		
3 Christian Stewardship	Rev. Dr. Lutz	
3 Romans		
2 The Theology of Missions		
3 Dogmatics VII		
2 Pastoral Counseling		
<u>4</u> Genesis		
23 SEMESTER hours credit		

## SEMESTER TWO

3	The Gospel of John
2	The Lutheran Confessions II
3	Acts of the Apostle
2	Official Church Rites
3	African Traditional Religions
3	Galatians
3	The Lutheran Reformation
2	Pastoral Theology
3	Lutheranism, Past and Present
<u>2</u>	Christian Apologetics
26	SEMESTER hours credit

Further Studies:     Introduction to Greek I  
                              Introduction to Hebrew I  
                              Other studies critically important to the proper equipping of Lutheran Pastors

The Concordia Lutheran Institute for Holy Ministry also requires each student to participate in assigned Field Work projects. The Field Work program includes an assignment to work under supervision in a local congregations. Emphasis is on leading the Lutheran Liturgy, reading of Scripture. The Second year Field Work program projects which include visits to the prisons, hospitals and other public institutions and special work with seniors and youth. Preaching assignments will be scheduled after the students have successfully completed Homiletics I.

### July 5

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn; Matthew Heise; Jeff Rahn; Bernhard Lutz  
Subject: Meeting in Juba

Dear brothers,  
Greetings from Yambio in Jesus. I just got back yesterday. I went to Gambela to solve some problems which had divided the church there. I am glad to inform you that all the differences were resolved and all are working together now in unity.

On my way back while in Juba, I got a call from Wilson requesting a meeting and bringing an end to the problems in our church. He stated that he was no longer interested in the court case and he wants us now to forgive, reconcile and work together. I did meet him and he stated that he wants to make peace and reconcile. So, I appreciated the initiative and told him that I was going to present this to the church council in Yambio, and he is willing to talk and solve the problems amicably. After I heard from the council, I will get back to him.

The issue has been long. We have been trying to get the Juba property through the court but it seems to be taking forever. Since he has opted for negotiation, I would like to carefully pursue this and see where it will take us.

Therefore, I request that you keep this in your prayers and I also need your advice. What should I do now

since Wilson has requested for forgiveness and reconciliation and that we solve the matter outside the court? Many have seem to be in agreement that the issue be resolved in the church rather than in the court.

Your comments will be appreciated.

Blessings+

The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Matthew Heise

To: Peter Anibati; Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn; Bernhard Lutz

Subject: RE: Meeting in Juba

Good evening, Peter. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

Your heart is right and proper to always seek reconciliation. I am not surprised by your humble heart that always seeks the lost sinner.

I'm curious, though, as to what prompted Wilson's change of heart, if it is indeed changed. He says that he is no longer interested in a court case. I wonder why? What does your lawyer say? Has he repented of the misallocated funds? Has he acknowledged this and told you how he spent the church's money? And is this Edward Nzeme actually the same Edward who was imprisoned for embezzlement of church funds? Has he, too, repented?

If he asks for forgiveness and reconciliation, I would think that he could no longer serve as a bishop or pastor anyway. As Paul reminds us in 1 Timothy 3:2-3, an "overseer" (episkopos) "...must be above reproach..." and "...not a lover of money." Wilson has often shown himself to be unfit in these categories of character.

I notice that Edward's Facebook post refers to you as "the two bishops." Does that mean that Wilson still considers himself a bishop? So I would guess that they will establish another church? Or do they still think that they are the ELCSS/S?

What does he mean by "negotiation?" I'm sorry for so many questions, but these are just some initial thoughts.

By all means, I think it is good to pursue a conversation, but I am curious as to what has prompted this change of heart (or change of tactics). And as I conclude my initial thoughts, I do want to say that the ELCSS/S would make the decision here, not me. It is your church and you know best. But I must confess that unless Wilson is truly repentant, you should be wary. I know that you are, and do know you will be in our constant prayers.

God give you His special wisdom to see to the heart of the matter. That will be my prayer.

Blessings, and God's peace to you and all of the brothers and sisters in the ELCSS/S, Peter!

Matthew



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From: Bernhard Lutz  
To: Matthew Heise; Peter Anibati; Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn  
Subject: Re: Meeting in Juba

Greetings in Jesus!

Speaking of the wicked person, the Psalmist wisely states, “His speech is as smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart; his words are more soothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.” Ps 55

How blessed are those who confess, repent and change their heart, even the angels in heaven rejoice!

May the Lord give to all persons involved the expansion of His Kingdom...wisdom, courage, boldness and faith to do His good and gracious will. We pray, Thy will be done! We remember the father filled with pain as he joyfully receives the prodigal come limping home!!

Jesus used specific “conditions.” He set the perimeters for His Bride, the Church. Let us rejoice, but proceed with caution as we give thanks for step one in the process of reconciliation.

In Christian love ... Allah mahabah.  
Dr. Lutz

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From: Peter Anibati  
To: Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn; Bernhard Lutz; Matthew Heise  
Subject: Re: RE: Meeting in Juba

Dear Dr. Matthew,  
I appreciate very much your comments and questions too.

I am also curious as to what really prompted Wilson towards this direction. I have my own reservations as a person, but because the church has the responsibility of seeking the lost in order to bring them to Christ, that is what motivated me to meet with Wilson and listen to him.

I think part of the reason why he has called for forgiveness and reconciliation is that recently the High Court in Juba decided to dismiss all his claims and the case he opened against us. I sent him a letter to hand over the church assets in Juba based on the decision of the court. He again appealed the decision of the High Court, and the Court of Appeals issued an order of temporary injunction on handover of church assets in Juba.

Our lawyer also went to the court and appealed the decision of temporary injunction on handover of the church assets. I think because of this Wilson decided to look for other alternatives. It seems the court case cannot finish quickly, it takes time...

Our lawyer is of the opinion that if Wilson has really repented, he needs to step aside and hand over the church property in Juba and give accounts of the lost funds and not consider himself as bishop.

In the discussion with Wilson, he stated he was sorry for what happened but there was no indication of stepping down. It seems he prefers to remain bishop in Juba and I in Yambio.

To be honest with you, I am very very careful with this and I am trying to find out what the intentions are. No decisions have been made but the we are open for discussion. I am having meetings with pastors and then the church council and will get back to you.

Keep us in your prayers for God's wisdom and guidance in this.

Blessings+

The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Matthew Heise

To: Peter Anibati; Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn; Bernhard Lutz

Subject: RE: RE: Meeting in Juba

Thank you very much, Peter, for your thoughts on this matter.

I do want to make it clear that I think you acted very appropriately and pastorally by meeting with Wilson and listening to him. But given this information you have provided, I agree with your lawyer. True repentance would mean he is truly sorry and realizes that he has taken money inappropriately. He absolutely needs to hand over the church property in Juba (it is not his private residence, after all!). And he can no longer serve as bishop. It seems to me that is non-negotiable. A truly repentant person would be ashamed of his conduct and would resign his office (which is no longer his, anyway).

Given that he doesn't seem to be inclined to do either of these things, as far as I can tell, I sense that he is just looking for a way to keep his ill-gotten gains. He probably doesn't have much money left to bribe judges, so if the High Court dismissed his claims, I would imagine he will not be successful in his appeal.

It sounds as if he is stalling for time, so it is good that you are meeting with your pastors and church council. That is the proper path to follow. And rest assured, we will keep you in fervent prayer!

God be with you and the ELCSS/S and guide you in your decisions!

Matthew

## July 21

To: Simon Gatluak-Gambela

From: Robert Rahn

Subject: Stewardship Lesson Under the Shade Tree

Simon,

You will remember that when I was there, the women of the Gambela Ethiopia Congregation wanted to meet with me after that five-hour service, and we set chairs under the shade of a tree. What kind of tree was that? While I don't know its name, I have talked about the meeting as "A Stewardship Lesson Under a Shade Tree."

Three of the women served as spokespersons. Each one of them began their presentation by saying, "We are happy." The thought that came to mind immediately was "How can they be happy if they come from a refugee camp?" The question loomed even larger when they outlined their needs and told of their plight...

- They were forced from their homes
- The conflict was intense and they had to run, leaving everything behind
- Many lost their husbands in the conflict
- They now were left to care for themselves and their children

What came to my mind was a statement our Ethiopian Director, Dereje Tilahun, used in a Powerpoint presentation when we conducted a distribution program for pastors of a circuit, giving away the Amharic *Book of Concord, Small Catechism and Catechisms, Creeds and Confessions*. The statement he showed was "God's Kingdom is not built on our achievements, but God's Kingdom is built using our sacrifices." It's part of the "Stewardship Lesson Under a Tree."

As each of the women spoke, they were requesting help — not necessarily for themselves, but for the church they loved. I listened carefully:

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. Fencing that could be placed around their church property to protect it from squatters.<br>It was the same need expressed later by members of the Anuak-speaking congregation in another part of Gambela. | \$5,500 |
| 2. Cement to be used to paint the wall of their church. They had painted it with mud but in the rain it washed away.   | \$5,000 |
| 3. A well so they would be spared walking great distances or from buying it from a donkey water wagon.   | \$7,500 |
| 4. Bibles (1,000) for those who had to leave theirs behind   | \$7,350 |
| 5. Equipping an orphanage for 200 children, ages 2-13 and their educational needs  | \$3,500 |
| 6. Plastic roof coverings for 20 churches until they could afford a more permanent zinc roof (20 churches x \$240 each)  | \$4,800 |
| 7. A scholarship for one of their pastors to get advanced education  | \$3,500 |

When the women finished their presentations, I simply told them that most of these needs are outside the mission objectives of the LHF. I, however, made a promise to them that I would let their needs be known in America when the opportunity presented itself.

This weekend I made a trip to Minnesota because a retired pastor friend of mine called and asked me to call one of his former farmer members to whom he had mentioned LHF as his favorite, most effective mission. I talked to the farmer and sent him LHF materials, newsletters, brochures and the book *Jesus Never Fails*. I made an appointment for this past Saturday and took with me a proposal listing the above items and the publishing of several books for a total of \$48,150.

Not knowing the level of support he and his wife might provide, I added a project with a lower amount as well I labeled the page "Foremost Focus: Well, Water and the Word" and listed items for \$20,800:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Dig the well  | \$7,500 |
| • Deliver the Word (Bibles)                           | \$7,350 |
| • Decipher the Truth (catechisms at the well)         | \$3,000 |
| • Distribute the Gospel ("Jesus Never Fails" booklet) | \$3,000 |

The idea of water resonated with this farmer as in a distant field we could see the bean field being irrigated by the use of an irrigation pivot. I shared with them that the digging of the well would provide water for the

church families, water that would be shared with the community around the church and provide opportunity for a Lutheran Gospel witness. I reminded them that we as Lutherans believe that the Word has power, value, comfort and hope.

I shared the story of the woman of Samaria whom Jesus talked to at the well and said to her: “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing to eternal life.” John 4:13,14

I explained that too many mission efforts are well intended with the distribution of food, water, glasses, buildings built and all sorts of projects. We believe the Word needs to accompany these acts of mercy. Once the well is dug and water is flowing, we not only want people to be drinking water to fill a thirst that will re-occur, but we want to provide the water of the Word that will quench an eternal thirst. I told them our prayer should be: “Lord, let us give them this water and this Word” and it will result in no more walking for water or purchasing it from donkey water carts.

The wife wrote the check for \$7,500 and he signed it. He asked that I keep them informed of the progress and requested an additional envelope for gifts in the future. He also indicated that he would give the proposal to his three sons, partners in the 3,000-acre operation, and maybe they would help provide the Word to be distributed at the well.

On Sunday I preached at Zion Lutheran Church in Annandale, Minnesota, and the Gospel reading for the day was on the feeding of the 5,000. My theme was “Bread King or King of Kings: What Is Jesus For You?” I told them about the Stewardship Lesson Under the Tree. Many thanked me after the service for sharing the story and that a Minnesota farmer had provided the well, and now we have the opportunity to provide the Word to go with the water through our gifts. It’s the mission of LHF to pray, preach and print the news of the availability of bread that lasts and water that provides the eternal refreshment. I introduced them to the “Jesus Never Fails” booklet, one of the publications we want to give at the well. The gifts given after the service amounted to over \$700 thus far.

When I returned home and told Donna that the well will be dug, she was pleased because she had asked many times about it and was looking for a way to help provide the water. The praying and the paying is what provides the product.

Simon, it took a while but the message I’m sending is that you can tell the women THE LORD PROVIDES. Let the process for the digging of the well begin, and we will continue to search for the funds to provide for the Word that will be distributed with the water in the books we publish.

May thirsting souls receive this water for physical thirst-quenching and may you provide the water of the Word that has eternal thirst quenching power. God wants to use you and me to give strength and hope from under our shade tree. All gave some, some gave all, militarily. So it can be among those serving in the army of the Lord.

Yours in Him Who is the Bread from Heaven and the Living Water for the soul.  
R. Rahn

**August 7**

The correspondence that follows once again takes up the question of church fellowship between the ELCSS/S and the LCMS that started already during the time of Andrew Mbugo Elisa's leadership of the church body in Sudan back in the early 1990s.

From: Matthew Heise  
To: Albert Collver  
Cc: Jeff Rahn, Peter Anibati; Daniel McMiller  
Subject: Visit of Bishop Peter Anibati to the USA

Good morning, Al.

I can now inform you that the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan (ELCSS/S) has received a visa to travel to the United States.

Bishop Peter Anibati will join us for our 25th anniversary celebration on Saturday, November 10 (to which you will also receive an invitation). We would like to explore if there might be time for you (and/or President Harrison) to meet with him while he is in the U.S.? You could come to us or he could come to you, most likely after November 14.

We know the time is tight with the Thanksgiving holiday looming shortly afterwards, so please let us know as to the possibility and your availability.

Blessings on your summer!  
Matt

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From: Albert Collver  
To: Matthew Heise  
Cc: Jeff Rahn; Peter Anibati; McMiller, Daniel; Darin Storkson  
Subject: Re: Visit of Bishop Peter Anibati to the USA

Dear Matt,

Thank you for writing. Unfortunately, I am in Brazil from November 7-15, 2018. They invited me to give a presentation on World Lutheranism in several locations in Brazil.

I have copied my assistant Darin, who can likely meet with you perhaps on November 10.

I know that the ELCSS/S has applied for ILC membership. At the present moment, Archbishop Ekong has recommended that the application be postponed until the situation regarding Bishop Anibati and former Bishop Noah Wilson settles down. If you or Bishop Anibati have additional information that Archbishop Ekong should be aware of, please let him (and me) know.

It might be possible for me to meet with Bishop Anibati after my trip to Brazil.

Thank you.

Abc3+

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To: Al Collver  
From: Matthew Heise

Thank you very much, Al. We know you are on the road often.

The ELCSS/S is working through the South Sudan Council of Churches to rectify the matter of former Bishop Wilson's malfeasance. He has not accounted for large sums of money (approximately \$100,000 per year for about 4 or 5 years) that came through renting church property to the United Nations. The property had been secured by the late Bishop Andrew Elisa for the benefit of the church, not one individual.

That, among other things, is the reason for the conflict in the church. But we understand. Perhaps after your visit to Brazil he can come to you. We can keep this open as a possibility.

God's blessings on your travels and endeavors for the LCMS!  
Matt

### **August 8**

From: Simon Gatluak  
Subject: Gambela well quotation

In the notice below Rev. Simon Gatluak, assistant bishop ELCSS/S, submits the official bid for drilling a well at the Gambela Church site that the women of the church requested. They were walking great distances for water and a \$7,500 grant was received to underwrite the project. The plan is to dispense water to the community and distribute LHF books and materials at the site.

### **August 9**

From: Matthew Heise  
To: Peter Anibati

Hi, Peter,  
Perhaps it will be a good time for you to ask Dr. Collver what steps need to be taken for fellowship to occur between the LCMS and the ELCSS/S. It would be good to immediately address the issue since he has just written.

We are working on your schedule while in the States. I will have a follow-up e-mail to you very soon on this topic.

Blessings,  
Matthew

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From: Peter Anibati

Dear Dr. Collver,

Thank you for your kind response. I really would like to meet with you and present in person what is happening at the ELCSS/S. I know you have heard so many things about us and especially the incident with our brother, the former bishop. We are working on resolving the matter. As Rev. Matt has rightly put it, it was all about accountability to the church.

I believe the issues will soon be resolved and I beg that this should not jeopardize our membership with the International Lutheran Council. This is what we have desired for a very long time — to belong to a confessional universal body of Christ like the ILC and the LCMS. I pray that you would consider us like brothers who need your direction. If possible send me the email of Archbishop Ekong. I would like to write to him on this matter.

God be with you in all your travels,  
Peter Anibati

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From: James May  
To: Matthew Heise  
Subject: Re: Lutheranism 101 and Lutheran Study Bible

Karibu sana! We could translate *Lutheranism101* but with the catechism and the *Book of Concord* in Swahili, I don't think it is a priority. We just published an historical resource in *Here I Stand*. Exegetical and devotional resources are needed now, in my opinion.

Rev. James May  
Director of Lutherans in Africa

### **August 10**

Today Assistant Bishop Simon Gatluak was informed that a wire had been sent for half of the amount to be used in digging a well at the Gambela Lutheran Church complex.

### **August 13**

Simon Gatluak wrote:

Jeff, thanks brother in the Lord. We received the money that you sent for the well project and the water well will start. We will keep you on the progress through the pictures and will share all information with you.

In Christ,  
Rev. Simon

**August 14**

From: Peter Anibati  
To: Jeff Rahn; Matthew Heise; Robert Rahn; Sgatluak Geng  
Subject: Confirmed the money for the well

Wonderful. Let the work begin immediately and keep us posted on the progress.

Blessings+

The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/Sudan (ELCSS/S), Gbudue State, Yambio

“Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.”-Proverbs 16:3

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From: Robert Rahn  
To: Peter Anibati; Jeff Rahn; Matthew Heise; Sgatluak Geng  
Subject: RE: Confirmed the money for the well

Dear Peter,

We are pleased to have the project begin and look for the updates. I'm now promoting the translation and publishing of the books that can be passed out at the well and elsewhere — my "Jesus Never Fails" booklet and the catechism. I assume it will be in several Sudanese dialects like Nuer and Zande and others.

I can't remember if I wrote to you out of concern relative to a request Bisi made to Mike Roth and his congregation, when he requested Rev. Roth to provide funds for a youth center. It was at the very time when you and I were discussing the need for all projects and programs to be initiated and approved by your office, so we don't have these end around efforts. I think you have addressed this before with your students and pastors.

Today I received a message from one of our LHF representatives, a member of Roth's congregation. He had received our newsletter in which we featured an article on the need to support pastors in the ELCSS/S. He mentioned that he was going to talk to Roth about it. Here is what I wrote to him:

We have been asked a couple of times about an "Adopt a Student" idea, but we are not interested or equipped to monitor that. Our goal is simply to designate it student assistance and let the Bishop and his administration decide how to disburse it and to whom. We have had some students go around the system to get help, and then the request comes to us to send the money through our channels. That is where it gets difficult. Some students are helped and maybe some that are even more needy (who don't have access to Internet) are not helped.

All of the above is shared as a matter of information. It probably is a little difficult for you to monitor this as you'd like in this Internet age, but your reminders to the students and pastors from time to time is important. It is also the whole matter of stewardship training we attempt to provide on a regular basis with Bernie.

Just want you to be aware of the fact that I'm in the process of compiling the ELCSS/S church history, doing two books at once. I have a lot of Sudan history in the LHF book and I'm transferring anything of a Sudan nature into the ELCSS/S text. I just discovered yesterday how to use a split screen on my computer to deliver me from what I had been doing in copying the information, closing the LHF text, opening the ELCSS/S text,

pasting the info, saving it, and going back to the LHF text. Now I have both editions in front of me to go back and forth. It is saving time and energy and gives me new hope that I may get through the editing by the end of the month. I am just building your history on a document I had published in 2012 that already had a lot of the history recorded. It will take your history through the present, and then hopefully someone else will pick it up for the future. (Who knows, this piece might even appear in our history as it reflects a problem that has been with the church since its inception.)

What about the bakery? Is Pascal still working with it since he became a student? The results are probably tied directly to the state of the economy at present.

How are things at the seminary with the local staff in the teaching role for August? Coming next is Rev. Henry Malone and his Sudanese friend Mike Salah Lado. They will be taking the Juba route because Malone's congregation is helping build a church in the Juba area (I believe). A Sudanese group uses his church in Salt Lake City for their worship service. That's how he probably got hooked up with Lado. You can find out all details when they arrive as to what Lado is doing.

Back to the editing.

Blessings,

RR

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From: Japheth Dachi  
Subject: MY RETIREMENT  
To: Herbert Gore  
Cc: James May

Mr. Herbert,

Apparently I am retiring by the end of this year, and I am requesting that you start with the paperwork so that when I arrive in Kenya, then it may only be the signing and I go to the Offices. I do not know how you do with the other Scheme of Insurance.

I will soon send you a copy of the budget that I will send to Rev. Dr. Rahn and copies to other leaders. In that email, I also will request to stay at the Scripture Mission for some few days. Has the Office moved to the LST? I am here up to February 2, 2018 for the Commemoration of 25 years of existence of the Church here. There will be very many delegates, so maybe I will book MAF Uganda and then to Nairobi.

Thank you for your services together with Rev. James May during all those years that I served in South Sudan and also my family. In many organizations, I do know of the payment of gratuity when an employee is going home. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,  
Rev. Japheth Rabach Dachi  
Principal, CLIHM

**August 14**

From: Peter Anibati

Sent To: Jeff Rahn; Matthew Heise; Sgatluak Geng; Robert Rahn

Subject: Confirmed the money for the well

Thank you Dr. Rahn for taking your time to write the history of the ELCSS/S. This is very much needed especially as we prepare for the December 25 anniversary of our church. Through your support, we will be able to hand out this document during the celebration.

The "Jesus Never Fails" booklet is now ready in Acholi and the Arabic version is being worked on. Hopefully Rev. Simon is getting the Nuer version in order!

When I returned from Nairobi, I did address the issue of projects submitted to visiting instructors without the notice of the office. I think from now onward this practice will cease.

The bakery was on hold for some time; now we have Linda and Pastor George working with it. Pascal is busy with his studies and does not have time to work at the bakery. Hopefully this will start generating some income for the church soon. Will keep you updated on this.

Concerning the issue of support to pastors, it is very much needed specially at this time. I would recommend that the support is given to the church and designated as support to pastors rather than individual pastors, because we want everybody to benefit from whatever support the ELCSS/S gets.

Blessings+

The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

**August 21**

From: Peter Anibati

To: Robert Rahn

Cc: Bernhard Lutz

Subject: Proposed project in honor of late Bishop Andrew

Dear Dr. Rahn, I have some thoughts that i would like to share with you.

1) I am prayerfully thinking of establishing a secondary school in Yambio in honor of the late bishop Andrew to recognize his effort of laying the foundation of the ELCSS/S. I am thinking of a name like this: Bishop Andrew Mbugo Academy for Science and Technology - BAMAST. This would avail a Lutheran Secondary School for graduates of our primary schools and the community at large would benefit from it. My issue is that I would need supporters for the project. What do you think of the idea?

2) This year has been one of the most difficult years for our pastors here. They were used to receiving stipends to support their families. We are trying with stewardship, but the truth is that many of the people we serve struggle to put mere bread on the table for their families. I am thinking of looking for education support for pastors' children. If such an item is included in our next year's budget, do you think we could get support for it? Tuition for primary education here costs about \$50 - \$60 per child for a year and double that for secondary school for a child, apart from uniform and books. I think it can ease the burden on pastors if one or two of their children can get education support.

3) Opportunity for further studies for ELCSS/S pastors. Many of our pastors, as I indicated in my recent report, are diploma holders. Since they graduated, some have never had the chance to get refresher courses that can improve their skills. Advise me on how these pastors can be upgraded beyond CLIHM. Perhaps it is time we start thinking of improving CLIHM to offer Bachelor degrees. Perhaps we could plan advance courses for pastors to be taking at CLIHM and invite professors to teach such courses. It might not be necessary to have pastors full time since they are busy with the ministry. Maybe they could be invited for two or three week intensives at CLIHM. Do you think we can get support from LCMS, Fort Wayne or St. Louis seminaries?

FYI, I have applied for PhD studies at Fort Wayne. If I am accepted, I would like to do distance learning and attend when I am needed. The Lutheran Seminary in South Africa and the University of Pretoria have sent my academic transcripts to them.

That should be enough for now... I need your thoughts on this and comments from Dr. Lutz.

Blessings+

The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia, Bishop

**August 23**

From: Peter Anibati

To: Dr. Al Collver; Darin Storkson

Dear Dr. Collver and Darin,

Greetings from Yambio, South Sudan in Jesus! I hope this email finds you well.

I plan to be in the U.S. by October 28 as you are aware. I know you both are busy traveling this time. Perhaps, is it possible to meet with you November 16 or earlier the next week?

Blessings+

The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia

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From: Albert Collver

To: Peter Anibati

Cc: Darin Storkson

Subject: Re: Visit of Bishop Peter Anibati to the USA

Dear Bishop,

I should be able to meet you between October 29-31. I am out of town until Sunday then I return. So if you wanted to meet on Monday - Wednesday (preferably for me Tuesday or Wednesday) that should be possible.

The dates you gave in November would not work for me, because I would be out of town again.

Thank you

Abc3+

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From: Peter Anibati  
To: Matthew Heise; Robert Rahn; Jeff Rahn  
Subject: Fw: Re: Visit of Bishop Peter Anibati to the USA

I just wrote to Dr. Collver and below is his response. I replied to him that we meet on October 31.

Blessings+  
The Rt. Rev. Peter Anibati Abia



## A View to the Future

The history of LHF's work in Sudan is one in which the hand of God is evident in so many ways. We could recall a statement once used to describe the work of LHF that underscores the impact God has had on the work carried out: "We don't know what we are doing or where we are going, but we know God is leading and providing."

This is true especially of the work in Sudan. LHF started out with a bold move to provide books and materials in the languages of the people and ended up seeing a Lutheran church body organized. In the context of this work, the question needed to be asked many times: "Is LHF money-driven or mission-driven?"

We have seen the manner in which God has used church leaders who had vision, confidence, commitment and leadership. The late Rev. Bishop Andrew Mbugo Elisa had an untiring zeal in laying the foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sudan/South Sudan. He also demonstrated an entrepreneurial spirit seldom seen in churchmen today.

God in His wisdom saw fit to call Andrew to Himself at a young age, and only now is the ELCSS/S seemingly recovering from this loss through the leadership of another able churchman, Rev. Bishop Peter Anibati. In his untiring efforts, he has had the challenge of putting together the pieces of a broken church that experienced a failed leadership. With attention given to the congregations, Rev. Peter has acquired the confidence of the church, and we are seeing it move forward.

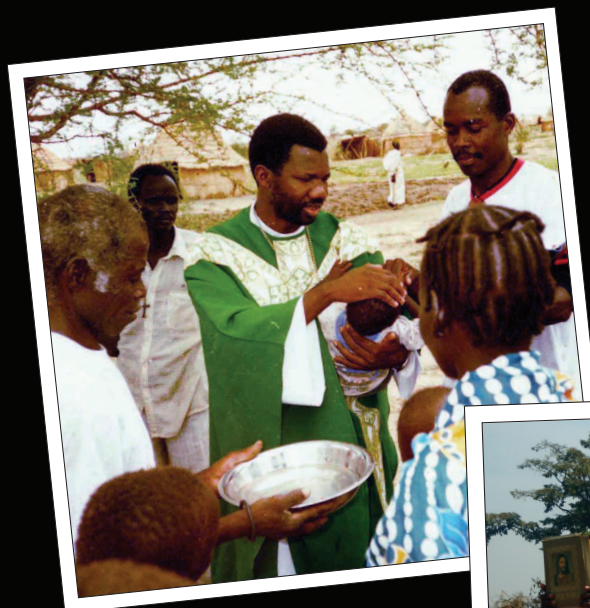
Tribal upheaval and bloodshed has caused many Sudanese Lutherans to flee the country to live in refugee camps. The LHF has especially ministered to the Gambela camps, due to the fact that several ELCSS/S pastors were among those who fled the country and now live in the Gambela camps. Under the leadership of Assistant Bishop Simon Gatluak, we have seen the church growing in the midst of adversity. LHF attempts to provide periodic educational opportunities for the Lutherans of Gambela.

As the church celebrates her 25th anniversary, we at the Lutheran Heritage Foundation give thanks to God for His blessings of the past, and we commend the ELCSS/S to the grace of God in leading this church in the future.

*Rev. Robert Rahn, LHF Founder  
Rev. Dr. Matthew Heise, LHF Executive Director  
Mr. Jeffrey Rahn, LHF Assistant Executive Director*

## God's Word shall not return empty.

The history of the Evangelical Lutheran church in South Sudan and Sudan is one in which we have seen this promise fulfilled in so many ways. For the past 25 years, it has been evident that the history of the ELCSS/S is God's arranged plan of salvation for the people of South Sudan and Sudan.



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**LUTHERAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION**

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