

A SUSTAINABLE  
RESPONSE  
TO AN  
ONGOING NEED

# Building Foundations for Lutherans in Africa

ISSUE #1 • SPRING 2013

## INTRODUCING A Capital Campaign For Lutherans In Africa

Lutherans in Africa is building a new center in Africa to do what else, create and support Lutherans in Africa. This newsletter introduces you to this God-pleasing and exciting project. In a few weeks you will be asked to get involved. For now, take a few minutes and read about this wonderful plan to spread the Gospel and Lutheranism across Africa.



## Who Are The Lutherans In Africa?

Picture it ... a growing village in sub-Saharan, Africa 2013 and new Christians are hungry for the pure Gospel. They have been told that the one true God sent his son to save the world and they want to learn all about it. They have met local Evangelists who share this great faith. They have even held the Bibles that contain this live saving Word and have seen other books and hymnals that allow them to study and worship this God and Savior. But there are not enough Evangelists and

there are not enough Bibles and some of the books are not yet in their native language.

Travel is hard and money is in short supply so they wait until it is their turn for the teachers of this wonderful faith to come to their villages. Between visits they use the new Bibles and other books that they can get their hands on and gather for study and worship. They sing hymns from the Lutheran Service Book to a simple drum beat and some even memorize the entire Catechism in their joyous new faith. These are the new Lutherans in Africa. And they are growing faster than any Lutheran church in the world.

Jesus said to his disciples, his evangelists, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. ..." This is happening now and on a large scale in Africa. The Gospel is being spread to those who are most hungry for it. The mission field is enormous but there are just too few churches, seminaries and pastors to serve these new Lutheran Christians.

## What Is This Organization Called Lutherans In Africa?

Lutherans in Africa was born out of mission work that was started back in 1996 by Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki. Rev. Simojoki worked with the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and spent several years doing mission work in Africa and translating the Book of Concord into Kiswahili, a language spoken by 150 million people. Rev. James E. May, Jr. had also been working in Africa with the Lutheran Heritage Foundation to bring the pure Gospel to the people of Africa. That work formed the foundation for Lutherans in Africa (LIA) which was founded in 2010. The mission of LIA is "to form African Christians to be teachers of the faith" Currently LIA works in 20 African countries, teaching confessional Lutheran doctrine to pastors, evangelists and other church leaders. They also continue the important work of translating Lutheran resources into the many languages of the African people.





## What Will This New Training Center Include?

The main components of the Training Center will be:

- Classrooms and offices
- Theological library
- Space for continued translation work
- Devotional Chapel
- Housing for the students and teaching staff.

Based on research of other successful Christian centers, the Training Center will strive to keep costs down by establishing a program of self-sufficiency. The students will build their own housing and will use the land to its best advantage for food. A deep well will be drilled for water and solar power will be the source of electricity. Once the Training Center is established, maintenance costs will be minimal and the current costs for rent and staff travel will be eliminated.

Since 2010, Rev. May has traveled all over the continent to teach. He spends one or two weeks in an area and then moves on to another country requesting training. He sometimes teaches seminary students who benefit from intense preparatory classes and sometimes trains Sunday School teachers who need materials to bring up their children in the correct faith which is given in the Catechism. But Rev. May and those working with Lutherans in Africa have found that the most pressing need is to train the Evangelists who are holding these new churches together while they wait for their next pastoral visit. These are local men who teach and lead worship. They do not administer the sacraments but they can teach their people once they, themselves are strong in the knowledge of God's Word.

## What Is The Plan To Train These Evangelists?

With their focus now on training the Evangelists, LIA was quickly able to come up with a plan to make this happen as effectively as possible. Instead of having a few pastors travel to all parts of the continent, LIA will make it possible for the many Evangelists to make one trip to a central Training Center. They will spend two years living, learning and working at the Training Center and then they will go back to their churches and share this knowledge, this Gospel, with their own people.

## What Is The Cost To Fund the Training Center?

The first order of business is to purchase land, fence it in, and install the well and solar panels. Then we can begin building classrooms. The estimated cost for the infrastructure and space for classrooms is roughly \$500,000. This figure can vary greatly depending on how close the facility is built to the city of Nairobi.

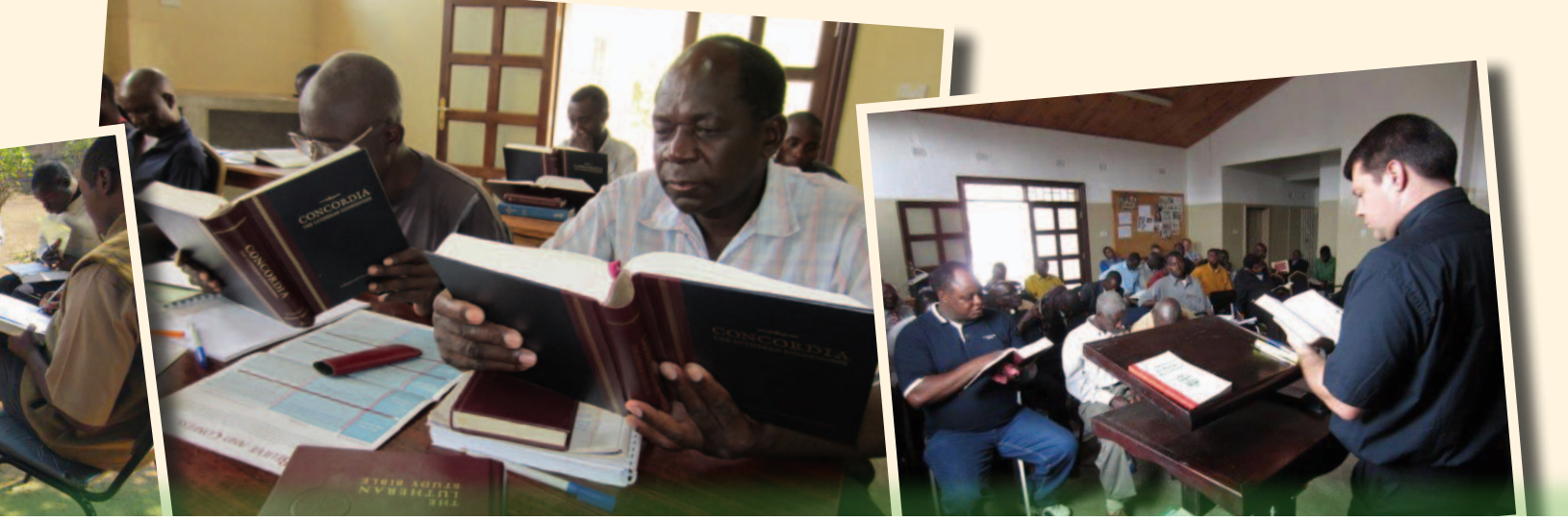
## How Will This Capital Campaign Reach So Many People?

We started the campaign by recruiting a slate of LIA supporters—pastors and laymen from all over the world. We asked them to take on the task of identifying even more current and potential supporters of LIA. We are in the middle of that process right now. Once this network of campaign volunteers is set, we will roll out the rest of the campaign by using these main components:

- Newsletters
- Informational Brochure
- Inspirational Video
- Live, Real-Time Prayer Vigil
- Home Gatherings

### NEWSLETTERS

This is the first campaign newsletter, intended to share the exciting vision that LIA has set forth and to introduce you to the Capital Campaign. More information will be coming your way in the weeks ahead.



### **INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE**

Watch for even more details about the Training Center in the campaign brochure. Here you will also see details of the financing plan for the building and maintenance of the Center, the types of gifts that will be needed to fund the project and inspiring quotes from the new Lutherans in Africa who have already been blessed by the work of LIA.

### **INSPIRATIONAL VIDEO**

Production work is well underway for our campaign video. We are fortunate to have been able to record Rev. James May speak about plans for this Training Center while he was in the United States in mid-February. What better way to become involved in a project than to hear about the plans firsthand! Listen to the needs of the African people, the progress already made and the vision for the future.

### **LIVE, REAL-TIME PRAYER VIGIL**

Mark Friday, May 31 on your calendar right now! On that evening from 9 p.m. to midnight, Central Standard Time, we are having a world-wide real-time prayer vigil. This means that during those three hours thousands of people will be praying together at their own churches and in their homes that God will be merciful to this campaign to raise funds for the Training Center in Nairobi. Hour one will be

simultaneous vigils at hundreds of churches and homes with a live stream vigil from Bethany Lutheran Church in Naperville, Illinois. Hour two of the vigil will switch to a live broadcast from Nairobi as we interview Rev. James May and pray together with those across the world. Hour three will round out the vigil with another hour of live streaming from Bethany and simultaneous vigils at churches and homes throughout the world.

### **HOME GATHERINGS**

Finally, after we have spread the word, asked God to bless our efforts and shared the story of LIA with as many as possible, we will gather in groups in the homes and churches of our supporters. This might involve a special dinner, an evening of wine and cheese or coffee and cookies. In a comfortable setting we will read through the LIA campaign brochure, watch the video and then make a prayerful gift or pledge in support of the new Training Center.

## **What Can You Do To Make This A Reality?**

### **HOST A HOME GATHERING**

After you have read this newsletter, take a moment to decide just how you might help with the LIA Capital Campaign. We are just beginning to recruit hosts for our Home Gatherings. If you have a group of friends that would be willing to come learn more about Lutherans in Africa and consider making a contribution to this campaign, please begin to make plans for your Gathering.

### **PARTICIPATE IN THE PRAYER VIGIL**

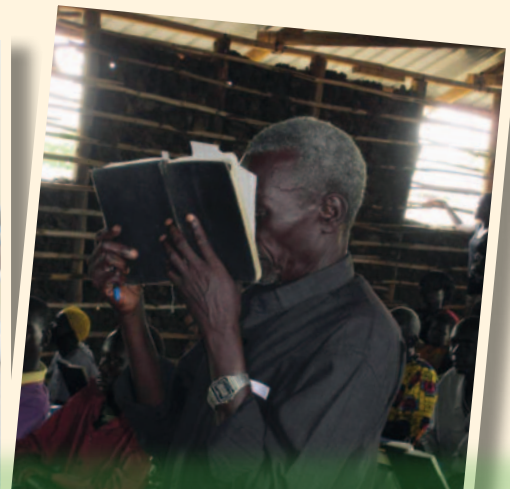
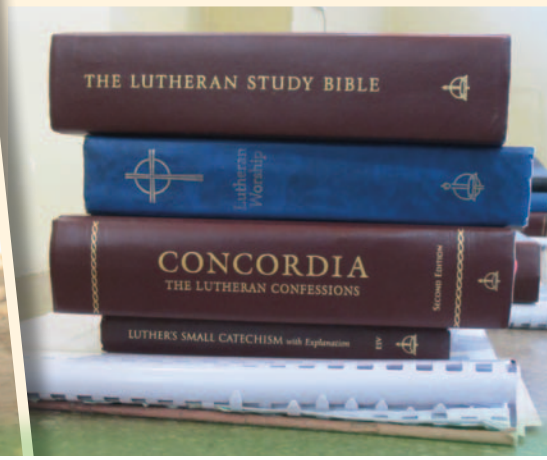
If your church is not already involved in the simultaneous Prayer Vigil on May 31, check with your pastor to see if you can help to organize this three hour event.

### **DONATE**

Plan to make a financial contribution or an ongoing pledge of financial support for LIA. Help us reach our goal of \$500,000 that will allow us to purchase the land and begin the building process. Consider making LIA your one designated charitable organization this year as they expand their ministry to better serve the people of Africa.

### **PRAY FOR LUTHERANS IN AFRICA**

These new Lutherans in Africa are so hungry for God's Word, so eager to receive the sacraments and so happy to sing His praises. Pray that God would work through Lutherans in Africa to meet the many needs of His people in this huge mission field.



## Case Statement And Leadership Team

Lutheran bishops in Africa are crying out to LIA—"Can you start a Bible school for our people?" This campaign will raise funds to build that Bible School in a permanent Lutheran Center that is partially self-sustaining that will include:

- Classrooms
- A Translation Lab
- A Theological Library
- Student housing
- Sustainable Garden Plots for Student Families
- A Devotional Chapel
- A Missionary Parsonage

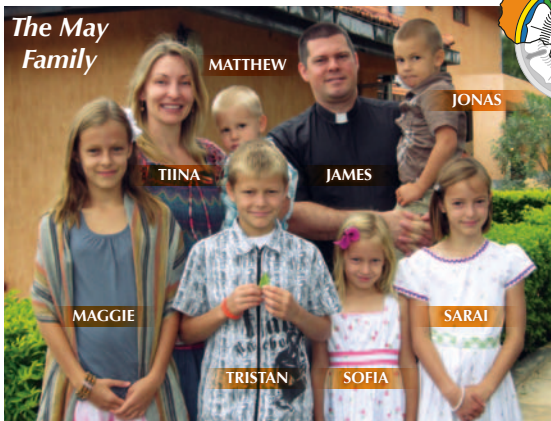
The Center will welcome students from all over Africa for a two year program. It will extend LIA's outreach in Africa by reducing staff travel time and by adding more teaching time with the students. It will keep the student and his family together and allow them to contribute to the Center via the sustainable garden plots.

The savings on rent alone is reason enough for doing this (\$40,000 a year) but of course the greater purpose is that the pure teaching of the Gospel will ready more workers for the harvest.

The first phase will provide the land, fencing, water supply electricity classrooms and offices. Your gifts to this campaign will bring the Gospel to many and make more Lutherans in Africa.

### THE CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP TEAM

- **Rev. James May**—Director, Lutherans in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, Africa
- **Rev. Jonathan Fisk**—Bethany Lutheran, Naperville Illinois, USA; Editor, Worldview Everlasting
- **Bishop Matti Vaisanen**—Luther-Saatio (Mission Province of Finland)
- **Rev. Robert Green**—Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma, Ohio, USA; LIA Chairman of the Board
- **Rev. David Rohde**—St. Paul Lutheran Church, Wilson, Texas
- **Rev. Benjamin Ball**—St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hamel, Illinois
- **Rev Tapani Simojoki**—The Lutheran Church of England
- **Rev. Matt Anker**—Goulburn Murray Parish, Shepparton, Victoria, Australia
- **Rev. Stephen van der Hoek**—Gippsland Lutheran Parish, Trawalgon, Victoria, Australia
- **Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki**—Uusikaupunki, Finland



# Lutherans IN Africa

FORMING AFRICAN CHRISTIANS TO BE TEACHERS OF THE FAITH

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