



LUTHERAN HERITAGE
FOUNDATION UPDATE:



SEMINARY EDUCATION FOR NEW PASTORS IN SOUTH SUDAN

20 SOUTH SUDAN SEMINARIANS BEGIN VICARAGE PLACEMENTS

Thanks to the generous support of the LWML – Nebraska North District, 20 impoverished Lutheran churches in South Sudan now have vicars ministering to their people.

A \$7,500 mission grant awarded to the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) at the 2018 LWML – Nebraska North District convention has provided much-needed room and board, books and supplies for the seminarians at the Concordia Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry (CLIHM) in Yambio, South Sudan. After two years of study, the men are now prepared to continue their learning in the field.

The need for new pastors is great in a country roughly the size of Texas, where there are only 66 ordained pastors to serve over 200 congregations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Sudan/ Sudan (ELCSS/S).



“The people there are completely unable to fund travel abroad to study at established Lutheran seminaries,” explained Rev. Robert Rahn, founder of LHF and coordinator of the CLIHM seminary program. “If we do not find a way to provide a solid Lutheran education, there are other [non-Lutheran] Bible schools and seminaries that will be

happy for the additional students. But what will the ELCSS/S students learn, and what will they then teach and practice to their Lutheran congregations once they are ordained? The ELCSS/S would not remain Lutheran for very long.”

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And so, ordained LCMS pastors from the United States travel to South Sudan to instruct students in a challenging course of studies. With the faithful support of the Nebraska North LWML, the seminarians have taken classes such as Law and Gospel, Liturgy and Worship, History of Christianity, and Homiletics (preaching).

A MESSAGE OF PEACE AND HOPE

As they studied, the men focused on how to bring to the South Sudanese people God's gifts of love, peace and forgiveness through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It is a message sorely needed in this young country, which has been torn apart by years of brutal civil war. The people also face famine and disease, and have an average life expectancy of only 56 years.

"Because of these issues, it would be unthinkable for most South Sudanese men to attend seminary," said Rev. Dr. Matthew Heise, LHF executive director. "Their poverty is extreme (most are subsistence farmers, many of whom have been displaced by the war), but your gifts are ensuring that their travel to Yambio, their tuition, books, supplies, food, beds and medical care are covered. What a blessing this is to our South Sudanese brothers and sisters in Christ!"

In early 2021, the vicars will return to the CLIHM campus for a final year of studies before being ordained.

To learn more about the South Sudan seminarians and LHF's work, go to www.LHFmissions.org.



Captions: (front page) the 2020 CLIHM vicars, Bishop Peter Anibati Abia, center; (top photo, above) ELCSS/S Bishop Peter Anibati Abia blesses the new vicars after they have received their placements; (center) a happy vicar!; (bottom) Rev. Dr. Bernie Lutz leads a seminary class at CLIHM in Yambio, South Sudan.



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