



Newsletter of Rev. Vance and Linda Becker at Matongo, Kenya

June 2020

Various Lessons to Learn

We spent May learning a variety of things. We continue daily study of Swahili and now use it to speak with the staff, the cook, Obadia, his wife, shamwe and Francisco, a maintenance worker who is studying to be a teacher.

Vance wrote a sermon in Swahili and the grammar and vocabulary were corrected by Francisco. The sermon, on the parable of the sower and the seed, emphasizes that despite difficulties, God's word does its good work in us. Vance now has another sermon and hopes to discuss it with Francisco. It is about the raising of Lazarus and emphasizes that God may allow suffering even for those He loves but uses it for His purposes; and by the power of His word alone He gives us faith and spiritual life. Francisco was listening to a sermon the other day on his phone. We didn't catch many words, but it was all shouting and we heard "Acha!" ("Stop it!") a lot. What might he think of Vance's sermons?

We completed another module of our on-line mission course through

Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne. We also took a week-long course on culture shock. Linda and Robyn are doing an on-line Bible study with other women of our mission region. We did several on-line classes on Community Health

Education and on using media for communication.

Please pray for us, praising God for His wisdom and power to provide, thanking Him for new learning experiences, and asking Him to help us learn well and to keep us mentally sharp.



Various Lessons to Teach

Vance has now learned which classes he will teach this fall at Matongo, God willing. He is to have four classes, Lutheran Confessions (the Book of Concord), Pastoral Care and Counseling, General Epistles (James – Jude) and Homiletics (preaching). He is starting to get excited about teaching these topics.

Now it is time to prepare course outlines and lesson plans. Since we



did not come here prepared to do anything but learn Swahili, this is a bit of a challenge. The books he has with him are a Bible and a pocket hymnal, along with the Book of Concord on his computer. That should be enough, right? Fortunately, there are some resources on-line, but he is looking forward to being able to get to the school library at Matongo. The shipment of his own books will not arrive until after classes start.

Please pray for us, praising God for His knowledge of all the future holds for us, thanking Him for all those who work along with us, and **asking that borders open soon so we can go to Matongo Kenya.**

Changing Times

The dry season now is cooler and sometimes windy. Not expecting to be here this time of year, we did not bring a lot of warm clothes, but by dressing in many layers we do fine.

There are still some new flowers, but many have turned to seeds. Some are very good at going new places by sticking to our clothing.

Many things have changed for you in the last few months too, for which you may not feel prepared. But God is with you. Layer yourself with His word and sacraments and you will do

fine. Are there seeds of His word sticking with you that you can carry to others as well?

Please pray for us, praising God for His unfailing love, thanking Him for guiding us through changing times and mysterious ways, and asking Him to help us grow in faith, hope and love.

We pray for you too. May God keep you safe from disease, disaster, destruction, doubt, discouragement, and every attack of the Devil.

Bible reflection

On Pentecost, Peter stood up and preached a powerful sermon to his fellow Jews about Jesus' death and resurrection. Thousands of people repented, came to faith and were baptized into the church.

Later, God had to prod him to go and preach to a small group, foreign to him, the family and friends of Cornelius. His sermon there was not long. He was still getting warmed up when the Holy Spirit interrupted by pouring out on all who were there, bringing them to faith. Peter had just mentioned that forgiveness comes through Jesus and that was enough.

Peter should not think that any of the responses were the result of how well he preached or any of his own efforts. Neither should we. God does choose to do share his word through us rather than through angels or visions, but it is always the Holy Spirit that uses that word to do His work in His own way and time.

After all, it is not by any of our own doing that we ourselves are saved, but by Jesus' death and resurrection in our place. And it is not by any of our own doing or choices that we came to faith or received God's spiritual gifts. The Spirit did it all in us by His word and sacraments. This is good. The more God gets all the credit, the more we get all the comfort and confidence. He will do what He wants through us, in us and for us, giving us all we need by His grace.

Please pray for us, praising God for giving us everything by grace,

thanking Him for His constant presence and protection, and asking Him to increase our faith and love.

Have you seen our minute video messages? You can see one at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bV1jhjW2v3QLkR4gWoD6QnCP0jCojK_4/view?usp=sharing

Swahili sample

Some words are starting to become quite familiar to us. "Mungu" is "God." "amini" is "believe," "imani" is "faith," and "amani" is "peace." "Mbingu" is "heaven," "–enyezi" is almighty."

If you can guess what "Baba" means, maybe you can figure out what this is: Namwamini Mungu, Baba Mwenyezi, Mwumba wa mbingu na nchi.

People wonder...

Are there a lot of bugs there?

There are plenty of ants here of various types. More than once they have climbed up in a pant leg while we were walking and surprised us. One night, just as Linda was getting into the shower, we discovered a huge line of them surrounding our bedroom and bath and had to go for help. One of the managers came with a can of spray in each fist and rescued us.

Mosquitoes are not as common right here as in some places and we don't see many during the day. The kind that carry Malaria are active only dusk to dawn but Malaria is not common where we are now.

Bugs in the house are controlled by geckoes and wall spiders which stretch about the size of the palm of a hand. They are good at hiding and so are not usually seen.

The nuisance for us is gnats which swarm around our faces while we are on walks. It could be worse.

If you wonder about a question, email vance.becker@lcms.org

Please pray for us, praising God for His wonderful creation, thanking Him for His constant provision and

protection and asking Him to keep us joyful, flexible and wise about taking care of ourselves.

If you get this newsletter in print but could get it by email instead, it could save funds for our ministry.

Email us with your name and the mailing address now receiving it.

If you don't desire to receive this newsletter, email us or call or write Trinity Lutheran Church, 1010 Fleming, Garden City, KS 67846 (phone (620)276-3110)

Connect with us.

Email us at vance.becker@lcms.org & linda.becker@lcmsintl.org, or send us postal mail at the Mission Central address below.

Help expand our network by liking [vance.becker.lcms](https://www.facebook.com/vance.becker.lcms) on facebook and sharing it and this newsletter with friends. Let us know about yourself and prayer requests. We will pray for you too.

Financial support

All our funding comes through the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, which is not just an office in St. Louis but the people and congregations. We are grateful for many generous people, for yearly & monthly gifts, and also single gifts.

A monthly or yearly gift is ideal but a start-up gift is also very helpful.

- Checks written to LCMS with Becker/Kenya in the memo can be mailed to: LCMS, P.O. Box 6861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

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Please pray for us, praising God for daily providing out of Fatherly, goodness and mercy, thanking Him for those who are able to give generously, and asking Him to keep providing funds for this work.