



MINISTRY MOMENTS

"This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." I Corinthians 11:24



Gambella Lutheran Church-Kalobeyei...

Last month our field office learned that the congregation from Gambella Lutheran Church had not received Holy Communion in nearly five years. This congregation of now 400 plus members started in the Dadaab refugee camp in 2006. As explained to us, someone from the Lutheran church visited and taught on the catechism. Those who attended were touched by what they heard and desired to become Lutheran. They started a simple church by meeting under a tree. Eleven years later they were relocated to the Kalobeyei refugee camp and now they have a more permanent church building. There is no pastor, but only a few evangelists who lead the congregation. After hearing about this, Rev. Aadland scheduled a visit. It was important that seminarian Okach Omot Opiew, from Kalobeyei accompany him. After completing his studies to become a pastor next year, Okach will return to Kalobeyei to serve the church there.

We arrived on Friday and visited the home of Okach and shared a meal with some of the leaders in the church. On Saturday we arrived at the church just as the heavy rains started. This prevented many from attending the teaching on the Lord's Supper. As the rains subsided, with the handful that came, Rev. Aadland with Okach as his translator, did a thorough explanation of the Lord's Supper. The group was very engaged and asked many questions.

The Lord's Supper

The Sacrament of the Altar, also known as the Lord's Supper, is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for Christians to eat and to drink. In this Sacrament, Christ gives us His own true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace. When Christians partake of this sacrament together, they make a public confession of Christ and of the unity in the truth of His Gospel. It is not a memorial of what Christ did on the cross, the Lord's Supper brings the benefits of Christ's work into the present day. Once the benefits of the Lord's Supper are understood, it is difficult to imagine a five year period without this means of grace.

Holy Communion Service

Sunday was an exciting day for me and I'm sure for Rev. Aadland as well. For me, I would stand side by side with these dear brothers and sisters and receive the Lord's Supper together. For Rev. Aadland he would get to administer the Lord's Supper to those who have waited a long time to receive it. There were over 150 people that attended service. Rev. Aadland did a review on the Lord's Supper before the service started. It was heartwarming to watch all of the faces focused on him, including the children. The time came for the words of institution and Rev. Aadland chanted in English and Okach echoed in the Anuak language. I was among the first group of ten to receive communion. I glanced quickly at those beside me and thought, "This is indeed a special moment as we are unified in Christ through His body and blood." As each group of ten came forward, I could see the joy on their faces and my heart was overjoyed to bear witness. Sixty brothers and sisters received Holy Communion that day after many years without. We often take for granted the things that are readily accessible to us. In our home congregations, we received the Lord's Supper regularly. For these Christians that live in such a remote place, that is not the case. It is quite a journey to get to the refugee camp and the communion elements are not available there. Thanks be to God for the opportunities that He has blessed me with to bear witness to and share the love of Christ with many.

Yours in Christ....Shara



Prayers & Praise

- Pray for God's strength and guidance as Michael and I serve in Eastern and Southern Africa.
- Pray for God to provide opportunities for the congregations in Kakuma and Kalobeyi to receive the Lord's Supper.
- Praise God for all of our brothers and sisters in Christ who received the Lord's Supper.
- Praise God for all of you and the support and love that you give to me and Michael.

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