



Newsletter of Rev. Vance and Linda Becker at Matongo, Kenya July 2020

Steps toward the Goal

We are still in the same place, doing the same thing: at the camp in Tanzania studying Swahili and preparing for teaching; but meanwhile there have been a few developments.

Our exciting news is that Vance's work permit has been approved. Now, that is not exactly the same as issued, which takes a few more hoops to jump through, but there is now a light at the end of the tunnel that leads to Kenya. We continue to hope that Kenya will start relaxing its shutdown to make things easier still. We bought some face masks from a workshop for handicapped people in town so we are ready to travel.

It is expected that colleges will be able to resume at the end of August. Our college at Matongo has decided to adjust the schedule to begin with one month of classes to quickly finish those that were suddenly suspended months ago. Because one of the teachers is not coming back, Vance



will finish a New Testament Introduction class.

Then, at the end of September, we will pick right up on the fall semester, squeeze down the breaks and end after the first of the year.

After a shortened break, the second semester, which is pushed back, will extend it into July so that things are back on track (hopefully) by the time things start all over again next August.

Please pray for us, praising God for His knowledge of all the future holds for us, thanking Him for guiding us through changing times and mysterious ways, asking Him to make us well prepared for

what is next, and thanking Him for our work permit approval and keep asking that things will happen so that we can go to Matongo Kenya.



Bible reflection

John, in his first letter, which Vance is preparing to teach about, writes of how Christians are to walk.

We are fortunate that we are able to get out for a daily walk. We look around at the beautiful scenery but also have learned to watch how we walk because of ants, snakes and other things that have been in our path. Pictured here are some prints in the dirt of things that have passed by the same way. Can you figure out



what they are?

Especially if you are able to get out these days, we encourage you also to watch how you walk. Are you taking notice of the wonderful things that God is doing all

around you? Are you watching out for ways that Satan would like to trip you up? Are you leaving behind good footprints, positive impressions on others and other ways of making a



difference in the place you have been?

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.

Swahili sample

Every language has idiomatic expressions. A few Swahili ones are:

- kata tamaa...literally to cut desire
- shikamoo ...I grab your feet
- umeshindaje ...how did you win?
- Unga mkono ...join a hand
- hali ya hewa ...condition of the air
- Matengenezo ya kanisa ...fixing of the church

Meanings are at bottom of the page.

Changes in the Africa Field

We are not here on our own but are part of a whole team. Just recently, eastern Africa, which is primarily English speaking, and western Africa, much of which is French speaking, were combined into one LCMS mission field, under our area director, Rev. Shauen Trump, who works out of Nairobi, Kenya. Besides theological educators, missionaries here in Africa include other teachers, nurses and those who manage business, special projects, volunteers, etc.

We all keep in touch regularly as much as we can but that can be a challenge. Right now, because the killing of a musician who was a public figure in Ethiopia has caused unrest, the internet and some news media there is shut down for a while.

But work is still going on. Students from the "Project 24" children's service sites who were sent home because of Covid 19 restrictions are now being provided with things they need through home visits. Work is resuming on possible volunteer teams coming again in the future.

Please pray for us, praising God for His wisdom and power to

provide, thanking Him for all those who work with us, and asking Him to guide and protect all who serve our church here in Africa.

People wonder...

What kind of trees are there?

Acacia trees are called "umbrella tops" because the leaves are mostly in a layer at the top. Young trees have many long thorns to keep the leaves from being eaten. The O.T. tabernacle was built of acacia wood.

Several other kinds of trees also have wicked thorns.

Baobab trees have leaves only a few months of the year but have very large trunks that hold water like a sponge. The large seed pods are hard but fuzzy and filled with tart pieces like chalk that are high in vitamin C.

"Sausage" trees have seed pods that hang down on long strings and look like huge sausages.

Candelabra trees start out looking like a thin cactus but end up with a tree trunk on the bottom but looking like a cactus on top. The branches not only have thorns but a very toxic juice.

Bamboo is common near the river and can get over 40 feet tall with a 5 inch diameter base.

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.

Swahili idiom meanings

- to be discouraged, despair
- respectful greeting to an elder
- how was your day?
- to support
- weather
- Reformation

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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

or Mission Central, 40718 Highway E16, Mapleton, IA 51034-7105,

- Give on-line at www.lcms.org/givenow/becker
- or missioncentral.us/becker
- Give by phone at 888-843-5267.

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.