



DEPENDENCY

I recently underwent (July 2020) a back surgery. Vertebra S1 to L5 of my spine were severely damaged and this was affecting my legs. It was becoming difficult to walk. Six screws were implanted. I spend two days in ICU and eight days in a general ward in hospital. From the anaesthetic on, I was totally dependent on the doctor and on the nurses. During the four hours of the operation, I was like a dead person. I needed oxygen and other medical devices to support me. After waking up, I couldn't wash myself; I couldn't go to the toilet; I couldn't get out of bed by myself. I did several physiotherapy sessions and slowly began to move independently again. It was a huge relieve when I could stand up from the bed and walk, and some days later, already at home, when I could shower. My wife is still my "nurse" at home, helping me to put on my socks, the shoes, and picking up what I let fall on the ground.

I'm still wearing a back brace and still doing physiotherapy. I'm not able to drive yet, and lot of other cares are necessary to protect and strengthen my spine. The physiotherapist said that the care will last for life, and that I always will have

to be very carefully with my movements.

DEPENDENCY: This experience of mine led me to think how dependent we are from our God. Without Him we can do nothing. We cannot breathe, we cannot walk, we cannot move. We are vulnerable to everything.

When everything goes well in our lives, we feel confident and strong, as if everything depends on us. We like to be in control of our lives and of the lives of others as well. Depending on the position we have in society, this confidence in ourselves grows more and more... until something happens that shows us how dependent we are on God.

COVID-19 has levelled the world population. Everyone is affected. How dependent do you feel on God? Or do you still feel powerful and independent during this pandemic? Once the dark hours come, someone who lives without God will feel totally lost. He who has never enjoyed full dependency on God's grace and love in Christ Jesus during his life, will not find comfort when he needs it.

The Book of Proverbs (3:5-8) says: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways*



INSIDE

Rector's Message...	1-2
Announcement on new Rector.....	3
Book donation to Library.....	3
COVID-19 Update...	4-5
LTS Consultation meeting	6
Deaconess Grace Rao	6
LTS Facebook Page....	6
Maintenance done and required.....	7
Thanks to all LTS Supporters.....	7
Vegetable Garden Update.....	8
Coming up at LTS.....	9
Please pray for.....	9

TRUST IN THE LORD

submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.”

Maybe someone who has never had the experience I had in hospital will not understand this matter of total dependency. But someone who had a similar experience, maybe even worse, knocking at the gate of heaven and coming back, will understand it better.

Dependency is not a weakness. We may even say that it is a strength, because we are aware that we are never alone. In all situations of our life, we can be sure that God’s holy angels are surrounding and protecting us. Also, the Holy Spirit is interceding for us when we are weak and even unconscious, as Paul affirms in such a nice way: *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans”* (Romans 8:26).

When you have to submit yourself to the hands of a doctor for surgery, remember that there is Someone who knows your inmost better than any doctor. Psalm 139 says: *“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret*

place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.”

Yes, when I awoke from the surgery, I was still with God and He with me; and I praised Him.

Do you like independency? There is a tendency of certain people to live alone. And that group is growing. They don’t want to have a family; they don’t want interference with their job; they want to do what they want to do. Is this a good style of living? I prefer to be totally dependent on God!

Psalm 37:5-7 says: *“Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him”.*

Carlos Walter Winterle, September 2020



New LTS Rector in 2021

Rector Dr. Walter Winterle will be retiring at the end of this year (2020). If repatriation flights are allowed, he and his wife Lydia will take a flight back to Brazil at the end of November.

Dr. Heinz Hiestermann is the rector-elect and will take on the position of rector from January 2021.



Dr. Heinz Hiestermann

Book Donation to Library—Report by Mintesinot Birru



Due to his retirement and relocation back to Brazil, Rector Rev. Dr. Winterle has donated almost all of the books of his personal library collection to our LTS Library (English books) and to the Mozambique distance education (Portuguese books), so that the latter can start a Library.

Among the books which are donated to LTS's Library: Bibles, Complete Sermons of Martin Luther, commentaries, systematic Theology, Catechism in different languages, Homiletics,

devotion books, and others—a total of 61 books. I would like to thank him and his family for the donation. This will hopefully encourage many to donate more for the development of LTS's Library collection.



LTS Librarian Mintesinot Birru with the book donation

Covid-19 Update

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused numerous challenges and disruptions at LTS.

- The students completed only 5 weeks of studies in February/March before classes had to stop due to Covid-19 regulations. When contact classes re-opened on July 17, only final-year students were allowed back.
- Currently government allows 66% of students to attend contact classes. For LTS this means that its first-year students still cannot resume their studies. The difficult decision therefore had to be taken by the LTS Board of Directors that first-year students will only be able to resume their studies in 2021. The Coronavirus has severely disrupted the lives and future planning of these students. We hope to welcome them back next year.
- Final year students are currently busy with their final semester at LTS. Due to Covid-19, the exams at the end of the first semester of 2020 had started six weeks later than originally planned. Below is a picture of the students during examination. Their graduation will—God willing—take place on November 19.



Covid-19 Update continued

Covid-19 disruptions for LTS' Zambian Students:

- Before the start of the national lockdown in March, LTS' two Zambian students had returned home to Zambia, as a three week lockdown had been announced in South Africa. With international travel restrictions still in place about five months later, these two students have not been able to return to LTS. They have continued their studies electronically in Zambia, with lecturers emailing them study material and assignments. This



LTS Students Michael M'tonga and Francis Mumba writing exams at the LECA head office in Lusaka, Zambia

- process is not easy for the students, as they do not have their own laptops and have to travel to an internet café to access the learning material.
- These two students have written their half-year exams from August 31—September 9 at the head office of the Lutheran Evangelical Church in Africa—Zambia Diocese (LECA) in the city of Lusaka under the supervision of LECA general secretary Rev. Gilbert Chirwa. They now are continuing their final semester of studies electronically and are hoping to return to LTS as soon as international borders re-open.

LTS Consultation Meeting

On Monday August 31, LTS members, Board of Directors and full-time lecturers held a lengthy meeting at Skeerpoort, hosted by Hugo Meyer. Planning was done for 2021, with accreditation, finances, maintenance, and exploring possibilities of distant education the main points on the agenda.

Many churches are struggling financially as a result of Covid-19, also LTS, where a shortfall of R600,000 for 2020 is forecasted. We pray that God will provide means to grow his kingdom.



Deaconess Grace Rao

The financial impact of Covid-19 has been felt worldwide. Deaconess Grace Rao, a faithful supporter and co-worker of LTS, has lost her job this year. She has been involved with LTS for many years, training deaconesses and presenting woman's seminars. The LTS is grateful to Dcs. Rao for her selfless service over such a long time, and we pray that the Lord will bless her richly.



LTS Facebook Page



The LTS Facebook page now has more than 1100 followers from all parts of the world. If you would like to receive more regular updates on what is happening at LTS, please like our page on <https://www.facebook.com/groups/162632853899513/>. Please continue keeping LTS in your prayers.

Maintenance done and required

Maintenance done recently at LTS:

Since the appointment of Mr. Gustav Paul as Operations Manager of LTS, much work on the maintenance of the LTS campus has been done:

- Electrical upgrades were made to most buildings to bring them up to code. Dube House, one of the student residences, has been completely re-wired. All buildings on campus now have electrical Certificates of Compliance.
- LTS is now also compliant with the South African Occupational Health and Safety Acts, ensuring a safe and prepared working environment for employees and students of LTS.

With these upgrades, LTS now meets the required Health and Safety criteria for accreditation.

Maintenance that still needs to be done:

- Roof painting and repairs (cost R200,000 or \$12,000)
- Refurbishments to three rental properties (cost R120,000 or \$7,500)
- Replacing of geyser at guest apartment (cost R9000 or \$550)



One of the roofs that needs to be repainted

Thanks to all LTS Supporters

Covid-19 has caused many disruptions and challenges to LTS this year, also financially. We therefore thank all donors for their generous support in these unprecedented times. Your donations make it possible for the LTS to continue to fulfil its mission of training people to work in God's kingdom. Your donations this year enable our final year students to complete their studies, and then return to their home churches and countries to be God's messengers, preaching the gospel of salvation for to all people, as our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded. Through your contributions, the Gospel will be spread in the five countries the final year students come from. Thank you again for your continued support.

More Happenings at LTS

Fruits of the vegetable garden:

The vegetable garden project at LTS has been expanded and upgraded. The beds have been enclosed with chicken mesh (picture right) to protect the vegetables from birds and hail. A water tank has also been installed to harvest rainwater for the irrigation of the vegetables. Students are diligently working in the garden with good results. Some of the vegetables are used when lunch is cooked. We again thank the Wittenberg congregation (FELSISA) for initiating and supporting this project.



The new rainwater tank at the enclosed vegetable garden

The new vegetable garden started by one of our students



The garden project is bearing fruit in more than one way. One of our first year students, Given Masemola, being home during lockdown, has started a vegetable garden at his home church in Siyabuswa (picture left).

Coming up@LTS

- ♦ 19-28 September Spring Holidays
- ♦ 8-18 November Examinations
- ♦ 19 November Graduation of final year students

Please pray for the LTS:

- That our final year students will successfully complete their studies, and then use their gifts and knowledge in serving God's church.
- That God will prepare more labourers for his harvest by sending new students to LTS to enroll in 2021.



- That LTS will receive accreditation and be recognized as an official institution by the South African Department of Higher Education.
- That Covid-19 cases will continue to decrease and students will be able to resume contact classes in 2021.
- For continuing donations, grants and prayers that allow the LTS to continue its mission of graduating multipliers for the Lutheran Church in Africa, thanking and praising God for all his blessings toward LTS.

Mission: "The LTS is a mission agency seeking to graduate multipliers for the Lutheran Church in Africa."

Vision: "To provide quality confessional Lutheran formation."

The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane is a registered Public Benefits Organization. Donations to LTS can be deducted according to Section 18(a) in the South African tax laws. Donations are also possible via check or Paypal. Please see our website for details (www.lts.ac.za).

Account Holder: "Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane NPC"

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