



Newsletter of Rev. Vance and Linda Becker at Matongo, Kenya April 2022



Training at Retreat

Our Africa team spring training retreat was in Egypt this year, on the desolate shore of the Red Sea. Unlike the Israelites, we did not retreat into the sea, although some did splash in it a bit. This is a time for those who work together here and their families to see each other in person.

Our presenter was Dwight Shettler from Ambassadors of Reconciliation, an



LCMS service organization which helps people and congregations with personal reconciliation in conflict situations. Our training included learning how to coach others in resolving conflict.

The retreat also included devotions, which we took turns leading and closed with a service including Holy Communion.

Please pray for us, praising God for our various co-workers, thanking Him for preventing and protecting us from disaster and asking Him to make all that each of us do to be a blessing to His church.

Preparing Interns

As part of his role as Field Education Officer, Vance held an

orientation meeting for those who will be going on internship at the end of this semester. There are thirty of them this time. The evangelist and deaconess students do a three month internship and the pastoral students do six months. They will do three this summer, return for a year of classes and do three next summer. Vance will assign faculty members to visit each one.

The students go back to their home churches for the internships. This time they are from eight different countries and nine different church bodies.

In May, the current interns will return to campus for “debriefing” about their experiences. The pastoral students among them finish some classes during a summer quarter. Then this group will graduate in September along with those in the new group who will finish their internship by that time.

Please pray for us, praising God for sending workers into his fields, thanking Him for the students who are finishing their studies, and asking Him to give these students all the material and spiritual blessings they need for their work.

The End is Near

Time is flying and the semester is already half over. Students have taken midterm tests known as CATs (Continuing Assessment Tests) and now Vance is busy preparing final



exams. They have to be “moderated” and approved by the rest of the faculty before they are given.

Vance has learned his teaching assignments for next semester, so he will need to begin preparing for them as soon as he has time. He will be teaching Homiletics (preaching) I and II again. He is teaching three new classes. One is Worship, one is Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and the other is Catechism. That is something he has taught many times before.

Please pray for us, praising God for all the truths he has given us to share, thanking Him for what the students have learned so far, and asking Him to help both Vance and the students be well prepared and effective.

Bible reflection

My devotion for our team retreat in Egypt was based on the story of Jesus’ “flight to Egypt” as a baby, one of the few times in the Bible that people were actually told to go there.

Other times that people went to Egypt were because of fear, such as Abraham and Jacob who both went because of fear of famine and those who went because of fear of some enemy. Also because of their fears, they did wrong things hurting others.

Others in the Old Testament, such as Joseph and Jeremiah, were taken to Egypt because of the fears of other people that led them to do wrong. Maybe we can say that Egypt is a symbol of fear that leads to doing wrong to others. A common reaction to fear is fight or flight.

Jesus also went to Egypt because of the fear of another, Herod. But the reason Jesus went everywhere he did was to be with us, including when we are in a state of fear or being hurt because of the fears of others. It is because Jesus is with us in all things that we do not need to fight or flee but can have peace and respond to others with peace and peacemaking.

Please pray for us, being with us in every time and place, thanking Him for Jesus’ suffering for and with us and asking Him to free us from all fear and fill us with his peace.

Culture Contrasts

Even when we are both speaking English, it is often difficult to understand others here. One reason is that a way of showing respect is speaking softly. Some students, especially the women, are so respectful, you can’t hear them at all!

But even when heard clearly, the English here can be misunderstood because of words that are used differently. We already knew that in British English, which is the pattern here, a car’s hood is a “bonnet” and the trunk is a “boot.”

When a student says they are “revising” their class notes, they don’t mean they are changing them but what we would call “reviewing.” A meeting to “moderate” something is not about toning it down but simply agreeing on changes. If a student is “outside” it does not just mean out of doors but off campus. If a sick student says they are feeling better “somehow” it doesn’t mean they don’t know why but “somewhat” better. The list goes on.

People wonder...

Was it really hot in Egypt?

When we returned from our retreat in Egypt and people here asked how it was, we mentioned that it was amazingly barren, just sand and rocks, if you get away from the Nile which is used for irrigation.

So, picturing the desert, people asked if it was really hot. Actually, we were surprised how cold it was. We had looked at the weather and knew that since it is a ways north of the equator, about even with Florida, it would be cooler than here this time of year. But, maybe because of the low humidity, it was colder than we expected. Vance ended up doing his Minnesota thing, wearing two pair of

pants and several shirts on top of each other along with our jackets.

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

Please pray for us, praising God for the wonderful variety in all He has created, thanking Him for daily and richly providing for all our needs and asking Him to show us what we should be doing day by day.

Contact us at the address below to let us know how we can be praying for you too.

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 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-66861* 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.