



RESOURCING MUSICIANS

Meet Kenensua LAMBONI, a gifted young musician in Accra, Ghana. He's a church musician who understands the primacy of congregational song in worship. This is important anywhere in the world, even as the task of leading the Lord's song happens in different contexts. The instruments change, but the goal remains the same: musical leadership that nurtures, evokes, summons, and teaches the assembly. It calls for a special kind of musicianship, one that is turned outward in love, embracing the people, rather than bent inward on self-expression.

Kenensua is pictured here with the guitar edition of *Lutheran Service Book* (*LSB*). He is not a guitarist, but a keyboardist, so one might fairly wonder why I did not give him the *LSB* hymn accompaniment edition – that bulky book you might notice resting on your congregation's organ. The answer is simple: he's not an organist, but a folk musician who plays keys. What he needs is what the guitar edition provides: words, melody, and simple, slow-changing chords to accompany the hymn. With this tool, he can lead his musicians in crafting hymn accompaniments that align with the realities of African music – and lead his people in joyful song!



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Introducing *LSB* in Ghana



One of the newly-ordained pastors in Ghana, and the choir from his new parish.

I didn't get the names of all the folks pictured above, as there was so much going on in the wake of a three-hour Divine Service in which several new pastors were ordained by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana (ELCG). I had the joy of playing with the band for this service, joining Stanley MAWULI, (pictured on my left) on keyboards. He is another young musician who will be using the guitar edition of *LSB* to craft accompaniments in African styles for our Lutheran hymns. You can see the full band on the other side of this page.

Given that my work has been focused on francophone (French-speaking) Africa, it may surprise some that I am going to Ghana. But one goes where there is a need, and the president of the ELCG, Bishop John Donkoh, eagerly desires that his church start using *LSB*. Right now, the general practice there is to use an abridged form of the Common Service from *The Lutheran Hymnal* (*TLH*) plus a mix of local songs and a few ecumenical hymns from *TLH* that are largely drawn from the

Anglo-Methodist tradition (such as "Rock of Ages" and "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed"). They will keep singing those. They are fine hymns included in *LSB*. But Bishop Donkoh wants his people to learn more of our Lutheran chorales and some of the great modern Lutheran hymns by authors such as Martin Franzmann ("Thy Strong Word," "In Adam We Have All Been One") and Stephen Starke ("The Tree of Life," "We Praise You and Acknowledge You, O God"). Plus, they want to use some of the canticles in the *LSB* liturgies, like "This Is the Feast" and "Thank the Lord." So I went to Accra and Kumasi earlier this year and am returning there this August.

The ELCG was established in 1958 by LCMS missions and became a full partner of the LCMS in 1971. They have their own seminary and several impressive day schools. The three I visited each have over 500 students. With over 60 pastors and 108 preaching stations, they are a powerful voice for the Gospel in Africa.



Band I Joined in Kumasi, Ghana

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Paperwork to be completed and approved so that Paroisse Wittenberg in Pointe-Noire, Republic of Congo, can receive their grant for a new roof.
- The francophone union of 11 confessional Lutheran synods as they strive to reconnect and reinvigorate their partnership.
- Safe travel during my upcoming deployments to Ghana, Kenya, and Congo.
- Continued progress on the African Edition of our French hymnal, including LHF—Africa's negotiations with local printers for this project.
- My son, Trevor, and his wife, Amalia, upon the upcoming birth of their first child this fall.

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The many supporters who make this work of “getting people to sing more about Jesus in West Africa” possible.
- Village Lutheran Church and their partnership with LCMS Office of International Mission. Not many congregations would allow their cantor to travel as much as I do to do this work!

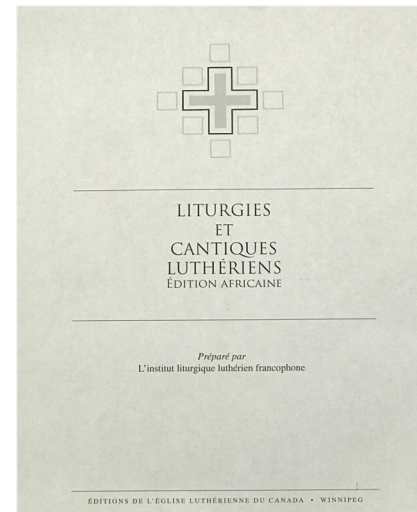
Édition Africaine Nears Completion

Pictured on the right is the draft cover of *Édition Africaine (E-A)*, a new edition of the francophone *LSB, Liturgies et Cantiques Luthériens (LCL)* that was produced by Lutheran Church–Canada (LC–C) in 2009. *LCL* serves French-speaking Lutherans in North America well, and is an excellent core resource for francophone African pastors. I have been pleased to teach from it since my first trip to Africa in 2010.

Over the course of the last decade, in conversations with fellow missionaries and local leaders, it became clear to me that, as good as *LCL* is, another edition was needed — one more appropriate to the mission context on the continent. So with the cooperation of LC–C and Concordia Publishing House, work began in earnest.

While only in production over the past 18 months or so, this edition is the culmination of over 12 years of work by several missionaries and musicians as we have taught hymns and liturgies from *LCL*, surveyed results, and considered substantial input from African church leaders. There is a great story to be told here, one I hope to share once the project is completed. For now, though, there is still work that needs to be done.

Here are the remaining steps. First, while I am in Kenya next month, I will be meeting with missionary Tuomo Simojoki and Lutheran Heritage Foundation–Africa regarding publication, distribution, and introduction of the book. Currently, they are planning to print 10,000 copies!



Then I'll be off to Congo-Brazzaville, where I will meet with the two African members of our hymnal committee, Rev. Albert KOUTIA, Président of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Congo, and Rev. Armel OUADIKI, professor at the confessional Lutheran seminary in Pointe-Noire known as CLETCO (Centre Luthérien des Études Théologiques en Congo).

É-A provides our francophone mission partners with a solid set of 138 hymns, a Divine Service, and an order for Matins. African tunes are used for several of the hymns. This book will unite the 11 church bodies around a Lutheran core, even as each location retains unique traditions.

A Busy Six Weeks!

Next week I begin my longest deployment so far, one that will take me to three countries: Ghana, Kenya, and Congo. In addition to helping introduce *LSB* in Ghana, I'll also be teaching at the seminary in Accra (the seminary chapel is pictured at left). I will also play in the band for the closing service of their national synodical women's convention. Then it is off to Kisumu, Kenya, for the annual leadership meeting for our francophone mission partners. Why Kenya for this meeting? It lowers travel costs for everyone! I'll also visit our seminary in Matongo while there. Then it is back to Congo for a couple of weeks of teaching — and then celebrating new vicar ordinations. SDG



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