



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Muli bwanji, friends.

Warm greetings on behalf of our partners and friends in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi. Here are a few updates for you!

HEALTH

Since experiencing significant flooding in early 2022, the people of Malawi have been impacted by cholera. This disease, most commonly spread through contaminated water, has become widespread - nearly 20,000 confirmed cases and 661 deaths have been reported throughout the country. An oral vaccine effort is underway in the areas most severely impacted.

There is also a growing concern about mental health. As people/households experienced difficulties during the pandemic, and are now try to cope with severe economic crises, deaths by suicide have become more frequent and there are few resources for assessment or prevention.



PASTORS' ACADEMY

In May of 2022 we helped host the first hybrid Pastors' Academy with the ELCM. Although we could not teach lessons "live" during the academy due to the 8 hour time difference, we prepared pre-recorded lessons on video that they were able to view as a part of their on-site classes. Synod staff, the conference deans, and the participants of the academy in Malawi shared

an opening ceremony together via Zoom and we are so thankful for the gift of technology that allowed us to see and hear each other in real time.

WELLS

Malawi's current cholera outbreak reminds us of how important it is for all people to have access to clean water sources. I am so thankful to the individuals and congregations of this synod who continue to share gifts for the purpose of building wells in Malawi. In 2022 two new wells were completed, one in Lower Shire and one in Mangochi, and there is a 3rd well site currently being prepared. Well projects like these can change a community in several ways: physical health, access to education, safety, and equity are often positive outcomes.



ELCM STRUCTURAL CHANGES

For the last few years the ELCM has been making plans to split into three dioceses in Malawi due to the growth of membership and subsequent leadership needed to support the congregations. In July of 2022 the ELCM announced the creation of a northern diocese, the *ELCM Diocese of Karonga*, and the election of its first bishop, Rev. Alick Msuku. Previously serving as a regional dean in the ELCM, he will now oversee the congregations in this new diocese, having been installed in November as the Rt. Rev. Alick Msuku. Read full article [HERE](#).



40th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

40 years ago, in 1982, the first worship service in the ELCM was hosted in the home of Gilbert Steven Msuku - there were 11 in attendance. Present at this first worship service was a small child, the son of G.S. Msuku, named Alick, now serving as the bishop of the Karonga Diocese in the ELCM. In November 2022 the ELCM formally celebrated 40 years together as a church. Hosted in tandem with the installation of Bishop Msuku, this celebration was attended by leaders and participants from Lutheran churches in Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Germany, and the ELCA/NWSWI. The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin has been blessed to be partnered with the ELCM for over half of this time and we pray for all the ways that God will continue to strengthen our ministry together.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE ELCM

All partners in ministry received a Christmas/New Year letter from Mphatso Thole, the companion coordinator in the ELCM. You can read his full letter [HERE](#).

TRAVEL IN 2023!!

After three years of travel difficulties, we will be returning to Malawi August 4 -18, 2023 for a companion visit!! This opportunity is open to the entire synod, however space is limited. If you are interested in traveling with us, please let Companion Coordinator, Laura Ramlow, know before February 1st. (lramlow@nswi.org).

I am so thankful for your ongoing and faithful response to this partnership. Your continued generosity, prayers, support – ALL the ways you show up for our partners in Malawi – is greatly appreciated.

Together in Christ,

Laura Ramlow

