

First Contact

Last March, Missionary Howard Molhke and I made our first visit to a church in the Republic of Congo. The ROC, which is commonly referred to as Congo-Brazzaville, neighbors the Democratic Republic of Congo to the northwest. This is the first time ever that WELS missionaries have traveled to this country. The Eglise Evangélique Luthérienne du Congo-Brazzaville (EELCB) reached out to WELS and the One Africa Team because they wanted to remain a confessional Lutheran Church.

Searching the Scriptures

We met all 10 pastors in the EELCB. The WELS' process for establishing formal relations with another church body begins with a preliminary visit. In a preliminary visit, our goal is to learn as much as we can about a church body. Also, we provide information about the history of the WELS and working with OAT.



The first two days of our meetings were about their church. We also worked through the pamphlet, “What the Bible and Lutherans Teach,” an overview of doctrine. We used this document to discover our common beliefs and to identify topics that need further study. We also studied Ephesians chapter 2, and discussed the practice of baptism.

Meeting the Members

We visited four churches and met some of the members of EELCB. It was amazing to see their push to worship in places where they have only a roof and no real building. I am meeting online regularly with EELCB leaders to continue discussions. We are already making plans for future in-person meetings to continue our process of establishing fellowship.



The work in the ROC is a great example of the opportunities for outreach that God is presenting the OAT here in Africa. We help church bodies that want to be confessionally Lutheran. In addition, we are pursuing relationships with churches that are already confessional Lutherans and desire contact with others. The One Africa Team is developing a large network of confessional Lutheran churches across Africa. This may have been the first time for WELS missionaries to visit the Republic of Congo, but it certainly will not be the last.

Missionary Jake Vilhauer lives in Zambia and coordinates outreach efforts to French-speaking Christians living in Africa.

Please pray for those working in fields that are ripe for harvest. Share their story, engage with future news, and receive updates. Learn more about our mission fields in Africa and how the Holy Spirit is working faith in people's hearts at <https://wels.net/serving-others/missions/africa>