

Picture This!

A picture is worth a thousand words - in any language. Members of the Obadiah Lutheran Synod (OLS) in Uganda speak English, Luganda, Lusoga, and many other Bantu dialects. It is a challenge to communicate Scriptural truths across linguistic and educational barriers. It's even more challenging to explain abstract concepts like justification, redemption, and Christ's humiliation and exaltation to students in Confirmation class. But a well-drawn picture can tie timeless truth to a tangible target.

Dr. Terry Schultz is an experienced WELS Missionary who creates print and music materials for WELS Multi-Language Productions. Dr. Schultz supports WELS's mission work around the globe. OLS President Maksimu Musa requested One Africa Team's assistance training Sunday School teachers. OAT turned to Dr. Schultz, who has graphically portrayed the Apostles Creed with full-color illustrations. He and Missionary John Roebke engaged 35 Sunday School teachers and OLS pastors with the task of translating these illustrations into lessons.

The Pictures

The 1531 edition of Martin Luther's Small Catechism contained 23 pictures printed from woodcut images. Like these images, Dr. Schultz's drawings help a teacher tell a simple story to explain a complex teaching. A courtroom scene depicts a young man standing before a judge with his accuser to one side and his attorney to the other. The next scene shows him standing before God flanked by Satan and Jesus.



He has redeemed me...not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood

Another picture unfolds the drama of a kidnapping and payment of ransom. The next scene represents the divine story of Christ's redemption - not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood. A comic book panel of pictures illustrates each of the stages of Christ's humiliation.



A composite illustration presents the stages of his exaltation. Dr. Schultz carefully crafted each picture to maximize understanding and teaching. A teacher's manual with minimal text supplements each picture, bearing in mind the target audience's literacy level. WELS MLP has produced three booklets to date – one for each of the three articles of the Apostles' Creed. Dr. Schultz is finalizing the illustrations for the Sacrament of Baptism, with the other chief parts of the Catechism to follow.

The Teachers

Attendees began each day of the workshop with animated singing and dancing. In addition to performing local melodies, the group learned a few African American spirituals from Dr. Schultz. OLS pastors delivered inspiring devotional messages in English. Dr. Schultz infused his own brand of energy into the workshop as he introduced each picture to the participants.



After this, the Sunday school teachers broke into smaller groups of 3-5 people. In each group, an OLS pastor walked through the concepts behind the picture. Thirty minutes later, each small group took turns teaching the lesson to the larger audience. Some teachers appeared more confident than others, but by the week's end, all of them had made significant improvement.

The Picture Ahead

Unfortunately, time did not allow for Dr. Schultz to present all 45 teaching posters to the group. The teaching posters and manuals remain with the OLS in Uganda. We encouraged the pastors to work through these materials with their Sunday school teachers. The pastors have a much better grasp of both Lutheran teachings and local culture.



Regardless if Dr. Schultz returns to Uganda, the OLS now has a powerful instrument for instructing youth and adults. Can you picture their faces gathered around Jesus' throne someday?

Missionary John Roebke lives in Malawi

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>