

Prepared to Serve



Chibikubantu Simweeleba, the newest Zambian national professor

God has blessed each and every one of us through the faithful ministry of our pastors. They have helped us to gain a much greater understanding of God and his will for us through their preaching and teaching of his Word. Every church needs a pastor who understands the Bible's complex teachings and can explain them in a simple way. Church members need a pastor who can apply the truths of Scripture to their lives in a loving, Gospel-centered way. Pastors need to be well-prepared before they begin to serve, because the eternal welfare of the souls under their care is at stake.

God has blessed the congregations of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa – Zambia Synod with church workers who have been thoroughly prepared in worker training schools that were established by WELS missionaries in the 1960's, and have been staffed by both WELS missionaries and by Zambian national professors. The current teaching staff at the Lutheran Seminary in Lusaka is made up of 3 Zambians and 3 Americans. This is the story of Chibikubantu Simweeleba, the newest Zambian national professor.

Upon graduating from the Lusaka Seminary in 2008, Simweeleba was ordained and assigned to serve Sinda-Chiyanjano parish, a cluster of rural congregations located in Zambia's Eastern Province. In 2015, Rev. Simweeleba received a call to serve Mt. Sinai Lutheran Church in the city of Ndola, located in the Copper Belt, the most important copper producing region of Zambia near the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. As a parish pastor, Rev. Simweeleba was involved in helping prepare candidates for the LCCA's worker training program by leading classes in the Theological Education by Extension (T.E.E.) program (see <https://welsfriendsof africa.com/t-e-e-ing-up-students-for-success/> for more background).



The Lord saw fit to give Rev. Simweeleba synodical duties in addition to his congregational responsibilities. From 2010-2019 he served alternatively as the LCCA-Z Mission Board Chairman, Synodical Vice Chairman, Secretary of the LCCA-Z Board of Control (akin to the WELS Synodical Council), and finally as the Chairman of both the Board of Control and the Joint Worker Training Board. These roles have provided him experience in various aspects of leadership skills, planning, and administration for use in the Seminary as an instructor. Additionally, Rev. Simweeleba holds a BDiv degree from the Greater Africa Theological Studies Institute (GRATSI), a post-graduate program for pastors in Zambia and Malawi, and he is currently pursuing an MTh degree with GRATSI.

In addition to his professional skills, one of the greatest blessings that Rev. Simweeleba brings to the Lutheran Seminary in Lusaka is that he has an insider's understanding of his students' lives and can relate to them much more naturally than his American counterparts. He is from the Tonga tribe of Southern Zambia, which makes up about 14% of the population of Zambia. One of his Zambian

colleagues at the Lutheran Seminary is from the Chewa tribe in the Eastern region, and the other is from the Nkoya tribe in the West. The LCCA Z has congregations spread all over the country, and the melting pot of the Lusaka Seminary gives students the opportunity to learn to appreciate cultures other than their own.

Rev. Simweeleba will begin his service at the Lutheran Seminary by teaching courses on Church History and Isagogics (Bible History). He will free up his fellow Zambian professor Rev. David Kamwata to prepare taking over the duties of teaching Biblical Greek and Hebrew from Dr. Ernst R. Wendland.



In the next several years some significant changes will be taking place in the shared worker training program of the LCCA Zambia and the LCCA Malawi. There is talk of

each synod establishing its own separate program for training pastors. Two of the current American professors in Lusaka are nearing the age of retirement. One Africa Team is exploring the creation of the Confessional Lutheran Institute, a new continent-wide initiative that would not only offer post-graduate education but also consulting services for national synods' worker training programs and enhancement of the skills of current pastors through professional development programs.

With these changes on the horizon, gifted men like Rev. Simweeleba will be essential to the success of preparing the next generation of faithful pastors. Pastor Simweeleba hopes that "LCCA pastors will be able to defend and proclaim the true teaching of the Word of God without fear. As Seminary instructors we hope to see [current] LCCA pastors who won't doubt or regret the kind of training others will have received but to envy it."

Missionary John Roebke lives in Malawi and is the Communications Director for One Africa Team

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<https://wels.net/serving-others/missions/africa>