

# Reformation Rain



It

doesn't rain in October in Malawi. October is an oven preheated to broil. The sun is intense. The heat blisters. The ground hardens. Rivers dry and the lakes recede. It never rains in October in Malawi.

But to everyone's surprise, showers fell on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October. People are still talking about it. *"Hey, did you hear...?"* That was the very day that most churches in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa Malawi Synod (LCCA-MS) were celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation.

A Mother Nature mistake? A global warming mix-up? Climate change chaos? Or...the gift of God?

I prefer the later. After all, if God controls ALL things, then doesn't He also have command of the weather? Interestingly, as the rains pounded the roof and streaked the windows during the worship service at Our Good Shepherd in Mzimba, the liturgist Pastor Milton Nyirenda was reading the Scripture lesson:

*"As the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without*

*watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread from the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth. It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10,11)*









Like lightning, it

struck me: it was raining more on the *inside* of the church than on the *outside*! Not because there was a hole in the roof, but because the LORD was showering His people with His grace!

A raining of the life-giving gospel message. An unending downpour of good news in Jesus. A surprising cloudburst of love and forgiveness. This rain had already started to fall in the Garden of Eden and has continued to this day. 500 years ago Martin Luther got soaked. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, so did we. On that day in Mzimba, and throughout Malawi, God's grace in Jesus was proclaimed, preached, taught, received, shown, sung and danced! Even *drawn* and *colored*!

The picture at the beginning of this post shows some of the northern region ladies coloring Luther's Seal or Coat of Arms. We studied the meaning and Scripture truths behind each of the five components that make up the Seal:

- The black cross
- The red heart
- The white rose
- The blue sky
- The gold ring



Luther's "logo" proclaims his faith and theology and ours as well. Isn't the cross, not only the central message of Scripture but central to our lives? Aren't our hearts alive in Christ and beating with His love? Aren't we, saints dressed in the white robes of salvation, placed delicately in a joyous white rose of hope? With a firm resolution, hasn't Jesus promised His second coming? And don't we, with eager expectation and with our spiritual eyes to the skies, look forward to it? Isn't God's love more precious than gold and as unending as a circle?

A resounding YES to each one! With Jesus being the Answer to each question, every one of them falls upon us like rain: cool, refreshing, invigorating, motivating.

No wonder the Lord included verse 10 in Ephesians chapter 2: *“We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

Apparently God must have been quite busy prior to the 29<sup>th</sup> of October because on that day His people were actively doing the good works He prepared for them:

- Structures were erected.
- Tarps were hung.
- Food was prepared.
- Guests served.
- Dishes washed.
- Hospitality was extended.
- Offerings were given.
- Shut-ins were visited.
- Songs were sung.
- Gifts were shared.
- Children were taken care of.
- Cups of cold water were given to thirsty people.



But there was not a greater work done that day than what God was doing for us by raining down His Grace in Word and Sacrament. Vicar Frank Mukhweya preached his sermon using the theme that was previously chosen and used by all the other LCCA-MS called workers who stood in the pulpit that day. It was the same text that is imprinted on the special

Reformation chitenje (skirts) that the LCCA-MS had designed and made for this significant occasion: Chipulumutso chichokera kuchisomo (We are saved by grace).

The text was preached, the Lord's Supper was received and God tipped the water jars. His people were doused. And if you ever wonder what the weather will be like the next time you go to your church, just open up your Bible to Ephesians 2:1-10. No matter the day or the month, there you can count on Reformation rain.

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