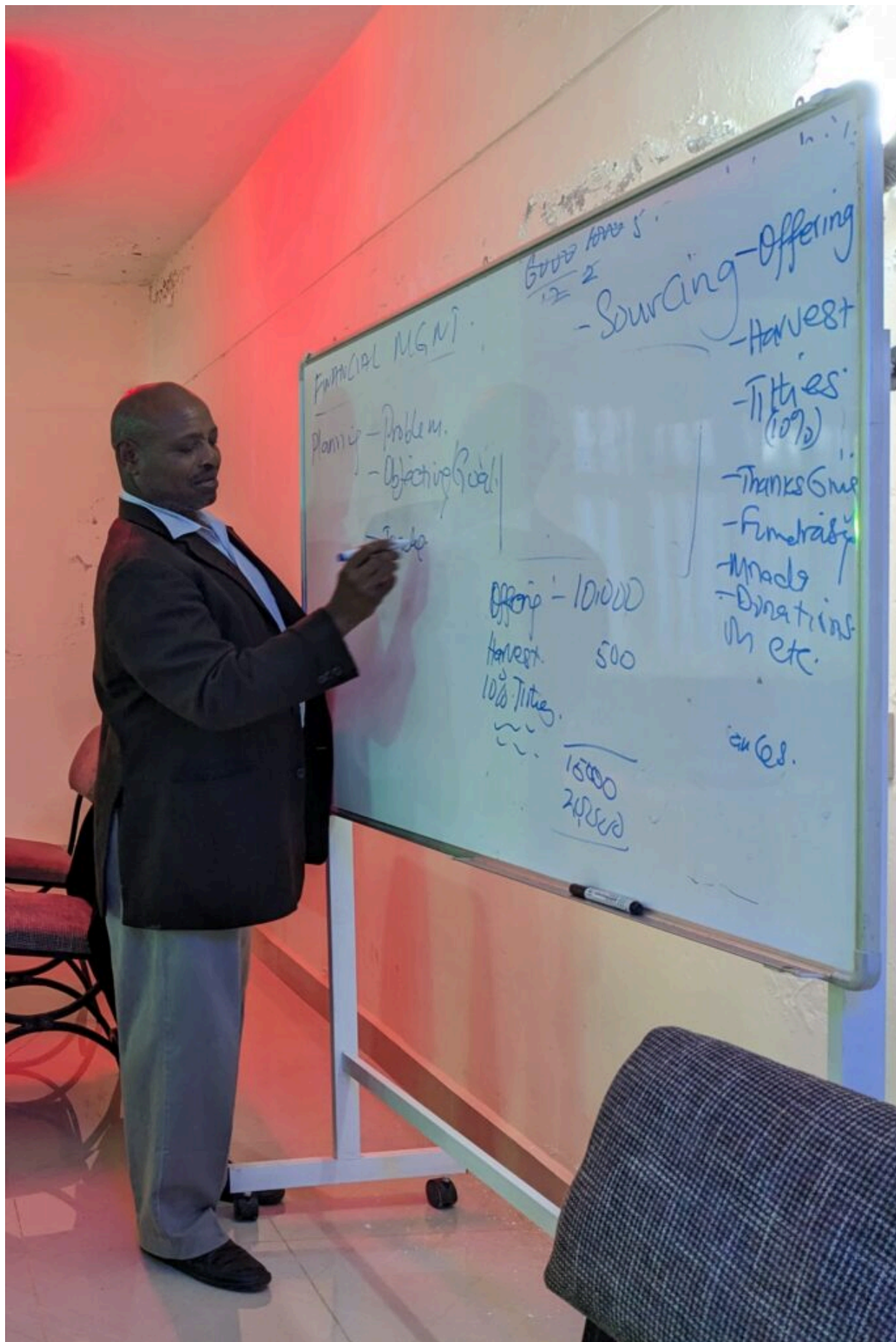


Who was in Sondu?



FINANCIAL MGMT.

Planning - Problem.

- Objective/Goal.

- Risk

Offering - 10000

Harvest 500

10% Tithe.

15000

20000

6000 / 2 = 3000

- Sourcing - Offering

- Harvest

- Tithes (10%)

- Thanks Giver

- Fundraising

- Grants

- Donations

- etc.

ended.

Who was in Sondu? This is my friend John. He was in Sondu, Kenya. We helped lead a workshop for church leaders and treasurers in the Lutheran Churches in Mission for Christ (LCMC). He is an experienced financial professional and a dedicated Christian. He led parts of the workshop. So did two other laymen. John was his usual cheerful, helpful self.



This is a new acquaintance, Pamela. She is the treasurer of her small church. She teaches in a school too. I asked her to facilitate part of the discussion on the afternoon of day two. She did a great job—better than I would have.



Who else was in Sondu? This is my friend Anariko. He is the LCMC president, but he did not lead the stewardship-and-financial-reporting workshop. Laymen did. Anariko helped coordinate it, and Anariko helped me with the part I led on the second day. He met with many people privately during the workshop. He and I conducted the communion service. He taught online during the workshop evenings. He is a hard worker.

Here is the whole group singing. They were all in Sondu, of course. Almost 60 of us were. They came from at least 16 congregations. There were only a few pastors.



I was in Sondu too. The photo of the whole group did not turn out well, so here is a better photo. It is of Pastor and President Anariko Onunda, me, and a gentleman whose name I did not get.

Who wasn't in Sondu?

I would like to tell you a bit, though, about people who were not in Sondu. Why? They were very important to the workshop.



For instance, Dr. Al Sorum from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary was not there. He and I both helped at the last LCMC workshop in October 2022. Years ago Al was the first WELS representative to get to know Pastor Onunda face-to-face. Without Al, humanly speaking, LCMC and WELS would not be partners.

Pastor John Roebke was not in Sondu either. John, who lives in Malawi, is our WELS liaison to LCMC. He teaches LCMC students online. He works with LCMC on ministry plans, mercy ministry, and more. He visits Kenya often. If it were not for John, I would not have been there at the Sondu workshop. I had scheduled class to teach with three LCMC pastors in mid-May. As long as I would be there for one reason, John had an idea. “Why don’t you coordinate with Pastor Onunda on a workshop right after the class?”

John also helped me when I flew into Kenya. There had been some snags with transferring workshop funds from the States. John helped me sort them out.



So did Stefan Felgenhauer, our WELS World Missions operations director. Without Stefan, I could not have managed in Kenya for three weeks. I want to thank him and others who work with him at the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry.



Here is our One Africa Team leader, Pastor Howie Mohlke. Like me and my wife, Howie and his wife Leslie live in Lusaka, Zambia. Howie was not in Sondu. I was the only one from OAT there. But without Howie I would not have been there. Howie coordinates most OAT meetings. In them we pray and discuss how best to work with

our partners and support their shepherding of God's flock. Howie asks the rest of us good, hard questions.

Who is Behind Me



Here is my wife Debbie and our whole immediate family. This photo of our six children and our son-in-law is from three weeks before the workshop. Our daughter Daria had just graduated from Wheaton College. A week later I flew from Tampa, Florida through Frankfurt, Germany to Nairobi, Kenya. I flew out on Mother's Day evening. My wife and I knew we would be apart for 5.5 weeks. It was hard to say goodbye. It always is.

I could not do what I do in Africa without the love, prayers, and support of my family.

Last but not least: *You*. You were not there in Sondu, Kenya 29 May-1 June. But you and everyone else in WELS let me be there. You gave the offerings. You were praying for me and other missionaries. You were praying for our Kenyan brothers and sisters. You do so every time you don't pray, "My Father" You pray, "Our Father"

I wish you could have been in Sondu. You might have giggled at my baby Swahili attempts. You would have rejoiced in the way the group asked to stay an extra half day so they could make more action plans. You would have laughed for joy at the love in the room for Jesus and for each other.

Your heart would have burst with mine as believers sang unaccompanied in harmony. They sang by Jesus' Spirit. They sang to God's glory. They sang at scheduled devotion times. The women at the conference formed an impromptu choir and sang at breaks.

Thank you for letting me be in Sondu, Kenya I was the only *mzungu* (white man) at the LCMC planning and commitment workshop.

God was there, indeed. But thank you to everyone pictured above who was not there. *Asante sana*. Thank you very much.



On June 1 five laymen, Anariko Onunda, and Dan Witte dedicated land near Sondu, Kenya. LCMC plans a new church there. The man nearest the camera is Duke. Missionary Dan Witte is based in Lusaka, Zambia. He is part of the WELS One Africa Team.

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>