



# FIELD NOTES

Writing to you from Nairobi, Kenya

February 2013

## Photos in Focus

*Home-Service 2012-2013*



## Advance Trip with Living Faith – Clive, Iowa

"This Kenyan man walked into my church last year looking for a place for him and his friends to worship," explained Rev. Luke Timm of Living Faith Lutheran Church in Clive, Iowa, "and, well, now here I am."

In January, Shauen traveled with Rev. Timm and David, an elder from his congregation, around Kenya to learn about God's amazing work and His people here as they prepare for a short-term team visit they expect to make in May. The first stop was north of Nairobi.

"In 10 years, these trees will be used to build a church," the local pastor explained as we each planted a tree alongside his garden. "Tomorrow," he said, "I think we should celebrate Holy Communion together before you go." Joyfully we accepted his offer and together under the shade of a grass-thatched pagoda, we celebrated the unity Christ brings to His church from around the world. This pastor will oversee the long-term mission work in the nearby

Muranga area, home of Rev. Timm's Kenyan friends in the United States.



*Shauen Plants a Tree for the Church*



*One of 21 Baptisms*

Next we headed west towards Kenya's tea plantations, where the post-election violence of 5 years ago wrecked its havoc. We were introduced to church members who lost children in the violence, met individuals who were blinded or maimed, and saw church structures that had been burned or looted. These brothers and sisters welcomed us with joy and taught us about what God has done in their midst in spite of their trials.

Halfway home on Sunday morning, we worshiped at a newly planted congregation – only a few months old – and joined in their joy as they celebrated 21 baptisms and 4 confirmations along with Holy Communion. Afterwards, Rev. Timm said to Shauen quietly, "I love your job." "Me too. Me too." Pray with us in thanksgiving for the joys of God's work here in Kenya!

## Contact Information

Shauen & Krista Trump  
PO Box 22  
Karen 00502 KENYA

Shauen.Trump@LCMS.org  
Krista.Trump@LCMS.org

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## Prayer Requests

- For peace during the national elections in Kenya March 4th
- For our precautionary evacuation during elections
- For all our Kenya missionaries as they learn Swahili

### In Praise

- For Shauen's recovery from his herniated disc
- For Elijah's recovery from a high fever this week
- For a limited but successful home-service
- For Living Faith Lutheran Church – Clive, IA and St. Andrew's Lutheran Church – Cape Girardeau, MO

## Home-Service 2012-2013

When Shauen severely herniated a disc in his back a few weeks before our return to the United States, all of our plans were put on hold. In a miraculous deliverance from pain, we did manage to fly to the States. However, instead of our scheduled visits in Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Illinois, Shauen spent a disappointing month on his back at his parent's place, but at least we were home with family. After a month of intense physical therapy, he was cleared to travel again.



*Shauen Preaches in California*

In Nebraska, Shauen slowly eased into the speaking engagements he was able to reach from Krista's parents' home, though throughout the remainder of home-service he was often in physical therapy and spent hours a day walking, stretching, and strengthening his

back.

Unfortunately, Krista also had her share of pain with carpal-tunnel symptoms in her wrist – likely from the increased work of providing virtually all the care for both boys. The most frustrating consequence was difficulty cooking when she finally had access to Western ingredients! A cortisone

shot has provided some relief.

Today Shauen's back is in fairly good shape. He walks about 3 miles a day and does some stretches to

continue to

keep it limber and strong. He's been able to travel and get back into his work here in East Africa. Though it was a challenge traveling for 4 months with the kids and we were disappointed to not see everyone, it was good to be home in the States. And now it's good to be back home in Kenya.

## Donors or Friends?

As the Congregation Connect partnership with St. Andrew's Lutheran Church of Cape Girardeau, MO was established over two years ago, Shauen emphasized the opportunity to learn about God's work in Kenya, to eat together, visit together, grow together, walk alongside each other, and be mutually encouraged and edified.



*St. Andrew's Visits Kenya*

After St. Andrew's visit this month, a debrief with the local parish touched on some frustrations from

this trip: constant requests for money and projects that didn't fit the partnership, all in contrast to previous visits.

Shauen delicately tried to explore where the breakdown in expectations occurred. Two hours into the conversation, a member of the

local parish council spoke up, "Ah! They don't want to just be donors. They want to be friends!" That's it exactly. In Christ we should be more than donors – we should be friends.