

A History of
THE LUTHERAN BIBLE INSTITUTE
Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa



1981 – 2003

Erich Westphal
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*For my generous father who has given me so much,
not the least of which are the wonderful memories of life in Malawi.*

*For the dedicated men of Malawi,
who give up so much of the little they have for the privilege of serving their Lord
as lay-leaders, evangelists and pastors of the LCCA.*

*For my gracious God, the Lord of the Church,
who has greatly blessed the work of the LCCA.*

Thank you to everyone who gave of their time to help me write this paper: Walter Westphal, Raymond Cox, Michael Hintz, Mark Rieke, E. H. Wendland, E. R. Wendland, Paul O. Wendland, Jeff Gunn, John Hartwig.

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A History of the Lutheran Bible Institute Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa

I was only three years old when we arrived and although I spent nearly ten of my formative years in Malawi, what I remember about the experience is quite limited. I remember the beauty of the land; the variety of its wildlife. No where in the world, except the waters of Lake Malawi, are there more varieties of Cichlids, a rain-bow-hued (tropical) fish. I remember, at first, feeling quite out of place, a bland skinned boy in a sea of color. I remember a simple life, where in spite of the extreme poverty the people were content. Their smiles were dazzling. There is a very good reason why Malawi is affectionately known as the Warm Heart of Africa.

I remember having toughened feet, a result of walking around the school property through the brittle grass. I remember spending hours exploring the fuel-wood forests around the property, swinging from the bamboo trees, trapping mice in the early morning fields with the sons of the students at the Lutheran Bible Institute (LBI). I remember visiting my father in his office. I vaguely remember hearing my father talk about the ups and downs of his day. What I was never sure about was what his work actually involved. Beside the fact that he taught I had no idea that he was contributing to a much broader goal. That goal was set in place by the men of the World Mission Board of the Wisconsin Synod long before my father ever came to Malawi.

What is that goal? The goal is to spread the Word throughout the world so that all people have the chance to hear about their Savior. However, missionaries do not plan to stay in an area forever. Their job is to work themselves out of a job. They aid the nationals in developing a self-governing church. The goal is indigenization, to educate and train the nationals to work independently from the Wisconsin Synod. The missionaries in charge of education desire to train men who are confident and skilled to take charge of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa (LCCA). Much of the change and growth which has occurred at the Lutheran Bible Institute in Malawi happened with these goals in mind.

Several miles south of the capital city of Lilongwe, down what seemed a mile of winding, red-dirt road, dusty in the dry season, mud-slick in the rainy season, lies the Lutheran Bible Institute. But what brought the LBI, my one-time home and the training-ground for national lay-leaders, to Malawi?

THE CONCEPTION OF THE LBI-MALAWI

The Need

When the Lutheran Bible Institute of Malawi was dedicated, theological training was nothing new. Reverend Raymond Cox relates,

Above all, we (expat WELS Missionaries) wanted to have national leaders in the LCCA who would be 'able to teach/preach God's Word in truth.' That was a goal even before mission work began in Malawi in 1963. When I arrived in Africa (Zambia - then N. Rhodesia in 9/1961) already then the Executive Committee for Africa (today Executive Committee is called Administrative Committee) wanted to have a worker training program for national workers. In the 1950s and early 1960s African men who had been instructed in a BIC helped the missionaries in preaching & teaching by serving as interpreters. That arrangement was not to be permanent.¹

In 1962 Ernst H. Wendland pioneered the venture of developing a theological training system in the LCCA in Chelston, Zambia.² After researching several other Bible institutes in Africa, a 40-acre piece of property was purchased eight miles outside of Zambia's capital city, Lusaka. In 1964, the Lutheran Bible Institute of Zambia opened its doors.³ The information they learned and the wisdom they gained over the years was very useful when the decision was made to start a training school in Malawi as well.

In that same year of 1962, missionaries Richard Mueller and Raymond Cox were sent to explore the neighboring country of Nyasaland. The story of that adventure, the Wisconsin Synod's beginnings in Malawi, can be found elsewhere.⁴ Fourteen years later, the Lord had greatly blessed the LCCA. The Book of Reports and Memorials (BORAM) states,

Last year Malawi had a 40% increase in baptized members and a 32% increase in communicants. While the enthusiasm is running high for our church and while the opportunity for expansion and growth is still before us, it is urgent to have more workers on the field.⁵

Prior to the publication of that report, the Executive Committee for Central Africa (ECCA) issued a written appeal to the Board for World Missions for three more men, one of whom should open a Bible institute. Scrawled on that same page were the words, "P.S. Be called at

¹ Cox, Raymond. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 18 March 2003.

² Wendland, E. H. *To Africa With Love*. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1974, 90.

³ Cox, Raymond. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 18 March 2003.

⁴ Cloute, Justin C. *Moving into Malawi: A History of the First Years of the Wisconsin Synod's Mission Work in Malawi with Personal Perspective from Missionary Raymond Cox*. 22 April 2002.

⁵ Reports and Memorials for the Forty-Fourth Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod – Assembled at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, 3-10 August 1977, 95.

once to open Bi. Institute in fall, 1977. Urgent!”⁶ It would take another four years before the dream was realized.

Malawi was a field that God was blessing abundantly. By all indications God intended to bless it even more. Missionaries John Janosek and Raymond Cox were already encountering and working with men with the abilities to be trained for the public ministry. When Malawian nationals appeared to have pastoral leadership qualities they were sent to Zambia for more thorough training. Although the nationals received adequate training in Zambia, in the 1976 appeal of the ECCA published in the BORAM in the following year, the need for a new, Malawian school was explained. It made little sense to send the nationals, with their families, 600 miles across the border to Zambia, train them for two years and then return them to Malawi. Not only was the distance a deterrent, but also the expense of moving entire families back and forth.

Additionally, some missionaries and nationals felt that the cultural difference between the two countries was an obstacle that could be surmounted by training the nationals in the country of their origin, where they would finally serve. Tied in with this was the inculcated superstition of some nationals. Raymond Cox describes the effects of this,

If a man from Malawi went to Zambia and got sick over there, the question raised was, Why did I get sick? Was it some evil spirit in Zambia? Perhaps if I had stayed in Malawi that would not have happened? This is part of the concept that the African writer (I think it was John Mbiti) talked about and said, (I may not have his words exact, but this is close): ‘Nothing ... absolutely nothing happens in the life of an African due to natural causes. It is caused by the supernatural.’⁷

Further challenges to the system also existed. The 1977 BORAM indicates that border crossings were becoming more difficult.⁸ Border crossing in Central Africa was not like traveling across state lines. It cannot even be compared to crossing the border into Canada or Mexico. Crossing the border from Malawi into Zambia and back was a stressful procedure that could take hours for the nationals. Cox explains the reason for this,

Malawi gained independence in 1964 ... a few months later there was an attempted coup d'état. That, and other political matters made President Kamuzu Banda (1st president of Malawi) very sensitive about people crossing borders. It seemed that Pres. Banda was afraid that people crossing borders, going to/from

⁶ Executive Committee for Central Africa. Letter of Appeal. 1976.

⁷ Executive Committee for Central Africa. Letter of Appeal. 1976.

⁸ Reports and Memorials for the Forty-Fourth Biennial Convention, 3-10 August 1977, 95.

Malawi to Zambia (or other countries) were potentially subversive & I think he perceived such people as a great threat to his dictatorial rule.⁹

President Banda's fear translated into political unrest in those first years of Malawi's independence. Raymond Cox recalls frequent road blocks and car searches. Of course, any time one of the nationals went back and forth from Malawi, he was put through "the mill."¹⁰ Every time a student left and every time he returned he had to report to the political party. In one case things got out of hand. Cylice Bowman, an early candidate for pastoral leadership training, was returning to Malawi from the Zambian seminary and was imprisoned. His crime? No one will ever know. The incident was, in effect, the last straw and further fueled the LCCA's push for another LBI in Malawi.

Based on all those concerns, the synod in convention resolved "that a Bible institute be established in Malawi."¹¹

The Location

Lilongwe's centrality was one reason why Lilongwe was chosen as the location to build. Even though the desire was to train men in Malawi, those nationals still had to go to Zambia for their seminary education. In the '70s, missionaries worked mainly out of the city of Blantyre, 200 miles south of Lilongwe. Lilongwe was easily accessible from Blantyre on Malawi's only highway, M1. If Blantyre missionaries had to transport students to the seminary, they still had another 400 miles to go on the Great East Road to Lusaka once they reached Lilongwe. By basing the LBI and missionaries in the central location of Lilongwe, Zambia was more accessible as were the northern churches in Mzuzu.

President Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda was another reason why Lilongwe was chosen as the location to build. President Banda had mandated that the capital city be moved north from its location in Zomba to Lilongwe. As Cox puts it, "Lilongwe would become the 'apple of the President's eye ... a good place for our church's headquarters."¹² Lilongwe was a rapidly expanding city and the city planners were not expecting the population growth to slow down any time soon.

⁹ Cox, Raymond. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 18 March 2003.

¹⁰ Cox, Raymond. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 18 March 2003.

¹¹ PROCEEDINGS of the Forty-Fourth Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod – Assembled at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, 3-10 August 1977, 96.

¹² Cox, Raymond. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 18 March 2003.

Lilongwe was a prime area for the LBI. It would be in a growing city, full of mission potential. The educational benefits it would provide for Banda's people would be readily seen by him and his officials. Banda would have no chance or reason to suspect the LCCA in Malawi of doing anything underhanded.

Financing the Project

The 1977 Book of Reports and Memorials recorded that the estimated cost for the building project would be \$130,592 not including an increase in the cost of materials by two percent per month. The breakdown of the cost was as follows,

Two mission houses	\$40,320
Five student houses	22,400
Classroom block	39,200
Property	5,600
Water/light	11,200
Ten percent contingency	11,872
Two percent per month material cost	? ¹³

When the LCCA celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1978, congregations of our synod throughout the United States collected about \$100,000 for the cause of building the Bible institute in Malawi.¹⁴ By 1981, inflation had caused the building committee to overspend the allotted amount.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the Lutheran Bible Institute of Malawi was finally constructed and ready to open.

THE BIRTH OF THE LBI-MALAWI

Why was there such a long period of time between the synod's approval of the LBI in 1977 and its opening in 1981? The short answer that often comes from the mouth of a world mission worker is, "Nothing in a world mission field comes easy."

The main challenge was finding someone to accept the task of being principal at the LBI. Two years went by before the call was accepted. Nearly one more year went by before his Malawi residence permit was processed.¹⁶ There was also a problem with acquiring a plot of land in Lilongwe that would be suitable for a campus. Add to that the rising costs of building

¹³ Reports and Memorials for the Forty-Fourth Biennial Convention, 3-10 August 1977, 96.

¹⁴ Reports and Memorials for the Forty-Fifth Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod – Assembled at Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin, 1-8 August 1979, 119.

¹⁵ Reports and Memorials for the Forty-Sixth Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod – Assembled at Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, 3-8 August 1981, 103-104.

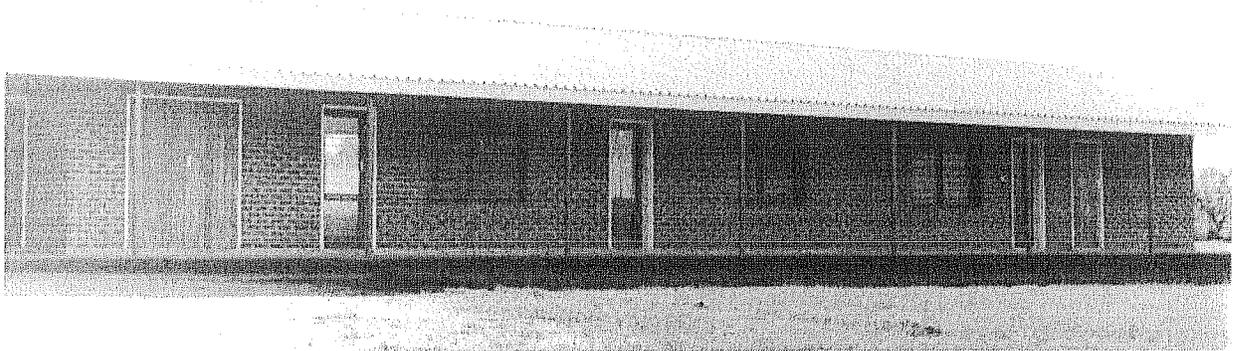
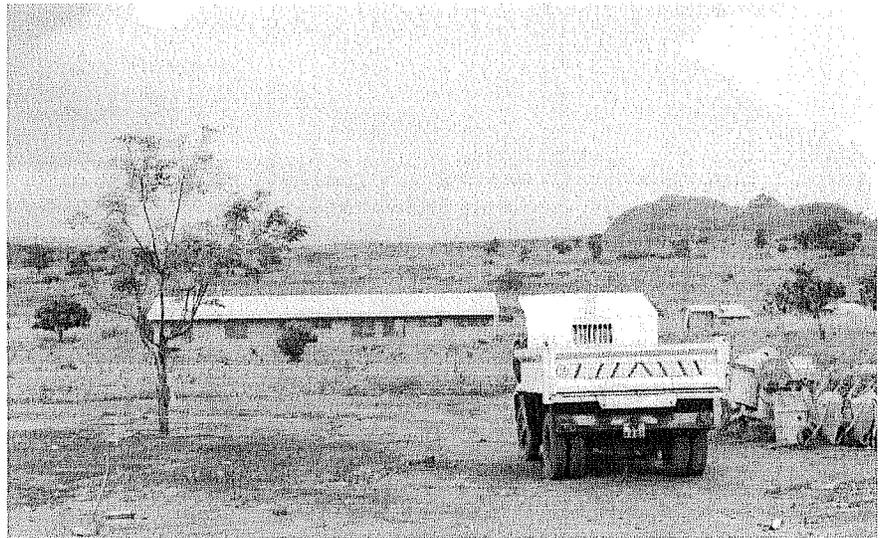
¹⁶ Wendland, E. H. 1981. Thanksgiving in Malawi. *The Northwestern Lutheran*, 25 October, 346.

THE LUTHERAN BIBLE INSTITUTE



Missionary Michael Hintz erects a school sign at the LBI entrance

The newly constructed LBI in 1981. Classroom/administration building and student houses in the background.



The LBI classroom/administration building

materials and it is easy to see why it took so long for the project to get underway. The challenges were not worth the wait! However, the birth of the LBI-Malawi was well worth the frustrations and wait.

The Lutheran Bible Institute, Lilongwe, Malawi was dedicated on August 12, 1981. Michael Hintz, a missionary of the LCCA, relates the events of this special day,

“August the 12th dawned bright and clear! What else should one expect in a country which hadn’t seen a drop of rain in four months! For a group of Christians who had gathered at a site in Lilongwe, Malawi, however, it was an exceptional day, a day long awaited, a day for singing, rejoicing and thanksgiving! ...

“‘Give Thanks unto the Lord’ was the theme of Pastor Mark Krueger’s dedicatory sermon. On the same day Pastor Walter Westphal was installed as the Institute’s principal. Among the many joyful worshipers were the eight students about to begin the two-year course of study at the school. They also hope some day after serving as evangelists to complete their theological studies at the Lutheran Seminary in Lusaka, Zambia, where they can be trained to become fully independent pastors of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa.”¹⁷

THE CAMPUS

Bare Bones

When the LBI first opened, the 11 acre compound was open to the world. A later attempt to surround it with a barbed-wire fence failed, when neighboring children who used pieces of the fence to make and market toy wire cars (*galimotos*). Since then, because of increasing security problems, a brick wall has been erected. The teacherage, located on the west end of the compound, was surrounded by a six foot high, chain-link fence.

Two-hundred yards below the principal’s property, lay the principal administrative and academic building. The south end of the building was a partitioned classroom, with a small library in back. The north end was the principal’s office.

Another 100 yards below the classroom building were the five student housing units. Each student house had a small plot of land on which they could do a little subsistence farming of vegetables and maize.

Growing Pains

In 1983, when the first class of the LBI graduated there were seven men who were assigned to serve congregations throughout Malawi. God had certainly blessed the school with

¹⁷ Wendland, E. H. 1981. Thanksgiving in Malawi. *The Northwestern Lutheran*, 25 October, 346.

that number. However there were many more capable candidates for leadership training at the LBI. With only five housing units on campus, the opportunity for increased enrollment was hampered. So in the summer of that year the Board of Control decided to expand the students' living quarters. The five original housing complexes had dividing walls built into them and an additional kitchen/utility area was also built onto each house. The whole project was finished in two and a half months at a cost of 16,000 Kwacha (around \$8,000).¹⁸

Another building project was undertaken in 1989. Two new houses were built, one for the Dean of Students and another for unmarried students. A guest house/cafeteria was also constructed at the same time.

At times it must have worried the missionaries as they wondered how they would accommodate the growing student body in those first ten years and supervising the building projects. However, those were pains well worth enduring. Those pains meant that God was looking with favor on the work that his people in Lutheran Church of Central Africa were doing.

Growth Spurt

Another change to the LBI campus occurred in 1995 to fit the changing curriculum. The building project included a new library and press building, five new student duplexes, a large chapel and a new house for the new missionary professor, Werner Lemke.

STAFF AND STUDENTS

The Faculty at the Start

Initially there were three men who served on the staff of the LBI, missionary Walter Westphal, national pastor Deverson Ntambo, and missionary Michael Hintz.



Missionary & Mrs.
Walter Westphal

Missionary Westphal was the acting principal of the Lutheran Bible Institute in Lilongwe from 1981 to 1990. Westphal graduated from the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in the spring of 1968. Before being assigned into the parish ministry, he served as a tutor at Northwestern College and then as a home mission pastor in Colorado.

In March of 1981, Westphal arrived in Malawi with his wife and three children. Upon being installed in August,

¹⁸ Westphal, Walter. 1983. New Class at the LBI-Malawi. *The Lutheran Christian* 12, no. 3 (December): 7.

he took up his duties as principal of the LBI where he regularly taught courses in Bible Introduction, Church History, Christian Doctrine, English and an introduction to Greek. He directed course development as well. In a letter to his mother, he described the curriculum work he was doing during a school break,

Another long gap in between letters, partly because I'd had a lot of typing to do for class preparations. The History course I've been teaching needed a reworking for the Module just ended and for the one coming up in two weeks.¹⁹

In addition, he was responsible for campus management as the one was in charge of keeping financial records and campus upkeep. That work included the hiring and firing of security guards and cooks. He wrote in another letter,

We have hired a new gardener. I terminated Evan's contract last month because his life-style wasn't compatible with our school. He had been warned about this in the past, yet he persisted in his old habits. As a result of one habit he failed to show up to cook one of the evening meals for the students during module two, because he was off on a binge somewhere. ... So he has gone, and Blazio has come.²⁰

It also entailed supervising any new construction such as the expansion of student housing, a water tower, a cafeteria/guest house, and Pastor Mabedi's house. Regarding the building of Pastor Mabedi's house, Westphal wrote,

I didn't go to the LCCA meetings in Zambia as I had planned. It turned out that I came down with a very bad cold. Besides, the contractor we signed to build Pastor Mabedi's house wanted to begin work on that Monday, so I needed to be here in order to get him started in the right place and make sure he would not cut down more trees than was absolutely necessary.²¹

He also managed the student work program and the ration program. His other major responsibility was his role as assistant pastor of the English congregation of Mtendere Lutheran Church in Lilongwe with Pastor Ntambo who served the Chichewa congregation there.

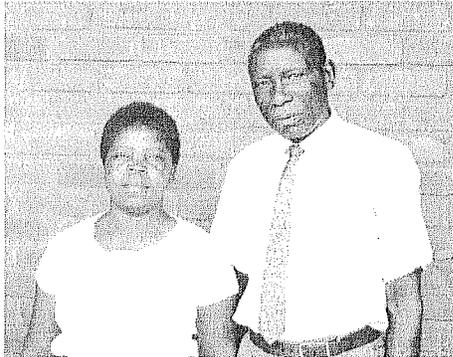
In 1981 Pastor Deverson Ntambo, the first national pastor of the LCCA in Malawi, began serving as a part-time teacher. Ntambo came into contact with the LCCA while he was working for the Malawi government. After going through instruction, he entered the Lutheran Seminary in Lusaka, Zambia, and graduated in June of 1974. After graduation he served as vicar in Blantyre, Malawi at Epiphany Lutheran Church. In August 1976, Ntambo was ordained into the

¹⁹ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 2 July 1988.

²⁰ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 27 February 1988.

²¹ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 21 February 1989.

public ministry and installed as pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Lilongwe. In 1983, he was installed at Mtendere Lutheran Church in Lilongwe.²²



National Pastor & Mrs.
Deverson Ntambo

Ntambo assisted by teaching practical theology courses including Evangelism, Stewardship, and Sunday school teaching. One of the more novel courses that Ntambo taught was a class with the students' wives. He helped them understand what it would be like to be the wife of a church worker. He taught them how to conduct themselves.²³ In a further step toward indigenization, Ntambo became the dean of students at the LBI in 1984. As a part of that position, he also helped in the counseling of students. He

served the LBI until 1988 when he accepted a call as pastor in Zomba, Malawi.

Missionary Michael Hintz was called to the field straight out of the seminary. He graduated in the spring of 1978, but he and his wife did not actually arrive in Malawi until February of the next year. So he arrived right about the time that the work in Malawi was being



Missionary & Mrs. Michael Hintz

established. In fact, the Hintz's were the first Wisconsin Synod missionaries to live in Lilongwe.²⁴

Hintz was an assistant teacher at the LBI along with Ntambo. He taught homiletics, liturgy, and helped Ntambo with Sunday school teaching. Hintz also taught the Confessions, specifically the Apostle's Creed followed by the Augsburg Confession. Aside from teaching, Hintz also developed course material on how to preach for his homiletics class and was supervising missionary of 12-15 congregations in the areas surrounding Lilongwe. In July of 1985, he and his family left Lilongwe for stateside ministry.

Pastor John Hartwig, who was called to serve Lilongwe in 1983, also assisted with instruction at the LBI. He took over for Hintz, particularly in the area of homiletics.

²² Rev. D. Ntambo Installed at Mtendere, Lilongwe. *The Lutheran Christian* 12, no. 3 (December 1983): 2.

²³ Hintz, Michael. Interview with Erich Westphal. 10 March 2003.

²⁴ Hintz, Michael. Interview with Erich Westphal. 10 March 2003.

A Day in the Life of an LBI Principal

Anyone who holds a ministerial position knows well the challenges and sacrifices of such work. These are only accentuated when encountered in a foreign environment. Even so, there are many blessings and a great sense of satisfaction that comes from this work. Those highs as well as the lows are magnified when one serves on a foreign mission field. Westphal speaks of one such high point of his service,

My greatest satisfaction came from the multiplication of ministry that results when a number of men graduate from a training program to enter the ministry and the progress that's made when a national church is equipped to do its own ministry. They can do it themselves better than we can do it for them. It also was a joy to work with people who were grateful for everything that they received. A further highlight came sometime after leaving Malawi when I learned that one of the graduates, Daesi Boloweza, had become involved in a border-crossing ministry serving a group in Mozambique. In other words, he had become both a Malawian pastor and a foreign missionary.²⁵

Joy comes in different packages on a mission field, from situations that were never part of the job description. Westphal tells of an occasion when he was ~~woken~~^{awakened} unexpectedly in the middle of the night. One of his responsibilities was providing transportation whenever a student's wife was *m'mimba*, pregnant, and ready to deliver. He recalls that

More often than not, this need would occur at one or two in the morning. Frank Chiumia's wife was one of those. Her friends helped her into the van which I had driven down to the classroom building, and we raced off into the night. There was no traffic on M-1 at that hour. But when we arrived at the dimly lit hospital entrance, there also was no one there to receive her. In fact the door nearest the driveway was locked. So she and her friend waited at the door while I hurried around to another door. A few minutes later after locating a nurse who unlocked the first entrance, we found the mother still waiting, but now with the baby in her arms. A few days later Frank asked me if I would pick a name for the child - quite an honor. For some reason I thought of the account in Acts 12 when Peter, released from prison, knocks at the locked door of a Christian house in the middle of the night, and a servant leaves him standing out there, running to tell the others, "Peter's at the door." So the child was baptized Pietro Pakomo (Peter-at-the-door) Chiumia. The child died about two years later, as happens to many Malawian infants. But I'm sure the door of heaven swung wide open to receive him.²⁶

Along with such blessings, God also permitted Westphal to experience some faith-strengthening challenges involving poverty, shortages, equipment malfunctions, sickness, and

²⁵ Westphal, Walter. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 7 April 2003.

²⁶ Westphal, Walter. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 7 April 2003.

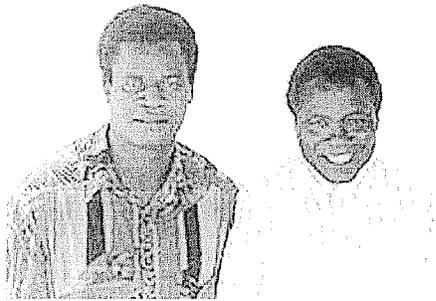
security issues. Break-ins at the principal's house and students' houses were not uncommon. One such burglary occurred in 1986,

We had a break-in at one of the student houses last week. While the students and families were in evening chapel a window was broken on the dark side of the last house in the row. Someone squeezed in and stole the family's clothes and blankets, a radio, mirror, some picture frames, and a bit of money. I am sure they would have taken the table and chairs, but couldn't get them through the small window opening. We had burglar bars installed on the operable windows two years ago, but the inoperable windows apparently need them too, because the panes of glass are large enough for a small person to get through.²⁷

Yet through it all, God instilled a willing desire in the nationals to continue enrolling and returning to the LBI.

The Changing Faculty

In 1987, a momentous move toward the indigenization of the LCCA occurred. The Board of Control gave their approval to calling a full-time national teacher to the LBI staff. He was to



National Pastor & Mrs.
Daison Mabedi

take over for Ntambo who had accepted a call to shepherd a congregation in Zomba. Pastor Daison Mabedi accepted the call in the Summer of 1988 and began teaching in September of that year. He was called to be a teacher and Dean of Students, and also to assist Principal Westphal in everyday duties. This was a proud moment for the LCCA; as one of the national writers for *The Lutheran Christian* proclaimed, "This is the first called position for a national to

serve full-time at the LBI."²⁸

After nearly ten years on the Central African mission field, Westphal returned to the United States. In his last letter from Malawi, Westphal wrote,

This will be the last letter from us in Malawi because our family will be moving to Wisconsin on Thursday, August 2nd. At the end of May as the school year was coming to a close and the fourth set of students was graduating from the LBI, we prayerfully decided in consultation with fellow missionaries and with those in charge of the African field to return to the USA.²⁹

As a result of this departure, the LBI was left without a principal until the 1991 school year.

²⁷ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 27 September 1986.

²⁸ Sumba, E. Changes in the Ministry. *The Lutheran Christian* 18, no. 3 (1988): 8.

²⁹ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 31 July 1990.

After Westphal left in August of 1990, the ECCA determined that the best course of action would be to reassign one of the missionaries on the field. In February of 1991, Raymond Cox was called to take over the position of principal of the LBI. He served as an interim



Missionary & Mrs. Raymond Cox

principal, teaching at the LBI for that school year with Pastor Mabedi. Cox left on Easter Sunday, 1992.

Following Cox's departure, missionary Mark Rieke was called as principal. He served in that capacity until 1997. That same year the LCCA-Malawi had another proud moment, taking a further step toward indigenization. Pastor Mabedi was elevated from Dean of Students to Principal. The

1999 Book of Reports and Memorials records this advance of the national church,

In recent years, however, the national church has begun to assert itself, and the role of the missionary has changed noticeably from decision-making to advising. In keeping with that change, two of the men most recently called to Malawi were called to role model the pastoral office. ... A veteran teacher also accepted our call to the Bible Institute where his presence will have the same effect of training and inspiring nationals to do work that they are better equipped to do.³⁰

That man was WELS teacher Werner Lemke, who was called to teach the Liberal Arts courses of the Bible institute.

Rieke remained at the LBI, but assumed more of an advisory role. Until his departure in the Spring of 2003, he spent most of his time writing material for the LCCA and having it translated and published. His position will be filled by missionary Paul Nitz, who has served in the southern city of Blantyre and the northern regions of Malawi in Mzuzu.

The Students

The students of the LBI were men in their twenties and thirties who came from a very simple, sheltered village life in the bush. Although not a set requirement, most of the students who went through the LBI were married with children. There was a very good reason for this, as well as a cultural one. As at the seminary in Zambia, the LBI in Lilongwe wanted to train men who had a high level of maturity, men who would be committed. As Wendland states, "African

³⁰ Reports and Memorials for the Fifty-fifth Biennial Convention – Assembled at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, 26-30 July 1999, 42.

village custom does not recognize an unmarried person as mature. Neither is the marriage 'complete' without children."³¹

It is worrisome for a single student from the LBI to face the possibility of being assigned after graduation without a wife and children. Westphal wrote in a letter about one such graduate in 1985,

The students have been notified about their congregational assignments and are all set to go. Graduation is the 16th. One of the students isn't too happy with his assignment however because it happens to be to his home area and he is afraid his relatives won't accept him as their evangelist. He is about 22 and presently unmarried. I hope it works out.³²

Unfortunately this student had two strikes against him. Not only was he not married, but also it was generally mission policy to avoid assigning a graduate to his home village. The problem that Jesus had in Nazareth was also a likely possibility for graduates from the LBI. One begins to understand then why this student was so upset.

Recruitment

English was another prerequisite for students entering the LBI. While this may have served to limit the education that was being offered, Hintz recalls that the missionaries just were not prepared to do it any other way. Even if classes were taught in Chichewa many of the reference books, such as in systematic theology, were written in English. Missionaries at that time had no ability or intent to translate those books.³³

English was almost a necessity for sociological reasons as well. The Central African region is home to many different dialects. In Zambia, missionaries had to work in Chitonga, Chinyanja, and Chibemba. In Malawi the main dialect was Chichewa, however, there were some nationals in the northern regions who spoke Chitumbuka.

Normally, a missionary working in conjunction with a particular congregation would recommend a person for the LBI. They would propose a national based on his previous service as a lay leader in his congregation.

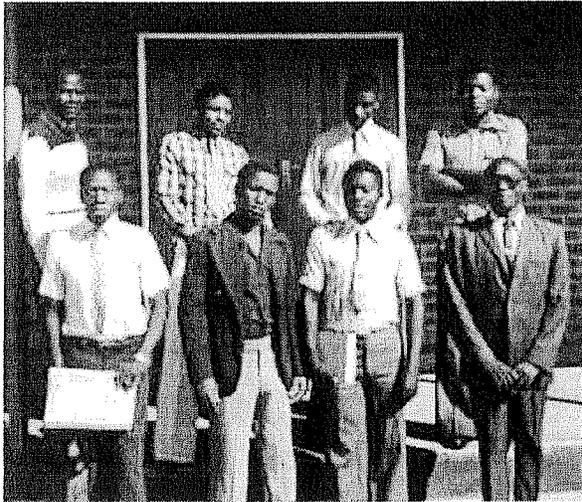
Lay leadership training was conducted prior to a national's entrance into the LBI. This was done through a series of Theological Training by Extension (TEE) books written by E. H.

³¹ Wendland, E. H. *To Africa With Love*. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 93.

³² Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 9 June 1985.

³³ Hintz, Michael. Interview with Erich Westphal. 10 March 2003.

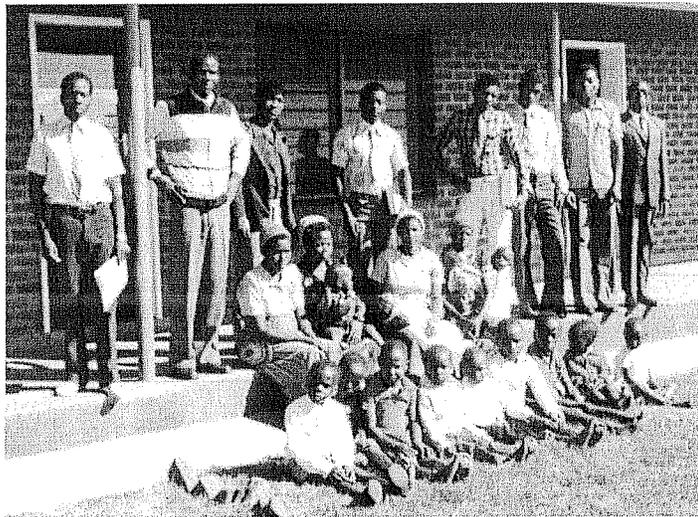
The Students of the LBI



The LBI Class of 1981

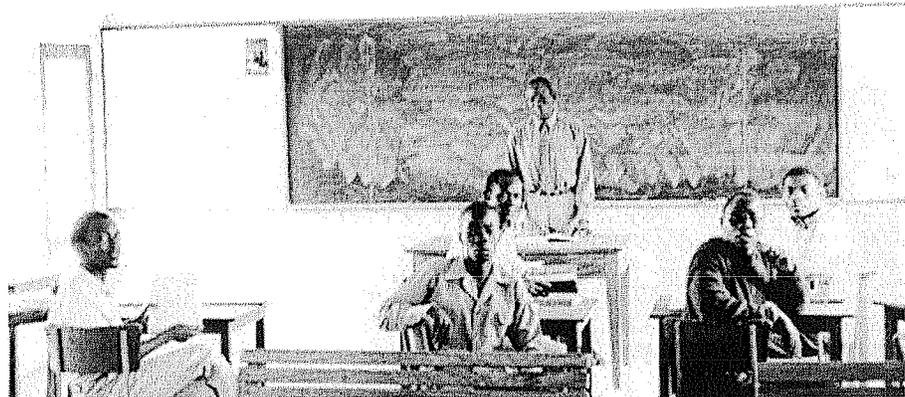
Back Row: S. Mangalesoh, J. Bernard,
B. Liwonde, H. Bickester

Front Row: F. Ndembo, D. Boloweza,
F. Besten, G. Makwakwa



1981 Student Body
with their wives and
children

Pastor Ntambo
teaching a class



Wendland. TEE is not something unique to the LCCA; in fact many church bodies made this type of training popular. Hintz described what the purpose of such a training course is,

What they did was they tried to get away from the institution of the school and train the national within his own context. The teacher would go to the student rather than the student come to the teacher ... We used a lot of Theological Education by Extension when we identified people within congregations who wanted to learn more about God's Word.³⁴

TEE books were written and used by missionaries to prepare men for further training. They covered a broad range of topics: Sunday school training (*Feed My Lambs*), preaching (*Feed My Sheep*), Bible introduction (*Know Your Bible*) and basic doctrine (*Go and Teach*). Another course used as BIC was *Arise and Be Baptized*.

Completion of the set of village-level training books could take one to two years. Any time a missionary visited the congregations he was assigned to, he would check a candidate's progress. The missionary would bring his own copy of the TEE books into the bush and go through the lessons he had completed. Hintz recalls that those books would acquire the flavor of Africa without much effort. They would get filthy because of red dirt so abundant in that region. When a national completed the course satisfactorily and had the recommendation of the missionary and congregation, he could apply to enter the LBI. Even then the process was not over,

The candidates who applied received further screening through a testing program held at the LBI when they came there to register. If they passed the tests, they could enroll. The tests were a review of the TEE content. If they were able to read and answer the questions in English, they were considered ready for further education on the LBI level.³⁵

In that way, English became a means to further screen the men who desired to enter the LBI.

Student Life

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. Yet President Banda had high aspirations for his people. He wanted his people to be educated, to learn English. Banda had a good understanding that if his country was going to get anywhere in the world; they had to raise academic standards. Therefore he provided the Malawians with free school systems.

To assist the students enrolled at the LBI, almost everything was provided for them. Since a student's whole family were housed and fed on campus housing and they sent their

³⁴ Hintz, Michael. Interview with Erich Westphal. 10 March 2003.

³⁵ Westphal, Walter. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 7 April 2003.

children to government schools, there was little else for which the students had to pay. By providing bed and boarding, the faculty did not intend to coddle the students. They realized that these poverty stricken people were being taken out of their comfort zone in their home villages. They were being cut off from their normal means of subsistence farming for a living. Although the LBI included small areas in which they could garden, the students were not always able to grow enough food or produce food when they needed it. That is why the nationals at the LBI also were provided with food.

Westphal set up a food-ration program following the method carried out in Lusaka. Since all cooking was done over a wood stove, firewood was provided as needed. Many pickup loads of wood were driven to school from the numerous fuel-wood forests around the city. Sometimes a large truck would be hired at the market to transport the wood.

The amount of food that was distributed was based on the size of each individual family. Westphal describes the food provisions,

At first this meant shopping for every menu item: Ufa (the basic corn meal) purchased in 50 pound plastic sacks at a commercial mill in Lilongwe approximately once a month. Beans came in 80 pound burlap sacks from an agricultural supply depot whenever available. Loaves of bread were bought from one of the bakeries. Beef, Chambo, or Kapinga (fish), tomatoes, and onions came from the central market. Powdered milk for small children and tea for the adults were purchased at one of the grocery stores.³⁶

Distribution occurred at the same time every week. The supplies purchased in bulk were kept in a storeroom in the classroom/ administration building. The meat was kept in the Westphal's freezer. The supplies were unloaded and then each family's portions were separated by weight and measurement and placed on the storeroom shelves. "Then the door swung open, one of the students rang the "bell," [an old tire rim] and the families trekked over to carry their supplies back to the house."³⁷

The system was not without its frustrations. Hintz still recalls seeing Westphal rationing food out every week, "It got to be such a ... there were arguments: my family is bigger than your family, or something happened with the food or who knows what. It just got to be a problem."³⁸ In an attempt to simplify the process, money was distributed so that students could provide food for themselves. The new system had its drawbacks as well. In the former system, the students at

³⁶ Westphal, Walter. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 7 April 2003.

³⁷ Westphal, Walter. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 7 April 2003.

³⁸ Hintz, Michael. Interview with Erich Westphal. 10 March 2003.

least received a balanced diet. With the change to money, students could buy anything they wanted. As a deterrent, the money was handed out to the students' wives. The students themselves received money by earning it through the LBI's work program.

To deter a dependent or lazy mindset in the students, Westphal also incorporated a work program for the students. This enabled the students to earn some pocket money. Grounds-keeping was also a way for them to repay the school for covering their living expenses. They slashed weeds and grass with machetes, planted trees, put up fencing, and cleaned the classrooms and houses. The work program was considered such a privilege that students were sometimes suspended from it as a disciplinary tactic. Westphal wrote in a letter,

Every time a student fails a test this year I am temporarily suspending him from participation in the work program (from which they earn pocket money) until the subject is restudied and satisfactorily learned. I've had to use that a couple of times so far, and it seems to be having a positive effect. 'If any would not study neither should he work and be paid' is becoming the motto of Mbusa [Pastor] Westphal.³⁹

Even after a curriculum change, when students could go home for several weeks and find work, the work program continued at school. The reason was, as Westphal says, "It had to. The weeds kept growing."⁴⁰

THE CURRICULUM

The "Tried and Tested" Method

The purpose of the Bible institute program was to train up nationals who would one day be capable of shepherding their people and administrating their church body independent from the control of the Wisconsin Synod. The curriculum that Westphal incorporated at the LBI in Malawi was similar to the one used at the LBI in Zambia. Cox explains the reasoning for this,

It was felt this would be good for unity in the church, and since that curriculum had been tried and tested, at least for a few years ... that was followed. Your Dad made some changes ... but the basic course was the same at both LBIs. This was necessary because the LBI was the pre-seminary program that started in 1972 (I think that's the date). And we wanted the men from Zambia & Malawi to enter the Seminary at Chelston, Zambia with pretty much the same curriculum background.⁴¹

³⁹ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 18 October 1986.

⁴⁰ Westphal, Walter. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 7 April 2003.

⁴¹ Cox, Raymond. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 18 March 2003.

In a paper delivered in Chicago, E. H. Wendland related the “Ten Commandments” of the LBI program. Those dealing with the curriculum were,

1. The purpose of the institute was to train effective lay-evangelists to serve under the supervision of missionaries, to be considered later as prospects for seminary training.
2. Entrance requirements emphasized high Christian character and a prior evidence of a willingness to serve the Lord; academic achievement was a secondary consideration. . . .
7. All students were required to spend their weekends in preaching-teaching assignments in area congregations, under the supervision of a national pastor or missionary. Sermons and lesson materials were prepared for their use and studied in class sessions.
8. “Learning by doing” was the goal of this essential field work exercise.
9. The curriculum for the two-year course included the following areas: *Bible Study, Doctrine, Bible History, Church History, Catechetics, Lutheran Confessions, Practical Fieldwork (Preaching and Teaching), Stewardship, Evangelism, English Study Helps, Hymn Study, Liturgics.*
10. No student was automatically promised a “job” upon completion of his studies.⁴²

The Practical Fieldwork course at the LBI in Lilongwe was taught by Hintz. He aided Ntambo with Sunday school training and taught a homiletics course. Homiletics at the LBI was conducted in a different manner than it is at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. As mentioned in point seven above, the LBI students were not taught to write sermons as they are at WLS, they were instructed to preach sermons that had already been written.

The Bible Study course was taught with the Bible as the text book. Westphal had the students underline the key thoughts and create a summary statement of each book. The students were also instructed to underline any gospel messages using red ink. In that way students were constantly reminded to distinguish between law and gospel. It also gave them an easy way to locate gospel passages. For Bible History, Westphal developed a course based on W. Franzmann’s three-volume commentary on the Bible.

In the second year of the LBI curriculum (LBI-2) Westphal taught an Introduction to Greek. The goal of the class was to teach the nationals to read, write, and recite the alphabet. They also learned a few vocables and some grammar. All this served to prepare them for further study at the seminary in Lusaka. He also developed and taught a Harmony of the Gospels course which incorporated occasional Greek words that the students were learning.

⁴² Wendland, E. H. *Pastoral (Theological) Training on the Mission Field*, 3.

Westphal also took materials he found at a Malawi bookstore and taught an English composition course based on those materials. He hoped to teach them the skill of asking the six key questions of reporting and practice using that skill in their own compositions.

The program was aimed at achieving the mission principle, “Nationals must be actively involved in the work as soon as at all possible!”⁴³ In a summary statement Wendland declared,

Yes, people, the colonial era is over! Nationals relate to their own. To be sure, in its early stages these workers still function under the call and guardianship of missionaries. The nationals, however, are very much out front, communicating and learning at the same time.⁴⁴

As a direct result of the national’s involvement in the public ministry, the mission field in Zambia started to grow even faster than it had before. The same was true when this “tried and tested” program was incorporated at the LBI in Malawi.

The school year lasted nine months, from September to May. Because students were on campus for the majority of the year with their families, this curriculum became known as the Residential Program. When the LBI opened in 1981, students attended classes four days a week. On weekends the students were expected to preach in area congregations. Some congregations were located quite a distance from Lilongwe, so long bus rides were required. That is why the school week went from Tuesday to Friday. As with the Zambian curriculum, students went through two years of training before they could graduate as evangelists.⁴⁵

Shifting Educational Gears: The “Modular” Program

The 1987 school year was met with some significant changes to the curriculum. Up to this point, a residential program was in place. Students spent two full school years on campus with their families. This required uprooting a particular national’s family from its surroundings and its livelihood. It was also not the most cost effective or convenient method, since every year the family and all its possessions had to be packed up and transported to the campus.

The new “modular” program was started on a trial basis. It was labeled the “modular” system because the training sessions were divided into six terms, or modules at different times of the year. When it first began, each term lasted one month, and at the end of each term students would return home to their families until the start of the next module three or four weeks later.

⁴³ Wendland, E. H. *Pastoral (Theological) Training on the Mission Field*, 4.

⁴⁴ Wendland, E. H. *Pastoral (Theological) Training on the Mission Field*, 4.

⁴⁵ Westphal, Walter. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 7 April 2003.

The first module ended just before the rainy season in September, the next two were held between Christmas and Easter, and the final three were taught after Easter. On paper the schedule looked like this:

LBI-1 SCHOOL YEAR SCHEDULE

TERM 1:	Module 1	(19 September to 14 October)
	Module 2	(9 January to 3 February)
TERM 2:	Module 3	(20 February to 17 March)
	Module 4	(10 April to 5 May)
TERM 3:	Module 5	(29 May to 23 June)
	Module 6	(17 July to 11 August) ⁴⁶

Under the “modular” program, families were left at home and only the students lived on campus. This meant that more students were able to study at the LBI in a given year. The maximum enrollment in the residential program had been twelve students. When the modular program began the enrollment increased to twenty-five in the '87-88 school-year, and 31 the following year. Since the classroom usually only held twelve desks, the library part of the classroom area had to be used as an overflow. In fact, enrollment increased so much that Westphal found it necessary to tape name cards to each desk so that he could learn names and identify faces more quickly.⁴⁷

This new program allowed the students to cover the same amount of material in a year as they had under the old schedule. They were also able to go home during the crucial planting times and raise crops to support and sustain their families. Yet even this system, designed to be more *conscious* conscientious of the nationals' needs, met with student opposition. After the Board of Control approved of the new program Westphal wrote,

Now I have to convince the students that this is a good idea. Some of them are complaining that their families at home are suffering while they are at school. I wondered why ... The answer was that if the students were at home they would find jobs to supplement their families' income. I asked if they worked any jobs during the month between modules 3 and 4 (around Eastertime). The answer was negative. So we have to work this matter out in the next week or so.⁴⁸

Under the new system, two modular years were followed by one residential year.

⁴⁶ Westphal, Walter. Curriculum records for the 1987-88 school year.

⁴⁷ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 29 September 1987.

⁴⁸ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 27 April 1988.

Modular Year – all LBI-1 courses
Modular Year – all LBI-1 courses
Residential Year – all LBI-2 courses

A possible drawback was that this slowed the rate of LBI graduations from on^{ce} every two years to one every three years. However, there were several benefits: Each modular year had a new student intake, and the class enrollments could be much larger than before. As a result, a very large number of lay-leaders received the LBI-1 courses. A further benefit was that the best of that large pool of students could be chosen to continue their training toward the full-time ministry.

When nationals had completed the LBI successfully they were assigned as evangelists at a congregation for one or more years. Only then could they apply for entrance into the seminary in Zambia. These changes produced many better-educated lay-leaders along with well-qualified candidates for the seminary.

Prior to his departure, Westphal made changes to the modular program. Instead of teaching the first year of the LBI curriculum in six terms of four weeks, the students would be taught the same amount of material in four modules of six weeks. At the start, Westphal had been more cautious about requiring students to be away from their families for weeks at a time while at school. As time passed, he felt that the caution seemed unnecessary. The revised modular program followed this schedule,

MODULE 1	(formerly Modules 1-2a)	18 June to 27 July 1990
MODULE 2	(formerly Modules 2b-3)	3 Sept to 12 October 1990
MODULE 3	(formerly Modules 4-5a)	7 Jan to 16 February 1991
MODULE 4	(formerly Modules 5b-6)	11 March to 19 April 1991 ⁴⁹

The change would be more cost effective, since there would be less travel required to and from school. It was also more practical for the nationals, since it gave them more time during the critical season for preparing and planting their fields.

A Change of Pace: Short Courses

Over the years, from 1981 to 1991, short courses were sometimes used. The program was similar to continuing education programs offered to pastors in the United States. The short courses offered lay-leadership classes that students were not offered during the regular school year.

⁴⁹ Westphal, Walter. Letter to the LCCA pastors. 7 March 1990.

The goal of the short course was to “strengthen these church workers and refresh them with some good Bible study.”⁵⁰ For instance, in the Fall of 1988 the LBI offered a week-long Short Course from November 14 to 18. Pastor Mabedi taught courses on Independent Religions in Africa and on Church Choirs. Westphal also had two courses, one on the Apostle Paul and the other on the books of Haggai and Malachi.⁵¹ This particular short course proved to be very beneficial for one evangelist who encouraged others to attend in the future,

I also want to encourage my fellow Christians in both Malawi and Zambia that short courses be organized and conducted not only for the Evangelists and Pre-seminary students, but also for the officers and leader of the congregations so that they, too, can be encouraged in many things concerning their own congregation and the LCCA.⁵²

When Westphal left the field in 1990 he determined that no new classes would be enrolled for at least a year. During that time, however, Pastor Mabedi conducted a short course in village areas around Malawi. He was assisted by area pastors, missionaries and lay leaders. From September 10 to 14, Mabedi conducted one such short course in northern Malawi, at Mzuzu. The success of this short course was recorded in an issue of *The Lutheran Christian*,

Sixteen men attended, with 4 called workers and 12 laymen. There was representation from all congregations in the area, including Usisya. To reach Usisya one must travel 140 km by bus and then by steamer on Lake Malawi. Ladies from the St. Michael’s Congregation in Mzuzu prepared all the meals, with sleeping accommodations at the new church. Courses were conducted by Missionary Cox, Pastor Mabedi, Evangelists Nyasulu and Chiumia. Devotions were held by pre-seminary students Chimaliro and Wowa. Included were studies on First Thessalonians, Church Leadership and Stewardship, and conducting of Sunday School and Church Services. One participant in the Short Course commented, “This is the best short course I have ever attended!”⁵³

Over the years, the short course proved to be a successful and useful alternative method to training the nationals.

Higher Learning: A Liberal Arts Curriculum Is Introduced

Right from the start, there had been talk of separating the LCCA into two self-governing fields. In the appeal brought before the 1977 synod in convention the ECCA expressed the

⁵⁰ Lozi, L. S. C. Short Course for Evangelists and Preseminary Students in Malawi. *The Lutheran Christian* 20, no. 2 (1989): 13.

⁵¹ Westphal, Walter. Letter to Erna Westphal. 30 November 1988.

⁵² Lozi, L. S. C. Short Course for Evangelists and Preseminary Students in Malawi. *The Lutheran Christian* 20, no. 2 (1989): 13.

⁵³ Short Courses in Malawi. *The Lutheran Christian* (Reformation Issue, 1990): 10.

thought that it might be expedient to split the field between Zambia and Malawi.⁵⁴ As the years went by and the church body grew by leaps and bounds, this topic kept arising.

In 1992, the LCCA in convention voted toward the goal of having complete worker-training programs in each country. However, Zambia was not especially fond of the idea because the possibility existed that two groups of pastors would be ordained into the same church body with potentially different educations. Yet they agreed to go along with the idea. As a result they decided to reshape their pre-seminary training program which had ceased to exist two several years before. The new program called for a three year course of study which included some secular courses such as English, English Literature, Math, Science and History. The following year, the modular system at Malawi was also altered to some degree and renamed, "Lay Leadership Training."⁵⁵

The division of the LCCA occurred in 1995. The ECCA finally felt that it was time to carry out the long discussed proposal. It was simply much easier to manage affairs of two smaller, independent fields rather than the one large church body. So Malawi and Zambia became their own entities. This decision caused much discussion regarding the future of lay-leadership training in Zambia and Malawi.

The question was raised whether each field should operate an independently run Bible institute and seminary or whether the two fields should work in conjunction, with one field holding the Bible institute and the other field holding the seminary? There were strong feelings on both sides as they debated the issue. Finally, under the direction of World Board Chairman William Meier, Worker Training Counselor John Kurth and two members of the Africa Administrative Committee, a six-year trial program was initiated. With this new program in place all the pre-seminary study would be conducted in Malawi and all the seminary study in Zambia. They also suggested that a new curriculum be considered.⁵⁶ The great benefit of the joint venture on the educational level would be that the lay leaders who graduated would all be on the same page. All the pre-seminary students would have the same educational foundation and all the seminary graduates would enter the field with the same pastoral skills.

⁵⁴ Reports and Memorials for the Forty-Fourth Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 3-10 August 1977, 95.

⁵⁵ Rieke, Mark. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 26 February 2003.

⁵⁶ Rieke, Mark. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 26 February 2003.

When the discussions in regard to changing the curriculum began in the Fall of 1995, two papers from both fields were presented. Missionary Mark Rieke from Malawi presented a discussion-started paper, "Preparing Pastors For The Lutheran Church of Central Africa With One Bible Institute And One Seminary." In this paper Rieke reminded the involved parties of the goal of the leadership-training program. The intent of the program was to train up pastors who possessed the qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. This meant that the national pastor possess an evangelical spirit, be self-motivated, able to study God's Word independently, able to prepare his own sermons and teach his own Bible classes, and capable of administrating the activities of an independent congregation. Above all, missionaries wanted the national pastors of the LCCA to have the same level of education as the men preparing for ministry at the seminary in Mequon had received. While this was the goal, up to that point many national pastors appeared to have a lack of ability or skills to carry out those tasks. It was felt by missionaries in Malawi that the greater focus of the new curriculum should not be on liberal arts but on developing better skills in preaching and teaching God's Word and training others to do the same.

At the same time, missionary Jeff Gunn presented the Zambian point of view in a paper entitled, "Liberal Arts Courses for Our Worker Training System." Missionaries in Zambia felt that national pastors needed to have a broader educational background to aid in administrative and leadership skills. They were not denying the great importance that a stronger biblical foundation needed to be established. They wanted the national pastors to have a better grasp of the world around them through the study of literature, science and history, as well as have enough mathematical knowledge to work with a budget. They were calling for Liberal Arts program at the pre-seminary level. It was felt by those in Zambia that a Liberal Arts program would greatly aid the goal of an indigenous, independent church body in Central Africa. In a concluding statement Gunn surmised,

The liberal arts have long been seen to be useful in producing not just graduates, but leaders with universally acclaimed qualities such as diligence, eagerness to excel, perseverance, independence and interdependence of thought and action, courage, compassion, honesty, forthrightness, and intelligence. These are the types of leaders we need for our LCCA. It has been said, "Where the goat is tethered, there it must browse." Young pastors-to-be need long tethers; and potential leaders in the church even longer ones. The liberal arts provide

“browsing room” so that our young pastors enter the ministry possessing more knowledge and experience than they would otherwise have.⁵⁷

To a lesser degree, one of the reasons why the curriculum was altered and the level of education offered was raised at the LBI was due to the fact that in general the level of education all over Central Africa was being raised. In the early days, men came to the LBI with some knowledge of English and some ability to write. However, in later years, nationals were receiving better secondary education. They were educated enough to get into the work force. Unfortunately, the job opportunities were simply not there. The LBI’s curriculum went through a transformation in order to give the nationals that opportunity for work. In order to create a greater pool of candidates for the LBI the bar had to be raised. Of course, great care still was taken to accept only the best candidates for leadership training. The students’ intentions still were factored in. The principle still applied, “No student was automatically promised a ‘job’ upon completion of his studies.”⁵⁸

In August of 1996 the first new LBI class began in Lilongwe.⁵⁹ The curriculum required three years. However, instead of incorporating the modular system, the residential program was again put in place all three years. The new curriculum was basically,

1. Year One:

- English as a second language – 10 hours [per week]
- English literature – 2 hours
- Science – 4 hours
- World geography – 3 hours
- Old Testament Bible history – 3 hours
- Christian doctrine – 3 hours

2. Year Two:

- English research, note-taking, study skills and writing – 5 hours
- English literature – 2 hours
- African History and Modern History – 3 hours
- Biology – 3 hours
- New Testament Bible History – 3 hours
- Christian Doctrine – 3 hours
- Teaching Methods and Sunday School – 2 hours
- Luther's Catechisms – 2 hours
- Greek – 3 hours

⁵⁷ Gunn, Jeff. *Liberal Arts Courses for Our Worker Training System*, 11-12.

⁵⁸ Wendland, E. H. *Pastoral (Theological) Training on the Mission Field*, 3.

⁵⁹ Rieke, Mark. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 26 February 2003.

3. Year Three:

- English literature – 2 hours
- Health – 3 hours
- Western Civilization – 3 hours
- Bible Introduction – 3 hours
- Study of John – 3 hours
- Hebrew – 3 hours
- Pastoral Theology – 3 hours
- Preaching a sermon – 2 hours
- Ecumenical Creeds and Smalcald Articles – 3 hours⁶⁰

This current three year residential program may result in fewer students who finally graduate. However, just as is sometimes the case in the Wisconsin Synod, the LCCA can only place so many graduates in congregations that are able to fully support them. In another step toward indigenization, the new goal in the LCCA is, “If you call a pastor, you will also be required to support him.”⁶¹

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Six years has now passed since the trial Liberal Arts program was instituted. In March of this year, E. H. Wendland was able to audit classes at the seminary in Chelston. He was very impressed with the work that the students are doing, and the progress they are making in their Greek and Hebrew skills. The additional year at the LBI in Malawi appears to have been a good move. I asked Wendland if he was happy with the way the program has developed over the past twenty years. His response, “We have gone ‘the expensive way,’ training full-time theologians rather than tent-makers. In my opinion it’s the only way to go!”⁶² However the jury is still out on whether the liberal arts curriculum is indeed the necessary way to go. There is still some question as to whether the national pastors, serving rural areas of Central Africa, really need the same education that students in our WELS worker-training schools receive.

The process has been slow, and over the years the mission has learned right along with the nationals they are training, yet some definite progress is being made. The Lutheran Church of Central Africa is well on its way towards independence. The Lord of the Church is blessing the efforts of the missionaries, national pastors, students and people of LCCA.

⁶⁰ Rieke, Mark E-mail to Erich Westphal. 26 February 2003.

⁶¹ Wendland, E. H. E-mail to Erich Westphal. 8 April 2003.

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