

# Putting Children on a Path to Success in Kenya

**T**ODAY, Daniel Seng'oi Lutudo is studying to become an evangelist in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK), while his classmate Evans Pkasin Kerisilima is pursuing masonry and plumbing/pipe fitting training with the dream of eventually becoming a tutor in a vocational school.

But the future wasn't always so bright for these two young men. As children, they were identified by the ELCK as being "vulnerable" due to their family circumstances and their risk of dropping out of school. That's why their families were invited to send them to live at Udom Children's Center in Chepareria, Kenya.

Udom is one of seven Project 24 boarding-school facilities operated by the ELCK, with assistance from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The site, which opened in 2010, provides a Christ-centered, safe environment for children who might otherwise not be able to attend school. While there, children also receive meals, medical care and daily opportunities to learn about the Word of God.

Daniel and Evans are just two of the hundreds of children who have been positively

impacted by this joint ELCK-LCMS project over the past decade. While each child's situation is different, they all are taught about the most important thing: the love of their Savior, Jesus Christ. They also receive career guidance, based on their interests and abilities, which helps them find a path to success after they age out of Project 24.

"Many of the students who are in the Project 24 program come from difficult backgrounds where higher education can only be a dream,"



**“Through Project 24, students now can continue and receive an education that will enable them to have a steady career, which in turn will help them support their own families and communities in the future.”**

—Britt Odemba, LCMS missionary

## Give God **Glory...**

... for all those serving in Lutheran parishes and schools — pastors, commissioned ministers, business managers, administrative assistants, aides, custodians, cafeteria workers and everyone in between. And for *Set Apart to Serve*, a long-term commitment to church work formation and recruitment aimed at encouraging young people to consider church work as a vocation for serving God and neighbor. Visit [lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve](https://lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve) to learn more.

... for Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA), an LCMS Recognized Service Organization that partners with local congregations, schools and individuals in the St. Louis region to offer a range of programs and services for new Americans. To learn more about how CFNA serves immigrants and refugees, visit [cfna-stl.org](https://cfna-stl.org).



... for the Rev. Matthew and Kali Wood, who serve in Indonesia on behalf of the LCMS. Matthew works closely with the Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church (GKLI) helping train pastors and lay leaders by providing resources through educational workshops, translation projects and other efforts in cooperation with the GKLI. Learn more at [lcms.org/wood](https://lcms.org/wood).

### You Make the Difference through LCMS World Relief and Human Care

You make the ministry described in this newsletter possible! Your prayers and contributions to World Relief and Human Care "Where Needed Most" help deliver our Savior's mercy to people in need. You bolster tightly restricted donations from others to help fully fund important mercy projects, allowing us to report here the impact you are making in Christ's name. The courtesy envelope in this issue allows you to send a future contribution as the Holy Spirit leads, when He leads.

Daniel Seng'oi Lutudo and Evans Pkasin Kerisilima have a bright future thanks to a joint project of the ELCK and the LCMS.



said Britt Odemba, an LCMS missionary and education consultant based in Nairobi, Kenya, who works with the program. "Through Project 24, students now can continue and receive an education that will enable them to have a steady career, which in turn will help them support their own families and communities in the future."

To learn about opportunities to sponsor children living in Project 24 sites, visit [lcms.org/ccck](https://lcms.org/ccck).

One of the priorities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is to reach out in mercy and compassion to those in need, motivated by Christ and His Gospel, according to the Lutheran confession of the faith. This is accomplished under the familiar name of LCMS World Relief and Human Care, which the Synod uses to describe the mercy work directed by the policies of the Boards for National and International Mission and implemented through the programs of the Offices of National and International Mission.

"Sharing" is the newsletter of LCMS World Relief and Human Care. Published by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295. Contributor services line: 888-930-4438. Website: [lcms.org](https://lcms.org).

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison Ext. 1402  
 President  
 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Rev. Daniel F. McMiller Ext. 1341  
 Executive Director  
 LCMS Office of International Mission

Rev. Robert M. Zagore Ext. 1730  
 Executive Director  
 LCMS Office of National Mission



# Preparing Tomorrow's School Leaders Today

**T**here's a growing shortage of LCMS-trained administrators for Lutheran schools, and LCMS School Ministry seeks to address this need through its School Leadership Development (SLED) project. SLED was created two decades ago to identify, encourage and prepare leaders to serve in the Synod's early childhood, elementary and secondary schools.

In 2021, 15 LCMS educators completed their SLED training and received SLED endorsement, and 20 educators began the program. Almost three dozen educators from around the country traveled to St. Louis in June to participate in one of two SLED training sessions.

Kayla Marty attended for the first time this year. She serves as director of the Ignite program at Concordia Lutheran Schools, Omaha, Neb. Ignite focuses on personalized learning through a non-traditional approach and a purposefully mixed-age classroom. Marty described her first SLED experience as "inspiring. It not only helped give overviews of the types of challenges and opportunities that Lutheran school leaders face, but it emphasized the importance of keeping God's Word at the center of all of our efforts."

Meanwhile, Andy Spieler was among the 15 who completed their training. When he began SLED in 2019, he was teaching elementary P.E. and religion. By the time he completed the program in 2021 (it was interrupted by the pandemic in 2020), he had become principal at

Immanuel Lutheran School in Perryville, Mo. He said the program made him "more confident ... and prepared to serve my new school and congregation. ... I am very honored to have been a part of SLED."

Asked why SLED is important to the church, Dr. Rebecca Schmidt, director of LCMS School Ministry, said, "Lutheran schools help to ensure that the next generation of children hear the Gospel message while being prepared for a life of service to their neighbor. Today

the shrinking pool of qualified, competent and Christian leaders has created a crisis for many schools. SLED helps to address this critical issue by raising up leaders for tomorrow.

"It is essential that the recruitment and training of current and future leaders remains a priority. SLED helps provide those essentials while creating and sustaining meaningful relationships that will carry far beyond SLED and equip educators for learning and service long after they complete the program."



Clockwise from top left: Participants gather for small-group discussions at the School Leadership Development (SLED) Project training event on June 17, 2021, in St. Louis. Participants gather for a photo following their graduation from SLED on June 16, 2021. Gretchen Dolan, administrator at St. John's Lutheran School, Corcoran, Minn., participates in a team-building exercise with Michael Griedl, teacher at Salem Lutheran School, Tomball, Texas, on June 15, 2021.

## Caring for Children, Body and Soul

**THE WORK AMONG needy children in Kenya**, highlighted in this issue of "Sharing," began around 2005. At the time HIV/AIDS was killing thousands upon thousands in Kenya. I vividly recall the constant appearance of caskets tied to van rooftops, and small buses jammed with mourners heading to cemeteries around Nairobi. Burgeoning numbers of children were left homeless and destitute by the death of their parents and relatives. We worked with our Kenyan partner church and many generous donors in the U.S. to build and staff a number of orphanages. Project 24 began among our LCMS folks in North Dakota. "1001 Orphans" was an effort based on the generosity of Concordia Lutheran Ministries in Cabot, Pa. There were many challenges along the way. But they were all worth it.

What is special about this particular effort to care for needy children? The children are all cared for body and soul. Not only are daily needs of food, clothing, support, care and schooling provided, but the children learn Luther's Small Catechism, Bible stories, and

attend the Lutheran Church as active and beloved members of the congregation. They get Jesus! I know this is true — I've visited these children myself on a number of occasions and our LCMS Office of International Mission African regional office oversees this effort closely.

Some 3,300 children have or are continuing to be loved and cared for. Many have received a high school education, and some have even gone to university. Jesus told His apostles, "I will not leave you orphans" (**John 14:18**). And James tells us how this promise works in our lives as Christians. "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world" (**James 1:27**).

Pastor Matthew C. Harrison  
President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

