



ALONG WITH PASTOR KRISTIN

Pastor Kristin Engstrom, ELCA Global Missionary

February 2025

Catching Up on News from 2024: On the Move (Again)

I have been serving as an ELCA global missionary since 2016. It is hard to believe it has been nine years since I first packed three suitcases to begin a new life in Senegal, West Africa. As a pastor and global missionary, I have committed to go where God and the church call me. In 2023, God and the ELCA once again called me to a new country and to be in relationship with a new church. In February 2024, I arrived in Madagascar to begin a new call as the ELCA Country Representative. I will also be the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) Country Coordinator when the program resumes in Madagascar. In my nine years as an ELCA global missionary, I have served in Senegal, Zambia, and now Madagascar—all in the Africa region.



Welcome reception by Malagasy church leaders and project leaders supported by the ELCA.

Over the past year, I have travelled through-out Madagascar to get to know the people and ministries of the Malagasy Church. I have been welcomed into Church Council meetings, witnessed leadership elections at the National Church Assembly, learned from seminaries, inclusive schools, and vocational training centers, visited healthcare, development, and gender justice projects, preached sermons, and ate many shared meals.

The Malagasy Lutheran Church has five million members and is one of the fastest growing Lutheran churches in the world. Madagascar is also one of the poorest countries in the world. So, the church is focused on their mission to share the gospel holistically. Over the past year, it has been wonderful to learn from the faithful leaders in Madagascar, as we walk together in the God's gospel mission.

Accompanying Pastor Kristin

My work as an ELCA Global Missionary is possible thanks to the generosity of many congregations and individuals in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Thank you! You can contact me at kristin.engstrom@elca.org.

[You are also invited to support me as an ELCA Global Missionary here.](#)

I have a blog at <https://alongwithpastorkristin.blogspot.com>, where you can find previous newsletters and occasional updates from Madagascar.



Pastor Kristin Engstrom

I serve as the ELCA Country Representative with the Malagasy Lutheran Church, and will also be the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) Country Coordinator when the program resumes in Madagascar. I have been an ELCA global missionary since 2016, serving first in Senegal and then Zambia, before coming to Madagascar

I'm originally from the midwestern United States, and served as a parish pastor in northern New Jersey for six years prior to beginning my call with ELCA Global Mission.





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2024 Year in Review

I wasn't able to send a Newsletter in 2024 to share about my new call in Madagascar. I have included photos below that show some of the ministries of the Malagasy Lutheran Church.



Malagasy Lutheran Church = Fiangonana Loterana Malagasy Foibe = Head Office



MLC Communication Office & Radio Station: Rev. Yves, center, Communications Coordinator.



Welcomed in worship at Toliara synod in southern Madagascar. The boat is a welcome gift, symbolizing the journey missionaries take to arrive in Madagascar. ELCA missionaries have worked in southern Madagascar since 1888.



Visit to SEFAM, the MLC Nursing and Medical Tech Training School. The MLC Health System is the 2nd largest in Madagascar, after the government health system. L-R: Theologian Saholy, Rev. Kristin, Rev. Themba, Dr. Hanitra (SEFAM Director)



Professors at Betela Seminary on graduation day. There are 5 regional seminaries and 1 Masters level school of theology in MLC. ELCA supports 2 seminaries and the school of theology. Betela Director, Pastor Albert is 3rd from left. Mahjanga Synod Pres. Tsiri is in the center.