



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.
Global Mission

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Nairobi International Lutheran Congregation - NILC

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Dear Members of Our Supporting Congregations,

What do you think the words “Live Nativity” mean? Do they refer to a live birth or perhaps a re-enactment, since this is a Church letter, of the birth of Jesus? Or maybe you’ve never seen those 2 words together –“Live Nativity”—and so you’re not exactly sure what they might mean.



At Nairobi International Lutheran Congregation, “Live Nativity” means hiring 2 camel drivers (with their camels, of course!), gathering together several local sheep and goats, and borrowing a member’s cow, dressing up some 50-60 church members in angel costumes, three as wise men, and of course dressing a woman up as a 1st Century Mary and a man as Joseph, setting up several bales of hay as a lowly manger on the front lawn of the church (on a busy Nairobi street), recruiting someone to lead singing with a guitar, and then with great fanfare and flair, marching the whole wonderful crew across the parking lot and out the Church gates, onto the lawn, where for over an hour, we sang and laughed and waved to people who slowed their vehicles or walk as they passed. In other words, “Live Nativity” means a ton of fun while witnessing.



A congregational tradition here at Nairobi International Lutheran Congregation, the “Live Nativity” provides a marvelous opportunity for people from several countries to gather on the afternoon of Christmas Eve to celebrate the incarnation, Jesus born of Mary, in the most dramatic of fashions and to herald our Lord’s birth with song and community making bold witness to those who drive and walk by, many of whom paused, stopped, and stood to soak in the atmosphere and this Lutheran church family have an obviously wonderful time together in Christian love and fellowship. After singing and standing and waving out front, we recessed into the church where we sang some more, listened to the ancient story told another time, prayed, and sang ‘Silent Night’ to blessed candlelight.

An old, old story told in the most wonderful and grace-filled of ways! And we in Nairobi added only 1 new part to the story this year that is not to be found in scripture: one of the camels bit a wise man!

From Nairobi, Kenya to your congregation, we wish you a blessed new year and thank you for your continuing interest in, and support of, ELCA Global Mission work in Nairobi with the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church.



Thanks for your support for ELCA Global Mission in Kenya!

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