



Africa Journal

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Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission International Central Council

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Mulumba Albert, Mputu Jacque, Irundu Robert, Kakhenda Damien, Kiswangi Leonard, Charles Buller

Launching a 'Moonshot Ministry' for Congo's Mennonite Leaders

by Charles Buller

You may recall that moment-in-time in 1969, listening to Neil Armstrong's voice crackling through your radio (or TV), ". . . one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind." I certainly do. Even at age nine, standing by a waterfall in Congo with our family's short-wave radio turned up while gazing up at the moon from whence the voice came (via Voice of America), I was forever imprinted. *Life is about attempting something great, even if it's a long-shot!*

If taking on big challenges against overwhelming odds seems endemic to human nature (sometimes referred to as 'moonshots'), it may just be because that's God's nature too. Perhaps even more so! What bigger challenge imaginable than God personally taking on the human condition in Jesus to "*enter the disordered mess of struggling humanity in order to set it right once and for all*" (Romans 8:3-4, The Message). We're following a 'moonshot' kind'a Savior.

Efforts to launch a leadership support network for Congo's pastoral leaders feels to me a bit like one such 'moonshot.' A real stretch, replete with impossibilities, but entirely

possible through the faith, hope, and love of God's people. By God's grace it will bring vitality and new possibilities to leaders largely overlooked -- and overworked -- in the struggling humanity that is Congo at this perilous time in its history.



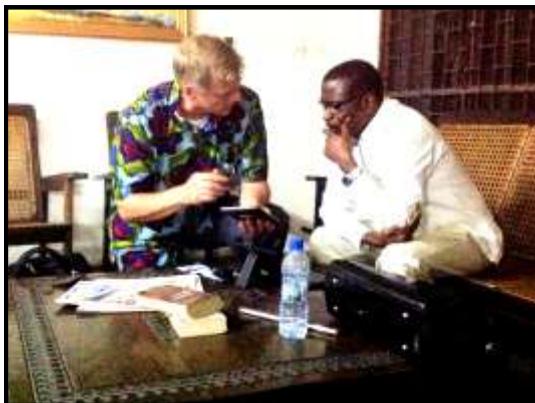
L to R: Kakhenda Damien, Irundu Robert, Wayindama Sylvie, Mulamba Aberty, Mulamba Albert, Kiswangi Leonard, Mputu Jacques

Presently, we are facing several formidable challenges as we envision how, exactly, to offer

training, set up regional networks, keep connected, and find financing -- all of this when so much of Congo's communications and transportation infrastructure is hobbled or near non-existent. Just this past month the political powers-that-be attempted to indefinitely postpone national elections (scheduled for 2016), resulting in riots in urban

centers and a virtual shutdown of electronic communications. This brought our collaboration efforts to a virtual standstill. By God's grace the National Senate rolled back the proposed postponement, and the country, along with our team planning sessions, are coming back online. At least for now.

Rewind: November of 2014 brought six of us together in Kinshasa to do some initial envisioning of the network. (See Photo on Front) A significant component of that time was personally experiencing the kind of support, encouragement and accountability *among ourselves* that we desire to offer to pastoral leaders, and to their marriages and ministries. I came away from that visit very encouraged. While huge questions remained as to how we would implement the vision, clearly the **coaching model as a come-along-side ministry is desperately needed - and desired.** Given the state of the country, and of the church, decentralized models are needed to leverage current technologies to support and develop leaders.



Charles Buller and Kiswangi Leonard

Fast-Forward: Come March, four of our team members will be present at **CMCo's Administrative Council meetings** to share the vision for the network and request both the council's feedback and blessing as we work toward a series of training seminars in 2016. Then one team member, **Mulamba Albert**, and I hope to journey across Kasai and Bandundu via motorbikes to encourage leaders, further assess needs, and explore possibilities. This trip in itself will be a bit of a 'moonshot' given the challenges of Congo's roads.

Now push 'Play': I believe *through your prayers and solidarity*, this mission, while perhaps a 'moonshot' is, in fact, a sure-shot. Truth is, we each have a part to play. God's love found a way to change the world - and our lives - in Jesus Christ. AIMM itself is a storied journey of God's amazing grace making a way where there seemed to be none. And now: *"God affirms us, making us a sure thing in Christ, putting his Yes within us. By his Spirit he has stamped us with his eternal pledge—a sure beginning of what he is destined to complete."* (2 Cor. 1:21-22, Emphasis added).

Let's go ahead and attempt a 'moonshot' for God's Kingdom!

AIMM International Central Council

(board) members and colleagues gathered in October 2014 in Porto-Novo, Benin to conduct a review, examining to what extent we have successfully aligned ourselves with God's mission to live and proclaim the Good News of



Jesus Christ. Focusing on the period since AIMM's new structure was initiated in 2004, we examined the following areas of our organizational life: relationships, structure, shared work, values, and vision.

One of the strongest affirmations AIMM received through this process was the emphatic statements made by each partner which underlined the positive value placed on the relationships which have formed and grown among the 8 AIMM partner churches. Praise God!

AIMM Review participants pictured in the photo- front row, left to right: Rod Hollinger-Janzen, AIMM Executive Coordinator; Nicodeme Coulibaly, Burkina Faso Partnership Council Coordinator; Marcelline Mbalo with her husband Komuesa Kalunga, President of Mennonite Church of Congo; Gaston Kandji, Financial Secretary, Mennonite Brethren Church of Congo; Joseph Nkongolo, Development Coordinator for Mennonite Church of Congo; Gerard Mambakila, President of the Mennonite Brethren Church of Congo; Siaka Traore, President of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso; Steve Wiebe-Johnson, Africa Director for Mennonite Mission Network. Back row: Bruce Yoder, missionary rep for the Burkina Faso Partnership Council; Jean Felix Cimalanga, President of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Congo; Fabe Traore, secretary of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso.

In Memory of Loved Ones.....

Ina V. Rocke passed away January 9, 2015 in Morton, Illinois. Ina and her husband Glenn, who passed away on May 1, 1989 served as missionaries with Congo Inland Mission/AIMM from 1946 to 1984. Ina's life work in Congo was evangelism and teaching with her husband. She taught the Tshiluba language to new missionaries. She also taught Bible lessons, sewing and gardening to women. She grew a wonderful vegetable garden in Congo. She was also an excellent cook and delighted in serving others.



After retirement she was active in her church, the Groveland Evangelical Mennonite Church. She wrote a book **"Precious Memories of our Beloved Congo 1946 -1984"**, telling the story of life and mission work in Congo. Glenn and Ina's sons are, Darrel (Jo Anne) Rocke of Sellersville, Pa., David G (Cathie) Rocke of Gilbert, Iowa and Keith I. (Mary Lambert) Rocke of Fort Wayne, IN.; six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. She was also preceded in death by her son, Leland E. Rocke; two brothers, Earl and Clarence; and two sisters, Marge and Doris.

Donna Schmidt went to be with the Lord on Tuesday, December 2, 2014 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Donna earned a Bachelor of Arts from Taylor University and later became a registered Nurse. She studied tropical medicine in Belgium before embarking on a career as a missionary nurse in the Republic of Congo.



While in Congo, Donna met Loyal Schmidt, who was a missionary builder. They were married on March 14, 1957. They became parents of three sons: Allen, Les, and Steve during their time on the mission field. In 1964, they resettled in California where they were blessed with another son, Mike. They moved to Omaha, Nebraska in 1966. Loyal worked at Grace Bible Institute and Donna was a nurse. In 1971, Allen and Les were kidnapped and Allen was killed. Through this very difficult time, Loyal and Donna's faith was very clearly shown.

They moved to Saskatchewan where Loyal

became a pastor at the Langham and Rhineland churches. Donna was a very supportive wife and caring mother. She reached out to many as a loving friend, adopted mom and grandma. She also came to be cherished as a prayer warrior carrying the requests of many to the Throne of Grace. Donna was a mentor, coach, and prayer partner to many women in the community as well as grandma in the nursery at church, a service she loved dearly.

Harris H. Waltner died November 23, 2012 in North Newton, Kansas. Harris married Christine Duerksen on August 15, 1951 and graduated from Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, and the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago, IL. He served as pastor for General Conference Mennonite Church/ Mennonite Church USA congregations in Moundridge, KS, Ritzville, WA, Mountain Lake, MN, Ft. Wayne, IN, and Manhattan, KS. In addition, he and Christine spent six years in Maseru, Lesotho, where Harris was pastor of the Maseru United Church as a missionary under Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.



**Pastor Kasonga Mukendi Philippe,
Evangelical Mennonite Church of Congo
(CEM) Pioneer** by Charly Malembe

Philippe was born in Tshikapa on December 25, 1930, the son of Mukendi Makanyisha and Ndelela Mwena Mulumba. His family's roots are in Bena-Kasa in Eastern Kasai province.

Philippe attended primary and secondary school in Ndjoko Punda, and also finished teacher training there with Congo Inland Mission. He began as a teacher in Tshikapa in 1952, and from there moved on to Nyanga. In 1960 during the armed conflict between Lulua and Baluba, he, along with many other Baluba, was forced to return to his home area in Eastern Kasai.

Having been a member of the Mennonite church, he joined with others who wanted to keep their Mennonite identity, to create a Mennonite church in Eastern Kasai. While still a lay person at that time, he was one of the original members who signed the document which formed the first Mennonite church in the province. In 1962 he joined with others who did not see it practical to continue under Tshikapa's direction, and he became a co-founder of what is currently known as the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Congo.

In 1975, facing a shortage of congregational leaders, Philippe was consecrated as an elder in order to provide leadership for a local church. In 1980 he attended a theological training seminar and subsequently was ordained as a pastor.

According to a number of testimonies, Pastor Kasonga was a man of peace and a model worth following for other leaders in the church. He passed away on Sept. 12, 2014 and was buried on Sept. 21, at the age of 83. A Mennonite library has departed; a Mennonite baobab has fallen!



Magdalene “Maggie” Liechty passed away in her home on Monday, August 18, 2014 following a lengthy illness. She lived in Berne until 2007 when she moved to Goshen. On August 26, 1950, Maggie married her grade school sweetheart, Fredrick Liechty. He preceded her in death January 19, 2012. Together they were active in the Mennonite Church and were committed to showing God’s love in concrete ways. She was a former member



of First Mennonite Church, Berne, and current member of Eighth Street Mennonite Church and closely affiliated with Emmaus Road Mennonite Fellowship, Berne. Despite being housebound for 30 years, Maggie remained vitally involved with her family, her many friends and the world. Her deep spirituality and compassion connected her to others as a counselor, confidante and advocate. In recent years Fred and Maggie were strong supporters for the ministries of AIMM through their prayers and financial contributions. Maggie is survived by her children, Nancy Liechty Loewen (Jake) and Mary Liechty-Caskey (Doug) both of Goshen.

Link to Congo photos on Flickr

The AIMM office is grateful for the work of **Tom Lehman** who has creatively preserved the photos of a number of former AIMM missionaries on Flickr. You are invited to use the following link to view photos from AIMM files, Jim & Genevieve Bertsche, John Byler, Carmen & Judy Good, Art & Martini Janz, Rudy Martens, Dr. Merle & Dorothy Schwartz, and Warren Yoder.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/telehman/collections/72157604514987203/>

According to Tom this site will always contain all the Congo photos, as any new sets of Congo photos would be added to the Congo collection.

Entrepreneurship News



Edgard Kimbau, agriculturalist from the **Mennonite Brethren Church of Congo (CEFMC)**, recently completed a half year of study in sustainable business agricultural practices at the **Songhai Center in Porto-Novo, Benin**, financed by AIMM. Edgard plans to help pastoral students in 4 regional CEFMC Bible Institutes become more self-supporting through small animal and crop raising.

Norm Nicolson (Mennonite Church Canada) is handy with a variety of building and manufacturing skills. He has been asked by the **Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso**, to provide training in basic welding skills for willing apprentice welders from the church. Recently the welding shop has been completed. It is built on church property, located with two of its outside walls forming part of the **Orodara guesthouse** wall.



Abel Traore and Yaya Bengali (pictured) are ready to learn from Norm. The church hopes in the long term to build up a group of skilled workers who can earn their own living through welding and other industrial trades, and also assist the church in various building projects.

Chicken and Egg Production Project

Tshikapa Area

Filit Walesa grew up in the **Tshikapa** area and was a member of the Mennonite Church of Congo. He has since established himself as a Canadian citizen, started a business organization, **Canadienne de Croissance**, and gained experience in international development through consultative work in Mali, Senegal and Haiti.



Filit Walesa

About a year ago, **Filit** got in touch with the **AIMM** office to inquire about how he might give back to the church and region that nurtured him in childhood and youth. He traveled to Goshen in November 2014, where he

engaged in discussion with AIMM Coordinator **Rod Hollinger-Janzen**.



Feed mill that will produce the chicken feed

AIMM and Canadienne de Croissance have entered into a partnership, with participation also from **Mennonite Church of Congo**. The goal is to establish a chicken raising and egg production project in the **Tshikapa** area. The project seeks to assist ordinary farmers in the Tshikapa region to begin raising chickens through the use of solar powered egg

incubators. The project will also provide a feed

mill in order to locally produce nutrition-rich chicken feed at an affordable price. This will enable the increased production both of eggs and of locally produced chickens. The project hopes to improve nutrition for ordinary Congolese families, as well as providing a means by which to raise income levels for these families, and by extension, for the church. The project is slated to begin by mid-2015.

Relationships Encourage Mission Among the Yalunka

Though usually separated by thousands of miles, **Siaka Traoré** and **Steve Nelson** have developed a strong relationship over the past 8 years, nurtured by email news exchanges, prayer, and personal visits. The relationship has grown out of an invitation extended and accepted.

Steve heads up the **Africa mission dept. for the Fellowship of Evangelical Churches (FEC)**, a former AIMM partner church and one of the founding groups

of **Congo Inland Mission**. Their African focus is on sharing the Good News of Jesus with the **Yalunka people**, who live in the area of intersection of 3 countries- Mali, Guinea and Senegal- where African Islam is predominant. In 2010, Steve extended an invitation to Siaka and his wife Claire to attend a gathering of different groups who were exploring the establishment of mission work among the Yalunka. Siaka is President of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso (EEMBF), and also President of AIMM's International Central Council. He grew up in a Muslim family, and after giving his life to Jesus Christ has spent years working to plant and nurture churches in Burkina Faso, which is a majority Islamic nation. Since that initial meeting, Siaka and Steve have met several times- in Mali, in Burkina Faso, and in the United States. Always, the focus has been on nurturing possibilities of partnership to strengthen the mission among the Yalunka.

In December 2014, Siaka and Claire again traveled to Senegal to meet with Steve, his wife Pat, and other FEC and related mission workers. FEC workers gleaned counsel and wisdom from Siaka as he described experiences related to planting churches in Burkina Faso, and dealing with persecution.



Feb. 2015 EEMBF-FEC summit in Bobo Dioulasso:
(l-r) Nicodeme Coulibaly, Steve Nelson, Pat Nelson, Abdias Coulibaly, Rocky Rocholl, Sue Rocholl, Alakagni Traoré, Fabe Traoré, Bala Sourabie, Daouda Traoré, Siaka Traoré.

FEC plans to offer trainings in health, community education and Bible “storying” in late 2015/early 2016, and has offered to open this opportunity to several EEMBF members. EEMBF is helping to provide formal and informal training for the FEC ministry’s translation assistant.

In early February 2015, **Steve and Pat Nelson** accompanied **FEC President Rocky Rocholl** and his wife **Sue**, to **Bobo Dioulasso**, Burkina Faso for meetings with EEMBF leaders. After thanking the Burkina Faso church for all the assistance given right from the beginning of the work among the Yalunka, and for their ongoing willingness to share their gifts, Rocky invited both groups to remain attentive to God’s Spirit in order to discern what form collaboration should take in the future. Siaka expressed the hope that one day this relationship between FEC and EEMBF would also include a relationship with Yalunka Christians. He stated, “This will be a sign that our relationship has reached a significant level of collaboration.”

Hakilitiguiya Primary School Update

The first primary school operating as a ministry of the **Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso** opened its doors in the **Colma** neighborhood of **Bobo Dioulasso** at the beginning of October 2014. Under the leadership of teacher Nwêyionibè SOME, the school currently serves 16 students. The Burkina Faso church is counting on the good work of Mr. SOME to raise the school’s reputation during this first year, thus attracting more students in the future.



The first three classrooms were built through the combined efforts of church leaders in Burkina Faso, in addition to financial contributions from Project Builders of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, the French Mennonite Mission Committee, and AIMM through the Schowalter Foundation. Funds for three more classrooms have been raised by the French Mennonite “Caisse de Secours”, and a youth building team from France is slated to help with construction and further build relationships in Colma during the summer of 2015.

Facing 2015, CEM organizes Weekend of Worship

by Jean Felix Cimbanga

“Glory be to God for His infinite love for His people!”

Thus **Pastor Jean Felix Cimbanga**, current President of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Congo (CEM), sums up his reflections regarding the weekend of worship and prayer that the CEM community organized December 19-21, 2014. The event, which brought together all 8 church districts of Eastern Kasai province to the Dipumba Plaine congregation in central Mbuji Mayi, focused on building unity, taking stock of 2014 and looking ahead in prayer to 2015.



CEM's National Management Committee: Left to right: Justin Mbombo, Jean Felix Cimbanga, Willy Nyamabu, and Hubert Tshibangu



Pastor Jean Felix Cimbanga

Preaching was an important focus during the gathering, with various themes addressed from Romans 12 and 13 including “My People must not be Conformed to this World”; “Each One of My People must put their Gift to Work”; “My People must Submit to Higher Authority”. A summary of 2014’s activities initiated by the National Management Committee was presented by President Cimbanga.

During this event, the hand of God was manifest. A family atmosphere of unity shone through shared meals, the evident enthusiasm of the participants, and the joy growing from the richness and depth of teaching received. Hundreds of believers expressed their ardent desire to see the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, delight in the gifts that He placed within them. Others prayed to receive a gift, or to become conscious of a gift already received, in order to accomplish God’s work. With tears, others repented for having put their own interests ahead of the Lord’s work.

Prayers were also offered for Mennonites around the world, and for partners of CEM including AIMM, sister Mennonite churches in Congo, and Mennonite World Conference. An opportunity was offered to those present or absent- CEM's arms are open to welcome back any son or daughter who left the CEM faith family for any reason whatsoever.



Visit to Benin Bible Institute



Delegates from AIMM partner churches and organizations who attended **AIMM International Central Council's 10 year** review and annual meetings held in October 2014 in Benin, also took part in Benin Bible Institute's 30th Anniversary celebrations. We visited the Benin Bible Institute (BBI) farm, where preparations are underway to begin providing basic agricultural training in addition to Bible and theology for BBI

students. **This photo shows part of AIMM's delegation at the BBI farm. Left to right: Nicodeme Coulibaly; Steve Wiebe-Johnson; Adolphe Komuesa; Gaston Kandji; Joseph Nkongolo; Siaka Traoré; along with Benin Bible Institute Administrator Bonaventure Akowanou.**

Mennonite Sisters in Kasai-Oriental

By Charlie Malembe

In August and September 2014 I was in Kasai-Oriental in connection with my work as an investigator of the backgrounds of Congolese adopted children. While I was there I took the opportunity to visit my



Mennonite sisters,

members of **Communauté Mennonite au Congo (CMCO)** in two communities in the province. I learned that these women are working hard to support their families and churches but they face enormous obstacles. They were hungry for news of connections with the outside world, especially North America.

While the **Evangelical Mennonite Church** has a strong presence in Kasai-Oriental, CMCO also has 63 congregations in the province. None of the 22 pastors are women, although women make up the majority of their members. Most congregations are led by the laity.

I first met with the **Mbuji-Mayi CMCO women's provincial committee**, who showed me their dyeing and soap-making operations. The committee takes responsibility for training church women in these crafts, as well as bread- and beignet-making and agricultural activities. They emphasized to me that they "have never received any support, financial or material, from CMCO" or from district leaders. The committee pays their own expenses in making tours for evangelization and training, and they ask the women of the area congregations, whom they visit in turn, to purchase their own materials before the training sessions.

The **provincial women's officers** were happy to hear that I brought greetings from women in the USA. They said they would appreciate visits and assistance of all kinds. They named literacy training as a dire need.

I visited a brand-new congregation in **Mbuji-Mayi, Bulelela**, which does not yet have a church building; the congregation worships under the sun. The great majority of the attenders are women, more than 50 of them. These women have an unusually high rate of literacy but they, too, emphasized literacy training as a great need. They told me they had received training in economic activities from their provincial leaders but had not yet implemented these activities due to financial difficulties.



Preparing fabric for dyeing

The women of CMCO in Mwene-Ditu, 132 kilometers from Mbuji-Mayi, are carrying out the same economic activities as the women of Mbuji-Mayi, but with some outside help. They have been visited by a missionary couple from Mbuji-Mayi who have trained them in artisanal dyeing, soap-making, animal husbandry, and other activities.

As elsewhere, many of the Mwene-Ditu women are illiterate. They said they collected money to buy materials to learn to read and write, but their literacy teachers have become discouraged because they didn't have enough money to pay them. They do not have Bibles. They are eager to learn to read and write so that they can become useful members of society and CMCO.

CMCO has 4 congregations in Mwene-Ditu but only two ordained pastors. The Jerusalem congregation has 80 women, most of whom are illiterate but very active in the church.

They were very happy to receive greetings from their American counterparts and sent greetings in return.

***Charlie Malembe**, a Mennonite journalist in Kinshasa, is collaborating with Nancy Myers on a new blog, **CongoMamas (CongoMamas.com)**, which will collect stories of **Mennonite women in Congo**.*

Congo Water Project Update

by Fred Suter

My son and I just returned from another trip to the Congo to work on the Water Project. We set three goals for this trip. **The first** was to meet and begin training our new Congolese recruits who said they were interested in learning the drilling method. The first day we had five young and strong men. The second day eight showed up to



Mandela with Daniel Suter drilling at the conference center in Tshikapa



Transporting our drilling equipment from Tshikapa to Dibumba

work and the third day we had four. Finally, we had a seemingly stable core group of five dependable young men to form our first drilling team. This is a huge step in order for this water project to go forward.

Secondly, we bored a hole 100 ft. deep at the Mennonite Conference Center. That depth is the maximum depth to which our drilling set will reach and also the lowest depth from which our pump will

lift water. The drilling went fine but there was no water even at 100 feet. We concluded that the Tshikapa Conference Center is built on a hill of sand.

Thirdly, we made use of a 250-gallon plastic tank recently purchased for the project. Reinforcing rod was bent and fastened to hold a plastic gutter to the roof of one of the dormitories at the conference center so that rain water could be directed into the new tank. After a Sunday afternoon rain we had collected 250 gallons of water. This extra water reservoir will save women and girls many trips to the nearest spring.



Fred Suter, Feb. 2015, with completed eaves trough and water collection barrel at conference center

Local Assemblies in Burkina Faso Undergoing Persecution

Several local congregations of the **Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso** have been dealing with strong opposition.

The **Samogohiri church** has seen several young men give their lives to Jesus over the past couple of years. One of these young believers is **Zoumana**, the son of a Muslim imam. This father has sought in a variety of ways to bring his son back to the religion of his family, even going as far as calling on family friends to kill him- perhaps as a means to frighten him so that he would turn back. **Zoumana** has remained true to his new faith, repeatedly reaffirming that his commitment is to follow Jesus. The father has also threatened church leaders in various ways, and even attempted to incite his community to violence against the church. About a year ago, there was a meeting of all of the wise men of the village, representing both traditional religion and Islam, along with church leaders, the son and father, and the local political authority, the prefet. At this meeting, the village elders united to urge the imam to allow **Zoumana** to “follow the path of his choosing”. Since then, while the father has persisted in opposition to his son, almost the entire village, including the imam’s wife, mother of the son in question, has been supportive of the son’s right to choose. The father’s refusal to accept the village’s counsel has led to a decline in his influence in the affairs of the local mosque.

Local church leaders have been calm but firm in dealing with this opposition. By not responding to the threats with counter threats but with patience, they have succeeded in de-escalating tensions and in showing respect to their **Muslim neighbors**, while at the same time affirming everyone’s right to choose their own spiritual path. This patience has won them the respect of many. Because of the father’s refusal to support Zoumana’s high school studies, the church has stepped into that role.

In the village of **Sidi**, the local **Mennonite church** has been under threat, because



Pastor Daouda Traoré, Zoumana, Fabe Traoré at Zoumana’s Baptism

believers there have refused to make the yearly sacrifices to the “**spirits of the fields**”. These sacrifices are believed to protect crops and to make them fruitful. In November 2014, a group of villagers including the village chief’s son, told Christians to leave the village by January 31, 2015, and to destroy their place of worship, or risk being killed. Since that time, national church President **Siaka Traoré** has met with the prefet in charge of **Sidi**, who said that he would meet with the villagers to inform them that Burkinabe law allows for freedom of religion. He did so, and there appears to be calm at present. The Christians continue to worship as usual in their building. The only believer still singled out is the first Christian to move to the village, **Seydou**, who has been told that he may at any time be asked to leave.

Please continue to pray that God would give the Christ followers in these and other villages grace and courage to live peaceably with their neighbors despite opposition.

By Carolyn Voth

The 2015 MK Reunion will take place in Newton, Kansas from Friday, August 28 3:00 p.m. to Sunday, August 30 2 p.m. 2015, at the Fireside Room, Grace Community Church.

Stan Graber and Heidi Regier Kreider have agreed to tell their MK stories. We have several of us going back to Congo we hope to hear from. We're planning to eat African food together!

Please plan to attend. \$35 registration due at the door. (If you'd like to give more toward the project we vote on, you are welcome to do so.) We also welcome your suggestions on activities and topics for our time together. Please contact Carolyn Voth jwvoth@gmail.com. David Rocke and Stan Graber are also helping plan and organize this event.



2012 MK Reunion in Newton

Days Inn 1 833-828-1972 has rooms for \$79, on special right now for \$51.

PRE-REGISTRATION: Please email your intention to attend to Lola at lola@aimmintl.org or call [574 535 0077](tel:5745350077).

AIMM PARTNERS VISITING 2015 SUMMER!

A number of **AIMM partner church representatives** will be visiting the USA this summer in conjunction with the Mennonite World Conference Assembly, which will take place in Harrisburg, PA July 20-26. We mention just a few of them here.

AIMM-ICC President Siaka Traoré (possibly accompanied by his wife **Claire**) will be the AIMM representative at the **Global Mission Fellowship**, which is a gathering of mission-minded churches and agencies from around the world wide Anabaptist family, and will take place immediately before the **MWC Assembly**.

Siaka will also be attending part of the

Mennonite Church USA convention (June 30-

July 3) as a guest of **Mennonite Mission Network**. A trip to Canada is also being explored, and it may include a visit to the **Evangelical Mennonite Conference's** annual convention in Brandon, MB.



Siaka & Claire Traoré



Marcelline & Adolphe Komuesa

AIMM-ICC Vice President Adolphe Komuesa, accompanied by his wife **Marcelline**, and also by **Mennonite Church of Congo Youth Leader Robert Irundu**, will be making an AIMM tour before arriving at the MWC Global Mission Fellowship, Youth Summit, and Assembly. They will take in part of the **Mennonite Church-USA Convention** in

Kansas City, where **Robert Irundu** will present a seminar focused on encounter between **Congo and American Mennonite** youth. This group will also participate in AIMM visits and events in **Newton, KS; Mountain Lake, MN; and Goshen IN.**

SUMMER 2015 AIMM CALENDAR

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN EVENT!

Sunday June 28- Morning- Congo Mennonite reps will preach at both Zion Mennonite Church, Elbing, KS and at First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.

Evening- An AIMM event featuring Mennonite Church of Congo **President Adolphe Komuesa**, and Youth Leader **Robert Irundu**, will take place at the Bethel College Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.

Sunday July 5- Morning- Pastor Adolphe Komuesa will preach at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN.



Robert Irundu

Evening- An AIMM event featuring Mennonite Church of Congo President **Adolphe Komuesa** and Youth Leader **Robert Irundu** will take place at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN.

Saturday July 11- Evening- An AIMM event featuring Mennonite Church of Congo President **Adolphe Komuesa**, Youth Leader **Robert Irundu**, and Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso President **Siaka Traore** will take place in Goshen, IN.

Sunday July 12- Morning- Mennonite Church of Congo Youth Leader **Robert Irundu** will preach at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN.

Afternoon- Fellowship gathering of African and North American Mennonites at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN. [This event will replace AIMM's Annual Picnic].

Monday July 13- All day event at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN focusing on discussions involving African and American participants, on what makes for good international partnerships [Interested in participating in this event? Call the AIMM office for further details.]



“November 30, 2014 in Kinshasa, the ordination of Regine Luweja Lembesa was celebrated by the Mennonite Church of Congo. She is the 5th woman to be ordained since the historic decision in favor of women’s ordination was taken in July 2012.”



2015 Gathering of the Association of Evangelical Mennonite Women in Burkina Faso

Claire Traore, President of the Association, writes,

“We give thanks to the Lord again this year for the privilege we had of organizing and taking part in the women’s seminar, held Feb. 2-6. Over 225 women gathered for this event! The **Orodara Training Center** in which we met, was too small to contain all of us. The larger group of women had to follow the teaching from outside. Lodging space was too limited for everyone.

Two women speakers from the **Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Mali** came to provide the teaching. The theme was, “The Importance of Praise and Worship”.

Noelle Dembele taught about the importance of praise. Through praise, God accomplishes great things in our lives. When should we praise God? At the time of her husband's death, despite this great loss, Noelle needed to praise God, and this came to be a great testimony among non-Christians. She told us to praise God in difficult and painful situations, as well as in moments of joy and in each circumstance. She stated that



Mme Noelle Dembele

one who praises God is like a preacher, and that praise and prayer are closely related. God dwells in the midst of praise. Bible passages such as Eph.1:6-12 and Ex.15:1-6 informed the teaching. According to II Chron. 20:20-25, praise destroys Satan's power. Through praise, God does great miracles. Among our group of women, during the seminar, instead of praying, we praised God, and God healed and liberated us.

Anne Coulibaly, the second speaker, taught us about worship. True worshippers worship God in spirit and in truth (Jn.4:23). The one who worships needs also to give time to meditate God's Word, and to walk in obedience to it. A worshipper always walks in holiness, testifies to Jesus, and gives tithes and offerings. She will keep her body holy, always keeping in mind that "my body is God's temple", and I

must not soil it through prostitution, or use of alcohol or tobacco.

Some women in our group repented; others renewed their walk with the Lord. We pray that this repentance will be sincere and that it will bring great change in the life of the church.

Thanks to all who support us through these seminars. Without them, it would be difficult for certain women to share their worries and difficulties and to receive comfort and encouragement for their faith in Christ. Numerous testimonies of God's miracles in the lives of women and their families were shared. One woman gave thanks for her son's healing. He had been reduced to his bed for months. But then Mennonite church pastors came to her village in order to pray for her son. He was delivered, and now is able to work." See photo of 2015 Women's seminar on back cover...



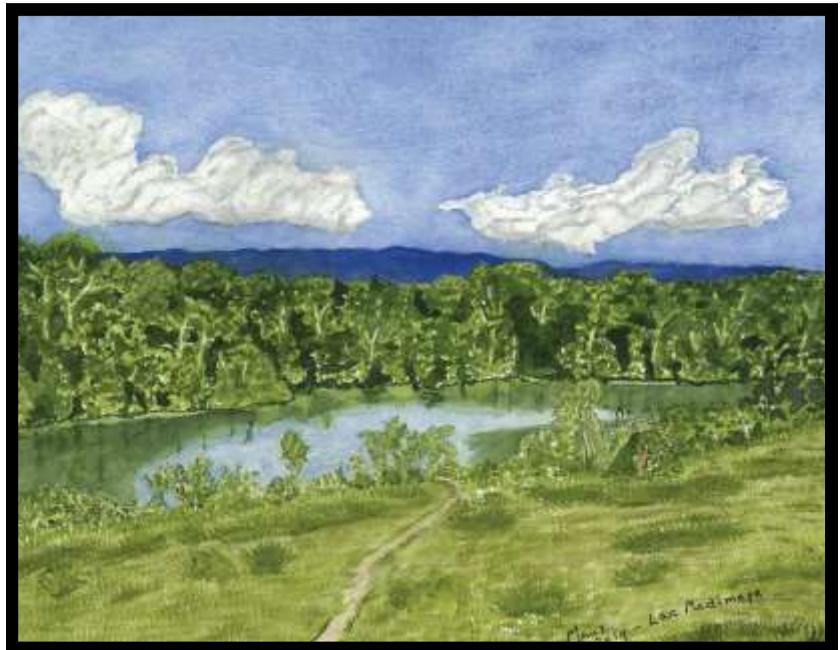
2015 women's seminar, held Feb. 2-6 at the Training Center of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso, in Orodara

Artist Information:

Mark Janz, an AIMM MK, painted this picture of Lac Madimape. If you are interested in purchasing a print of this painting, Mark is offering an **AIMM special of an 11 x 14 print for \$30 plus shipping**. Please contact Mark at the following email to express your interest.

mrjanz52@gmail.com

Hm Phone: 909-989-2483



Lac Madimape