



# Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission International Central Council

P.O. Box 744 • Goshen, IN 46527-0744 • 440 Main St., Steinbach, MB R5G 1Z5 Canada  
Ph: 574/535-0077 • Email: [aimm@aimmint.org](mailto:aimm@aimmint.org)

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Dear AIMM Family,

Imagine the joy you would feel at being able to read the Bible for yourself for the first time? Or the sense of peace at being able to support your family while also being able to minister to your church. Essential to AIMM is following the lead of our local African partner churches and how they want to be the “hands and feet of Jesus” within their own contexts. As friends and supporters of AIMM, your prayers and financial gifts are part of being Jesus’ hands and feet in these communities.

AIMM partners recently gathered for our International Council meetings. **Here are a few stories about our work:**

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) the Congo literacy project continues to empower women to read and write for the first time. The literacy project is an idea that germinated with women leaders from North America and Congo. Literacy training is becoming a vital part of future ministry.

The DRC Mennonite Brethren Church reported on the encouraging beginnings of its Village Savings and Loan program that AIMM supporters helped initiate. The loans show that the church ministers to both spiritual and physical needs of their communities.

The three Angolan Mennonite/Anabaptist denominations, our newest partner churches, have a contagious zeal for expanding the reach of the church and creating new congregations. Through the Angola Mennonite Church’s agricultural cooperative, we have provided improved seeds, a durable warehouse for crop storage, and community training in the use of local resources and sustainable agricultural practices.

Also in Angola AIMM partners have assisted five church leaders, four of them women, in the pursuit of their theological training. In addition, AIMM coordinated funding for the completion of a Mennonite Brethren congregation’s church building and is exploring options to help the Evangelical Mennonite Church realize a poultry project among its members.

This year the Anabaptist Network in South Africa, ANiSA, hosted AIMM’s International Council gathering. ANiSA brings together a variety of churches, church leaders, and diverse ministries that value the heritage of the Anabaptist movement. Together they embody a radical lifestyle centered around God’s reconciling vision for the world. They draw on the collective wisdom within the Anabaptist movement. They walk with, support, and grow communities of peace, justice, and reconciliation. ANiSA leaders led those at the ICC gathering in our daily meditations, reminding us to let the Bible challenge our preconceptions and to see the gospel in a new light.

**We also heard stories of challenge:** The Mennonite Church of the Congo shared about the difficulty of

*“Following Jesus, Making Disciples, Serving the Church”*

preparing pastoral leadership in the face of diminishing foreign support for the Kalonda Bible Institute. AIMM donors are helping by providing training to identify and leverage local resources to make leadership training a durable and sustainable ministry.

This year's Burkina Faso Partnership Council gathering took place in the city of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso instead of in the western regions of the country where the church is based. Terrorist attacks continue to cause death and destruction. The Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso decided the security situation warranted the change. We mourn the desperation and violence that terrorist attacks embody. We equally lament the limitations that kept AIMM partners from France and North America from communing with church members outside the city.

We are encouraged, however, by God's protection and by the resilience and faithfulness of our Burkinabé brothers and sisters. An example is Joseph Sinou and his wife Eve, young leaders guiding the church's work in Bobo-Dioulasso. Pastor Joseph oversees the three Mennonite congregations in this growing city where Islam is the majority faith. He has organized an outreach committee from the Bobo congregations, which has developed relationships in two villages and is moving to establish new congregations there.

Members are also building relationships of cooperation and trust with their Muslim neighbors, a significant witness in a region where religious identity can be used to stoke conflict and violence. Joseph recently completed a bachelor's degree in anthropology and is exploring options to do a master's degree in sociology. Eve is doing doctoral studies in linguistics, an important asset for Bible translation. With two young children, their days are full of family life, church leadership responsibilities, and academic pursuits.

**Pray for Joseph and Eve,** as well as for the entire church in Burkina Faso. **Pray for wisdom and courage** as they balance their many responsibilities.

It is only with your support that our ministries are possible. We are grateful for the way God has provided through contributions from you and many others. We invite your prayers for AIMM partners and their ministry engagements. We invite donations too, for specific ministries and for the general fund, which enables AIMM administrative capacity to help partners contribute to what God is doing in the world. Has God blessed you financially this year? **Would you consider increasing your giving by 30% to increase AIMM's long-term sustainability?**

By each of us doing our part, we can be the hands and feet of Jesus and build more communities of faith.

In Christ,



R. Bruce Yoder  
AIMM Co-Executive Coordinator



John Fumana  
AIMM Co-Executive Coordinator