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WHAT'S
INSIDE

2

Partnerships
Flourish in
AIMM

4

Expanding
Missionary
Work in
Bikoro

7

JoinTrees
Plants Seeds
of Hope



Grace Community Women Gather

By Lawrence Coetzee, Lead Pastor at Grace Community Mennonite Church

The women of Grace Community Mennonite Church in Cradock, Eastern Cape Province in South Africa, recently hosted a **conference to acknowledge and encourage the women in their churches and communities**. The theme of the seven-day event was “Women You Can Be Restored” and included women from the community and its various churches. Visiting speakers from the Northern Cape and Western Cape provinces highlighted **the spiritual leadership roles women play in their families, churches, and communities**. During the weeklong conference participants visited Cradock schools to encourage young women students and organized open-air evangelism activities.

We wish to thank all our families, ministers, churches, and organizations in the community whose support made the conference successful. It is with great pride that we acknowledge the determination of our sisters and their ministries to win back families for the Lord! To God be the glory, great things He has done!



AIMM International Council members from South Africa, Angola, Canada, and the United States take a break at the beach during October's ICC meetings



The New Paradigm for Healthy Partnership

AIMM held its International Central Council meetings at the Wycliffe Center in Lome, Togo, from October 27 to November 02, 2024. Participants from Angola, Burkina Faso, Canada, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the DRC, and the USA attended the event. These meetings were an excellent time to give thanks to God for what He is accomplishing among AIMM member churches and organizations and to **pray, worship and fellowship as a family and plan together what God is calling them to do together**. The participants in these gatherings were richly encouraged, inspired and edified by times of morning and evening devotions around the theme of “the new paradigm for healthy partnership” taken from **Paul's epistle to the Philippians, 3:12-16**. The AIMM Central Council meetings offer members of this Anabaptist Mennonite family the opportunity to celebrate God's blessings in the church and to consolidate and strengthen their partnership and mutual commitments as co-workers in the Great Commission. This important gathering concluded with a time of praise and fellowship over the Lord's Supper, to the great satisfaction of all present.

Supporting the Most Vulnerable in Sierra Leone



Primary school children show off their new backpacks, thanks to the Christ Salvation Mennonite Church's project to support vulnerable students

Christ Salvation Mennonite Church is supporting 475 vulnerable children in 5 primary schools with school supplies and their schools with educational materials. The most recent census from Sierra Leone indicates the literacy rate is just over 50%. Illiteracy often is the result of lack of schooling. 62% of Sierra Leonian children 6 years old and older have either left school or have never been to school. According to the World Bank's World Development Indicators, just over half of the population lives in extreme poverty, on less than \$1.90 USD per day. 80% of poor households have out-of-school children while only 20% of more affluent households have out-of-school children.

To allow vulnerable children to stay in school, **the church provides** children from poor households with pencils, pencil erasers, crayons, a pencil sharpener, a ruler, exercise books, crayons, and a backpack. Each of the 5 schools received blackboard rulers, chalk, blackboard erasers, calculators, bells, and school registers. **With the help of the Luke 4 Foundation and AIMM financial support, the church is giving vulnerable primary school children a chance to learn to read and write!**



CMCo missionary Seraphin Kutumbana visits a homebound church member during the recent mission training session in Gungu, DRC

“Our three-day tent-making seminar in Gungu was for young adults, to empower them to **follow Paul's example** and **become soul-winners** in their various areas of life,” reported Pastor Seraphin Kutumbana last month. Among the eighty-six participants were teachers, doctors, farmers, and market vendors. The topic was **inspired by the way that Paul financed his missionary work** by making tents, and the teaching focused on Acts 18:1-4.

The gathering in Gungu, Kwilu Province, is one of the Mennonite Community Church of the Congo's (CMCo) mission initiatives. “**All in common for fellowship and church growth**” was the theme of the church's “Mission Sunday” this past September 29.

Across CMCo's many congregations, preachers focused on Acts 2:44-47 in their sermons, encouraging people to contribute offerings for mission activity. This year church members gave the equivalent of \$595 USD in addition to clothing and other kinds of in-kind donations. The funds and goods collected were passed to the CMCo Missions Department, which Pastor Kutumbana leads.

The tent-making seminar in Gungu encouraged participants to share the good news in their communities as tent-makers, financing their own outreach instead of waiting for assistance from others. Afterward Pastor Kutumbana shared, “We are grateful for the large number of seminar participants and for the even greater number of the community who came out to our morning worship services and film events. Glory be to the Lord, Lord of the harvest!”

» Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. «

- Acts 18:3-4

CMCo's Tent Makers: Following Paul's Example



Pastor Jean Pierre Muya Mukanya preaches on Mission Sunday in the Centennial Central parish

Expanding Missionary Work in Bikoro

By Reverend Nathan Mudiji Makumbi,
Mission Department Director CEFMC

This year the Mennonite Brethren Church of the Congo (CEFMC) is celebrating 100 years of evangelization in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). While the church started in the West, we are now spreading to the East, Center, and North of the country. The DRC is vast! However, the Mission Department, which has set **the goal of planting the CEFMC in places where it has not yet been established**, continues to work on evangelizing the rest of the DRC.

» **Go there and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.** «
- Matthew 28:19



Nathan Mudiji, Director of the Mission Department of the Mennonite Brethren Church of the Congo (CEFMC), DRC

The goal of our CEFMC Mission Department is to ensure the spread of the Good News of wholistic salvation in Christ to everyone. This goal applies to the remote peoples living far away from urban areas, in foreign countries, and unreached peoples here in the DRC.

One case is the Batwa peoples (often referred to as the Pygmies in Congo) who have been marginalized, driven off their land, and exploited by the Bantu peoples. CEFMC's Mission Department strives to promote the Batwa's inclusion in all aspects of community life. We seek **to transform the relationship between the Batwa and Bantu communities, promoting peace and a better life for all.**

We would like to help Batwa children and young people to study, just as Bantu children do; to create listening and information centers for young people in these communities; and to organize constructive exchanges on peace, justice and conflict transformation.

Our most current challenge is **acquiring land for local church buildings**, and **training and equipping Batwa pastors.**

With the Lord's help **we are making progress**, bringing people together, and expanding God's reign!



Youngsters in Bikoro: possible future church leaders?

In recent decades, AIMM member churches have engaged in **mission and outreach initiatives to make the gospel known** to unevangelized and less evangelized ethnic groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is an area in which North American workers had taken the lead for more than eight decades. With the growth of the church in the Congo, Gospel outreach has become more of a collaborative endeavor.

The CEFMC has been doing mission work among the Batwa, who live in remote areas of the equatorial forests, for the last three decades. Missionaries Augustin Boika and Dieudonné Ndimwaku are assigned to serve among this group of marginalized people. They are working to spread the Good News and plant churches in the Kiri, Bikoro, and Mbandaka areas. Let us thank God that AIMM member churches are using their gifts and resources to build up God’s Kingdom in the world.



Pastor Augustin Boika

A major focus since 2018 is the Bikoro territory, where our missionary Pastor Augustin is focusing on evangelizing the Batwa people. Despite challenges of reaching remote areas where the Batwa live, Pastor Augustin’s efforts have been fruitful. In Bikoro so far we have 8 local churches, 1 cell group, and 14 primary schools. Two ordained pastors are now serving the region, as well as 10 evangelists.



Beatrice Kulutwe holds her diploma

Gratitude for Scholarship

“I give thanks to God for He is the protector and giver of intelligence and wisdom,” wrote Beatrice Kulutwe in a note that arrived at the AIMM office in Kinshasa in October of 2024. The joy in her face from the accompanying photos of her graduation reminded us that it is good to take time to praise and give thanks to God.

Beatrice was one of seventeen students who received AIMM educational assistance this year to study in the fields of pastoral training, medicine, conflict resolution, environmental sciences, and nursing. Providing this opportunity to young people in the church helps those who do not have adequate resources to complete their education. It also strengthens the church by increasing the capacity of future leaders. We are grateful for Beatrice’s scholarship!

CLIP & SHARE

**Tell a 3-min story of
God at work in Africa**



Pray

WITH US

Please join us in prayer.
Clip & save prayer requests

Join us in thanking God for the **success of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso's youth retreat last March**. Let us also pray together that the Lord will help the youth of this church to preserve their faith. Burkina Faso has been facing multiple security challenges in recent years. Let us **implore divine grace for the restoration of peace in Burkina Faso**.

Let us also **pray for peace and stability in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo**, where the population is the victim of violence and armed conflicts that are causing a serious humanitarian catastrophe. This situation is an obstacle to the well-being and peaceful enjoyment of the population.

We rejoiced in God's goodness as we talked to AIMM's donor partners during our end-of-year campaign. Thank you for your prayers and donations throughout the year!



Community Notices

Marking milestones within the AIMM family



Gladys Graber

Gladys Graber, 96, entered into the presence of her Lord and Savior on November 15, 2024 in Newton, KS, of natural causes. She served as a missionary in Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, under Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission from 1951-1964.

After service in Zaire, Gladys taught accounting and general business at Hillsboro High School, was adjunct professor at Tabor College and Hutchinson Community College, served as faculty chair of the business and economics department at Hesston College starting in 1976 and later, from 1986, became tenured Associate Professor of Business and Economics at Bethel College. Gladys served as a member and trustee of the Division of Administration of the General Conference Mennonite Church, as a member of the Western District Conference Audit Committee, and as member of the Board of Control of the Mennonite Library and Archives.

Read the full obituary at:

<https://www.petersenfamilyfuneralhome.com>

Opportunity to Join AIMM Staff

AIMM is looking for a Church and Donor Relations person to add to our team. If you are interested or know of anyone who would be a good candidate, please contact us.

Kalonda Bible Institute's director, Reverend Bercie Mundedi, is embarking on a two-year period of study to complete her university degree, a move that will not only reinforce her abilities as director and teacher but will also allow the Institute to strengthen its usefulness to the church. Please pray for Bercie as she completes her university degree in theology.

Bercie Mundedi



JoinTrees Reforestation Project in DRC & Angola

AIMM member churches in the DR Congo and Angola are joining with Mennonite Men, the men's organization for Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA, to establish eight pilot reforestation projects.

As the rains of planting season draw near, land is being prepared at the first projects in the DRC at Mukedi, Kalonda, Mbuji-Mayi, Matende and Kinshasa. The trees will help recover land, countering soil erosion and providing fruit and other goods. Mennonite farmers will care for the trees and cultivate their crops on the land around them.

Pray for good growing conditions as farmers seek to steward the earth that God has created and sustain its productivity for the well-being of their families and communities.



Preparing the ground to plant trees in Mukedi, one of the JoinTrees pilot project sites

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.

–Matthew 13:31–32

This *Africa Journal* celebrates the mission work of AIMM member churches in Africa that North American partners empower. Grace Community Church in South Africa is reaching out to women in its community while the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church in Angola is walking with 13 widows, providing modest seed funds and coaching to improve their market skills. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo the Mennonite Community Church (CMCo) held a “Mission Sunday” and collected the equivalent of \$595 USD for mission activity, and the Mennonite Brethren Church (CEFMC) is sending workers among the Batwa people, celebrating 8 new church plants among this marginalized people group. Yaya and Medina Bengaly continue to encourage a new group of believers in Mali among the Jalonké people, and the Christ Salvation Mennonite Church in Sierra Leone is reaching families through its work with vulnerable primary students in 5 different schools around Freetown. This is the fruit of our collective efforts through prayer and mutual support. Praise be to God!

Co-Executive Coordinators
John Fumana
and Bruce Yoder





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» Your kingdom come. Your
will be done, on earth as it
is in heaven. «

Matthew 6:10

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Cover photo: Grace Community Mennonite Church women gather in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Angola Widows' Project Supports the Vulnerable Among Us

Pastor Daniel Nelson Canganguela, lead pastor for the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church in Angola, expressed thanks to God and to sisters in Canada for assistance to widows in Angola. He wrote,

We want to extend our greetings and thanks for the support given by the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada through AIMM for 13 widows from Malange and Luanda provinces. After the loss of their partners, our sisters struggle to support their families. The \$280 USD that each one received helped them to augment their entrepreneurial activities, primarily small-scale market sales, that they have started. May God bless you!

Praise God for the Angola church's commitment to reinforcing the wellbeing of those most vulnerable in their churches!

**whatever you did for one of these least brothers
and sisters of mine, you did it to me.**

- Matthew 25:40



Increasing tomato inventory for greater profit