

Partnership visit to Zambia from 18th - 30th September 2015

Aims – To meet with United Church of Zambia senior leadership group
To visit MCB/ Church of Scotland mission partners serving in Zambia
To meet with other MCB partners – UCZTC & TEEZ

Lusaka visit

- **Meeting with ex-SALT's family – Late Rev Alice Mulenga, former Community Development Secretary, UCZ**

I arrived in Zambia in the evening of Friday 18th September and met with Roger Ngambi – United Church Zambia Synod Secretary that evening. The next morning I met Mr Silvester and Ntalanga Mulenga; husband and daughter of late Rev Alice Mulenga. Alice was an ex-SALT student and an alumna of Queen's Foundation with a promising future before her sudden death from a heart condition. I prayed with the family after enquiring about their welfare. They were both appreciative of my visit and past help offered to Alice by UCZ. The family has since moved out of the church manse they were living with Alice and Alice's pension helped support Ntalanga's tertiary education in ICT at a Polytechnic in Lusaka. May Alice's dear soul rest in peace?



Ntalanga and Silvester Mulenga

- **Meeting with a National in Mission Appointee in Lusaka – Mr Laston K Chewe, Internal Auditor for UCZ**



Mr Chewe – Internal auditor

Mr Chewe was appointed as an internal auditor for UCZ Synod since 2012 up till date. He trained as an Accountant and previously worked with private audit companies that audited -development, service, manufacturing and government organisations. This was his first time working for a church organisation and found it interesting though encountered some challenges. The peculiarity being that most of the income generated has been from offerings which is often difficult to predict. Therefore assumptions were applied properly and procedures put in place to promote accountability, design budgets and ensure consistent records across the synods. Since inception, the volume of work generated has been immense but recruiting extra personnel to assist has been difficult. Volunteers were appointed but the quality of service delivered was poor. After discussions he agreed the need for succession planning peradventure his post is no longer supported by the British Methodist after 2017. Seeking young professionals to mentor might be a positive avenue e.g. upskilling interested Account assistants.

Mr Chewe said the most rewarding aspect of his job was to observe increased income by almost 50% since he started work. Also his visits to remote areas, provided schedules for consistent record keeping across all churches and presbyteries especially as they were threatened by law suits where payments were lacking. Now UCZ Synod staff and retirees are being paid regularly and promptly. UCZ has also been able to dislodge a chunk of debt owed to the Revenue office and Pension schemes. Proper systems were now in place to steadily clear the backlog in adherence to state regulations. The General Secretary has been able to use the budget reports to select and fund priorities by exerting good budgetary controls. There is continued priority checks and review to manage income and expenditure concurrently. It has been a successful NMA programme so far, two more years to go.

- **Meeting with Rev Kangwa Mabuluki – Co-ordinator of Pan African Theological Education by Extension (TEE)**

Rev Mabuluki was another National in Mission Appointee that recently started on 1 September 2015. He was appointed as the TEE co-ordinator for Africa and his first assignment was to reinforce sub-regional meetings namely Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, Horn of Africa, Northern Africa and the Oceania that comprises of Madagascar and Mauritius. His next regional meeting is to take place in Zimbabwe in November 2015 and the focus is the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the *Kairos document* on



Rev Mabuluki – Pan African TEE coordinator

Apartheid by the Churches. The architects were Desmond Tutu, Bears Naude, Frank Chikane etc. and the forum is to examine the theologies undergirding apartheid, the Church, State and Prophetic theologies as well as the non-participation of many churches at the onset. The concern is the loss of momentum and what lessons have been learnt? The next sub-regional topic for East Africa is expected to be managing HIV/AIDS because there appears to be increased infected rate caused by information fatigue amongst the youths. Watch this space.

- **Attended services at St Pauls and Trinity Church, Lusaka; United Church of Zambia**

On Sunday 20th September I had the privilege of attending the first service that started at 08.00 hours at Trinity Church and later went to the second service at St Paul’s Church –both in Lusaka. Trinity is a smaller church with English speaking services whereas St Paul is a mega-church with vernacular speaking services. Both churches were filled to capacity however St Paul had a Holy Communion service with lots of spontaneous singing and services from a vibrant congregation. I met with few of the church elders as well as the UCZ Synod Secretary – Mr Rodgers Ngambi. They appreciated my visit and mentioned the need for ongoing partnership particularly as a friend offering independent views, sharing ideas and promoting exchanges with other African partners. They really appreciate the importance of implementing succession plans for outgoing mission partners as they lamented on the void experienced after the first set of missionaries left Zambia. There were several challenges raised on rural versus urban church stationing, twining between presbyteries, funding certain professionals in churches e.g. accountants, ICT specialists etc. It was an enlightening and cheerful meeting.



Mr Roger Ngambi – UCZ Synod secretary at St Pauls

- **Meeting with Synod Bishop and the General Secretary of UCZ**

I met with the Synod Bishop on Sunday 20 September after service as he was preparing for his Tanzania trip taking place early the next day. We discussed the appreciable progress made by UCZ these past years and the need to draft the strategic plan for the next five years. The process has already started however he was conscious that the election for the post of the General Secretary of UCZ was in 2016 which might influence the direction of the church. The next day I participated in the staff morning devotion at 08.00hours where I shared from 2 Chronicles 20 – the battle is the Lord’s! Afterwards I met with Peggy to discuss partnership issues. She was very grateful for our support and the presence of Rev Graeme Hall at the golden jubilee in January 2015. UCZ was also thankful for the donation of the neonatal machine approved since 2014 when Gill Dascombe, 2014 MCB Vice President visited. Peggy commented about the remarkable contributions from MCB mission partners serving with UCZ and was very sad that Glen and Wendy were leaving by the end of 2014. There was a request for Keith and Ida to be redeployed to Lusaka from Mwandi so as to take up new posts of Education and Health Education Secretaries. This should enable them take up more strategic roles and help have national efficient systems and processes in place as part of their succession planning. UCZ is also recruiting a vice principal at Chodort Training Centre in years to come as its succession plan to take over from Jenny Featherstone– MCB mission partner in years to come.



Dr Peggy Kabonde – UCZ Gen Sec with Bunmi



Wendy Lund –MCB mission partner

- **Kitwe visit to meet with Glen, Wendy and family**

I was picked up at the airport by Glen and later we travelled for over an hour to Kitwe to meet the family. They were in good spirit though Julu and Tsunami were back in school. Julu seats for his A levels late 2014 and thereafter they all return to the UK as the end of their mission service. Catherine and Taliesin were home schooled and they all look forward to their final move which has slowly started. They leave lots of friends behind and consider lots of opportunities for the future! Glen is a theology lecturer and Wendy a music teacher at UCZ University. In addition, Glen coordinates library and ICT services and Wendy teaches English as and when required as

she also home schools the children with Catherine having special needs. They shall be sorely missed at Kitwe due to the various contributions from Glen, Wendy and the children these past five years.

- **Meeting with Academic dean of UCZ University and Principal of Theological Education by Extension, Zambia**

I met with the Academic Dean of the university and we discussed the teething problems encountered in the university. There are currently six lecturers and there have been challenges with staff retention with many new universities cropping up in the country. Few advantages so far is the continued training of UCZ ministers for churches as well as the trust by parents and government to deliver Christian and high standard education in comparison with newer untried institutions. The university plans to have its Agriculture College at Chipemba and has kindly asked for mission partners willing to serve as Agro-business Manager for the farm. When Glen leaves, there will be an urgent need for a trained Librarian with ICT skills for recently developed student modules.

I later met with Rev Ackson Banda the Principal of Theology Education by Extension in Zambia based at Kitwe near the university. TEEZ trains trainers all over the country and participants often possess secondary level qualifications and mostly laity. The institution is supported by nine denominations and request for refresher courses for ministers plus other be-spoke courses were organised by TEEZ. There is increasing demand for the distance learning courses as it supports continued development and offers the foundation for future applicants to apply for ordained ministry. Its popularity is also because the resources are subsidised and TEEZ has considered few income generating ideas to help supplement costs e.g. owning a guest house near the city centre.



Rev Banda at TEEZ guest house in Kitwe

- **Meeting with Jenny at Chodort Training Centre, Choma – Zambia**

Jenny picked me up at Livingstone stone airport and we travelled over two hours journey from Livingstone to Choma. It was good see few of the long standing staff plus new ones. UCZ is recruiting a new vice-principal as part of its succession plan after Jennie retires in future and the recent NMA grant approved has enabled this. There are new initiatives at Chodort Training centre to provide essential skills to the vulnerable as well as offer income generating ideas. The recent drop in student sponsorship by European partners and CHAZ – Christian Health Association of Zambia have adversely affected fees income, therefore different fund raising ideas were being considered to avoid staff redundancy. Later I visited the newly completed classrooms though considerations on recruiting new students or seeking partnership with other donors are priority. Moira and I visited Njase girls secondary school set up by Methodists in 1963 and still has a very good education reputation. We also visited Karen and Theuns promoting conservation



Moira (CoS), Bunmi, Jenny and Mubita at Livingstone

farming in Zambia. After fellowship on Sunday morning, Jenny, Moira (Church of Scotland visitor) and I travelled to Livingstone to meet with Ida and Mubita. I then proceeded to Mwandia in the Western province of Zambia from Choma in the Southern province.

- **Meeting with Keith and Ida at Mwandia**

We were greeted by an excited Dachshund dog and five lovely children being fostered by Keith and Ida after intercepting their journey by traffickers. They were approached by the local police and supported by the UCZ church to foster the children pending their court case. Nevertheless the upkeep of the children is at their own personal expense which they have accepted. Plans are being made to re-house them by the social worker as they await the courts' ruling. Unfortunately the case has taken longer than anticipated and the children are waiting to be re-housed before enrolling in school. The children are Congolese and speak only French and Swahili. However Keith and Ida are great handling the situation with the love of Christ in demonstration in addition to the fact that Keith is a linguist and communicates well in French. It was fun



also to know that I arrived on Keith's birthday. He had preached earlier and we all had a nice hearty birthday meal! On my departure day, the Immigration officer visited the house early in the morning to prepare the children for the court briefing and the Social worker was also on site the previous day to acquaint themselves with the children. Every effort was being made to settle these trafficked Congolese children and to enrol them back in school.



Mwandi residents, the social worker (lady), Ida and Keith

Keith is a teacher and slowly transitioning as the Education Secretary for UCZ though he still visits the local school in Mwandi and helps from time to time. However as a succession plan, he has handed over the reign of authority to the locals. Ida is a matron at Mwandi Mission hospital and she is responsible for its administration, assisting with surgical procedures as well as the feeding programmes of young lactating mothers and HIV/AIDs patients. She is very busy and plans to handover her duties by January 2016 and transition into strategic management as the Health Secretary. They have both served at Mwandi for ten years and have a great adopted son with special needs –Mubita.

Accompanied by Keith, I visited the senior school area harbouring year 8 and 9s. There were 371 students in total with 22 staff members –there could be up to 63 in a class. There was another classroom block under construction being funded by the Beit Trust. Also on site was a two-class room building for special needs students. There was a tuck shop to cater for students and all proceeds are used to sponsor orphans in the community. We then drove to the church where the resident Bishop with other community representatives were sharing bags of grains for feeding and farming to about 300 farmers with failed harvests and about 100 households comprising of the elderly or the vulnerable. The grains and vegetable oil were supplied by Canadian government & farmers through the World Renew programme. Most of the bags were stored in the old church hall and the programme would last for about eight months by which harvesting would hopefully commence. The community members were well organised and the scene reminded me of Jesus feeding the five thousand again!



Famine relief support from partners

The next day I visited Mwandi Hospital and went on ward rounds with Ida as the Hospital Administration. Managing has been hectic with no doctors on site; therefore ambulances had been in use to take emergency patients to take patients to the nearest hospital. Being a level one hospital, it is totally free except for scanning foetuses which is optional. Mwandi was upgraded to a district hospital and the two doctors supplied by the government. There is the out-patient department. The maternity ward, the isolation units, the children, male and females wards, emergency room near the theatre. There were also the pharmacy, IT room for data management and the laboratory. Unfortunately the load shedding meant intermittent power supply that affects communication and it was recently renovated and formally opened on 10 April 2015. However the first dispensary was built in the 1920s and called the Glasgow Dispensary. You could feel the buzz on the hospital !



Mwandi Mission Hospital, Zambia

Psalm 67 ⁵⁻⁷ Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.

⁶ Then the earth shall yield her increase; God, our own God, shall bless us.

⁷ God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.