



Congo Church Association

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Aru celebrates its 10th Anniversary: GOD Reigns, New Kingdom, New Humanity
From Dr. Francesca Elloway, CMS Mission Partner in Aru. (Used with permission)



These are the words that were the focus for the celebrations of the 10th Anniversary of the Diocese of Aru, celebrated on 13th November 2015. There had been frenetic activity for weeks as preparations were made, with buildings being finished, the compound spruced up, and an arena prepared.

The logistics were amazing especially as no-one knew exactly how many people would come! Everyone mucked in. The man driving the tractor bringing the chairs is a Canon of the Cathedral!

Rain was a constant challenge, though amazingly although it rained, it always rained 'at the right time' and it didn't seriously interfere with any event – God is good!

There was a whole variety of events – including a march round the town, the opening of the dental department of our nursing college, and the laying of a foundation stone for a new building connected to the cathedral, all culminating with a big service of

thanksgiving and rededication. One enterprising person had made a statue of a pastor preaching, symbolising the arrival of the Anglican Church in the Aru area from Uganda, with his left hand holding a Bible, and pointing west further into the interior of DRC.

Thousands of people came from the all over the Diocese, making amazing efforts to get to Aru. One group including a choir spent three days on the road, having got stuck in mud, arriving just in time to perform.



Particularly poignant were a group from Isiro who, led by their pastor Fabien, walked 300km to reach Aru, using their walk as a chance to evangelise

in the different villages through which they passed, accompanied by their amazing brass band. A few days into their walk the pastor tragically heard that his 14 year old son had died. Rather than walking back on his own when he would have arrived after the funeral had occurred, the pastor bravely decided to keep going with parishioners and so came to Aru. Please pray for him and his family as they mourn the loss of their son.

It was a particular privilege to welcome Bp. Keith and Bp. Libby from the Chester Diocese with whom the Diocese of Aru is linked. Although the focus was on these 10 years, the Diocese wouldn't be here without the faithful work of those who worked in the Anglican Church here for many years before that. So for me it was especially good to see 'old friends' who had planted the seeds and watered the shoots. I hope they could see some of the fruit of their faithful labours and felt encouraged and thanked.

In lots of ways it is amazing how quickly these 10 years have gone, much has been achieved but equally there have been lots of challenges too and much still needs to be done particularly in the many isolated parishes, some of them hundreds of kilometres from Aru, where transport and communications are difficult, and financially the church is struggling, but where the pastors and their congregations are faithfully carrying on. The sacrifice and perseverance of some of these pastors in particular is especially humbling to me.

Message from Judy Rous

CCA Chair

Thank you so much for your ongoing prayers, donations and support for the Church in Congo and its ministry!

Thank you also for your participation in our recent surveys of members and Congolese church leaders. Highlights of your comments were:

- the value of our mutual prayers and friendship;
- opportunities for visits and spending time together, in DRC and in UK;
- the financial support for particular ministries and needs.

I was very privileged to spend November in DRC, visiting Aru for its 10th anniversary celebrations, and then Bunia, Butembo, Goma and Bukavu, travelling with MAF as far as Butembo. There were two recurring themes throughout the

trip, inspiring hope and thanksgiving: 'with God all things are possible' (Mark 19 v 26); and being part of God's family, and all that means in good times and bad.

Each day was filled with extraordinary interchanges: deeply humbling testimonies of faith in Christ lived out in the hardest of situations with joy and trust, challenges, successes, indescribable pain, transformations, and great vision for the future.

I will return to Bunia for the Provincial Synod later this month which will be a brilliant opportunity to meet church leaders and representatives from the whole church, and discuss our ongoing partnership. Please pray for Synod and all its discussions and planning for the future. More news in the next newsletter.

UAC – Changes and Blessings

Rev. Dr. Yossa Way

Canon Sabiti, Rector of UAC, stepped down in December 2015 after his appointment as bishop of the new diocese of Kamango. Sabiti served at UAC for over 20 years in a variety of roles, overseeing the turbulent period in 2003 when the institution went into exile in Aru and the recent transformation of ISThA into the current university. Rev. Dr. Yossa Way is now interim Rector, supported by Rev. Nguba Martin and Rev. Joyce Muhindo and a Management Team including all the Faculty Deans. This academic year, the student body has topped 350, with a steady increase in numbers year on year. On Christmas Day, we rejoiced in the Baptism of a third-year psychology student.

Two building projects are underway now that the dry season has begun: foundations for a new University Church at UAC, using gifts given in memory of the late Bishop Michael Scott-Joynt and also the first three classrooms and offices for a new secondary school, financed by a legacy gift. So now on Gbanday campus we have a primary and secondary school, as well as the University. We thank God for all these initiatives for young people in the region, providing places of education where Christ is also made known.



Abp Isingoma laid the foundation stone for the new chapel

News from Kasai

Bishop Marcel Kapinga

DRC has been reorganised into 26 administrative provinces (up from 11) and Kasai Diocese now finds itself straddling five rather than two. We need to develop an evangelism strategy for the fifth and new Kasai province (formerly Tshikapa District) as we do not have any churches in this area.

We have signed a partnership agreement with INADES (*Institut Africain pour le Développement Economique et social*). We will work together to train and support farmers, and we have a small bookshop which sells books published by INADES on development issues.

On 15th October, 2015, the Kasai Anglican Theological Institute (known as ITHAK) was opened in Mbuji-Mayi. The institute currently has six teaching staff and is training 15 students on a three-year programme. We thank all those who have supported us financially to make this happen, and pray that we will be able to sustain future growth.



Provincial Youth Officer visits Brazzaville and Kinshasa

Rev. Bisoke Balikenga, Provincial Youth Worker

This was the first visit by the Provincial Youth Department to Brazzaville. Rev. Maurice (the Youth Worker for the Diocese of Kinshasa) and I were given a great welcome by all the young people, Assistant Bishop Molanga Botola and the clergy.

The young people showed their appreciation of the support that they are given by the clergy who encourage them spiritually as well as trying to help them consider how to support themselves in their physical needs. But there is a very real need of training for the youth leaders using our own methods of active participation in discussion.

It is hoped that a group from All Saints Cathedral, Nairobi will be able to visit in May 2016 to help them grow spiritually.

Kinshasa: Some young people came to meet us invited by the Bishop Elect Achille. Discussions were held to overcome the conflict between various youth leaders, some trained in Mahagi. Reasons for this were discovered and it is hoped that by further leadership training these problems can be overcome. We also discussed how the youth in Brazzaville can collaborate with the leaders in Kinshasa and how these leaders, trained in Mahagi can help with the training of youth leaders in Brazzaville.

News from Katanga

Bishop Kasima Muno Cornelle

A Major Rural Development Programme

In association with the African Development Bank, and through its office of Community Development, the Diocese has launched a vast programme as part of a project to support infrastructures for rural development. This includes the rehabilitation of public markets, agricultural service roads, ferry docking terminal, drilling wells, and the construction of public abattoirs as well as the provision of drinking water. The official launch took place on 10th December 2015.

The Farmers' Association in Mokambo, under the supervision of the Church, harvested sacks of onions to help people cope with famine and the school fees of their children. This programme of food for work was initiated by the diocese with finance from the World Food Programme.



Rooted In Jesus

12 people received attendance certificates on completion of the 3-month long teaching series 'Rooted in Jesus' held in the parish of St André and led by Rev. Stéphane Makata.

Each person will now in their turn create a group of seven people. Forty similar groups have now been started with a view to engaging in evangelism. We would like to thank our missionary partners in England, Rev. Dr. Alison Morgan and Rev. Matthew Grayshon for their support.

Boga news

Bishop William

Last year Boga Diocese met to redefine its vision and mission. The vision is for the church to stand firm and be fully engaged in mission. The core values of the diocese are: faith in Christ; commitment to his mission; love and unity together with maintaining Anglican tradition. With this in mind, in the next five years the hope is to triple the number of church members (at present 39,472) and disciple a third of them to enable them to bring the lost to Christ. The schools, the 21 health centres and the hospital will be focussed on mission.

Recognising the history of dependence on outside aid the aim is to use our own resources to generate income to support the mission of Christ. This vision will be possible through the involvement of many people in mission outreach, seminars, conferences and leadership training.

Women Together in North Kivu and beyond

Judy Rous

On 25th November, women from Protestant churches across Butembo gathered for their annual day of teaching and worship. This gathering coincided with the start of '16 days of activism against Gender-based violence'. The teaching centred on the difference Christian women can make in society, and included a heart-felt challenge to the 500+ women present and civic dignitaries to pray and advocate for the peace of the nation.

The lady preacher said sadly that the word "kidnapping" never existed before in our vocabulary but now we know it too well and the extreme pain and distress it brings when women and young girls are kidnapped while out cultivating their gardens, collecting water or going to market. They may or may not return at some indeterminate point in the future after being raped and made to serve their captors.



Prayer outside the Mayor's office



Gathering for the Walk of Witness

Following a walk of witness across town to the Mayor's office they gathered outside for more lively worship, prayer and intercession. It was profoundly moving as women poured out their hearts in prayer and lament.

The MU team and members in North Kivu are working extensively with the some of the greatest sufferers in society: with rape victims and their families; with prisoners in the Central Prison; with orphans, showing Christ's love and compassion through their practical care and words. (More details in our next newsletter.)

Elsewhere in Congo these 16 days of activism were marked with special activities in schools and church groups, including teaching on 'positive masculinity'; Mugisa Isingoma gives leadership to this work through the Provincial MU office and UFPPS. Luke 6: 31 'Do to others as you would have them do to you' was the key Bible verse used all their teaching.

Community Development News

Mushamuka Hamisi Fidele, Coordinator

The summer of 2015 saw the Church taking part in two meetings held in Nairobi. At the first meeting in June, around twenty participants addressed the theme "Church life and holistic ministry in Africa: bridging the gaps". The second meeting was organised by the Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa (CAPA). Over a hundred participants from over twenty different African countries and some western partners discussed how the "Church and Community Mobilisation Processes" can be successful. The first point was to note that whilst the terminology used could vary, all were looking to see how the church could respond to the needs of their local communities.

The needs are enormous and the approach cannot succeed without external support, otherwise work continues with little impact. There was interest in identifying and securing sustainable means of financing so activities can be self-supported.

To conclude, Mushamuka signs off, "we really had time to share and reflect. We have received new knowledge and skills that we are determined to put into action."

Kisangani News

Bishop Funga

We carried out pastoral visits to seven Archdeaconries during which 3,609 Christians were confirmed. Seventeen people have been ordained, including an Army Major. We have given assistance to forty-five households whose homes were destroyed in the November flooding in Kisangani.

Our Diocesan Synod was held in November with 137 delegates and funded by our fourteen Archdeaconries.

Pioneering mission

Rev. Desire Mukanirwa, Provincial Evangelism Coordinator

I am writing with a thankful heart because of what Jesus has done over past year in our ministry. We have seen God's hand in every single activity.

For instance, in pioneering mission we have reached out to 256 pygmies, including children, in their respective rural areas. One was baptised (others having been baptised previously). There are also those who are waiting to be confirmed by the Bishop. With the support of CCA we are continuing our holistic mission, both spiritual and physical, towards this group. In one camp for the first time ever, pygmies will receive 15 goats to rear.

Pygmies are normally nomadic but we are trying to help them establish one camp by buying land for them. With the help of the Diocese of Bukavu, through its development department, this has now been done and the group living 28 km from Bukavu received 100 dollars and assistance

with starting up small scale businesses.

We also want to thank God for the ministry of Flame International, particularly in the dioceses of North Kivu, Boga, Aru and Bukavu. Many received healing and forgiveness, others confessed their sins, while yet others came to Christ. Among them were Muslims, soldiers, police and prisoners. Praise Jesus!

In addition, we thank God for helping us minister in places where people are afraid to go, like Rutshuru and Uvira, where there is still tension and insecurity. The word of God continues to reach people in those areas and some are coming to Christ, including footballers!

We believe that God will bring total peace and reconciliation in these places in Jesus' Name. Much prayer is needed.

Clergy Retreat in Brazzaville

Rt. Rev. Molanga Botola Jean, Missionary Bishop

A 4 day spiritual retreat for priests from the Anglican Church in Brazzaville took place from 18-21 November 2015 in St Felix Paris, Brazzaville. It was a time for prayer, sharing of experiences and reflecting on our ministry as Pastors.

We saw the importance of unity in the work of God's mission, and looked at John 17:20-26 where Jesus prayed that the Church would have the same unity which exists between the Father and the Son.

Participants raised some of the difficulties which they encounter in the exercise of their role, including how to carry out their mission in their workplace where poverty is a major concern for the Christian population.

Bukavu Diocese

Rev. Muhindo, Diocesan Youth Coordinator & Bishop Bahati

Youth Conference: The youth are facing many challenges in today's world. Conscious of its responsibility to help them to become strong in their Christian faith and to play their part as influential members of their communities, the diocese arranged a conference for 100 youth leaders,



covering topics ranging from rape, sexual immorality and abortion, HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, poverty which leads to violence, and the abuse of human rights as well as protection of the environment.

With elections due in 2016, a session was held to enable them to contribute to good governance through participating in voting peacefully.

New Church in Bukavu town: The Rev. Alexis Ekyamba was commissioned to lead Cahu /Kabuye church of Bukavu which started with a congregation of 40 believers in 2015 and no building. In 4 months (July-October), the church has grown up and people decided to change: they raised money for a plot and to build a church! In October 2015, Rt. Rev. Bahati was invited to bless the new building proclaiming it to be a parish. Now it has more than 120 believers. Elsewhere, a number of chapels have become parishes and three new Archdeaconries have been created.

The new Kamango Diocese

Bishop Sabiti Tibafa

The new Diocese of Kamango, formed out of North Kivu Diocese, was inaugurated on 31st January 2016. Abp. Isingoma presided over the consecration and enthronement of Bp. Sabiti Tibafa Daniel as its first bishop, with over 2,000 people present.

Bp. Achille Mutshindu was consecrated Asst. Bishop of Kinshasa at the same ceremony. Bishop Sabiti received a number of gifts including a jeep from the President of DR Congo and from MP Baliesima, a Rava4 car.

Our thanks to all of who participated in this consecration with their prayers and gifts and attendance; please pray for us as we start work as pioneers in this diocese; and for Bp. Achille as he faces the challenges in the capital.

Provincial Communications Dept.

Henri Kyausa on keeping communication lines open!



Early in 2015, the arms of the satellite communication system in Bukavu diocese were replaced and an improvement in the signal ensured the quality of the connection. This was followed by trouble-shooting and resetting of the satellite direction towards East Africa with the sole purpose of improving the service, this time in the diocese of the two Kasais which had been without a connection for almost a month in June 2015. A change in the VSAT antenna

equipment in Katanga diocese meant we were able to restore the internet connection after an interruption of two weeks.

News from Kindu

A summary from the Christmas Newsletter

In his Christmas newsletter Bishop Masimango reflected on the prospect of elections in 2016, asking for prayer that the president, civil society and opposition parties will be willing to listen to each other as they meet to formulate a plan for the various elections. In August the diocese reviewed the activities of the Berea Bible School which is meeting its goal of producing clergy (including some from other dioceses) who have a good understanding of the Bible and ministry. This year the Bible school community has risen to 37 including students, their wives and young children.

Praise and prayer

Province: give thanks for the Provincial staff gathering in June and for the bishops' retreat in August; pray for upcoming provincial Synod: opportunity for strategic planning, fellowship & mutual encouragement.

Youth: pray for continuing spiritual growth amongst the young people in Brazzaville and Kinshasa.

Brazzaville: pray for the spiritual retreat in Nov; plans for pastoral visit to Ouessou and the visit from All Saints, Nairobi

Aru: thanksgiving for 10th anniversary celebrations; pray for the vision of 'abundant life for all', through evangelism, education, health care, and social projects.

Boga: thanksgiving for a new vision and prayer for its realisation; pray for God's continuing work in the lives of all who participated in recent Flame International conferences.

Kindu: pray for pastors working in missionary arch-deaconries; roll out of 'Together We Can' programme.

Katanga: financial provision for an elective Synod due to be held prior to Bp. Kasima's retirement; missionary Bp. Elisha and team pioneering the church in Kalemie region.

Kamango: praise for the inauguration of the new diocese; prayer for vision and unity under Bp. Sabiti's leadership.

Kinshasa: pray for Bp. Achille's new ministry as Asst. Bp. working in the challenging urban environment of the capital.

Kisangani: pray for growth in faith and trust in Christ for all those recently confirmed; and riverside communities affected by the heavy rains in the autumn, and their recovery.

UAC: pray for the chaplaincy team's work amongst students; Rev. Dr. Yossa as he leads the staff team.

North Kivu: pray for an end to violence, conflict and atrocities; healing of trauma experienced by so many in this region; displaced communities; MU work in prisons and with rape victims.

DRC: peaceful elections, scheduled for late 2016.

Bukavu: pray for opening of new churches; rape victims and abandoned street children in Bukavu town needing spiritual, moral, psychological and material assistance.

Kasai: thanksgiving for provision of a building, finance and students for the new theological college.