

TIGAWANE April – June 2005

Laying of Foundation Stone in Dowa Parish by Dean Rolf Froehlich

Dean Rev Rolf Froehlich who is the Assistant to the Bishop laid a Foundation Stone for the pastor's house at Mwangala Congregation, which is the centre of Dowa Parish. Three choirs of Mwangala, Msakambewa and Mwela Hill congregations were among those that witnessed the event, which took place on 5th April 2005.

He said that building of the parsonage needs strong foundation. It is like life, which is supposed to be built on Jesus Christ, the strong foundation of our faith and hope. People without Jesus are like a house without foundation.

He advised the gathering that through our faith in Jesus the project would be completed.

Dean Froehlich thanked the partners of North West Synod of Wisconsin for the support that will enable the parish to build the parsonage. He also thanked them for the assistance of building the current chapel, which is near to be completed. On hunger, the Dean advised people that the church has very little money to support those that have been affected by acute hunger, which has hit the country this year. This is why it thought of considering the most poorest to receive food aid especially the widow, orphans and the aged. He asked for prayers from all the Christians and our companions so that the hungry are fed in this country.

Dowa Parish has two chapels at Lingadzi and Mwangala congregations due to be finished and ready for dedication. Dean Froehlich will dedicate Lingadzi church building on 19th June 2005.

According to the church elder of Mwangala, it was on 10th November 2004 when the request for the parsonage was submitted to Head Office. It is less than a year the request has been answered. In this case the parish thanked the Bishop and ELCM Staff through Dean Froehlich for the quick consideration. The Parish Centre is located at a place where accommodation is a problem. The trading centre is very small with little houses. Most of them thatched with grass. Hence, to build the parsonage at the centre will solve the Pastor's accommodation problems. The Pastor also thanked the good cooperation of the Dean and people in the parish.

Dowa is at a high escapement. It is one place that has been affected by hunger this year. The parish and most congregations are very far from good roads. They are away from the head quarters of the district hence the area is greatly underdeveloped. Although electricity is close but water is a big problem. With this experience the parish through the church elder and the village headman, asked the Dean to carry their message to the Bishop and Head Office to consider introducing Irrigation Schemes, as done in Lipiri as part of alleviating poverty which is high in the parish.

LAKE CHILWA PARISH PROFILE

The Parish took its name from a lake called Lake Chilwa. The parish consists of 10 places where sacraments and worships are administered. The parish was born on 20th October 2000. The parish has a total membership of 2,800. 1,300 are children, 900 are of 30 years above and 600 are of 40 years and above.

Lake Chilwa Parish is found in the southern part of Malawi more than 300 kilometres from the capital city of Malawi – Lilongwe where the headquarters of ELCM is located. Most of the congregations are near the lake where people are engaged in fishing to find their daily needs.

One congregation is at an island called Chisi. It is a very beautiful place. There is an old chapel and the parish is planning to build a new one in the near future. For Sunday services and Holy Communion the pastor and other visitors use boats to reach the place that is expensive. It takes one hour to reach the place if using local boats but takes fifteen minutes if using an engine boat.

The staple food is **nsima** prepared from white corn flour. People also eat rice, Irish potatoes and sweet potatoes.

The area experience Chiperoni winds which come during wintertime in the months of May, June and July. It is the winter period of Malawi the lowest temperature reaches sometimes at 6 degrees celcius. Due to lack of clothes and blankets some of the people die during this period, as it is very cold mainly kids die of cold weather.

There are primary schools in this parish but it is difficult for children to pass in class because of lack of materials. Most of the people in the parish are eager in moulding bricks for the construction of buildings like chapel and other blocks but have no resources to raise funds for buying iron sheets, cement, timbers, frames, books sometimes chalk for the school. One school is called Maera Primary School. People burnt bricks at the school but have been there for three years since they were moulded for the school building construction without finishing due to lack of resources.

The parish has three chapels finished out of ten congregations/places where worship is done. The remaining seven places have no buildings and people worship under the tree and shelters roofed by natural grasses, whereby people face problems during rainy season.

Churches are far from one to another hence people travel to along distance for worship. Even the pastor and other co-workers like parish workers travel long distances for official engagements. There are local roads where cars and motorbikes can pass.

Lack of good water is also another problem. As people are close to the lake the soil is not good and makes water to be worse due to lack of treatment.

The parish has seven volunteer evangelists, one fulltime evangelist, two volunteer parish workers and one pastor.

The following are congregations and preaching points of the parish: Chilumba, Maera, Nanyenga, Chisi, Mwazozo, Misumwa, Manyawa, Dibi, Matundu, Chisani, Naphini and Lake Chiuta.

Can the Pulpit be Used? To be translated into Chichewa and Tumbuka languages

Can the Pulpit Be Used? Is a Hand Book giving guidelines that can assist the churches fight against HIV/Aids, which was written by Bishop Dr Joseph P Bvumbwe when he went to finish his thesis for the Doctorate in Ministry in United States of America this year 2005. This is a user-friendly handbook that can be used by any church not only the Lutheran Church.

Dean Rolf Froehlich Presents Motor Bike to Nambuma Parish

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi is one of the fast growing Christian Churches in the country. The church, which is about twenty-three years in the country, has the membership of about 55,000 and forty parishes. One contributing factor to the growth of the church is transport. The church to grow needs strong evangelism so that people come closer to the church for the nations to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour. It is in this case that Bethany Lutheran Church the congregation of North West Synod of Wisconsin of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) responded to the request of ELCM to provide transport to the parish by assisting with motorbike. Due to shortage of Pastors to match the fast growing of the church, pastors end up covering large

It was on 15th May 2005 when Rev Rolf Froehlich, Assistant to the Bishop of ELCM presented the bike to Nambuma Parish at Livuno Congregation. Three choir groups of the parish and many members of congregations close to Livuno participated in the event. Nambuma has nine congregations and five preaching points but served by one pastor. Congregations are very far from each other and transportation was a major problem in this parish.

On behalf of Bishop Dr Joseph Bvumbwe, and the people of Nambuma Parish Dean Froehlich thanked Bethany Lutheran Church for the great support to its companions in Nambuma Parish.

The church received ten new members and baptized two children and two young men on this Sunday of Pentecost.

Due to the hunger which has hit Malawi and the parish, the church is asking ELCM Head Office to open a Feeding Centre in the area as many children are suffering from malnutrition due to lack of food. ELCM is running 115 feeding centers in the country and assists with food aid to its members in time of calamities like this year.

Mphatso Thole –Reporting
ELCM

Bishop Dr Joseph Bvumbwe launches Bed Net Project

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi is on a campaign believing in the saying that prevention is better than cure to fight malaria by using protected bed nets. Mosquitoes, the malaria carrier which cause most deaths of children, can be prevented by using nets. Most Malawians who feed on less than a dollar per day can not afford to buy the bed net let alone the malaria treatment.

ELCM through Department for Diakonia is saving most lives of rural Malawians by feeding, providing school fees and assisting in emergencies like hunger as some of the programmes the church is implementing.

Bishop Dr Joseph Bvumbwe on 14th June 2005 evening launched the Bed Net Project. In this Project ELCM will fight malaria by providing Bed Nets to orphans in its 115 Feeding Centres of the church. This wproject will also target in a pilot phase and this will be done in a few chosen parishes. To launch the project the Bishop presented the first Bed Nets to one child and one expectant woman at Karonga Boma Congregation.

In his launching remarks Bishop Bvumbwe thanked partners of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, North West Synod of Wisconsin who worked with ELCM to come with this project with the funding from Global Health Ministry.

Mphatso Thole
Information Officer – ELCM

TELL ME NEWS

*Tell me news about a man
Whose robe had a healing power?
Was he a doctor?*

*Who rebuked the wind and the waves
Was he the owner of the creation?*

*Tell me news about a man
Who always taught in parables?
Was he a teacher?*

*Tell me news about a man
Who died on the cross to save mankind
Was he a promised messiah?*

*Tell me news about a man
Who prophesies about his own death
Was he a prophet?*

*Tell me the news about a man
Who rose from the grave to claim victory
Over death who is he?
Tell me news*

By: mike Langa Lulanga

Campaign launched against Africa's insult laws

Johannesburg- A campaign to rid African countries of “insult laws” laws ostensibly intended to protect the dignity and reputation of people in high office but which are actually used to protect president, parliamentarians and in varying degree other state officials from scrutiny of their conduct in office- is to be launched in Lusaka, Zambia, on Monday during a workshop which coincides with World Press Freedom Day on May 3. “insult laws” are continually invoked against the media in Africa when personal references to heads of state or officials are deemed insulting or when journalists allege official or other misconduct such as corruption and misadministration especially when related to the police or military. Cases of editors and journalists being charged or imprisoned for such reports abound. These laws apply in varying degrees of severity in 48 of the 53 countries in Africa, including Zimbabwe that has one of the harshest laws. The Lusaka meeting is the first of a series of sub-regional advocacy.

Adopted from EDICISA Reports

Capacity Building Workshop held from 6th to 10th May 2005 at Njube Youth Centre of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe

Department for Mission and Development (DMD) of Lutheran World Federation held Capacity Building Workshop at Njube Youth Centre in Zimbabwe from 6th to 10th May 2005. The workshop, which was facilitated by Jaap Schep and Catherine Currat was participated by members of Lutheran Development Service and ELCSA, Eastern Diocese in Swaziland. Other participants were members from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi and the host members from LDS and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe.

ELCM sent six delegates; from the church were Mabel Madinga, the Administrative Secretary, Rev Evance Mphalasa, Youth Coordinator, Stella Nyasulu, Coordinator for Diakonia and Mphatso Thole the church's Information Officer. Dean Joseph Banda, the Deputy Director represented Evangelical Lutheran Development Program (ELDP).

Bishop Litsietsi M Dube of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe opened the CBW. The Bishop read the text from the book of Genesis 2:15 about the creation of the earth.

He said that ELCZ did not talk about development since its birth in 1903 until 1983. He said that development is what God did when he created man. He also referred from the book of Isaiah where the prophet is saying that God is creating a New Earth and Heaven (Isaiah 65:17-23). God is not like man who runs out ideas. That is why the group gathered at Njube to plan and learn for the future development of the church.

The CBW was aimed at addressing a number of issues pertaining to development and project management within the church and to discuss various tools in the project management like strategic planning, guiding principles for sustainable development, project management, implementation and monitoring.

Ngelenge to become Parish

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi is growing rapidly in all regions of the country. One district which ELCM has touched all corners is Karonga. The district has now five parishes. On top of Chilumba, Mlale, Karonga Central and Karonga Northern parishes Ngelenge is the will be the new parish. The Parish Council through the Pastor requested this on 16th June 2005 when Bishop Dr Joseph Bvumbwe visited the area.

The Bishop without hesitating in his speech approved the proposal since the church membership has grown. Most congregations of Karonga Central Parish are far from the center and they had all that is required to be a parish. Hence introducing Ngelenge Congregation will mean bringing development close to congregations in the north.

The Bishop lamented on human killing which is happening in most parts of the country and asked chiefs to expel people in their villages if found in such kind of conducts. The

Bishop said that notorious gang stars kill children and women in order to feed their families, which is inhuman. He said that man not God creates all problems in this world. Most people are suffering for the benefit of few people.

One chief representing participated villages requested the Bishop to assist the area by introducing SACCO through Evangelical Lutheran Development Program.

Mphatso Thole – Information Officer

DIAKONIA

Dear Readers,

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi through the Department for Diakonia has found themselves getting more concerned and involved in HIV/Aids. Now that we know, it is possible to work and dialogue across the country (in parishes, congregations and communities) we adequately address and ameliorate this concern.

Evangelical Lutheran Development Program (ELDP) the development arm of the church has been coordinating these programmes in six districts of the country where it has its development centers acting as entry points. Having realized the need for mainstreaming HIV/AIDS issues in all the church's activities and programmes and also because of the alarming increase of the infected and affected, the church decided to establish an Aids Desk which could carter for all its parishes/congregations in addition to what ELDP is already implementing.

ELCM Aids Desk under the Department for Diakonia Ministries was established in June 2004 with an aim of coordinating its activities to the parishes/congregations on issues of HIV/AIDS, Human Rights and Gender. However in the church, the programmes on HIV/AIDS date back to the year 2002.

To say without reservations, HIV/AIDS has really brought untold miseries in families, communities, churches and the world at large. It has also brought forth an alarming increase in number of hence child headed families and families headed by grand parents. Abuse of human rights is also a contributing factor to the pandemic whilst gender insensitivity also plays a greater role in the spread of the virus. That is why there is a great need to Break the Silence in HIV/AIDS Human Rights and Gender issues with love and compassion.

God bless you all.

Stella Nyasulu Coordinator – Department for Diakonia Ministries
(HIV/AIDS, Human Rights and Gender Desk)

ELCM Fights HIV/Aids

HIV/Aids is a serious problem in our country and the world at large. AIDS is killing many people every day leaving many children as orphans. This problem is not only for the government but every one should participate in the fight against this killer animal. It is because of this background that Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi established HIV/AIDS Desk.

The church has made a great effort in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS issues in its activities. People of different levels are targeted. The church believes that youths being leaders should be taught life skills as away of empowering them with necessary and adequate knowledge to fight HIV/AIDS. The church believes that if youths can be equipped with vital tools to fight this pandemic then we will win the war against the pandemic.

Parents are encouraged to take the major role on counseling their children rather than other people. Parents are advised to discuss issues of sexuality with their children rather than letting their children get the information from other people that is often misleading and misguiding.

Women are taught that they can do any work men can do and they are advised to take up roles that were in the past done by men only. They are also encouraged to participate fully in economic and developmental activities of the country rather than to relegate themselves to the kitchen. Decisions making in families and society is another part women are advised to do.

People are not open when discussing issues of HIV/Aids. Most of them believe that it is taboo to discuss issues of sex and sexuality in public. They believe, these are bedroom issues and cannot be shared in public.

Esther Gondwe - Assistant Coordinator (HIV/Aids/Human Rights/Gender Desk)

SONG AGAINST AIDS

This song is adopted from the presentation of Verna Mzezewa, HIV/Aids Coordinator for LUCSA at Capacity Building Workshop in Zimbabwe from 5th to 10 April 2005

If you believe and I take heed united against AIDS.
With love and care we'll conquer all.
Our country will be saved. (x 3)
With love and care we'll conquer all
Our country will be saved.

If you believe and I take heed and we together pray.
We fight our fears with truth and love
And Africa will be saved. (x 3)
With love and care we'll conquer all
Africa will be saved.

Today believe - today take heed
United in love we pray.
With hearts inspired we'll heed the call
For God will lead the way (x 3)
With hearts inspired we'll heed the call
The whole world will be saved.

Bishop Dr J P Bvumbwe visits Kawale Primary School

Bishop Dr Joseph Bvumbwe of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi visited Kawale Primary School on 15th June 2005 where he cheered pupils and discussed with the community about the development of the school.

The Bishop was very happy to meet the chiefs and the community on this day and asked them to work hard for the bright future of the pupils. He presented 30 bags of cement for the maintenance of teachers' houses. He also assured the gathering that the church will assist with 20 more bags for the maintenance of other structures.

Present at the function were Traditional Authority Mwakaboko, representative of the District Education Manager and village headmen. In his speech, T A Mwakaboko advised parents to sort out small problems, which the school face. The school should approach the Bishop when there are difficult issues. The Primary Education Advisor thanked Bishop Bvumbwe for creating the good environment for learning. She asked the Government, Non Governmental Organizations and other denominations to emulate what ELCM is doing in the country.

Bishop's Visitation to Chitipa

Bishop Dr J P Bvumbwe visited Chitipa Central and Northern Parishes from 10th to 12th June 2005 as part of his pastoral visitation programs.

The Bishop visited Kameme and Kapenda congregations in the Northern Parish, Meru and Chitipa congregations of Central. The church is growing very fast in the north and there are plans to divide the northern parish into two parishes where by the centres will be located at Kameme and Kapenda congregation.

Laying Foundation Stone at Chilumba Parish

Chilumba Parish is planning to move its parish centre to a new place, which is located eight kilometers from Giti Congregation near Uliwa Trading Centre along Mzuzu – Karonga M1 Road.

The center will be situated at a magnificent place and enough to build different structures of the parish centre. It was on 18th June 2005 when Bishop Dr J P Bvumbwe laid the foundation stone at the centre. Representatives of different congregations attended the function, which marked the beginning of projects which could take place at the center.

The Bishop had a similar function at Chihepusha congregation on 17th June 2005. Chihepusha is a congregation located at Wovwe Rice Scheme in Chilumba area.

Cathedral Choir cuts an Album

The Cathedral choir of the Evangelical Lutheran Church- Lilongwe Cathedral has cut their first album comprising ten gospel songs. The album which is on CD and audiotapes is entitled “Padziko Tikhala” (The World in Which We Live) which is the title track for the album. It is a soothing song for those who are suffering through diseases, hunger, death, poverty and other eventualities.

Bishop Dr J.P. Bvumbwe dedicated the album to the Lord on 3rd July 2005 before the group starts selling it out. The album will officially be launched in the ELCM church during the forthcoming Women and Church Assembly, which will start from 19th to 21st, and 22nd to 25th September 2005 respectively.

The Choir would like to thank Bishop Bvumbwe, Mama Bishop Bvumbwe, Pastors and members of the ELCM, Diane Kaufmann, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America-North West Synod and all well wishers for their financial, material, and moral support. Above all, they thank the Lord for the talent and the music ministry he has given unto the group.

Ronnie Mvula – Choir Chairperson

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