



The African Christian Pulse

A Bulletin of the All Africa Conference of Churches

September - October 2009

Climate change is a reality



Photo credit: AFP

Floating cars in a flood in Burkina Faso likely to be followed by drought.

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In this issue of the African Christian Pulse

This new issue of the *African Christian Pulse* brings to your attention two major issues: governance for the dignity of the churches in Africa and Awareness on Climate change. It took two workshops for African church leaders at the AACC headquarters to tackle them. The first concerned the newly elected church leaders (bishops and moderators). For a week they were taken into a journey of good governance and resource mobilization in particular, financial. As the continent becomes the center for both Christianity and poverty, the church leaders committed themselves to work tirelessly for a less vulnerable, less dependant, less undignified church. Hopefully through the exposure they had when they visited income generating projects conducted by AACC, the Methodist Church of Kenya and the Anglican Church of Kenya, they came to the conclusion that sustainability of the church in Africa is no longer empty vows; it only takes good planning to increase church members' ownership through their full involvement and participation.

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THE AACC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) met in Nairobi on the 10th of September 2009 and received updates on the process of the implementation of the post-Maputo mandate given to the AACC Secretariat.

Among other main decisions made, the Executive Committee appointed the Director for Theology, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations and the Executive Secretary for Youth and Children.



The Rev. Dr. Simon Kossi Dossou was appointed as the Director for Theology, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. Born in Benin in 1951, Rev. Dr. Dossou brings a vast wealth of experience to this position. He holds a Bachelors degree in Theology from the University of Porto-Novo in Benin, a Masters Degree and a PhD in Theology (Old Testament and Hebrew) from the University of Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Rev. Dr. Simon Dossou began his professional journey in 1974 as a pastor in Benin before moving to work with the Christian Communication Center for

multi-media in Yaoundé, Cameroon in 1978. From 1994 to 1997, Rev. Dr. Dossou undertook studies in Hebrew in Yaoundé with periodical stays in Israel.

The Rev. Dr. Dossou is widely published and has held various distinguished positions which include that of Professor and Director of Theological Seminary in Porto-Novo in Benin and Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew in the Faculty of Protestant Theology of Yaoundé, Cameroon between 1992 and 2000. He also served as visiting Professor of the Faculty of Protestant Theology of Butare in Rwanda and at the Institute of Theology of Porto-Novo in Benin.

He was the President of the Fellowship of Christian Councils in West Africa (FECCIWA) from 2005 to 2008 and had been a member of the General Committee of the All Africa Conference of Churches until 2008. He is currently the Africa President of the World Council of Churches (WCC), a position he was elected into in 2006 by the Porto Alegre Assembly.



Rev. Domingos Adriano Quelende was appointed as the Executive Secretary for Youth and Children. Born in 1981 in

Angola, Rev. Quelende brings a variety of experiences with the youth from a number of African Countries into his new appointment with the AACC. He worked as a Pastor at St. Peter United Methodist Church, Mutare in Zimbabwe from 2005 to 2006 and has taught at Baixa de Cassange College from 1999 to 2003. Rev. Quelende holds a Bachelor of Divinity degree from the University of Zimbabwe, and trained in Peace at the National Democratic Institute in Angola and in Leadership from the International Leadership Institute in Angola.

He has participated in many forums as a youth delegate and has also held a number of responsibilities including that of been the secretary for evangelism for Luanda district for the United Methodist Church, the Vice-president of the United Methodist student movement at African University and the spokesman for the Angolan Community at the African University among others. He was a youth delegate at the AACC 9th General Assembly in Maputo, Mozambique and is currently the Youth Director of the Council of Christian Churches in Angola.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR DIGNITY

The Power of Prayer

A campaign for Dignity was launched on the 12th July 2009 in Kinshasa during the Ecumenical Solidarity visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo with the aim of mobilizing churches in Africa towards knowing, owning and praying for the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC).

This campaign is conducted at the end of the Sunday worship towards the end of the liturgy where each congregation receives information about the AACC and then engages in prayers for the success of the AACC, its leadership, its members and its programmes.

The information that reached the secretariat of the AACC



The Diocese Secretary and his family together with AACC staff in Nakuru

says that after the launch, the AACC members in the DRC conducted this campaign successfully and after prayers, Christians were encouraged to contribute financially to the

work of the AACC.

It is in the same spirit and framework of the same campaign that the AACC staff have been invited by the Anglican Diocese of Nakuru, Kenya, to participate in the Sunday worship on the 20th of September 2009 and to also speak about challenges and the work of the AACC.

We are also informed that in other parts of Africa, the same campaign is being successfully conducted and we have all the reasons to believe that the process of ownership of the AACC is in progress. We thank God for this.



In the Nakuru Cathedral, the congregation offering for the African Dignity campaign

ORIENTATION COURSE FOR NEWLY ELECTED FRANCOPHONE HEADS OF CHURCHES

The AACC organized a one week orientation course for newly elected heads of churches in Nairobi, Kenya from the 21st to 25th September 2009. The Orientation course which targeted heads of churches from the French speaking countries

in Africa, was the second after a similar course that targeted newly elected church leaders from the English speaking Africa in July.

The course attracted a total of twenty two participants from Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, the

Central Africa Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Togo. Participating heads of churches had the following comments to make in regards to the training.

Feedback from Participants:

1. Bishop Dibo Thomas-Babyngton Elango of the Anglican Church of Cameroon.



Bishop Dibo Thomas-Babyngton Elango

I got into office on the 13th of April 2008. I am grateful to God for this particular programme because it answers some of the things we want to do as church leaders.

The daily activities in the programme are very well shaped. The flow from the morning devotion to the presentations until the end of the day is well arranged. The issues raised are provoking, they get you thinking. We all feel that it

should have been longer than this but we understand that it is also a matter of finances and time.

The interaction with other participants has in it some rare openness and unity. We are very diverse as we sit here – Anglicans, Methodists, Reformed churches and others – the kind of interaction and openness being witnessed here is great and this is what the AACC is all about; the spirit of ecumenism is thriving here.

2. Bishop Mashinda Kalenga Veronique of Church of Christ in Congo

I came here with the expectation that I would strengthen my existing skills and gain new skills on how church can sustain itself. I can confidently say that the training has met my expectations. I am grateful for the opportunity that the AACC has given me and fellow heads of churches



Bishop Mashinda Kalenga Veronique

because a few months ago my Archbishop delegated the day-to-day church activities to me, and a lot is therefore expected from me. Now I am confident that we shall be able to change our management system and bring growth and development in our church projects.

3. Rev. Isaac Bimpenda, President of the National Council of Churches in Burundi

I got into my new office in the month of March 2009. I find the teachings that we have here to be very



Rev. Isaac Bimpenda

interesting because we are working in churches that find themselves operating in changing political, economic and cultural environments and as a church we need to adapt to these changing situations. I have found this training very helpful in getting me as a church leader to manage this transitions and the adaptation process without compromising on the mission of the church.

My immediate concern is that of ensuring that we have developed a strategic plan for my church and for my council.

4. Bishop Samoela Joana Ranarivelo of the Diocese of Madagascar in the Province of the Indian Ocean.

I was made a bishop one year ago. And I am feeling lucky to be able to attend this course because everything that I have been able to get from this training is totally very relevant for my personal experience and in light of my own context especially in Madagascar. This is a

shared feeling through this course the participation of the group I can feel that they are deeply concerned especially in terms of their experiences in their own contexts.



Bishop Samoela Joana Ranarivelo

This training helps us to deal with issues like stewardship of resources entrusted to us.

5. Mrs. Amuzu Nomenyo (Presbytre de l'Executive/Eglise Evangelique Presbyterienne du Togo)



Mrs. Amuzu Nomenyo

I was elected into my current office in February 2009. I find this initiative very useful because it

equips newly elected church leaders towards improved performance in their duties. This course is a worthy investment; the Church keeps changing its leadership from time to time and therefore the need to train those elected into office is important for them to perform effectively. The empowerment of church's economy through proper financial management is critical for all of us.

6. The Rt. Rev. Nathan Kamusime Gasatura, of the Anglican Diocese, Butare Rwanda.



The Rt. Rev. Nathan Kamusime Gasatura

I got into my office late last year. This was really a well thought out idea. I find its relevance in two areas, it gives awareness and it gives ideas about what a church leader in our position should be prioritizing and thinking. It has brought up critical issues like vision, mission, core values, and fundraising and resource mobilization that need to be considered. More importantly, church

leaders also need to be refreshed, absorb, and recharge their batteries by listening to other people's ideas; this is what the book of proverbs refers to when it says as iron sharpens iron so a man sharpens another. This is a process of sharpening one another.

7. Ms. Ramahefarivo Iveline Lalanirina, the treasurer of Eglise de Jésus Christ a Madagascar FJKM



Ms. Ramahefarivo Iveline Lalanirina

I am a newly elected in my current position. I find this training to be a very new approach in church work and I think it is the best thing that could have ever happened to the church at this time. I think as a church, we are always afraid to think about investing and finance because most of the people in the church think that it is worldly. This training has demonstrated to us that financial management is the wisest thing that the church can ever think about. It is wonderful and I wish all newly elected heads of churches could go through such an experience.

8. Pastor Lawson-Kpavuvu Tèyi Dogbéda, the Superintendent of the Methodist Church, Togo



Pastor Lawson-Kpavuvu Tèyi Dogbéda

I am one year old now in my new position in my church. This was a good experience for us, one of the major aspects of this training was in regard to systems of planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects and incidentally our churches are very weak in this area. The second aspect of this training was in the whole aspect of sustainability. As churches, we need to develop such plans so that we have good management systems and this will make our churches credible.

9. Pastor Samoela George, General Secretary; The Lutheran Church in Madagascar



Pastor Samoela George

I was elected into my new office in September 2008. The course touches on the different aspects of the life of the church in terms of leadership, administration and financial management. I found it very relevant to my work in that it is about what I am supposed to offer to my church - good stewardship.

10. The Rt. Rev. Sixbert Macumi, Diocese of Baye of the Anglican Church in Burundi



The Rt. Rev. Sixbert Macumi

I was elected into office in November 2005. This course has opened for me new opportunities towards which I should lead the church for self-sustainability and self-governing. Indeed it has shown that the journey to success and development for the entire society will only begin with the Church of Christ.

11. Mr. Kongbowali Jacob, Reformed Church of Central African Republic

I have been elected President of the Church Council in April 2008. This course is very important for



Mr. Kongbowali Jacob

us because after the revision of our Constitution, we came up with a policy for our Church with a clear vision based on the development (extension) of our Church in order to allow her cover the entire territory and in integrating organisation and management of our properties (income generating) to fund the Church activities. It could not have come at a better time than this.

12. Pasteur Awanyoh Agbenoxevi Mawuli, Moderator, Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Togo



Pasteur Awanyoh Agbenoxevi Mawuli

I was elected into my new office in February, 2006 and took function on July 2nd the same year. As you can see, I am not newly

elected. I am almost at the end of my term but in life one does not stop learning. This course is for me an opportunity to confirm what I already know. The course is useful and relevant for the management of our churches. It is an imperative that other actors, be they accountants or development agents also benefit from this course.

13. Pastor Radimisaon Andriamasinjara Jonah, Executive Secretary for Ecclesiastic Affairs, FJKM Church in Madagascar



Pastor Radimisaon Andriamasinjara Jonah

I began my second term in office in 2008. I find this training as a precious moment that God gave to us, we have been equipped to know the role of Church Leaders and we pray that God will assist us to fulfill His will and improve the life of the Church through us.

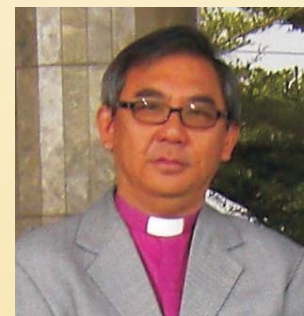
14. Bishop Eraste Bigirimana of the Anglican church of Burundi.



Bishop Eraste Bigirimana

I was elected into my office in November 2005. The orientation course has inspired me a lot. I learnt a lot especially regarding the duties of a Church Leader. The course has also given me an opportunity to know more about the AACC. The course was relevant for my new office.

15. The Rt. Rev. James R. Wong Yin Song, Bishop of the Anglican Church, Seychelles



The Rt. Rev. James R. Wong Yin Song

Dear Arthur,
Greetings to you in Jesus' precious name from Seychelles. I arrived safely home. Praise the Lord. I

wish to express my appreciation for the course that the AACC through you organised for us, the newly appointed church leaders of Africa. I have been able to learn to look in new ways the administration of the church which I have been called to lead.

Do send my greetings to the General Secretary of AACC and the colleagues who are still in Nairobi.

May God bless you.

Together for his glory.

*The Rt. Rev. James R. Wong Yin
Song*

16. Rev. Dr. Nicodème Alagbada and Rev. Dr. Zabulon Djarra, l'Eglise Protestante Méthodiste du Bénin



Rev. Dr. Nicodème Alagbada



Rev. DR. Zabulon Djarra

Our stay in Nairobi will remain in our memories because of numerous things we have learnt which will enable us to assume our new respective responsibilities. Our expectations have been fully met especially in the area of financial and human

management. Moreover we learnt much about the challenge of dependency, interfaith relations and the imperative of ecumenical relations in Africa. We have no doubt that the AACC will find creative ways of following up this important process initiated.

CLIMATE CHANGE OR THE SURVIVAL OF OUR PLANET

Climate Change is a major challenge of our time. Reading from the Bible, in particular the book of Genesis and looking at the world geostrategy church leaders from the Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Togo, Burundi, Rwanda, Madagascar and Zimbabwe have committed themselves to be agents of change in their countries. Church leaders expressed the hope that the seminar will equip them with scientific facts that will help them in understanding the root causes and the consequences of the Climate change. They call on churches and Christians to empower the populations and



Church leaders who participated in the Climate Change workshop, together with some of the AACC staff members.

stand beside them to resist the irresponsible destruction of the environment, the overexploitation of natural resources for the benefit of a few. God entrusted us with the stewardship of His creation not for the selfishness of the rich and present generations. In his loving plan for us His Son Jesus Christ came so that all have life in fullness that is present and future generations.

The consultation gave new impetus to the ecumenical engagement on Climate Change in Africa, in which AACC has been actively engaged since 2006. AACC is continuously committed to create awareness of the challenges of climate change in Africa, support its members in the struggle to adapt to and mitigate the negative effects of the changing environment as well as

engaging with the Global Ecumenical family in advocating for an ambitious and equitable new agreement at the upcoming UN Conference on Climate Change; the 15th Conference of Parties of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change (COP15), in Copenhagen 7-18th December 2009.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FEAC

FEAC, the *Fraternité des Eglises d'Afrique Centrale* in French, which means Fellowship of Churches in Central Africa. This fellowship has been formed by church leaders who attended the climate change seminar as a framework in which they want to deal with the many challenges facing their sub-region.



The Rt. Rev. David Yemba, AACC Vice President for the Central Africa region

We remember that such an

initiative has taken place before with the formation of Fellowship of Churches and Councils in Central Africa (FOCCOCA), an initiative which failed. This time round we hope that FEAC will achieve its objectives because church leaders departed by learning from the mistakes and incoherence of the past.

WOMEN'S SOLIDARITY WORLD WIDE

The International Committee of the Fellowship of the Least Coin (ICFLC) will be holding its 29th Annual Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya from 18th to 23rd October 2009. The theme of this year's meeting is "**Jesus Amongst Us: Pray and Act For Change**". This is the second time that the ICFLC will be holding its Annual Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya having held its first meeting in 1991.

The Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC) is a Women's global ecumenical movement of prayer for peace, justice and reconciliation. Through this

movement, Christian women around the world seek fellowship with each other and are reminded to live a reconciling and forgiving life with others.

Though "least coins" are given during each prayer meeting, it is not a fund raising project, but a movement of prayer for peace and reconciliation. These coins are forwarded to the FLC Fund.

The International Committee for the FLC

Because the FLC prayer movement became truly worldwide and the grants were made to programmes and projects all over the world, an International

Committee for the FLC (ICFLC) was formed in 1979 to administer the promotion, the interpretation of the movement and the allocation of the FLC grants.

For many years, different Women's Projects from the AACC member Churches and Councils have benefited from FLC grants and are grateful for the support.

Thank you for praying for the coming meeting. We will update you in the next issue of the African Christian Pulse.

By Vivi Akakpo

**Congratulations to the Evangelical Church in Congo Brazzaville for its
hundred year anniversary.**

A thanksgiving worship took place on 27th September 2009.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Alliance for Religions and Conservation

The AACC President, Archbishop Valentine Mokiwa accompanied by Arthur Shoo will represent the AACC in the Alliance for Religions and Conservation meeting to be held in the United Kingdom from 12-15 November, 2009.

Sudan Ecumenical Forum Assembly

The Sudan Ecumenical Forum Assembly will take place on 9-11 November, 2009 and the venue is not clear yet.

General Secretaries of National Councils Meeting

To be held on 11-14 November, 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya.

World Council of Churches, United Nations Advocacy Week

Will take place from 14-20 November, 2009, in New York, USA.

Training of Lay leaders

Will be organized by the Empowerment and Capacity Building Programme of AACC from 16-20 November, 2009, in Nairobi Kenya.

Advisory Committee on Theology, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Programme

Will be meeting at the AACC Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya from 24-25 November, 2009.

Second Theological Institute

Will be held from 29th November to 6th December 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya

**WE INVITE YOU ALL TO SHARE YOUR STORIES AND EXPERIENCES THROUGH
THE AFRICAN CHRISTIAN PULSE**

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