

# MISSION ECHO

UNITED EVANGELICAL MISSION AFRICA REGION

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**United against**

**Covid-19**

# EDITORIAL



Dear readers and UEM members, this edition of the Mission Echo Newsletter introduces to you what the United Evangelical Mission and his members have been doing in this year 2020.

First of all, I would like to thank the Almighty God for his protection, healings and great favour of being healthier up to now despite the big

challenge of Covid-19 Pandemic Worldwide.

During this period, we have experienced a lock down all over the World, although in different forms, but most of activities were not done face to face, rather were done digitally through Zoom, Vsee and Skype. UEM member churches in Africa, Asia and Germany also have been heavily affected with Covid 19 epidemic, and therefore our planned activities could not be run as expected.

However, as a great family, the UEM have shown unity and solidarity among churches and communities in three continents: Europe, especially Germany, Asia and in Africa. In this solidarity, more than one Million of Euro have been donated to roll back the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic. In this solidarity, marginalized people were not forgotten.

**Finally I wish you Mary Christmas and Happy New Year 2021.**

January – December 2020

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# A great wave of solidarity from Germany towards Asia and Africa

By Volker Martin Dally



Actually there should only be one word on this page: CORONA! For a few months now, pretty much everything in this world has been about dealing with the pandemic. Who would have suspected at the beginning of the year that we would one day be travelling with breathing masks, be it for shopping or when using public transport. Who would have suspected that a virus would almost completely paralyse public life. And in all the terrible effects that we have been experiencing in our surroundings for weeks, I say: We are doing well! In spite of all the restrictions and the almost universal fear that it could affect me or someone in my family or circle of friends. I am increasingly troubled by the fact that I can only hear the excitement about it with pain, that children cannot go to school, restaurant visits have only recently become possible and only to a limited extent, and that the popular holiday destinations cannot be visited, concerts cannot be attended and theatres have to remain closed. "Whining at a high level" is what a politician once called it on another occasion. Because while we have a social system that protects us from the situation of literally having nothing left, millions of people in the UEM community have just that: NOTHING MORE. While we complained that toilet paper was no longer available and that flour, noodles or other products were rare, the UEM received desperate calls for help from those whose entire livelihood was destroyed because of the restrictions imposed by COVID-19. Here in Germany, I can trust that if I fall ill, a solid health system will catch me and that I will have a good chance of escaping largely unscathed despite belonging to a risk group. Our sisters and brothers in Asia and Africa, on the other hand, tell us that the number of

deaths has increased, but at the same time it is not possible to report this openly. For the powerlessness in the face of the situation has led to the fact that in many places the reference to COVID-19 should not be made. To claim that the problem would not even exist in the country is, however, also common among the politicians of the superpowers of the West and the East.

In the community of the UEM we experience a great solidarity with each other. At the time when the virus hit Europe, masks were sent which had been sewn in Tanzania. Indonesian churches have provided for the people in Hong Kong and China, now we have a great wave of solidarity from Germany towards Asia and Africa. In everything, prayer accompanies us with and for each other. New forms of community through modern technology are being tested and successfully used.

One concern, however, accompanies me in this great solidarity. Increasingly I hear that we "must help". That is quite true, but not to hide the fact that this attitude stems from a feeling of superiority in some people. Our help is necessary and possible because we in the UEM as an international community need each other, not because one side is better than the other. The fact that injustice is usually systemic has been demonstrated most recently in Germany, when the Corona crisis dramatically brought to light the living conditions of workers in agriculture and the meat industry. I hope and pray that we will learn together here and be prepared for change.

*Volker Martin Dally is General Secretary of the United Evangelical Mission.*



# United against Covid-19

Dar es Salaam.

**U**nited Evangelical Mission (UEM) played a pivotal role by joining partners from across Africa in fighting against the Covid-19 pandemic. From 16th to 22<sup>nd</sup> May this year the regional office distributed different kinds of equipment to communities so that they could fight the virus.

*“UEM is part and parcel of the community that is struggling to fight this pandemic,”* the organization said in a statement.

The Africa regional office identified different places which may have been forgotten or may not have been given priority by other institutions which intervened in the situation such as prisons, public areas, dispensaries, motorcycle stations (Bodaboda stations), parishes located in mission areas and poor families.

The office has also participated in rolling back Covid-19 by supporting three municipal outreach supervision services, supplying 20 improved water handwashing machines, sanitizers, soap, masks and food to poor families.

One of the beneficiaries, Mr Athuman Bakari, said that they appreciated the support because they felt they had been forgotten.

*“Therefore, this support, especially the soap, sanitizers and improved water handwashing machines, will help*

*us to protect ourselves from COVID-19 while travelling using motorcycles,”* he said.

In addition, the mission supplied colorfully printed mouth- and nose-covering masks which arrived at the Wuppertal Mission House on 30<sup>th</sup> May this year.

The masks were sewn by the city’s young mothers. They are members of a project called “Binti Mamas” (Teenage Mothers). The project gives hope to underage single women who become pregnant young.

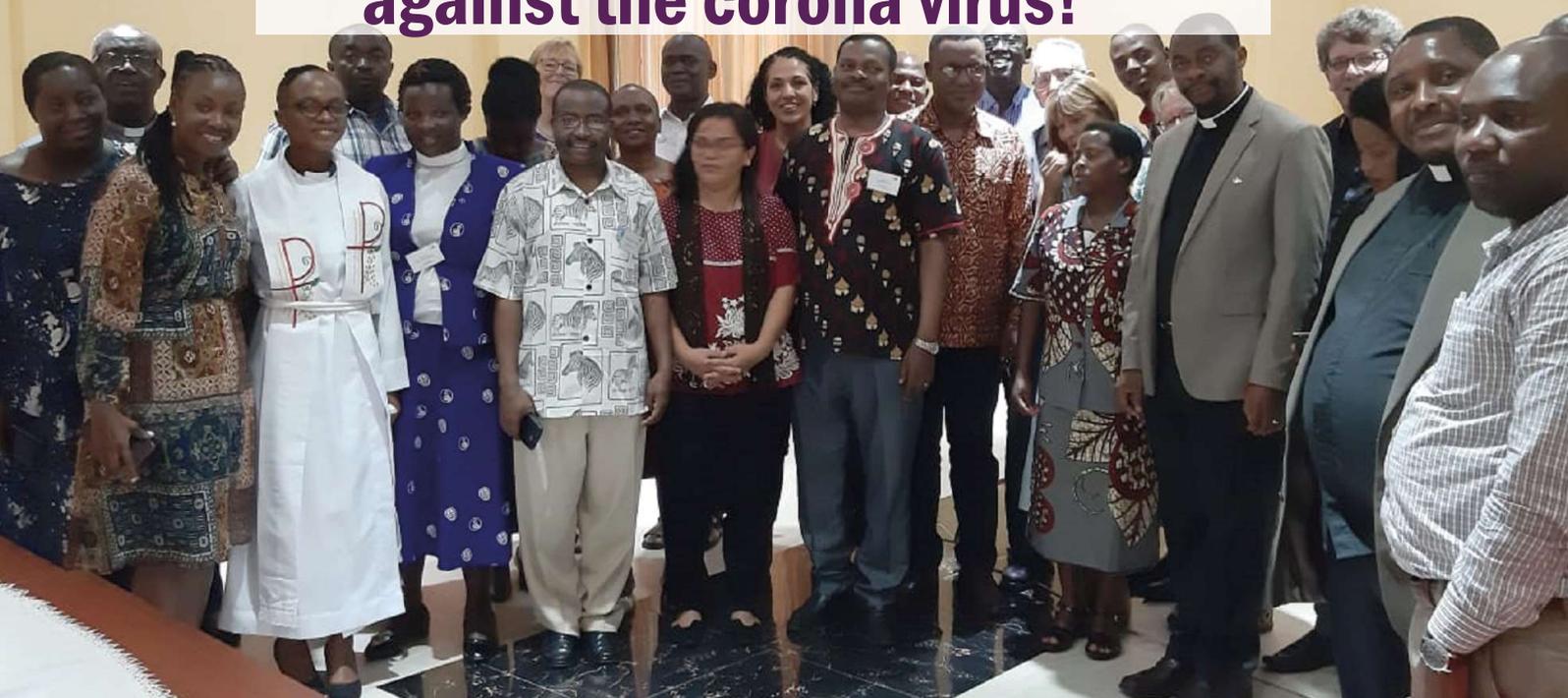
The **“Binti Mamas”** project is owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese. Mwamini Charles Chuma, a social worker of ECD together with Rev Almut Birkenstock-Koll a North-South co-worker of the UEM in the ECD take care of this group of about 30 young women. Rev Almut Birkenstock-Koll and her husband,

Mr. Ingo, have been in Evangelical Lutheran Church Eastern and Coastal Diocese since the end of March 2018.

*“We improve the Binti Mama project each day. We sew face masks three times a week,”* Birkenstock-Koll writes in her card.



# We stand together: Let us fight against the corona virus!



## Wuppertal.

Some Protestant churches are helping their partners in Africa and Asia to minimize the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic by providing a total of €1.5 million euros emergency funds.

The **United Evangelical Mission (UEM)** in Wuppertal has set up an emergency fund of one million euros for supporting their members in Africa, Asia and Germany in the fight against the pandemic.

*“To finance this enormous amount of Euro 1.5 million, we are releasing reserves that we can use for such disasters. Millions of people in Africa and Asia are currently without basic daily supplies because they are out of work owing to the lockdowns,”* said Volker Martin Dally, UEM’s Secretary General.

The Evangelical Church of Westphalia and the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland have each contributed €250,000 euros.

The Protestant state churches in Hesse and Lippe have also contributed 50,000 euros. While the African and Asian member churches of the UEM are providing nearly €20,000 euros for fighting the pandemic.

The UEM said that the **“What can we do”** question is: What has the organization been working on since the spread of the corona virus became worse.

The corona virus has a firm grip on the world; the situation in many member countries of the United Evangelical Mission is frightening.

In many countries in Africa and Asia, the health systems are highly inadequate and the hygienic conditions are poor. People are starving because they don’t have jobs as a result of lockdowns. In many countries markets have also been closed because of the corona virus.

The markets are often the only place where farmers can sell their produce and families can buy their food. In any case, harvests are owed because farmers cannot sow sensibly at present: seeds are stuck at borders, trans-shipment stations or on ships. There is also the absence of workers to harvest crops.

“As a community of solidarity in African and Asian countries and Germany, the UEM would like to improve the living conditions of the local people and help relieve them of some of their worries,” the UEM stated. The following are the churches which provided the financial support with which to roll back Covid-19 in their churches and which gave the lessons learnt to UEM:

## Evangelical church mission in Cameroon



## Community of Baptists Church in Central Africa (CBCA)



The EEC Roll-Back Corona Task Force travelled to different towns in Cameroon such as Loum and Ndoungue for another donation after the first installment of the emergency fund donation from UEM.

The Loum synod region was chosen because it housed a dynamic radio station, La Bethanie, which would serve as an appropriate communication channel for sensitizing the people in the Loum, Ndoungue, Manjo, Nkongsamba and Penja areas.

At least 70% of our target population (50,000 people) has used protective masks.

“At least 50% in the selected areas are more sensitive to prevention messages and have adopted protective behaviour. Around 600 families can feed correctly despite the hardships created by the pandemic,” the UEM said.

### Lessons learnt during these missions

**Total support from the hierarchy:** The initiatives would not have been successful if the task force had not received the green light from the church’s president, Rev Prof Jean Samuel Hendje Toya. After each technical meeting, the task force reported to him.

**Team work:** A team of committed people (volunteers) was involved in the whole process and showed the commitment and resolve to succeed.

Nearly 21,000 washable and reusable face masks bearing the UEEC and UEM logos were provided to community members and fifty 250 liter capacitor water containers were purchased and distributed to various places in the community. Moreover, over 7,500 soap cubes and 100 bottles of liquid soap COMPLETE IT!



In the community of Baptists Church in Central Africa people were educated via the radio and television. The main slogan was “**Protect yourself, protect others,**” which translates into Kiswahili as “**Jikingje, Waking wengine**”.

As the need is enormous, four broadcasts were edited and broadcast on the radio (Radio-Télévision Source de vie-RTSV).

Ten billboards were prepared in local languages so that the message could reach people everywhere in Kivu. It’s transmitted through the radio and social media networks, especially WhatsApp and Facebook. The team also took advantage of the distribution of the various items to give a short message on the challenges of fighting the transmission of the Covid-19.



## Indonesia United against Covid-19



### Java, Merabu volcano.

Farmers, pastors and young vicars from the villages of Ngaduman, Cuntel, Dukuh and Krangkeng on the slopes of Merabu volcano in central Java called for a vegetable drive on 22nd April this year. Together with a farmers' group called "**Sorga Farm**" (Heaven Farm), they asked farmers to donate to the people of Salatiga vegetables such as broccoli, beans, cauliflower, peppers and whatever else the gardens on the slopes of the volcano produce free of charge. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of them have got into

economic difficulties. Some 800 kilogrammes of various types of vegetables worth around 500 euros have been collected. The campaign was started by two pastors, Claudius Budiyanto and Joko Suwignya Mahendro. Pastor Budiyanto not only leads a parish in Java, where small farming families live, but also owns an organic farm as a demo to the community.

# THINK GLOBAL ACT LOCAL



**T**he Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Eastern and Coastal Diocese (ELCT-ECD), hosted this year's UEM Global Learning in Ecumenical Perspective (GLEP) Think Tank Africa workshop in Dar es Salaam.

The workshop, which began on 3rd February and ended on 7th 2020, involved 34 participants from different African and Asian countries, and Germany. The participants discussed various topics about understanding the global learning in ecumenical perspective, diversity management and experience of GLEP in JPIC global learning.

*"This GLEP think tank was the third; the first two were held in the German region in 2018 and the Asian region in 2019,"* read the organization statement. During the presentations and discussions, the participants learnt more about the GLEP. The initiative concept has been developed in such a way that it takes into consideration the interconnectedness of people worldwide.

The GLEP also promotes a sense of tolerance and a way to nurture our diversity.

The programme is also educational and aims to enable people to share knowledge and competencies, in order to develop critical thoughts and surpass the challenges, to which one is exposed by globalization.

The GLEP creates the **"win-win"** principle that is, building mutual respect and understanding, while getting the results that all UEM members want. GLEP It may be symbolized by Saint Paul's message in **1 Cor 12:12-27** about the message that proclaims one body with different organs which work together to complete a set of objectives.

The GLEP is not a programme; it is a philosophy, means No one should say to the other how to live, or what to do but eager to learn and respect the other.

Apart from the good lessons learnt, there are also a few challenges about the GLEP such as the gap between the *"global"* and *"local"* realities of globalization.

# The UEM promotes organic cotton farming in Busega District



## KAGERA.

Since 2018, the **United Evangelical Mission (UEM)** in collaboration with the Evangelical Lutheran Church North Western Diocese (ELCT-NWD) and the Busega District Counsel have initiated a project of organic cotton farming. The Lac Zone Organic Cotton (LAZOC) aims, not only to promote an environment friendly agriculture, but also to help farmers to earn more financial profit and to protect their health in avoiding to use dangerous chemical inputs. Reducing drastically the use of chemical, both as fertilizer and pesticides, is in the line with the promotion of socio-economic climate justice, one of the focal point in the work of the **United Evangelical Mission**.

The difference between conventional cotton and organic cotton farming, is that, the first uses a lot of chemical products as pesticides and fertilizers, while the second, which is organic cotton, promotes the use of natural materials from the local environment. These local organic material are prepared by the famer himself. It is used to set trap for protecting crops against pests and insects, and to protect the soil against chemical poisons.

The second project associated to the organic cotton farming is the installation of biogas systems for each famer. This will help farmers to get clean and renewable energy through animal waste, and natural fertilizer of the farms from the remaining manure.

The UEM believes that the biogas would reduce the use of cotton remains as fire wood, which sometimes may cause resistance to pests when they move from one farm to another.

The first harvest of organic cotton have been well appreciated both in quantity and in quality. In fact, the product is qualified as pure organic cotton. This

rapid progress is a result of permanent assessment of the national body of cotton, which have been done on the whole channel of production including farms, agricultural system, inputs, harvest, transportation, of the product and the stores. This body have concluded that the requirements of organic cotton farming have been well respected. Therefore, this organic cotton have been sold at 905 Tsh / Kg (0,33€) instead of 814 Tsh/Kg (0,30€) for the conventional cotton.

After the Nane Nane National Exhibition held on 8th August 2020, the Tanzanian agricultural official have advised that this initiative of LAZOC should be extended to the entire region even beyond. Responding to that call, the UEM have decided to include more than 1000 famers in the new phase of the project (2020-2021), which will be, at the same time extended to Missenyi District, in Kagera Region. "We hope that the production of organic cotton will contribute, not only to increase the economy of Tanzania, but also will improve the working and life- conditions of farmers. It will also increase their financial capacity of taking care of their families in paying the school fees of their children, their health care and their clothing. We also hope that the second project of biogas associated to the LAZOC project will help famers to save woods in using this renewable energy, and will contribute to nourish the soil through the use of manure. Furthermore, our wish that this organic cotton will be used in the production of church and state textile materials like pastors gowns, bed sheets for hospital and guest house, military, police and school uniforms, etc.

# Interfaith is a key to religious development in Africa



## Dar es Salaam.

From 20th to 27th February 2020 an exposure-dialogue programme was organized in Nairobi Kenya. The main stakeholders were AGIAMONDO, a Catholic church-based organization from Köln, Germany, and the Institute for Interreligious Dialogue and Muslim Studies at Tangaza University College in Nairobi, Kenya. 24 participants from Germany and one from Tanzania, representing UEM Africa Regional office, were involved in that programme.

The aim of that exposure-dialogue was to increase the capacities of the participants in running interfaith activities in building or maintaining peace in multi-religious society. The programme was based on a participative experience of living together for a couple of days with people of different faith or religion and taking part in their daily activities. This really helped the participants to understand how conflicts relating to intercultural and interreligious relations can occur and therefore, how they may be mitigated in a peaceful manner.

## Why?

In Europe, in particular, the immigration of people from different religious organizations causes serious concern in European society. Even in Africa, religion still being used to fuel conflict. For example, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram have used religion as a weapon of violence. In this context, religious and civil society actors need to be equipped for peace making.

## Results/a mitigation approach

In various contexts of conflict related to religion, people lose trust in each other. Therefore, dialogue seems to be the best way to mitigate such mistrust in order to build a generation of peace among people belonging to different cultural and religious origins.. However, in such process of building peace, the main actors need to be identified and their respective role well determined.

In modern society, the state is known to be responsible of making and maintaining peace through the use of legal instruments. However in some contexts, especially in Africa where most of the time the political regime have lost their credibility, religious leaders seems to be the major and efficient actors of peace in working closely with people in their communities. Unfortunately, sometimes their contribution may be officially underestimated by political power. In such context, religious leaders represent the *"silent actors"*. Particularly, this is the experience of religious leaders in Kenya.

As strategy of explore the role and power of these silent actors in Kenya, participants were spited and hosted in families of different background in the cities of Mombasa and Nairobi. There they had opportunities of learning, individually or collectively through intercultural and interreligious shock.

For example, Prof. Dr Ludwig Schick, the archbishop of Bamberg, Germany, and Prof. Rev Dr Kambale Kahongya were hosted by Sheikh Yusuf Abuhamza, the imam of Jeddah Mosque in the slum of Kibera, where most of inhabitant belong to the Nubian

community.

The Nubian community is made up of about 100,000 people. Originally they are from Sudan and southern Egypt. They were brought to Kenya over 100 years ago to serve in the East African Rifles, a regiment of the British colonial armed forces.

The imam Yusuf Abuhama is one of the religious leaders from Nubian people. He was first trained at the Madrassa of Makina Mosque, the biggest mosque at the Kibera slum, before he went to Egypt for further Islamic studies. His mosque and other youth organisations gives hope to people in Kibera.

### Young muslims against religious radicalisation

The Kenyan Muslim Youth Alliance, an independent and nonprofit network founded in 2003, is also involved in empowering youth Muslim through the media and a programme focusing on nurturing Kenyan youth, in general and in Kibera in particular. It monitors religious teaching in Madrassa (Muslim training center for children) to prevent the radicalisation of children.

Another youth organisation is Youth Reform in Kibera, a group formed by former gangsters who have decided to change their bad behaviour and do self-reliance activities instead.

For example, they have a cinema hall, where the youth watch various movies that help them develop their knowledge. The same hall is also used to watch football matches played in African and European leagues. They have also built public toilets and bathrooms, from which they collect some money on a daily basis. Actually, there is no enough space at the Kibera slum in which to build toilets. Therefore, public toilets are very helpful to many families and young people.

Religious leaders in a disadvantaged society

According to the current system set by Kenya government on National identity Card provision, many youth in Kibera cannot afford to get the card. The precondition of getting the ID card, is that the candidate should present a valid birth certificate as

well as birth certificate of his or her parents. In Kibera slum, where many youth were born out of marriage, they don't have birth certificate, even in many cases, they don't know their parents. In this context, many youth don't have national Identity Card.

One of the consequences of the stateless status in Kenya today is the risk of being easily recruited to any kind of terrorist group. This is not specific for young boys, but young girls are more vulnerable, due to the fact that their perspective of the future life are very limited.

### Impact of the programme

Through the learning exposure visits to different parts of the cities of Nairobi and Mombasa, the exercise became very fruitful to each participant.

Rev Dr Kahongya Kambale said that *"From our host, the family of Sheikh Yusuf Abuhama, I learnt about their spirituality, social life and gender relations in terms of children's education and freedom of the mind."* He also said that some children of the neighborhood were coming to greet and have a talk with them. On Sunday, the final day of the visits, one of the children, six years old, said: *"We will miss you"*.

This was based on the fact that children would be going back to school and coming back home very late, while the visitors will be also leaving the following day. The friendly talk between Bishop Schick, Rev. Kambale and the children has led to the building of peaceful intercultural and intergeneration relations. In his conclusion, rev. Kambale says: "I ask myself again and again what kind of future the children living in that kind of environment expect to have and what will prevent them from developing feelings of revenge on those who are rich and who live in better conditions, just on the other side of the street. In their case, however, they lack good space in which to play and develop their talents. However, I learnt from Sheikh Yusuf that they teach children to be content with what they have and work hard at school to improve their future lives".

# A transformation programme improved community members in Rwanda



## Kigali.

Beneficiaries of the Church and Community Transformation programme, which is under the RDIS, have praised the initiative for helping vulnerable communities in Rwanda fight economic hardships. The programme, which is supported by the **United Evangelical Mission (UEM)**, has helped them build communities' capacity to sustainably use the resources available to raise their socio-economic status.

Mr. Claude Munyabahire, a father of three children and a husband to Valentine Byukusenge, is one of the people in Gisagara District who benefited from the programme.

He was part of the first round of the trainees who graduated in 2015.

*"We were taught how to solve problems by*

*ourselves using the local resources available to us,"* he said.

He said, before joining the programme, his family had gone through a tough period; he was unable to afford basic needs.

*"Straight after the training, we formed a savings and credits group, where each of us would save 1000 Rwandan Francs on a monthly basis,"* he said.

He also said, *"Six months later, I took out a 20,000 Rwandan francs loan and rented a piece of land."*

He is currently growing tomatoes on the land for domestic consumption and for sale.

*"I have earned 161, 000 Rwandan francs by selling my produce to the market,"* he said.

Through the programme, Mr Munyabahire raised his socio-economic status.

# Eastern and Coastal Diocese's plan for children live with disabilities



Dar es Salaam.

**M**landizi Vocational Training Centre (MVTC) is set to help the country's youth and the young people with intellectual disabilities to obtain skills that would help them secure permanent jobs and financially support their families.

The institution's project, which is under the Eastern and Coastal Diocese (ECD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), is scheduled to start operating in 2021.

In early February 2020, **United Evangelical Mission** (UEM) General Secretary Rev Volker Martin Dally paid a visit to the facility and had firsthand experience in the development of the project.

Rev Dally said, *"These kids have special abilities and can empower themselves. We do this because this task was given to us by God."*

He then proposed the term *"children with special abilities,"* in place of *"children with disabilities"*.

The MVTC project is a continuation of the work of the Mtoni Deaconic Lutheran Centre. Since 1983, hundreds of children with special needs have received primary education there.

The objective of the ECD is to make sure, after finishing primary school, the children at the centre, receive vocational skills at the MVTC (also known as Mtoni Phase II).

The skills would include housekeeping and bakery skills.

The ECD believes this is a major step toward improving and give sense of life to God's special children who are marginalized and stigmatized by the community

due to their special and unique abilities. In this regard ECD has constructed an office building, a classroom block and a dining hall with a kitchen at Mlandizi.

In her presentation during Rev Volker Martin Dally's visit, the MVTC project coordinator, Mrs Caroline Shedafa, who also doubled as UEM North South co-worker to the ECD, said that there was a strong need to build dormitories for girls and boys before receiving the first batch in 2021.

During his visit to the centre, Rev Volker Martin Dally was accompanied by Rev Dr John Kabango, other UEM Africa desk staff members as well as leaders from the ECD, including the Secretary General, Dr Emmanuel Luvanda.

They planted trees with primary school pupils from Mtoni who are expected to be MVTC's future trainees. **United Evangelical Mission** (UEM) has been a strong partner in establishing Mlandizi Vocational Training Centre.

The mission provided the funds for the construction of the classroom block.

In his remarks, Rev Dally quoted **Jeremiah 20:13**: *"Sing to the Lord, Praise the Lord, He has delivered the lives of the needy from the hands of the evildoers."* He also quoted **Luke 1: 52**: *"He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly. We have a vision that the needy or the so-called lowly can be given a special opportunity for their life."*

# Building block of church thinking and action

Lecture tour of Indonesia by Claudia Jahnel

By Marion Unger



The influence of intercultural diversity on religious and social life was the focus of a series of lectures Claudia Jahnel gave in the universities and diaconal training centres of the UEM churches in Indonesia. As a professor of intercultural theology and physicality at the Ruhr-University Bochum, she gave a lecture to students and teachers on the topic *“Intercultural Theology and Faith in a Global Perspective”*. Through the lecture she gave impulses to the Indonesian churches from a European perspective so that they could reflect on their theology and reassess it from a global perspective.

*“The experience of enormous cultural diversity and its impact on the understanding of mission are an important topic in the UEM member churches,”* Claudia Jahnel says. This impression shaped the two-week trip, during which she visited training centres in Sumatra, Java and Nias. With her lectures she triggered lively discussions with young theologians. The interreligious dialogue, which results from the living together of people of different faiths, is, according to her, traditionally part of Indonesian society and - with reference to the Christian churches there - *“an important component of church thinking and acting.”*

The theologian’s special interest was directed to the diversity of religions in Indonesia, a country with the world’s largest Muslim population. *“Religious diversity has been prescribed by the state,”* she explains, referring to the national ideology, Pancasila, which is included in the constitution. Its guiding principles are intended to create identity and homogeneity in the multi-ethnic country. However, this basic attitude, which is described by Claudia Jahnel as a kind of *“civil religion”*, has certain limitations. *“In the last century, the huge country became a nation out of political interests,”* she explains, *“but that way of thinking and common culture must grow from below.”*

Thus, it presented a very different picture in terms of mission and dialogue in the various regions. While in the north of Sumatra with the large HKBP (Christian Protestant Toba-Batak Church) Christianity strongly influences the society also culturally, the south of the large island presents itself rather multiculturally. In Java, where the professor was also invited to a Muslim faculty, the Christian-Islamic dialogue is well developed. According to Claudia Jahnel, coexistence is disturbed by the influences of an Islam which is brought into the country from outside and which aims to present itself as a *“true religion”*. *“Existing conflicts can be religiously intensified,”* she summarizes *“highly exciting experience”* of the stay there. On the island of Nias she observed obviously unequal educational opportunities which disadvantage women. Also with the training of the new generation of theologians the attention was above all on the young men.

The professor’s lectures triggered a lively echo from the audience. Young theologians, deaconesses and Bibelfrouwen (Bible women), who repeatedly asked her questions about the situation in Germany. Wasn’t mission necessary in Germany because churches were under pressure owing to the ongoing secularization? Is German society Islamophobic or simply xenophobic? These were some of the questions that were put to her. *“The Christian faith still strongly influences our culture in Germany,”* Claudia Jahnel said. This, in turn, triggered the question of what this means to people who leave the church. In the discussions, especially in the urban regions, the young people addressed topics that are often considered taboo in Indonesia. They included the connection between religion, racism and the struggle for political independence using the example of the indigenous population of West Papua, or topics of humans and women’s rights, and homosexuality.

*“The UEM offers Indonesian churches a great opportunity of a community based on solidarity, in which the One World is lived as the One World,”* says Claudia Jahnel about the role of the church community in the multi-religious and multi-cultural country. The theme of the mission is still in a state of flux between tradition and modernity. Using the example of the numerous projects for trauma healing implemented in various member churches of the UEM, she describes the successful development of a method based on traditional dance. *“It is an incredible wealth that unfolds there,”* she said. With its human rights work, projects on climate protection or social welfare work, the UEM could contribute much to awareness raising. An important role plays thereby the GLEP process of global learning from ecumenical perspective.

Marion Unger is a freelance journalist.

# From volunteering year to be a head of the department

Dar es Salaam.

Two committed volunteers have a touching story to tell about how they embarked on a journey of serving communities from the entry levels to supervising youth and children department. They are Mr Paulin Mugisho and Mr Amos Kamele, who previously served for one year as United Evangelical Mission (UEM) volunteers; they helped disadvantaged groups at different times and places.



Mr. Paulin Mugisho,



Mr. Amos Kamele

Mr. **Paulin Mugisho** was UEM's South-North volunteer who worked at Weigle Haus in Essen City, Germany, from April 2013 to March 2014.

He was on a programme that involved taking care of communities and promoting positive actions among teenagers and adults.

The programme has been in existence for the past 100 years.

He performed his tasks at different spots from open youth activities, to the streets, helping church services, house groups, youth groups and at one time he also served at a café.

After his volunteer period, Mr Mugisho went back to CBCA Goma/the Democratic Republic of Congo to share his experience WITH WHOM? and pursue his vision.

He sought to contribute to the development of his church and country by creating a platform where the youth and children could meet.

He started the "pour le Development et la Restauration Integral (IDRI), which is a Non-Governmental Organization, which aimed to invest in future generations.

A few years later, Mr. Mugisho was asked by the CBCA church to supervise the children and youth department as a director.

Mr Mugisho said, "I feel proud to serve my church, especially to work with my colleagues and to help to reform children in different spheres of life."

Mr. **Kamele** is also a former volunteer who worked at Haus Nordhelle Tagungszentrum in Valbert (Meinerzhagen-Westfaren) and at Valbert Evangelical Church.

His duties included, but are not limited to, the following: offering bailiff services, welcoming guests and guiding them towards important things.

One year later, he returned to his church and was placed at the human rights desk as a legal officer. He served various clients who had legal aid needs. Specifically, he prepared legal documents and offered legal advice to the community members who needed it.

A few years later, he was transferred to the Child and Youth Development Department as a project director (PD) at the Biharamulo parish, where he served children aged between three and five.

However, owing to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, all North-South volunteers had to return to their home countries earlier in early March 2020.

We thank Almighty God that, in spite of this challenge, the South-South volunteers who were in their stations were not asked to return to their home countries owing to the lockdowns imposed in many countries, which means they would have to cross more than one country to get to their home. The following South-South volunteers could not travel back to their home countries because of the lockdowns imposed by many countries:



Merveille Kasitu Ajabu

**Merveille Kasitu Ajabu** is from the Community of Baptiste Churches in Central Africa; he works at Jerusalem Pre- and Primary School of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese as a French teacher.



Jonathan Kasereka Mbula

**Jonathan Kasereka Mbula** is a theologian from the Community of Baptiste Churches in Central Africa; he works at the North Western Diocese Cathedral of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern. He is also helping with the activities of the Human Rights desk, especially awareness raising and advocacy.



Veronica Amos Liana

**Veronica Amos Liana** works at the Goma Ville Parish Community of Baptiste Churches in Central Africa from evangelical Lutheran Church Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese. Owing to lockdowns, many programmes were postponed and, therefore, she only assembles and records collections from a small community and submits to the parish treasurer.



Ever Aron Mtaki

**Ever Aron Mtaki** is from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese; he serves in the Community of Baptiste Churches in Central Africa at Bethesda Hospital serves as a social worker.

# Online Mission Service

By Michée Wabomundu



The Baptiste Church in Central of Africa celebrated an Online Mission Service on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Churches and others activities which collect more than 20 persons was closed since March 19<sup>th</sup> 2020 in DRC cause of the pandemic of COVID-19. **“Sunday of the Mission”** is a service which all UEM member churches celebrate each year. Christian all over the world support each other in prayer and collection of donation. This period of the pandemic, the **“CBCA”** streamed this from CBCA Goma-Ville parish where a German song was sung to decorate this great ceremony of partnership. Madame Muteho the preacher of the day, preached about **“learn from means of faith”**, *Judges 8, 1-5; 11-26*. The main message from these scriptures was *“for serving God we must grow in faith”* and know that we can do all things through God who strength us (Philippians 4:13). Mr Police Kivava presented the **Mission Evangelical Mission (UEM)** by saying that UEM is Communion of churches in 3 continents, it is an international missionary organization which was born from the union of 3 former missionary societies namely the Rhineland Mission, the Bethel Mission and the Zaire Mission which was operational in the province of Equator and the 3 missionary societies with their partners have become an international mission that we call today **United Evangelical Mission**; it has actually 38 members or 38 churches and a diaconal institution; these are based in Africa, Asia and Germany and who have decided with their partners to join their efforts to carry out mission work together. The purpose of the missionary society is resumed in the article of the constitution adopted in June 1996 and that is why we celebrate this worship service in the first or second week of June in all the UEM member churches especially in Africa and in Asia. The article declares: *The United Evangelical Mission, a communion of churches in three continents works*

*within a network of churches established in Africa, Asia and Europe and wherever it will be called to work together it proclaims that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Saviour of all humanity and faces missionary challenges in the present world. In a tearing world they want to remain member, the one body of Christ and therefore committed to growing together to form a united community in worship, knowledge and service. Share their gifts, their visions and their responsibilities. Calling men and women to repentance and new life, witness the kingdom of God by fighting for justice, peace and the protection of creation.*

After all these, Mr. Polisi gave the pillar of the UEM which are 5 in number based on missionary work:

- Evangelization,
- Development,
- Diakonia,
- Advocacy and
- The partnership.

The head office is located in Germany and there are regional offices: a regional office in Wuppertal for the Germany region, a regional office in Dar es Salaam for the Africa region and Pematangsiantar in Indonesia for the Asia region.

Polisi KIVAVA closed his speech and gave the principle in the mission which says: **No one is too rich not to need others, and no one is too poor to have nothing to give**; he also introduced the UEM volunteers from the sister churches currently with CBCA in Goma and finally offered a prayer for the Mission.

You can re-watch the French service through this link on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERgzyKoEDPs&pbjreload=101> , Swahili service on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZ0B2Y1Pvas>



# New Leader in the UEM office Africa Region



The United Evangelical Mission Regional office in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) is now headed by Rev. Dr Ernest Kadiva since February 2020. He comes in replacement of Rev. Dr Nagaju Muke who is moved to the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Science (PIASS) for another assignment. Rev. Dr Ernest Kadiva is ordained Pastor of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese for more than 17 Years and served in different congregations and positions including Deputy General Secretary Administration, Human Resource, and Estate Affairs, Eastern and Coastal Diocese, from September 2006-2018.

His education background based on ecumenical and ministry leadership whereby he studied a Doctor of Ministry in Missional Leadership at Luther Seminary, Minnesota in United State of America (2019), Master of Ecumenical Theology at Genève University, Bossey Institute in Swiss (2011), Bachelor of Divinity at Makumira Lutheran University in Tanzania (2002). In addition, Rev. Dr Ernest Kadiva also graduated with Bachelor of Commerce and Management at University of Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania (1992). He has been a member of parliament of constitutional referendum in Tanzania. Furthermore he had worked in different organizations and private sector at various capacities before his ordination as a pastor and a leader.

Rev Dr. Kadiva is married to Sifa and blessed with four children, one daughter and three sons.

*We therefore, pray the peace of God be with him and God's face goes with him (Exodus 33:14)*

## The UEM Africa Regional Board met online

On October 13, the **Africa Regional Board (ARB)** of the UEM had its first online meeting. It was chaired by Bishop Mothusi J. Letlhage from Botswana (ELCB). The task of the ARB is to prepare the **Africa Regional Assembly** in cooperation with the UEM Executive Secretary Africa and to handle all the business of the Regional Assembly between its meetings.

Shared reports from all ARB members on their church situations revealed to which extent the Covid 19 pandemic has had its impact on people's daily lives and on the church programmes. In some countries, lockdown was instructed by the government. In some others however, restrictions of church activities were implemented on a voluntary basis for fear of the pandemic.

The negative results were among others unpaid teachers and pastors, general joblessness. Closed schools and universities caused an increase of domestic violence and abuse of minors, children and students losing what they learned. The churches were grateful for the support from the UEM, respectively from UEM and German members transferred via the UEM. They employed the financial means for awareness building and measures against infection, for alleviating the acute needs of the most vulnerable

and for supporting church workers without salaries for a number of months.

In the working report of the UEM Co-workers in the Africa Department, ARB members received an update on the UEM work and supported projects in the last seven months of the Covid-19 pandemic. They also received a summary of important decisions taken by the September 2020 UEM Council on the development of UEM members. Churches were reminded to elaborate and send in proposals for the UEM Partnership Prize.

Churches reported that they are preparing and implementing activities for the next year's celebration of 25 years' anniversary of the international UEM.

The board members agreed that it was a good opportunity to meet electronically, even if the use of these means is still a learning process. Originally, the ELCB, Botswana was planned to host the ARB in 2021. The board members would of course rather meet personally, but due to the UEM international travel restrictions going until May 2021, the next meeting will also be online in February 2021.

**For the UEM Africa Department,  
Katja Romanek**



Finance is one of the basic resources in the congregations. Finance is necessary for the church to function effectively. It covers costs when God's people go to the mission. With this Saint Paul asked, "And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: *'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'* (1Corinthians 10:15). Robert Wuthnow writes, "All income and all resources are God's. They're given to us to sustain our needs, but they are basically resources to fund his kingdom. ... Has become clear that that funding his kingdom meant supporting the church." However, this does not imply that God's mission will not be accomplished without money, rather it can be done by faithful stewards since God owns everything.

Ammerman, in the book *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* articulate that "Keeping track of money in an organized way is good stewardship all the time, but it also helps when the congregation wants to assess whether its resources are being deployed in a manner consistent with the congregation's purposes and goals." Turner N. Clinard, *Responding to God* also cite that: "Stewardship means holding in trust, using and investing that which belongs to someone else. Christian stewardship includes that basic understanding of stewardship, but it is essentially a life of response to God for his goodness and to Jesus Christ for his love."

Good financial stewardship in the church is the fundamental aspect of a good relationship with God and with God's people. It addresses how the church fears, reveres, honors, and adores God. *"Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So, shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine"* (Proverbs 3: 9-10).

King David had a good relationship with God and confessed that. *"Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name"* (1 Chronicles 29: 10-13). It is

this relationship that made people give to God. Poor stewardship in the church is a sign that the church is not growing in Christ; it is reflective also of the leadership. Being a pastor, I have witnessed how a congregation's stability is based on financial stability. The financial accountability and transparency of the congregation to members is a matter of utmost urgency. Church leaders, life, and ministry may be negatively affected due to widespread "rumors" on the disappearance of church funds sometimes suspected to be diverted into personal gains. It tarnishes the image of the church and waters down its prophetic voice in its local context. Rick Rouse and Craig Van Gelder argued that practicing stewardship toward building financial viability is an issue that, if not taken seriously, can become a huge obstacle to a congregation seeking to implement a missional plan. Financial challenges can also become a flash point for congregational conflict.

Good stewardship of church finance is determined by how the leadership spends the church's money carefully and within the approved budget. The budget provides directions on a financial spending plan. Financial planning needs leaders to engage in planning and own the plan.

Church members need to see that what they are giving is well looked after and well used. They need the leadership to explain how the money was spent. When they are satisfied, they build trust in their leaders and are able to respond with confidence when they are asked to give. It is important to note that when church members give money in the church, they give to God who is just and faithful. Saint Paul wrote: *"it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."* (1Corinthians 4: 2).

Leadership in the church is very important in the congregation for the encouragement of financial faithfulness. It is the leadership which make decisions on how to spend church money. God wants leaders who are faithful and trustworthy. Christoph Stückelberger argues that *"Responsible leadership must include transparent leadership. Transparency is the opposite of corruption which conducts financial transactions in darkness, 'under the table' and not on the table. To become corruption-free, churches have to ensure they have corruption-free church leaders."* This implies leaders who love God and treasure their life to God. Jesus constantly warned *"Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses"* (Luke 12:15).

Financial accountability takes the lead in the church. There are several biblical passages about financial accountability and its consequences. Jesus Christ teaches that God is pleased with the good steward and not pleased with the unfaithful steward. "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So, he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward'" (Luke 16:1-2).

# UEM promotes Youth Commercial Producer Groups in ECD



Commercial and vegetable production groups in Rufiji are made up of 2 groups young adults 38 (17 females and males) who have completed secondary education from three Secondary schools namely Ikwiriri, Kamoyo and Umwe (IKAU) as well as the Rufiji Agricultural Business Group (KIBIRU) in Ikwiriri division. The two groups are under the auspices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Eastern and Coastal Diocese. The Commercial Producer groups were established to enable young graduates of secondary, college and university to join groups and enable them to produce commercial products and create self-reliant attitude without thinking of formal employment.

IKAU and KIBIRU groups were formed in 2018 after UEM-trained 2 officers of ELCT-ECD on the best practices of vegetables and fruits production with the aim of developing such education for youth groups in their churches. These two groups were formed with the aim of connecting young people who have completed secondary education without continuing with other higher or technical training and empower them to become self-reliant through the cultivation of vegetables and fruits. Most of Young people are graduating from high school and college are unemployed and have insecure income, so a result of this challenge many of them indulge in bad habits and practices that lead to drug addiction, theft and teenage pregnancy.

Currently there are various agricultural activities going on in Shamba langu (my farm) which are implemented by the IKAU and KIBIRU groups. The ongoing Activities are including the cultivation of green peppers, cucumbers, and nutritional squash. The 2 groups are now preparing the fields for increasing the cultivation of tomatoes, and cucumbers on a small scale; 2 of Cucumbers acres and other 2 acres of tomatoes. IKAU and KIBIRU groups are closely monitored by farm manager Mr. Burure Job Kuyanga who is employed by ELCT-ECD. He is connecting groups to various development stakeholders like UEM and the Government which is in Rufiji District Council.

Just few months, the UEM has supported Euro 4,100 to the two Youth CPGs to facilitate the construction of deep water wells for easing vegetable and fruits production activities in Rufiji Shamba langu Project. This is a big support that will help the groups to produce business crops all the time. The project manager Mr. Burure Job Kuyanga has heartily extended his thanks to UEM Africa Regional office, Africa department and to the whole UEM family for the support.

# Interview with Reverend Quinton Ceasar



**Quinton Ceasar comes from South Africa.** He studied theology in Stellenbosch and completed his vicariate in the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. After postgraduate studies in “*Religion and Culture*” at the Humboldt University in Berlin, he became pastor of the Protestant Church in the Rhineland. He has been living in Wuppertal-Cronenberg, Germany, for two years.

## **Do you experience Germany as a secularized country?**

I already have the impression that faith has less and less to offer people, or means less and less, the more prosperity they have. But at first I found it very restful in Berlin (laughs). I come from a small town where everyone looks after each other, and where you go to church twice or three times a week. And in Berlin I was able to find out: What does faith actually mean to me, beyond this tradition? That was also liberating! And it was also during this time that I came into contact for the first time with people who are not socialised in the church. I didn't know that from South Africa. But these people also have a strong faith, only different, outside the church or in other faith communities.

## **How do you meet these people?**

I have to back up a bit. When the missionaries came to South Africa, they turned their Eurocentric understanding of Christianity into “*good work*”. But they trampled on the faith and self-conception of the people. They thought that this did not fit in with the Christian faith at all. (Missionary work and their close connection with colonialism, which despises man, plays a special - dark - role here. Chinua Achebe's novel ‘*Things Fall Apart*’ would be compulsory reading at this point). The people had a strong faith,

even if it was not the Eurocentric, white Christian faith. And I now associate that with the experience in Berlin.

## **In other words, you ask what kind of faith people have before you tell them anything?**

Yes, that is important to me. First go and see what there is. And don't say immediately: I have an answer ready now. But first go there, look, listen to what moves people. I am not anonymous, people know that I am a pastor. But nevertheless I want to immerse myself in their context, with respect for what is there. That also applies to the church. We have to leave our church towers behind, leave our four walls, really approach people without saying: you are actually already somehow Christian-Jewish. No, first look and listen: What is on people's minds? What is important to them? Mission is God's mission, I can only participate. As a pastor, as a Christian, I am allowed to get involved where God is already working anyway. I don't bring God to the people, I find God where the people are. I don't need to have answers, I can ask questions with the people. Of course I then also talk about what I believe in. I understand the impulse, the hope that the church will be full again, that people will become members again, especially now, when so many are leaving. But there is also the chance that the church out there will grow. This could give rise to completely different forms of faith communities.

## **Can you give an example from your work in Wuppertal-Cronenberg?**

I'm not the type of person who says, “Why don't you come to our church and join in?” But I wanted to create a space, a living space, where people can just come, where you can talk, but where it's not so churchy. Churchy is not so bad, I am churchy too, but it was about something new. And I noticed that people like good coffee. Me too, by the way! I also like to go for a coffee, and I've already been approached by people who know that I'm their pastor. And they want to talk to me again, but I can't invite them to the service right away, because the classic Sunday morning service is very milieu-specific. That's why it was clear to me that we need a different space that radiates something different.

And there is a little house next to our church, which used to be occupied by an insurance broker. We have rented it now. There's a good coffee machine, nice original furniture from the fifties - one of the people who has been working on this project from the very beginning is working on a job dissolving flats, and he offered to take what we need from his warehouse. He is someone who does not come to the service, but in this project he is involved. And he likes to talk a lot about faith, and he likes to philosophize and argue about faith. Only much later did I find out that he is actually a parishioner with us, on paper.

One thing that we have done now: We watched the Netflix series “*Messiah*” together every Thursday

evening. This was suggested by someone who is not even active in the classical church. This series is actually quite theological; it poses the question of what it would be like if the Messiah suddenly came here today. It was a group of six or seven people from 20 to late 40s; we sat together, watched this series, and then we had very, very intense conversations. I always prepared myself for the theological themes that came up. And I must say, I have never been able to conduct such intensive faith conversations in such an organic way in my core church. In the congregation it is more like that everyone has their own personal faith, but that is then private. I know this from South Africa quite differently. There we talk a lot about what God means to us, and sometimes also about how we despair of God. But in this project, I was able to hold crass faith, life and theological conversations for the first time in Germany. People say of themselves that they are atheists, but they do believe something. And to look from this perspective at the Messiah coming again - and that is very important for our Christian faith! - That was quite exciting. And these people had lots of questions for the church and for what we believe.

**In view of the number of people leaving and future studies: What is your hope for this church?**

That we as a church cheerfully diminish ourselves. That we ask ourselves where the good news is, even in this diminution. I do not give up hope that we can pass on our faith, our hope. There are people out there waiting for us to come to them.

I see the sign behind you, "Black Lives Matter". How do we make the church become less white? How do you see the future?

The first step would be for us as a white church to think

more anti-racist. And not only critical of racism, but also anti-racism. Then we will automatically become more diverse. After all, there are many Protestant churches outside our church structure, churches from Asia and Africa, to whom we rent our rooms. The fact that they would be socialized differently in the church should not be the focus. Because it is precisely this diversity that belongs to Pentecost, that we live the Pentecostal message, that people of different languages and backgrounds come together. The diversity has long been there; the question is: can we open ourselves to it?

As far as racism is concerned, I often have the impression that the church only speaks to the outside world. Racism is a sin, and we stand against it. People always think that it is very far away. But what I feel is that it is right in the middle of society. And I am experiencing it for the first time in church that young people in particular are thinking about their own whiteness. That is the key, also for me. Because we in the church think we are the good ones. We have been working against racism for 40 years, and we have already helped organize the fruit boycott against South Africa. And then to think about your own whiteness hurts, and that is also a process that needs to be accompanied. And I am curious how the church will deal with this. Because to become truly anti-racist, you have to give an account of your own whiteness. That is not so easy for white people. That is why we need staying power for real change. And clear words, the time for gentle action is over.

**Interview: Rev. Dr Claudia Währisch-Oblau, Head of the Evangelism Department of the UEM**

## ELCT-NED ELECTS NEW LEADERSHIP FACES



The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania-North Eastern Diocese has convened a special Synod assembly from 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The main agenda was the selection and formation of new leadership in the Diocese.

The Synod was the 3<sup>rd</sup> general assembly after 125 years of evangelism which involved the election of new members of council, Bishop, assistant bishop and Districts Pastors. In the election **Rev. Dr. Msafiri**

**Mbilu** was elected new bishop of the Diocese, where Rev. Michael Kanju was elected new Assistant Bishop for the next four years. **Rev. Dr Msafiri Mbilu** before being elected as a new bishop of ELCT-NED was a **UEM** Coworker at Silliman University in Philippines. The Bishop-elect had previously been a lecturer at Tumaini Makumira University College of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, teaching Old Testament. He later joined Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University held a position of Deputy Provost Finance and Administration.

In this special synod assembly, districts pastors were also elected for a tenure of 4 years after the current leaders completed their term. The following pastors were elected new district pastors: -

- I. Rev. Anderson Kapande- Northern District,
- II. Rev. Isai Mweta- Southern District,
- III. Rev. Frank Mtangi-Tambarare District and,
- IV. Rev. Thadeus Ketto-Coast District.

The new leaders of NED will be installed soon in order to assume their responsibilities officially.

*We pray that God will use them faithfully in His work.*



## Youth united in the Mission

From 22nd to 26th July 200 youth leaders from United Evangelical Mission Tanzania member churches met in Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Karagwe Diocese for 5 days workshop. The workshop was involved 200 (70 Girls and 130 Boys) youth leaders from 4 UEM member churches namely ELCT-KAD, ELCT-NED, ELCT- ECD and ELCT-NWD. The workshop was hosted by ELCT-KAD whereby opening service was done by Bishop Dr. Benson Bagonza and the UEM vice Moderator Bishop Dr Abednego Keshomshahara who also spoke a word of opening remarks.

During his opening remarks, the vice Moderator Bishop Dr. Abednego Kesho Mshahara, explained that we are living in the era of digitalization whereby technology has improved the means of communication. During the Covid 19 pandemic disease, people are not able to meet physically, what has helped so much is digitalization. It is mainly youths who know more about digitalization, they know more about internet, WhatsApp, emails, zoom and so on. Therefore you should use it to convey information, in particular Gospel, partnership matters etc.

The theme of the workshop was "we are the salt of the earth" (Mathew 5:13a) the word were accompany by different topics which were presented to enlighten and strengthens youth's capacity in regards to their day to day life situation. Among other topics were encouraging and promoting South-South partnership among youth (Choir, Groups, professional etc.), Life skills, Misleading theology, Youth Climate Action day and Bonanza was also took place as a part of partnership among youth. It has narrated that, south - south partnership among Tanzanian member churches should be encouraged and promoted before promoting north - South partnership. Youth

Leaders portrayed a lot of skills and experience regarding church and society work that they participate in their churches, for example, some are employed by churches, Non-Governmental Organization, Civil Societies and Government of Tanzania. Apart from the experience they mentioned, but also some are facing unemployment challenge despite the fact that they are graduated some years ago from colleges and universities. They also came up with some recommendations to churches and UEM as follows: - Church should prepare succession plan to youth to take part in different leadership position, UEM to plan for more leadership training to youth and offers scholarship to them as a part of promoting youth to get prepared for church responsibilities.

In line to this workshop, also ELCT-KAD on 26th July 2020 after Sunday service, they launched UEM 25th anniversary by presenting the journey of KAD with UEM since 1996. During their introduction, Bishop Rd Benson Bagonza explained that, in 1995 I was one of the delegate who participated the first meeting in Evangelical Church in Cameroun to discuss the union among churches with Bethel and Rhenish background. Therefore, he was confidently proud of being UEM member church, because he started with UEM and now he is leader in KAD who today hosted the youth meeting. During the presentation, it explained that KAD is among the UEM member churches that benefited a lot with UEM in all spheres or pillars namely Diaconia, Development, Advocacy, Partnership and Evangelism. Bishop Dr Benson Bagonza mentioned that he is also a product of UEM, because his PhD was sponsored by UEM and many other colleagues in Karagwe Diocese.

# ELCT-ECD CONDUCTS SYNOD



The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese has convened the 35th Synod assembly from 29th Nov to 2nd December 2020 at Mbezi Beach Parish in Dar es Salaam.

The inaugural of the assembly was preceded by Sunday services which was led by Bishop Dr Alex Malasusa and preached by Bishop Donald Leo Mtetemela a former Tanzanian Anglican archbishop. Bishop Mtetemela preached on the impact of being light and salt to the community. He emphasized on mission outreach rather than being contented and locked in the walls of our church.

In the inaugural speech of the 35th bishop Dr. Alex Malasusa acknowledged all participants including two district commissioner who are also members of the ECD, invited partners such as United Evangelical Mission, New Life in Christ, Danmission, Norwegian Church AIDS, Soma Biblia, Bible Society, and eligible members of the General Assembly from ECD Congregations and institutions. Each congregation is represented by two member male and female.

In the inaugural speech he briefed on the implementation of the resolutions of the 34th Synod assembly held 2018. He cited successes such as the growth of the church quantitatively, qualitatively and organically. He numbered new social economic projects, new church buildings, and number of partnerships. He also cited challenges during the implementations such as pandemic, poverty, economic hardships, good governance, climate change, and misleading theologies or false teachings and teachers.

He pointed out that during the period 2018-2020 the Diocese's economy grew by an average of fourteen

percent (14%). This provides an opportunity for the Diocese to continue to strengthen projects and programs that will increase income and focus on serving humanity effectively.

He also added that the Diocese continues to invest in building projects and the purchase of shares of Maendeleo Bank PLC in the stock market. In the period 2018-2020 the Diocese increased its strength by investing in a forest project where it intends to invest in the planting of 500 acres of trees in the Madaba farm in Njombe region. The ultimate goal is to take care of the environment and earn a living that will help improve the Gospel as well as Diakonia's services in the future.

He thanked all partners from abroad for their support being tangible and intangible. He appreciated the support of UEM during the height of COVID 19 in the country.

He pointed out that in the period 2021-2022 the Diocese will prioritize on its pillars such as evangelism, development, diakonia, and partnership. He emphasized that the ECD will continue to equip and empower her members to fight against any forms of injustice and poverty. He declared that the church will continue to accommodate and encourage innovation and creativity being in worship and societal changes. He appreciated the work done of Upendo Media and ensured to support this media for holistic evangelism. The ECD will continue to investment on projects that will bring quick income in the short term to ensure cash flow in the finance directorate. Concluding his inaugural speech Bishop Dr. Alex Malasusa thanked all staff from the sub congregation, congregational, diocesan level and to all the diocesan centers and directors for doing God's work faithfully and diligently.

Among the guests who were invited to give greetings

was UEM who was presented by Rev Dr. Ernest Kadiva, Zakaria Mnkai and Christopher Shine. The Deputy Secretary General of the UEM Africa Regional office Rev. Dr Ernest Kadiva greeted the synod Assembly on behalf of UEM General Secretary Rev Volker M. Dally. On behalf of the UEM General Secretary he said that the UEM General Secretary Rev Volker Martin Dally acknowledged the invitation, he is satisfied with the

active participation of ECD in the UEM families and in implementing UEM pillars, he thanked the ECD for offering a plot of land to build a headquarter of UEM Africa Region. He kindly asked the ECD to be active in the participation of the 25th Anniversary of UEM Internalization. He finally said the UEM General Secretary is wishing GOD blessings and wisdom for the synod Assembly.

# Human Right Campaign 2021

## Against Discrimination and Exclusion



On 10th December 2020, the International Human Rights Day, the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) have launched its new human rights campaign, which will run under the biblical motto from James 4:12 “Who are you to judge your neighbor?” The campaign was simultaneously presented at 1 p.m. (East Africa Time) in a digital event.

Combatting discrimination and exclusion is the central action and message of Jesus Christ, who, in his life on earth, approached all those who were excluded. He was close to the blind people, the disabled, people with contagious diseases, women, the prostitutes, the tax collectors, children, poor, etc. This attitude of not judging anybody is the Gospel proclaimed by the Church. From the words of Jesus “Judge not, that you may not be judged” (Matthieu 7:1), today we call upon all people saying: “Who are you to judge your neighbor?” (James 4:12).

“Discrimination and exclusion determine the life of many people in all parts of the world. The murder of George Floyd in May 2020 in the United States has given the discussion about racism a new dynamic not only in Europe, but also in Papua/Indonesia, and in Africa. For example.” With this campaign, the UEM supports various actions of young people in Africa, Asia and Germany against racism and persecution of children and women on cultural, political and religious grounds. “As a church community, we want

to set an example of inclusive community in church and society”, says Dr. Jochen Motte, member of the UEM board. In Germany as part of the campaign young people in Westphalia have started a program to combat racism in the German society.

In Africa, particularly, this campaign is highly opportune, since in many countries people are threatened and criminalized due to their political opinions they have expressed. Even in churches, women still discriminated. For example, throughout the year 2021, youth in Anglican Church of Rwanda and in the Lutheran Church in Tanzania, North Western Diocese, will advocate against the discrimination of young women who got pregnant and who often then are excluded from the church communion and prohibited to attend schools. In the diocese of Karagwe, Tanzania, and in the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda, young people will address the discrimination against disable people. Meanwhile in the Baptist Church in Congo (CBCA), the discussion will be focused on the rights of Albino. The Evangelical church of Cameroon and the Church of Disciple (CDCC) in DRC, will address the issue of land grabbing of indigenous people and peaceful cohabitation between them and other young bantous. In this way a society of tolerance will be build.

