

4 June 2013,

The Africa Appeal: Vital support for growing Christian Communities

What is the Africa Appeal?

The Africa Appeal is a mission of the Traditional Anglican Church of Canada focussed on two national churches in Africa affiliated with the Anglican Catholic Church – Original Province (ACC-OP). In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Bishop Steven Ayule-Milenge leads the Missionary Diocese of the Eglise Catholique Anglicane du Congo, and in Cameroon Fr Alphonse Ndukiye is the Vicar General of the Missionary District there.

The primary effort of the Africa Appeal is to provide support for liturgical necessities and for church buildings, as well as ensure regular financial support for clergy living expenses. Donations are managed by the parishes of St. Bride of Kildare and St Columba of Iona in British Columbia and Fr David Marriott communicates with the churches.

The financial situation

In 2012, the Africa Appeal received a total of \$15,905 from Canadian donors. Of this, \$15,150 was sent to Africa with the remaining \$755 carried forward for use in 2013 (unaudited figures based on year-end totals). All costs related to mailing and photocopying, Western Union fees and bank fees have been absorbed by the parishes of St. Bride and St. Columba; no administration or promotion costs are covered out of donations to the Africa Appeal. Thus 100% of donations go to Africa directly.

At the start of 2012, it had seemed that the task of finding over \$1,000 a month for the Appeal was well-nigh impossible. But, thanks to our generous donors, we have been able to surpass that goal. Because of this, the two churches have been able to grow and initiate new projects and new parishes, responding to the demands placed on them by those who are discovering the Anglican Catholic faith and want to establish a new parish.

This year our fundraising goal to support the Africa Appeal objectives is \$24,000 (roughly \$1,000 per month per church). We hope that this would reduce the number of times that Fr David has to say “no” when Bp Stephen or Fr Alphonse come to him with requests for funds, and would provide for more stable funding for basic church needs such as clergy support or communion supplies.

History

In 2007, under the auspices of the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada (ACCC) and at the request of then Fr Steven Ayule-Milenge, Fr David visited the Congo to see firsthand the situation of traditional Anglicans there. During this visit, contracts between the ACCC and representatives of several Africa churches were signed. These contracts outlined responsibilities and goals on both sides so that tax-receipted funds could be sent from Canada. The parish of St Peter and St Paul in British Columbia undertook to manage the collection and distribution of funds.

Since then, the Africa Appeal has funded projects which were identified during Fr David’s visit and in subsequent conversations and communications. The funding stabilized the church in the Congo, allowing for some building to take place and financed the building of two churches in Zambia. It also provided clergy support in both countries.

In 2009, funding of the Africa Appeal was suspended during the break up of the ACCC although contact with the overseas churches continued. In 2010, the new parishes of St Bride and St Columba re-established mission efforts in the DRC and Cameroon only, supported by Archbishop Mark Haverland, the Primate of the ACC-OP. This complemented the work of the Missionary Society of St Paul in the USA and included cooperation with Anglican Aid Abroad in Australia and Bishop Mead of the Diocese of the UK (ACC-OP) who is overseeing British contributions to these missions.

Traditional Anglicanism is growing in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Bishop Steven has recently established five parishes in the central province of Kasai Oriental (in addition to those already established in Sud-Kivu), in the centre of the country. Expectations are high that this new deanery will continue to grow but local conditions cause difficulties. It can be hard for parish representatives to attend synod due to long distances, poor roads and lack of transport. Even worse,

the presence of armed militias can make the synod journey dangerous. In 2012, as some delegates were making their way to synod they were stopped and forced to strip off their clothes (both men and women) so that anything of value could be taken. Bishop Steven himself was attacked and seriously wounded by these same militias a few years ago.

In the Congo, the education of children is managed by the state authority for education. The state cannot provide adequate education services without outside assistance, either from aid groups or churches.

Recently, Bishop Ayule-Milenge wrote asking for some support for the school at Birindwa. This school, situated some 30 kilometres west of the city of Bukavu, had been operating on property sub-leased from a local development association which served notice on the school to leave just before the end of the school year.

But the crisis had a happy outcome. Local authorities made land available for the school but required US\$1,000 to purchase the property – the Africa Appeal was able to respond to this request and the local parishes erected tents as temporary accommodation so that students would be able to complete their school year.



Conditions near Birindwa on the main highway that leads to the city of Bukavu

The Africa Appeal also responded to Bishop Steven by providing funds for continued help to the Widow's Agriculture Project in Mosho, near Bukavu, where the church improved the plight of widows and their children by leasing land for a cooperative farming project.

Bishop Steven concludes his Synod report, "The ACC-OP/ Missionary Diocese of Congo beseeches the ACC-OP church members to hold hands with us, help us to provide income generating projects and have good diocesan infrastructure. We have not only small churches built with mud bricks and roofing of sheet metal but many churches built with mud and grass. Church leaders are walking to visit parishes because they lack a vehicle. Our churches are scattered in dangerous place which makes the need for a four wheel drive vehicle urgent. We humbly ask you to think of us and the difficulties we experience in our ministries. We hope this will be our time of sharing what God has given us and offer blessings to you in our Church Communion."

The church in Cameroon is active in providing education and training

In 2012 the Africa Appeal sent the majority of its funds to Cameroon as the church there is in its infancy. The need has been pressing even though the church in Cameroon has started to receive support for Fr. Alphonse's personal expenses from the ACC-OP's Missionary Society of St. Paul, as well as some very valuable funding for its school project from Anglican Aid Abroad in Australia.

Vicar-General Fr Alphonse Ndukiye in his Christmas message expressed his thanks to all those who sent money for the growth of St. Augustine School, for the sewing and dress-making workshops, and the computer technology centre, asking for continued support for their activities as they prosper and grow.

Fr. Alphonse has spoken of the contribution of so many people in and around Yaoundé. He writes of the efforts and energy which have allowed the church such rapid growth. At the same time, his Diocesan Council has had to revise plans for expansion due to limited finances – the Africa Appeal has not been able to keep up.

The church needs to develop in an orderly fashion in full compliance with local and national regulations. As an example, the purchase of the church property in Ngoulemekong, Yaoundé must be completed; this will allow the church to be registered as an official church recognised by the state and would permit

Fr. Alphonse to have a passport, apply for a visa for the USA, and attend Provincial Synod there. (His fare and accommodation would be paid by the Province.)



**Church at Ngoulemekong with
Fr. Alphonse and M. Léon
Ebode (Président du Conseil)**

Fr. Alphonse continues his work in Cameroon, together with four other clergy, on an incredibly small budget. This has been helped by the exceptional willingness of the faithful in Cameroon to contribute to the growth of their church.

Fr. Alphonse follows some of the same precepts that have been successful in Congo and taught by the late Fr. Pierre Dil in Zambia. The education and training necessary to permit an improvement in one's life is often very difficult to find in Africa. Churches provide the fundamental skills and those trained take on the task of refining skills whether in farming, livestock management, information technology or sewing. One proposal, still in its infancy, is for a sewing school to start marketing vestments for clergy once quality standards have been established. This is similar to a project in South Africa with Bishop Kenyon-Hoare.

Another smaller request from Fr Alphonse is for assistance to buy roofing sheets for the parish of St Eleuthère de Biteng so that the altar and sanctuary would be protected from the frequent violent rainstorms so common in this part of the world. Roofing sheets are around \$15.00 each; not much for us, but quite a sum for those who have little or no work.

Please pray for all who work in this outreach, especially those clergy and laity in each country.

O GOD, who willest that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: Prosper, we pray thee, all those who labour in the Gospel at home and in distant lands (particularly Bishop Steven Ayule-Milenge, Father Alphonse Ndukiye, their clergy and all of their people in Congo and Cameroon); protect them in all perils, and support them in loneliness and in the hour of trial; give them thy grace to bear faithful witness unto thee; endue them with burning zeal and love, that they may turn many to righteousness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Any contribution you could make to the 2013 Africa Appeal fundraising goal of \$24,000 would be greatly appreciated. Our assistance is vital to the future of these growing Christian communities.

With thanks for your invaluable support in building the Kingdom of Jesus Christ both at home and around the world, in Cameroon and Congo,

David+

How to donate

Donations are tax deductible and can be sent to:

The Parish of St. Bride,
c/o 20895 Camwood Ave.,
Maple Ridge, BC
V2X 2N9

Please make a note on the front of the cheque that the funds are for the Africa Appeal.

Tax receipts will be issued.

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