



CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH IN MOZAMBIQUE

Newsletter #23 - April 2023

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EDITORIAL

Pastor Airton S. Schroeder

It is with great honor that I address a word to each of the readers of this newsletter. The relationship between the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil - IELB and the Igreja Cristã da Concórdia em Moçambique - ICCM goes back since 2007. Personally, I have been following this work since 2014, and in a special way this newsletter has recorded the history of the Concordia Christian Church in Mozambique. Difficult situations such as natural disasters and the great blessings in the growth of the church and the progress of social work have been recorded by Rev. Dr. Carlos Walter Winterle.

The opportunities for the development and structuring of missionary work in Mozambique go beyond what is possible to our imagination. To get an idea, there are 139 places of worship. There are 22 ordained pastors and an equal number of theology students, as well as leaders who are active in the development work. Among all these pastors, students and lay leaders there are some things in common. Nobody owns a car, and only a few have a motorcycle or a fairly used bicycle. Even so, the work is in full development, because what makes the church grow is the preaching of the Gospel and not the physical and material conditions of its spiritual leaders.

I confess that the sentence above is the expression of the purest truth, but writing it generates a strange feeling, because while we experience a stagnation and even shrinking of churches in rich countries and in places in Brazil where the structural and economic conditions are stable and abundant, the exponential growth in Mozambique has exceeded our natural ability to give them the physical and economic structure. But certainly, a collective effort would give us the necessary conditions.

Our first commitment is to theological training, and the plan is always to offer two

theology modules each year to students and two training modules to pastors. But when the church expands its area of operation, increases its membership and places of worship, the demand for administrative costs grows, but especially the need for land and church buildings grows. And on this issue, there are fantastic challenges. We built a church for about USD \$8.000,00.

All the information is already known through various reports in previous newsletters, but I decided to condense them into a single text, in this first newsletter under my coordination.

To the donors a simple word. The IELB will be forever grateful to Pastor Winterle, who not only coordinated the work with the Concordia Christian Church in Mozambique, but also took the first steps in welcoming, supporting and structuring the church, giving that church a mark impossible to forget. It will not be possible to write the history of ICCM without Pastor Winterle's name appearing. At this moment we respect pastor Winterle's retirement, but we count on his experience, support, and still his vocabulary and affection will be present in the bulletin about the church in Mozambique.

I ask for everyone's prayers and support. People change positions, but the IELB's commitment to Mozambique does not change. And the opportunities to serve in the Kingdom of God only increase.



CYCLONE FREDDY HITS MOZAMBIQUE

Pastor. Carlos Walter Winterle



Cyclone Freddy threatened the Beira region on February 23 and 24. The news was of high alert. Everyone feared a repeat of the sad episodes of early 2019, when cyclones devastated the city of Beira and many brothers were left homeless. But, thank the good Lord, the winds calmed down and did not wreak havoc in Mozambique. Only heavy rains caused flooding. Many prayed that God would calm the winds, as Jesus did with the storm on the sea of Galilee (Matthew 8.23-27), and the prayers were heard. (Photo: church of Beira)

Unfortunately, Cyclone Freddy, after returning to the sea, returned to the continent with full force and hit the central region of Mozambique, where ICCM has most of its congregations. The reports are heartbreaking! We have selected some messages received from the Mozambican brethren:

- Good evening, I have fresh news about Cyclone Freddy. On Tuesday, March 14, it caused damage in the province (=state) of Sofala in the following districts: Marromeu, Caia, Chemba, and Mutarara in the province of Tete.

In the village of Matema (read below), where Pastor Horácio Rui Jalene is responsible for the services, the believers in this community lost all their possessions, as Cyclone Freddy came through with heavy rain and the Puze River filled up out of bounds. They all lost their goats, pigs and poultry, besides the crops. People took refuge in the Complete Primary School - EPC of Kapasseni. Others were not able to cross the Puze River and had to climb the trees waiting for the waters to recede. All the machambas (gardens) are flooded. I think they won't be able to get food this year, because all the corn is already rotting in the fields.

And those who live in Magagade, Tchetcha and Deve at this moment took refuge on the railway tracks. (Antonio Quembo)

- In the city of Beira, it is the floods that are ravaging the citizens and most are accommodated in the schools of the government of Mozambique. In the province of Zambezia, in the city of Quelimane, there was much destruction of houses, schools, hospitals and the death of many people. Until





today they are uncommunicated due to the destruction of many power stations.

Cyclone Freddy has headed towards our neighboring country Malawi, where it is doing a lot of damage right now. By this afternoon we already had reports of the death of 60 people in Malawi. (Antonio Quembo) (N.B.: The latest news reports that there have been about 200 dead in Malawi and 20 in Mozambique).

Pastor Chadreque reported, with many photos, how the Village of Sena was hit, destroying many houses. The headquarters of the ICCM are in Sena Village.

On Sunday, March 19, Pastor Abel accompanied Pastor Ernesto to the church in Murrema, which was heavily hit by the cyclone. They crossed several seasonal streams formed by the rains, with water up to their waists. Many people are still sheltering in schools, as they have lost everything. They celebrated worship in the very school where people are staying. Read their account:

- Good evening brothers and sisters, pastors and laity of ICCM and partners, we want to thank everyone for the prayers and direct and indirect support you are offering for the great tragedy caused by Cyclone Freddy. The waters have receded and the winds have ceased, so we were able to reach

the Lutheran "St. Luke" church in Murrema, where most of the members are stationed at the school. But when we arrived, most had already left in search of something to eat. We shared God's message with the very few members who stayed.

During our visiting trip we were able to share the message of hope in an individual and collective way, including praying for the sick. There are many houses that have been destroyed, machambas (gardens); one man lost his life caused by the flowing waters. Besides the churches we visited in Mpango, Nkhutche and Murrema, other Lutheran churches in the region have suffered the same effects and have the same needs which are: food, seeds to plant again, shelter and clothing. Therefore, all help is welcome for ICCM.

The families of pastors Antonio Mesa, Deves Jairrossi, Maneca Furquina and others are also without shelter and without food! The situation is chaotic and it is very difficult to reconcile the two responsibilities: family and pastoral ministry. (Abel Sifa)

Specific donations for those affected by the cyclone should be identified as "Cyclone Freddy" and sent to the accounts listed at the end of this Newsletter

ICCM'S NEW BOARD IS LEGALLY RECOGNIZED BY THE MOZAMBIKAN GOVERNMENT

Pastor Abel Sifa

The Concordia Christian Church in Mozambique - ICCM is rejoicing for the great success of the trip to the capital of the Mozambican territory, Maputo, in order to finish the work of the registration of the new board of directors legally elected on December 11 last year. Thus, the new President-Pastor of the ICCM, Rev. João Luís Nota, officially received from the National Director of Religious Affairs the following documents:

- 1) Church Certificate and
- 2) Definitive Certificate of the Church.

We also asked for the Publication Notice of our Statutes in the Republic Gazette, which was given to us in electronic form, which is very good for forwarding to our partners.

The President-Pastor of ICCM was accompanied on this trip by the General Secretary, Rev. Abel Sifa.

Besides receiving the official documents of the church, we had a courtesy meeting with the authorities, when the President-Pastor, as the executive representative of the Church, received some advice to facilitate the proper functioning of the institution and the best relationship between the Church and the government entity. We highlight the following guidelines received:

(a) not to miss meetings related to religious matters when the church is summoned, whether at the national or even provincial (state) level. If the President is unable to attend the event, he can delegate someone to represent him.

b) Have the administrative, legal and financial autonomy well regulated, including furniture and real estate, from the

administrative posts, districts, provinces, up to the national headquarters of the Church.

c) The ICCM, as a religious institution just like other institutions, must have the basic annual sustenance to supply the administrative expenses in all vital sectors of the national board; for example: sustenance of the national board members who work full time, service agents of the office of the national board and other departments; material for use in the offices and maintenance of equipment and the office itself; to have obligatory means of transport feasible to attend the displacements in due time, to update and sustain the sector of external and internal communication; etc.



d) Maintain the permanent dialog with all the sectors of this religious organization, including the government and the partners that support the Church's activities. Especially the monthly, quarterly, semiannual and annual meetings with the integral members of the activity sector.

e) Besides preaching the word of God, the Church should also focus on teaching the word of God, on social projects within the

religious communities, on the program of caring for and defending the needy, such as: the orphaned children, the elderly and the disabled!

The National President-Pastor presented several plans of activities that ICCM, together with its international



partners, has already done in Mozambique and continues to do, such as: Theological Education; translation of books; AGRO-LUTERO and Dorcas projects; church building; the drilling of water sources for the communities. He also mentioned the plan to build a church in Catembe in the capital-Maputo, in Tete City, and in Nhamatanda Village. The National Director of Religious Affairs was very pleased with the plans presented and intends to be present at the laying of the first stone for the construction of such a church in Catembe.

At the end of our stay in Maputo, we met with the leader of our church in Maputo and passed to him all the future plans and asked him to help us implement them.

We returned well to Beira and from Beira to Sena. Many thanks to all who interceded for the trip and those who supported us in a direct or indirect way, including our partners. We ask that our Almighty God bless you all.

LUTHERAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION – (LHF) E NHAMATANDA

Pastor Abel Sifa

The ICCM General Secretary arrived in the city of Beira on January 5th of this year in order to execute and monitor the printing works of the booklet "Jesus Never Fails" in the Chisena language. Reverend Abel Sifa, as the translator of the books from the Portuguese language into the Chisena language within the ICCM, was commissioned to identify the printer and monitor the printing of this booklet. The work is funded by the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) to support the Concordia Christian Church in Mozambique (ICCM) in spreading and solidifying the gospel of Christ.

In the course of this printing work, the translator included in his work schedule a visit

to the "Jesus Salvador" Church in Beira. This happened on Saturday, when he had a consultation and counseling meeting with the local board leaders. We discussed a lot about the spiritual and economic life of the church. Among the consultations, the general secretary explained the role of partners within ICCM.

On Sunday, the 8th of January, the ICCM general secretary made the first visit of the year to the Lutheran Church "Love of God" in the village of Nhamatanda. There he shared the Word of God and administered the sacrament of Holy Baptism; and eventually, he conducted a meeting with the district board. At this meeting, the members representing the different Lutheran churches in the District presented their oral reports on the church activities of their local churches. And

among all the concerns was the purchase of a



plot in the village of Nhamatanda and the construction of a church building that would represent the district headquarters of our church. They also implored the involvement of members in the ICCM's AGRO-LUTERO project to boost the livelihood of Christian families in that district.

Future pastor Romão Paulino Tazono, as the person in charge of the gospel of Christ in that district, complained about the insufficiency of pastoral visits to administer the Sacraments.

Pastor Abel returned home with the already printed material of 1000 copies of the Jesus Never Fails booklet in the Chisena language.

NEWS VIA-WHATSAPP

Pastor Abel Sifa

Matema

Pastor Abel Sifa and his family visited in late January the Matema Lutheran Church in the Kapasseni region, where Pastor Horácio Rui Jalene Sousa is the congregation's minister. It is a church that emerged from the testimony of the pastor and leaders of Kapasseni in 2015, after the graduation of the first pastors

Suero

Pastor Nota visited the congregation in Suero. The members of Suero Lutheran Church greeted everyone and did not forget to send greetings to Pastor Carlos Walter. The members did not forget the visit that Pastor Carlos made together with the ICCM board members in 2017. (Pr. João Luis Nota)



RAINS - FLOODS - DROUGHT

Pastor Abel Sifa

At the beginning of the year, although there was no rain in the Sena region and its surroundings, the Zambezi River overflowed because of rains in the neighboring countries. As a result, the river flooded all the crops in the lower regions, wiping out many crops.

On the other hand, due to the lack of rain, the higher regions have lost their crops due to the drought.

The situation is critical, according to reports from ICCM President Pastor Nota and Pastor Chadreque. (Pr. Nota)



ICCM PASTORS' MEETING

Pastor Abel Sifa

A meeting of the ordained pastors of the ICCM was held on February 15. The meeting was moderated by the General Secretary and led by the ICCM President Pastor. Pastor Graciano shared the word of God. Among all the points discussed in the meeting, the point that talks about the hard

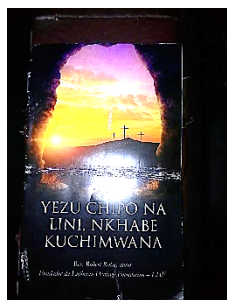
and miserable life of the Mozambican pastors stands out. The president asked everyone to continue praying and waiting on God, because God will answer one day. And the board will continue to look for support among ICCM partners to find who can ease this burden!



"JESUS NEVER FAILS" - DISTRIBUTION

Pastor Abel Sifa

The translation department for literature from the Portuguese language into local languages distributed "Jesus Never Fails" booklet in Chisena language to all the pastors present at the February 15 meeting, in order to take the booklets to be distributed to the members in their congregations.



The pastors were very grateful for the material and asked that if it is possible there should be more Christian literature available in their languages to facilitate understanding and solidify our faith and the faith of the members. They also thanked the IELB and all the partners who support the work in Mozambique, in particular the Lutheran Heritage Foundation - LHF, who is directly supporting this translation work in Mozambique.



THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Pastor André B. Plamer

We are already in full swing with the preparations to go to Mozambique and take another important step in theological education. Concordia Seminary, in partnership with ICCM, continues to focus on preparing more pastors in Mozambique and also to continue the work of pastoral training with the pastors who have already graduated. Going there to continue the formation is not only important, but also challenging, especially because this year, with the passage of the cyclone, the economic situation of the families is very complicated. This makes it difficult for candidates for ministry to decide to leave their homes to go to study, because they need to work and provide for their families. We pray that God will not let our students get discouraged. We expect to go to Mozambique at the end of April and beginning of May. We depend on the documents issued by the competent authorities.



GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



On January 13, Pastor Carlos Walter and his wife Lída Winterle celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. A ceremony in the same church where they got married in Santa Cruz do Sul, RS, followed by a reception for family and friends, marked the date. Instead of gifts, the couple asked each guest to give a donation to the mission in Mozambique. The amount raised was destined to the Dorcas Project for the purchase of more sewing machines. This is because Mrs. Lída has worked all her life sewing, thus helping the household budget. Thus, she wants to help other women to be able to sew and help their families. That is her suggestion.

HAPPY EASTER

The celebration of Christ's resurrection at Easter always fills us with new hope, not only in the spiritual sense, but also in the situations we face in this life. - To the brothers in Mozambique who suffered the damage from Cyclone Freddy, we wish that Easter will give them more strength to trust Christ with all their hearts. In the midst of disgrace and death, Jesus resurrected and showed us the true meaning of our faith and life. - To those who are suffering and are weakened by illness or age, we show the open grave and the consolation that Jesus gave Mary: "Do not weep..." - To those who are in full work and health, we challenge them to share a little of the blessings they receive for God's mission in Mozambique.

We wish everyone a HAPPY AND BLESSED EASTER!





SEE HOW YOU MAY HELP:

USA: The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod PO Box 66861 St. Louis, MO 63166-6861 – USA
(Designate: Mozambique – 60606)

OR: LCMS– Mission Central - C/O Gary Thies 40718 Hwy. E16 Mapleton, IA 51034 - USA
(Designate: Mozambique - 60606)

OR: Credit Card donations – call LCMS OIM at 1-800-433-3954 (specify donations for Mozambique – 60606)

South Africa: Mission of Lutheran Churches (MLC), Account Nr. 1913-137-538, Branch Code: 19 87 65 NEDBANK LTD., Branch: Cresta, Account Type: Current, Swift code: NEDSZAJJ (3954 (specify donations for Mozambique)

PARTNERS SUPPORTING THE PROJECT MOZAMBIQUE,

to whom we thank:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil - IELB, via IELB's Project Support Fund, FAPI

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, LCMS, of the United States, through the Office of International Mission, OIM, regional office for Africa in Nairobi, Kenya

The Selbständige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche, SELK, from Germany, via Lutherische Kirchenmission (Bleckmarer Mission), LKM

The Lutherische Missionsgesellschaft in Österreich - LUTMIS, from Austria

The Hungarian Lutheran Mission Society - HLMS from Hungary

The Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa, FELSISA, and the **Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, LCSA**, both from South Africa, via the Mission of the Lutheran Churches, MLC

The Lutheran Church-Canada, LCC, from Canada, via Redeemer Lutheran Church, RLC, Vancouver

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of England, ELCE, from England

The Igreja Evangélica Luterana Portuguesa, IELP, from Portugal

The Lutheran Heritage Foundation, LHF, from the USA, which has supported the Chisena language translation projects.

Compilação dos textos enviados de Moçambique:

Carlos Walter Winterle

Diagramação:

IELB.com

Photo credit:

Abel Sifa, Chadreque

This Newsletter is published in Portuguese, English and German.

We thank the reviewers:

Portuguese:

André B. Plamer e Airton S Schroeder

English:

Dr. Bálintné Kis Beáta

German:

Martin Benhöfer

