



CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF CONCORD IN MOZAMBIQUE

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EDITORIAL

Rev. Airton S. Schroeder

Mozambique is no longer just a place on the map but has become one with faces, people, pastors, families, and challenges. I have been following the financial management of the work in Mozambique since 2015. I was there between June 8th and 22nd, 2023, together with Prof. Leonídio Schulz Görl, Coordinator of the Theological Education Program for the Christian Church of Concordia in Mozambique, and with the Missionary Pastor Rev. André Buchweitz Plamer and his wife, Maíra.

This trip allowed us to offer another module of the Theological Education Program and start a journey to support the administrative management of the church. It was an essential step towards placing a Brazilian missionary in the country.

Administrative and bureaucratic difficulties have taken away much effort this year, starting with the visa for the team's entry. We planned to travel in March but could only do so in June.

Following the country's custom, on June 09, there was a meeting and lunch with the head of constitutional and religious affairs in Beira. On June 15, we spoke with the head of government of Vila de Sena and the manager of Caixa Financeira de Caia in Vila de Sena.

There were several moments and meetings with the ICCM Board of Directors, and we highlight the night of June 20, when ICCM signed the document of Mutual Understanding between the churches that support the work there. In Brazil, the president of IELB (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil) signed the paper at the National Board of Directors meeting on June 28, 2023. The other churches signed the document in Wittenberg, Germany, at the Meeting of Churches of the International Lutheran Council.

The theological development of pastors is receiving special attention from the Coordinator of the Theological Education Program, as emergency attention was given to the ordination of workers, meeting an urgent demand of the church in the country, which now needs also to meet the parameters of Lutheran Confessional Theology,

seeking to deepen the formation and knowledge of pastors for theological dialogue in different nations.

In 2023, it was impossible to start constructing a temple or expanding the facilities at the Seminary, as the ICCM board was still dealing with banking difficulties. We believe this stage will be overcome, and we can move forward with structuring for next year.

Some people from Brazil are seeking information on volunteering with the Church of Mozambique. On the next trip to the country, we will deal with specific issues with the government and plan a program with the church that will allow us to provide a minimum structure of welcome and action.

Our gratitude to all those who have their hearts set on missionary work in Mozambique. Thank you for the prayers. Keep praying for the people, the pastors, and their families. Also, for the coordination and the churches that in joint agreement support the work in the country.



Pr. Jacobo Estefano Lencastre and family.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND CONGREGATION VISITING



It was a 42-hour trip from the first to the last airport, but arriving in Mozambique was exciting.

And after another 15 hours of car travel, the reception was remarkable. It was already evening when we arrived at the entrance of the Seminary in Chola, Sofala.



At each visit to the Christian Church of Concordia in Mozambique, theological training is directed to students and pastors. At the same time, as many congregations as possible are also visited, always together with local church pastors. These celebrations are contagious moments. The attention given to the moment of the sermon is the dream of every pastor in any country in the world: complete attention and reverence to the preaching of the Word of God. Alongside this, song and worship are spontaneous.



ICCM relies on the work of 22 pastors. This has generated a more effective service to the congregations and baptisms being carried out all the time. Given the distances, there is a need for more present pastoral action, and layman leaders still have to attend some places. When pastors are present, it is an opportunity for many people to be baptized. Prof. Leonídio celebrated worship on June 18 in Nhamgoma Sede, in Mutarara, and 51 people were baptized, including children and adults.

Pastor André, on June 17, at the Congregation of St. Peter, Chemba, baptized the 10th daughter of the presiding pastor, Rev. João Luiz Nota, and his wife, Mrs. Chica Armando lapuquene Nota.



On June 17, after the service, the president, Rev. João Nota, invited us to have lunch at his home in Chemba.

Here are some of the visits to churches that became possible: on June 09, in the town of Massoda, in Beira; on June 10, at CEL Santo André, in the cities of Gondola and Guidione;



Rev. Airton celebrated two services in the localities of Murrema and Mpango,



on June 14, in the city and province of Tete.

and Rev. Leonídio in Nhamgoma Sede, Mutarara. On the way back to Beira, on June 20, they held a celebration in the town of Inhanminga, Cheringoma district, Sofala.

On June 16, Rev. André celebrated service in the town of Minjale, which is part of the Mutarara District;



On June 17, Rev. Airton participated in a service held in a place called February 3 while Rev. André was at CEL São Pedro in Chemba, and Prof. Leonídio in the locality of Asuero. On June 18, Rev. André celebrated a service at CEL São Paulo in Sena.



MAÍRA PLAMER (REV. ANDRÉ'S WIFE) ACCOMPANIES THE MISSION AT ICCM

Mrs. Maíra Plamer made history in IELB's work with ICCM. The wife of Rev. André Plamer was the first woman from IELB to accompany the work in Mozambique. She expressed herself to us as follows:



“After ten years of following the mission very closely, this year, I had the opportunity to accompany my husband on his missionary trip to Mozambique. It was an enriching experience, and I learned a lot about the love of God. The financial situation is difficult, but the passion and dedication to hearing God's Word are impressive. That impacted me the most on this trip. In his travels, my husband always mentioned the love and dedication of these people to hear and learn more about the Word of God, but I had no idea what that love and commitment were like. I was moved upon arrival and during the service in each church I visited, along with the pastors. They show immense love and gratitude to God for all that they experience. Indeed, I came back to Brazil a different person. We

have better conditions and many opportunities in our country. Yet, we live enchanted by futile things, we complain, and too often, we do not recognize the goodness of God, which is with us even amid difficulties and problems. Seeing our brothers and sisters so grateful to God and showing such gratitude and love significantly changed me. There's much work there that we can help with. Even far away, we can pray, assist in the Dorcas and Agro-Luther projects, and support the construction of churches; in short, we can do a lot even from far away.”

IELB PRESIDENT MEETS LHF DIRECTORS



The president of IELB, Rev. Geraldo W. Schüler, was at the 68th Regular Convention of The

Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS), from July 29 to August 03 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. On the occasion, he took copies of the book *A Garden of Biblical Stories*, produced by Editora Concórdia, in Brazil, and the booklet *Jesus Never Fails*, in Chisena, published in Brazil and printed in



Mozambique with donations made by the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) to be used by the Christian Church of Concordia, in Mozambique. At the LHF booth, President Schuler was joined by LCMS Director of National and International Missions, Rev. Dr. Kevin Robson.

With the support of the LHF, a study on the Lutheran Liturgy in Portuguese, the Lutheran Liturgy in the Chisena and Shona languages—to be

printed in Mozambique— and the Summary of Christian Doctrine—to be published in Brazil—are nearing completion.

We offer our constant gratitude to the American brothers and sisters who support LHF with donations in favor of missionary development worldwide, particularly, in Mozambique.

MATERIAL TRANSPORTED TO MOZAMBIQUE

The offerings of the services held weekly at Concordia Seminary in São Leopoldo, RS, Brazil, are directed to the purchase of theological books for pastors in Angola and Mozambique. This year, each pastor received an NTLH Study Bible.

parts (paperback), as well as the children's book *A Garden of Biblical Stories*, copies of the Lutheran Messenger Magazine with ICCM reportage, posters with Bible stories and the Lutheran Hour's booklet *Who is Jesus?* We took eight full suitcases containing more than 160 kg of books.



In partnership with the *Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF)*, materials were produced in Portuguese and printed in Brazil; then, they were taken to the Christian Church of Concordia (ICCM). This time, we took *Confessing the Gospel: A Lutheran Approach to Systematic Theology*, volume 1, and dozens of copies of the complete Small Catechism and the Small Catechism with the six



THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM – PET

Professor Leonídio Schulz Görl

Between the 12th and 20th of June, the subjects of Module 7 of the PET: Comparative Religions, Homiletics, and Pastoral Counseling were taught at the ICCM Training Center in Chola, Sofala Province.



IELB oversees theological formation through the Theological Education by Extension Program and follows a program aimed at pastoral formation in Mozambique. The Program is now being adapted, and a new

proposal will be presented to ICCM with a view to theological deepening and formation expansion.



The classes are taught by professors and pastors invited by the Coordinator of the ETE of the Concordia Seminary and have simultaneous translation into local languages. Students who are fluent in Portuguese and local languages take turns translating.

THE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL SECRETARY OF ICCM IN MALAWI

On August 08, the General Secretary, Rev. Abel Sifa, announced the arrival at the meeting venue in Malawi. He wrote: "Good morning, brethren and pastors. I want to inform you that Rev. João Luís Nota, ICCMS's President, arrived in Malawi in the city of Blantyre to participate in the meeting of the representatives of the churches of Malawi, Zambia, and Mozambique, together with the missionaries of the LCMS".

When returning home, the president, Rev. João Luís Nota, wrote: "Thank you all very much, for the grace of God, and for the prayers concerning our coming to Malawi. The meeting was good. There were churches from five countries: Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Kenya. It was good to get to know each other. Our God in Jesus unites us. I thank God and his son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Other places need God where the gospel of Jesus needs to be preached. I thank this organization, which called the pastors of each country to join and see the work of God, and also for their supplies for this meeting in Malawi. God bless this organization to continue organizing gatherings for other countries out of the 25 with which this organization is involved. It was nice that they could see how the African continent has been doing together by sharing the Word of God in Jesus. With the help of the Holy Spirit, may you continue to plan more for the development of the churches on the African continent in the different countries because the word of Christ is for all, and it must be taken



to the various places of the world. May God bless the churches worldwide so that others may know us and we may also know other partner churches worldwide.



The trip went well, and we arrived home safely. Thank you to our Mozambique Mission Coordinator, Rev. Aírton S Schroeder, and the others praying about our journey from Mozambique to Malawi. We came back well by the grace of God. May God bless ICCM, IELB, and its president, Rev. Geraldo Walmir Schuler. Thank you so much, Lord. May God be for all."



The Brazilian pastor, Rev. Fernando Henrique Huf, LCMS Area Facilitator for Southern Africa and missionary of the Alliance Project, joined the meeting.

SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)



On the night of June 20, in a meeting with the ICCM Board of Directors, President João Luiz Nota was the first to sign the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). On this date, the ICCM Board of Directors gifted IELB and Concordia Seminary with crosses with the acronym of the church – ICCM. The Vice President of Social Action, Rev. Airton Schroeder, delivered the gift destined for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil to the president, Rev. Geraldo Walmir Schuler, who, at the meeting of the National Board of Directors on June 28, signed the MOU representing IELB.



In October, in Germany, the coordinator had the opportunity to meet with leaders of the churches that support ICCM's work.

On October 4, Rev. Airton Schroeder was in Bleckmar, where he met with the mission director, Rev. Roger Zieger, and Rev. Martin Benhöfer, Head of Communication for the Bleckmar Mission.



Prof. Rev. Leonídio Schulz Görl handed the gift for the Concordia Seminary to the director, Rev. Dr. Gerson Luís Linden.



On the occasion, he got to know the missionary organization, its challenges, and its activities in several countries, including Brazil and



Mozambique. Rev. Roger Zieger, the director, signed the MOU.



In Wittenberg, he met with leaders of two other churches participating in the joint work. On behalf of LCMS, Rev. Shauen Trump, mission director for

Africa, and Bishop Helmuth Paul, from South Africa, also signed.



The meeting in Germany was an opportunity to listen to the expectations and suggestions of the partner churches for developing the work in Mozambique.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

André Plamer

ICCM is, along with its partners, taking a giant step for the church's growth, not only in numbers but in a unique way to perfect and equip the church by constantly studying the Word. Year after year, it is natural to observe that the church, which began with the desire to preach the Gospel, has started to structure itself as an essential theological reference point in Mozambique, with the Lutheran confessional foundations. We are still at the beginning, but the beneficial posture of the pastors and leaders in Mozambique, who show a sincere desire to know more and more about the Word, leads us and gives us clarity that the work of preaching the Gospel never comes, and will never come back, without answers as reminded by the prophet Isaiah 55:10-11: "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return

there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it." With the partnership relationships between the sister churches supporting missionary work in Mozambique and the love for the Gospel of the ICCM brethren, we are seeing the emergence of a church based on the Scriptures. Also, with the signing of the new MOU (Memorandum of Understanding), we will continue the work and solidify the plan of a missionary pastor residing in Mozambique. May the good God conduct everything so that His holy will may be done.



THE LUTHERAN MISSION IN ANGOLA

The Lutheran Confessional Church of Angola, ILCA, presided over by Bishop Benjamin Nzuzi Mavungo, has been supported by IELB, which mediates projects with the LCMS Africa Office. In 2021, in addition to renovating its temples, it also equipped them with benches that the members themselves manufactured.



Since 2022, a dream of almost a decade has been taking shape. It is the construction of the temple in *Christ the King* mission, in Chiazzi, Cabinda, Angola, with the dimensions of 11 x 22 m.



The masonry of the temple is completed, and the roof is on. The challenges are the electrical installation, the plastering, the flooring, temple furniture, painting, and finishing.



The Seminary began the new school year in October. It continues to train pastors for ILCA and accepts students from other denominations, which helps with the tuition costs.



EDITORIAL STAFF:

Editor: Rev. Ailton S. Schroeder

Layout: IELBcom / Ederson Wasem

Photos: Abel Sifa, Ailton Schroeder, André Plamer,
Leonidio Görl, and Malra Plamer.

Proofreaders:

Portuguese: Rev. André B. Plamer

English: Rev. Fernando Huf e Magda Huf

German: Rev. Martin Benhöfer

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN 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)

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