



HELPING THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA SINCE 1971

## ANGOLA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

www.angolamsf.org

Fall 2016



### Glossary

**AMSF:** Angola Memorial Scholarship Fund

**CICA:** Council of Christian Churches of Angola

**IECA:** Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola

### Donations

AMSF is grateful to have received a donation in honour of Bev Houslander on her 70th birthday and her election in July 2016 as Vice-President of AMSF. AMSF is grateful to have received donations in memory of Edith Radley and Rev. Etta Snow

How to donate, page 4

### How much longer can AMSF continue its work?

By Eleanor Ellins, AMSF Treasurer

That's a question your hard-working and dedicated AMSF members and volunteers are asking. In 1972, the fund's first year of operation, \$3,900 in scholarships were awarded to Angolan war refugees, for advanced education. By 1978, the year's scholarships awards total had risen to \$28,500. Once peace was restored to Angola in 2002, churches there asked AMSF to also help respond to the pressing need to re-establish primary education and provide adult work skills training.

Continued on page 4

# AMSF funds 314 children's Bibles for literacy program



High school student mentor with children in one village After School Program, held in the village adobe chapel

By Icel Rodrigues, AMSF member and Director of Global Missions - Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church

Education continues to be a high priority for the United Methodist Church in East Angola. In 2015, the Angolan Association of Former Students of Quessua (AEAQ) launched the After School Program for six of the villages around the United Methodist Quessua Mission. Twelve high school students from the Mission Boarding House have been trained as mentors for the 314 elementary age children enrolled in the program. Each of these secondary school students receives a \$270 scholarship each year from the Florida Conference of the UMC that covers their school fees and uniforms. As a way to pay forward, they volunteer their

Continued on page 2



A student uses a tin can for a desk



# IECA education program benefited 2,945 in 2016

Rev Ana Vongula, Director of the IECA Women's Association, reports that the \$40,000 AMSF grant received in late 2015 has helped them to provide an impressive 11 education programs for women, men, youth and children (See box below). Rev Vongula describes how women participants are visibly empowered in church and social milieus, particularly in urban and peri urban areas. Children and adolescents are contributing their new skills and ideas to church programs. Fifty of the Vacation School graduates are now enrolled in a computer course provided by the Angolan Ministry for the Promotion of the Family and Women. The graduates have formed an Association of Adolescent Entrepreneurs. Looking to 2017, the Women's Association is planning to add a tutoring program for 100 children with academic challenges. Of the 13 Formation Centres, the seven newer ones will require mentoring and support. Rev Vongula's report concludes with the sobering observation that centres have seen a drop in income from enrollment due to the country's current economic crisis.



**Youth graduates of the IECA Vacation School show off certificates in cooking and décor courses, in the company of their teachers and church leaders**

## LITERACY PROGRAM continued from page one

time and travel to the villages in pairs, three days a week, to assist elementary school age children with their school work between 4 and 6pm. In most instances, these lessons are the only exposure that children have to education as some of them work in the fields during the day. The AEAQ has provided school supplies for the Program for the last year and a half and a modest stipend for transportation for mentors who travel to the farthest villages. Teams from the United Methodist Florida Conference have also provided support to build benches for the little chapels where the classes take place as well as funding for building repairs. Later this year, two teams will work with the church and community members to rebuild two of the chapels that collapsed during the rainy season.

Another top priority of the United Methodist Church in East Angola is to provide strong Christian education for local children and youth. Our hope and prayer is to be able to strengthen this area through the After School Program by using illustrated Bibles to teach reading.

The role of AMSF: In September 2016, AMSF provided a grant of US \$5,181 to purchase 157 Bibles. AMSF member Rev Joyce Myers-Brown raised a matching US\$5,181 for another 157 Bibles, enabling each child to have their own Bible. When I visited Quessua in September I was able to participate in the presentation of the Bibles at the Annual General Meeting of AEAQ and at the consecration of the Bibles during a Quessua Church Service.

To AMSF donors, I extend many blessings and many thanks for your support and love for the people of Angola. The situation with the current economic crisis in the country is dreadful, particularly in the poorest communities like the ones around Quessua. People seem sicker and hungrier. I had never seen a situation like this in the last 10 years. It was so sad to see the children, who would usually be dancing, singing, playing, instead lining up to see the doctor. I can see the Bibles being an instrument of God to bring back joy to the children.

## IECA education programs funded by AMSF grant

**1** Three-phase leadership program for 50 provincial-level Women's Association leaders

**2** Grass roots campaign to open literacy centres for women in all provinces and a pilot literacy school in Uige

**3** Life skills vacation school program for over 100 children and adolescents

**4** Domestic sciences courses in weekly Women's Association meetings, Formation Schools and through itinerant teaching

**5** Workshops in organizational skills and hygiene, provided during weekly Women's Association meetings, in Formation Schools and at major women's camps in Balombo, Bocoio and Ebo

**6** Train-the-trainer seminars in business and entrepreneurship for women leaders and the opening of small businesses by women and youth



**Hundreds gathered at the IECA Women's camp in Balombo**

in Huila and Bie provinces

**7** Agricultural entrepreneurship courses for over 100 women and youth in Chilessso and Camundongo

**8** Workshops in family and social relations, citizenship, social and health protection, professional development and job search skills, provided during dry season camps for women and men, held in 11 provinces. Similar

camps will be held in seven other provinces in the fall.

**9** Bible studies and deepening of prayer and meditation practices at weekly women's meetings and at regional women's camps

**10** Teacher training for Sunday School leaders this fall

**11** Courses in effective parenting of children and adolescents in December

# A gift of solar lights for IECA schools

In August, 120 Luci solar lights arrived to power classrooms in four IECA schools. Solar lighting is a useful alternative in a country where power is expensive and sometimes intermittent. Here's the story of the 120 solar lanterns.

Rev David Gilchrist, a founding member of AMSF, has been inspired by the efforts to rebuild Dondi educational institutions. And he has a keen interest how solar energy can provide a renewable source of power for schools. Rev. Gilchrist shared his ideas with members of his local Red Deer Presbytery of the United Church of Canada in Alberta. They were especially interested in the reconstruction of the Lutamo Domestic Sciences School and raised CAN\$1,590 for the purchase of solar panels for that school.

Coincidentally, indeed providentially, Rev Joyce Myers- Brown learned of the inexpensive, lightweight Luci solar lights recommended by the United Church of Christ Global Ministries for overseas partners. The Red Deer Presbytery agreed to AMSF using their donation to purchase 120 Luci solar lights. IECA leaders confirmed that the lights would be useful, given the frequent power cuts they are faced with even in the capital of Luanda.

Rev Mike Solberg and his wife Janine, members of a team from the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ Angola Partnership, delivered the Luci lights during



**Dondi Seminary students try out the solar lights at the Brantford School in Lutamo**

the team's tour of the work of IECA in August. Senior IECA church and school leaders warmly welcomed the Luci lights and distributed them among the Lutamo Domestic Sciences School, the new Lutamo Brantford Middle School, the new AMSF-

funded elementary school in Amboiva, and the elementary school in Waku Kungo. The distribution of solar lights to three different regions means many more Angolans may be introduced to this green technology.

## AMSF provides US\$30,000 grant to CICA scholarships

For over a decade, AMSF has been supporting the advanced education scholarship program of CICA. This program offers scholarships to young Angolans for the period it takes to complete their programs. When one recipient graduates, another is selected. CICA staff member Joana Vemba, in this year's annual report to AMSF, provided the following information on current recipients. There are 12 women and 10 men studying at institutions in five provinces. Thirteen recipients received a scholarship of \$1,500 for professional and advanced studies. Nine received a scholarship of \$1,000 for undergraduate studies. (Their courses include Accounting and Administration, Communication Sciences, Geographic Engineering, Governance & Management, Health Studies, Law, Mathematics, Physical Sciences & Biology and Psychology Education.) Students are recommended for the program by their home churches, churches which belong to denominations that are members of CICA. The expectation is that recipients will give back to their communities and their church families. This is the case for graduate Marcelina Avelino, pictured here.

### Marcelina Avelina, grateful scholarship recipient



"Thanks and peace in the name of Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. Amen."

I am Marcelina José Avelino, daughter of Eduardo Avelino Kiaku and Rosa José Avelino, resident in Luanda, a member of Paterson Missionary Parish of the United Evangelical Church Anglican Communion in Angola. I come through this letter to thank CICA and AMSF for the four-year scholarship support given when I studied Business Management at the Technical University of Angola. The scholarship served for payments of tuition fees, acquisition of didactic materials and meeting other student costs.

I acquired the training to, in turn, make my contribution to CICA where I began working as a financial assistant two years ago. I am also giving my contribution in the field of education, where I work as a teacher.

I am grateful for the support of AMSF donors. May God continue to bless you with the strength and courage to keep this scholarship project going and to continue funding young Angolans who have difficulty financing their studies. May God bless you richly.



# Project Courage school opens!

By Rev Joyce Myers-Brown

"In the community of Amboiva more than 500 children will no longer study under the trees." Thus began an article about the inauguration on July 15, 2016 of the Reverend Joyce Evangelical Primary School. The school was a project of IECA's Sociedade Media Joyce (Joyce Young Adult Society). The ribbon was cut by IECA's Executive Secretary, Rev. Abel de Jesus Sangunde, and by the Vice-Governor of Kwanza Sul Province, Franklin Fortunato de Silva. This beautiful school sports six classrooms, occupies 20,000 square meters and heralds a new day for this community.

Young Loide Cambiete, representing more than 500 students, delivered a message to the vice-governor. She acknowledged the great effort and commitment of IECA, the Sociedade Media, and Rev. Joyce. Members of AMSF also played a large role through the Project Courage Campaign in achieving this amazing accomplishment.

The General Director of the Sociedade Media, Amilcar Dan-

iel Veloso, expressed his great joy and told of the long struggle since early 2013 to arrive at this great day. He spoke of the challenge of bringing building materials from such a great distance to this isolated hill community, of roof-destroying storms, and especially of the work of all involved.

As "godmother" of the Sociedade, I was not able to be present at the opening ceremony for health reasons but I sent this message from Atlanta, Georgia.

"God has given us all the strength and perseverance to achieve this goal. Thanks be to God! My prayer today is that those who study here – and those who teach here – will use mind and heart for the glory of God and the good of all. You will have my love and prayerful support day after day into the future. And may the grace of God and the love of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit dwell within these walls and in your lives forever. Amen."

*Note: AMSF member Rev. Myers-Brown matched the initial AMSF Project Courage School*



**Above, The ribbon-cutting moment**



**Left, Loide Cambiete presents a message from the students to the vice governor**

*grant of \$20,000 by raising another \$60,000 to complete the school. The funds were also needed to repair the damaged roof. The major storm's de-*

*struction delayed the school's opening by a year. The Angolan provincial government has furnished the school and will be paying the teachers' salaries.*

## AMSF Future? continued from page one

AMSF, in choosing to broaden support of Angolan education programming, has awarded a series of grants which averaged \$60,000 a year from 2007 to 2011. This annual grant total jumped to an average of \$123,000 a year from 2008 to 2015, partly as a result of some significant matching grant funding (funds raised by groups and individuals on top of regular donor contributions.) The Fund has been the beneficiary of several bequests which were invested. Our core Investment Fund has contributed up to \$30,000 in annual interest income to our yearly budget. However, no new bequests

have been received since 2011. In addition, our donor base is declining. There were 450 donors in 2007 and 295 in 2015. Donations totalled \$120,000 in 2007 and \$60,000 in 2015 -- a drop of 50% in eight years. We realize that many of our wonderfully faithful donors are older seniors and church groups faced with closing.

Must this be the end of a long and fruitful relationship? We hope not! If we could find a way to build our core investment and cut back a little on grants, maybe we could get back on a solid footing. In 2016 we are sending out two major grants: to CICA for scholarships and to IECA for Women's For-

mation Schools (asking the latter to accept a \$10,000 cut in their requested funding). Then, there's next year to worry about!

Just think: We distribute 1500 copies of this Newsletter. If everyone who picked up a copy were to send \$20 we'd have significant additional funds to add to the faithful efforts of our dedicated annual donors! I invite you to join me in visioning small steps to sustain our half century partnership between Angolans and North Americans which has helped thousands of individuals and played a part in sustaining peace and reconstruction of a nation.

## How to Donate

Donations may be made online at [www.angolamsf.org](http://www.angolamsf.org). Donations may also be sent to your AMSF Regional Representative, whose addresses may be found on the AMSF website. Cheques should be made out to Angola Memorial Scholarship Fund or AMSF. Donations may also be sent to the AMSF Treasurer, Eleanor Ellins at: 2016-1333 Bloor Street, Mississauga, ON L4Y 3T6.