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ANGOLA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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QUÉSSUA AREA SCHOOLS EXPERIENCE MIRACLES

By Icel Rodriguez, Director of Global Missions at The Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church and AMSF member

The Quéssua Methodist Mission in Angola is a fertile ground for God's miracles and wonders. So many are the challenges, roadblocks, and difficulties of daily life in the area that, unless God is involved, the best thought-out plans and most selfless desires of good for all would not materialize... ever. This year, Quéssua has seen another miracle. Five young adult missionaries from Brazil are spending a year teaching at the Elementary through High School levels.



Quéssua packed classroom

Allow me to take a minute to explain how God made that happen. Last year, my husband and I were in Havana for a few hours at an event of the Methodist Church in Cuba. During lunch, we struck up a conversation with a visiting pastor from Brazil about the need for volunteer teachers in Quéssua. Not long after that, the first couple of Brazilian volunteers arrived in Quéssua. (AMSF provided a grant to cover their living expenses for 10 months, travel and visa costs). In September, another three Brazilians joined. See, not only had God set up that brief divine appointment in Havana but He was already working in the hearts of five young adults, thousands of miles away, and getting them ready for a life-transforming journey. God took care of every difficulty that arose through the months before their arrival. He provided the financial resources needed, the

one-year visas and the volunteers that lovingly prepared a place for them to stay.

God also moved the hearts of the Quéssua School leaders to open the institution to all the children whether or not they have the costly government-issued ID card required for registration. It's amazing how the Lord sends His word, and strongholds collapse and doors open at the power of His voice! Lastly, God moved another set of people, faithful donors, who contributed generously towards the \$25 per student per year cost of education for hundreds of children who can't even afford to buy a pencil. All the funding for this school year is secured and school attendance has gone up from fewer than 300 students last year to more than 800!

Continued on page 3...

Glossary >>>

- » **AMSF** Angola Memorial Scholarship Fund
- » **CICA** Council of Christian Churches of Angola
- » **IECA** Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola

MIRACLE STORIES FROM THE QUEUSSA LITERACY OUTREACH PROGRAM

By Ruthie Schaad, Coordinator of Quessua Literacy Outreach Program

Note: This program has been made feasible with the building of chapel schools in villages near Quessua and with the use of volunteer mentor-teachers, high school and post-secondary students who are funded through small honorariums. AMSF has been a funding partner.

João Vunge family: Recently we were able to process all four of Tio João's children for bilhetes/ID cards. Four at once is a challenge, but Sebastião, our bilhete expert was able to secure them. The family lives across the Lombe River in Sona village where the last chapel was built with AMSF matching funds. Joana Vunga is the youngest girl and had bilateral cataracts from birth. After two years of trying to find a solution, we sent her in April 2024 to Boavista Eye Clinic in Benguela. Dr. João/John Kakorio operated on her right and left eyes seven days apart. She did beautifully. He fell in love with her with her spirit. He was able to do both operations under local anesthesia because she was so cooperative – or he was so calming! Usually children need general anesthesia..



Joana is now a smiling 8-year-old walking the 30 minutes to Mbango for school every day with 1st and 2nd grade teacher Simão. I just love Joana's story and especially that she has such an attentive, adoring father and surgeon.



3rd & 4th grade teacher Noe at Mbango satellite school

Classes at Mbango: This year as part of the collaboration between the Florida Conference, United Methodist Church and the Quessua school, a satellite classroom was started in Mbango chapel. It is located across the Lombe River where access to school becomes difficult when the river and footbridge flood in the wet season. Simão is the 1st and 2nd grade teacher during the first morning session. Noé, in the picture, is the 3rd and 4th grade combined teacher for the second morning session. Both young men are undertaking education majors (4th and 3rd years) at the university in Malange and are beneficiaries of Florida Conference UMC scholarships for students. They both graduated from Quessua secondary colegio. They wanted to get more experience teaching, so this Mbango chapel school placement worked out perfectly for them. They are wonderful teachers as we fully expected they would be. Simão was a chapel school outreach teacher for three years while he was in secondary school. This is a blessing for the children of Sona and Mbango and would not be possible without our wonderful chapel!

Teacher Mauro at Terra Nova chapel: Literacy teacher/mentor Mauro has started classes at Terra Nova. He is a 12th grader in his third year of teaching in the chapels. He is being shadowed by a would-be teacher from Mbango village, 9th grader Martins. In this session he was gearing the lesson to the older children.



Teacher Mauro at Terra Nova Chapel School

Sona Chapel Summer Classes: Simão taught classes at the Sona school three days a week during the dry season in July and August. Despite the 1.5 hour walk each way, the lack of rain made the footbridge across the Lombe River accessible, enabling him to get to the school relatively easily.



...continued from page 1

As part of the educational program, the Cassembele elementary school, part of the Quéssua school complex, has reopened all classes. Also, a satellite classroom has started at Mbango, where AMSF financed the construction of a chapel/classroom in 2020. Children from Sona, the most distant village from the mission, are now able to attend school in Mbango. What was God's vision from the beginning? Mrs. Betty Freitas, a Quéssua resident, described it beautifully: "The joy of seeing a sea of white coats (uniforms) filling the Quéssua road again." There is no other way to explain this chain of events but God's power and love in action for the good of the least of these – the children of Quéssua. And there is no way any of the players in this story would say anything but "Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness." Psalms 115:1



Luciel Cravalho, one of the Brazilian volunteers: "This time here has changed my life. It is an honor to serve the people of Quéssua!"



Brazilian volunteers celebrate a birthday with the Espinosas, medical missionaries from Cuba. Also in the picture, baby Ana, born to Danilo and Fernanda not long after arriving in Quéssua.

Rev. Danilo Figueira, another of the Brazilian volunteer teachers, also pastors the congregation at the Mbango chapel.



AMSF is Grateful for Donations in Memory of:

Bev & Tom Brown, Rev Ed Brown, The Very Rev José Chipenda, Rev Tom Gilchrist, Dr Sid & Frankie Gilchrist and their daughter Betty Gilchrist, Robert Malcolm

OVERJOYED STUDENTS WELCOME HISTORY RESEARCHER TEACHING ESL AT IECA LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

My name is Catherine Ramey, and I am a fourth-year PhD student in History at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada. From August to December 2024, I am working as the English teacher at the Language Institute of IECA (Instituto de Línguas da IECA) in Huambo, Angola.

While I teach English, I am also working on my dissertation on Canadian missionary education in Angola from 1880 to 1920. I am writing my second chapter, planning out other chapters, going through the archives of over 20,000 images, and interviewing those who attended Canadian mission schools (particularly Means School and Currie Institute) between 1880 and 1970 and their descendants.

I arrived in Huambo on August 19th after 48 hours of plane travel. Rev. Moma, director of the Language Institute, picked me up from the airport and brought me to the apartment at the Institute, which is perfect for my four-month stay.

One week after arriving, I began teaching English. From Monday to Thursday, we run five classes: 7:30 a.m. for advanced adults, 9:30 a.m. for beginner children and adolescents, 2:00 p.m. for beginner children and adolescents, 3:30 p.m. for intermediate adolescents and adults and 6:00 p.m. for advanced adults.

Students in the beginner classes play games to practice vocabulary, numbers, and common phrases. I am very impressed by their progress already: even the six-year-olds know how to greet people and say how they are in English!

The intermediate classes have been the most difficult because they include a range of ages and knowledge levels. I have had to adapt to new students on a weekly basis, and I am just getting into a solid structure now in October. We generally focus on verb tenses (which they specifically requested) and discussion, particularly using the new verb tenses in everyday conversations.

The advanced classes are the most unstructured and change based on the students' questions and requests. Yet, these classes are my favourite part of the day because I have conversations only in English on a variety of topics, and I often spend half of the class laughing. We have recently started trying out tongue twisters to improve pronunciation



Catherine with Rev Momo, director of IECA Language Institute, student Felipe and Institute Secretary Florinda attending 100th anniversary of Benguela Mission

of English sounds, and we all stumble over the sentences and end up laughing together.

Following Adrienne and Joe, my predecessors, I have continued holding Library Days on Tuesdays and Show and Tell on Thursdays. For Library Days, we go to the Institute's library, which is located directly beside the classroom, and everyone reads books in English. One of the younger students prefers to look at the pictures and flip through the books very quickly, so I have started having him read to me to make sure he practices reading. He is only ten, but he is still learning English very quickly!

For Show and Tell on Thursdays, all students are invited to prepare a short presentation on an object from their home or give a performance (singing, dancing, acting, reciting poetry, etc.). The intermediate and advanced students speak and perform mostly in English, and the beginners usually speak in Portuguese. This activity has been great for getting to know the students, building their confidence in speaking in front of the class, and sharing our interests with one another. At 7:30 a.m., one student brings his piano from home, and we spend the entire class singing and making music.

Here are a few words from Filipe, who attends the

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advanced 7:30 a.m. class: “Hello, my name is Filipe. I am an English student in the Language Institute of IECA, and I have gained many experiences since I began to study. My teacher’s name is Catherine, and I have learned a lot with her. In my point of view, she is the best teacher I have ever had. My favourite part of classes is Show and Tell, and I am overjoyed to be here.”

In addition to research and teaching, Rev. Moma and I have made trips around Angola to the Benguela Jubilee, to Namibia, and to nearby towns around Huambo. You can read more about these trips (and see more pictures) on my blog at <https://catherineramey.wordpress.com/blog-posts/>.

While I have been here for less than two months, I cannot imagine leaving. From the students to the food to the landscape, it has been an incredible experience, and I am already planning to come back in the future.

NOTE: The Language Institute is a social mission project of IECA and they have asked the Angola Partnership Team (APT) of the Illinois Conference United Church of Christ for visiting English teachers. We are grateful for contributions of time, talent, and financial support! Contact: Rev Mike Solberg, First Church of Cambridge, Massachusetts (UCC), jmichaelsolberg@gmail.com or Rev Dr Coutinho Moma, IECA Language Institute Director, coutinhommoma@gmail.com

CICA REPORT ON 2024-25 AMSF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

All 14 of last year's scholarship recipients passed. Abigail Calulu completed her 4-year nursing course and has proceeded to university level studies. Israel Casimiro completed his 4-year computer engineering program. The remaining 12 continue their studies in accounting and finances, biology, economics, pre-school education, nursing, and regional and urban planning. We thank AMSF for the annual USD 20,000 grant which has made possible the advanced education of dozens of young Angolans in the last two decades and has empowered them to contribute to the development of their country and communities.

Funda, Luanda Literacy teacher trainees



IECA WOMEN'S SOCIETY EDUCATION PROGRAM ADDRESSES ALARMING RISE IN NATIONAL POVERTY



Cuanza Norte youth trainees in cooking and crafts

Introduction: The empowerment of women and girls is an essential tool for community development and poverty reduction. Women continue to be a strategic group for the development of any community in which they are inserted. Yet training opportunities that allow young women, especially in rural areas, to receive consistent social affirmation and growth continue to be denied to them. This results in various social contradictions that these young people will face in the future. Thus, the education work that the Women's Society carries out in communities, with funding from AMSF, is an opportunity for young women who yearn to build a life and create fundamental bases for self-sustainability.

In the last two years, poverty in Angola has reached alarming levels, resulting in hunger and acute malnutrition, especially in rural areas. There has been an exaggerated rise in food prices, families' lack of economic capacity to support such prices, and low agricultural production due to the lack of public policies capable of supporting families. The empowerment of young women is undoubtedly an opportunity to alleviate poverty.

Training activities:

In June 2024, a skills development course was held in the city of Luena, Moxico Province, to enable the development of self-confidence in creating business initiatives and technical and professional advancement for 40 young women aged between 14 and 20.

In August, in Dalatando, Kwanza Norte, a training in pastry, cooking, arts and crafts was held for girls (ages 15-20). Participants gained knowledge and skills to promote self-confidence and the ability to create business initiatives for personal/family sustainability.

In October, in Luanda Funda, trainers organized a Financial Education course for women in rural areas near Luanda. More than 30 women attended. The training aimed to provide knowledge that improves the optimization of small incomes and the development of savings habits.

Also in October, a training session for literacy teachers was held in Luanda Funda for a group of 10 teachers in the province of Luanda. It contributed to reducing illiteracy for more than 250 women.

Lesson learned: We observe that Arts and Crafts and Financial Education graduates, beyond skill development, benefit from broader social and economic gains, such as participation in the lives of their families in decision-making, and in access to decent work and resources, and autonomy.

Conclusion: Educated and healthy women and girls, with equal access opportunities, can become strong, intelligent women who will assume leadership positions in their families and communities. Although our communities have one of the highest rates of labor participation among women and girls, the reality is that it continues to be a



Funda, Luanda Financial education graduates

more vulnerable type of work. Women in our communities continue to work more hours per day than men and perform most of the work for free in their families. By providing these training courses, we are helping women to look at life differently and contribute more – and better – to their own development, and to that of their families and communities.

Studies Update from Abrantes Chingalule



It is with great pleasure that I share the events and progress of my fourth semester in the Agricultural Engineering course. During this period, I faced some challenges in the subjects of Plant Physiology and Entomology, but with determination and support, I managed to overcome them and maintain a satisfactory performance in the other subjects. I am one of the four students who had an excellent average in my class, but I want to study harder because I believe that obstacles, such as those of the third semester, were important for my academic and personal growth.

Unfortunately, the practical field activities in Quilengues and Namibe planned for the months of July, August and September could not be carried out due to calendar conflicts and are rescheduled for my holiday period. However, I remain

committed to applying the knowledge acquired to date and seeking new opportunities to complement my training. I am already in the fifth semester of the curriculum and I have fascinating subjects that, like the others I have already learned, are building my profile as an Agricultural Engineer. I would like to reiterate my deep gratitude for the continuous support. The scholarship is essential for my development and for me to continue advancing in my academic and professional career. I am very happy to see my dream becoming a reality day after day. May our good God in His infinite Grace and mercy bless you all abundantly, Amen!

Best regards,

ABRANTES DE JESUS JAMBA CHINGALULE

Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of Huambo, University of José Eduardo dos Santos





2024 Human Health Conference, Kansas City

DR KAKORIO REPORTS MORE TRAINING IN SKILLS FOR LOW RESOURCE HEALTH CARE

Dear AMSF supporters, first, I wish to again convey my sincere appreciation for the financial support you have provided me throughout my online Master of International Medicine program with the Institute of International Medicine, Kansas City, completed in December 2023. Your sponsorship has been instrumental in my progress and has eased my financial burden greatly. The generosity and belief you have shown in me embolden my commitment to achieve the human health and development objectives we both value for Angola.

I also wish to convey my sincere appreciation for the financial support AMSF has provided for my recent trip to the USA, to participate in the May 2024 Humanitarian Health Conference and preconference training course. The INMED Professional Qualification Course in Hands-On Skills for Low-Resource Healthcare (which is a review of most commonly needed clinical skills in settings with a shortage of specialists. Included are hands-on sessions covering wound care and suturing, extremity trauma and immobilization, complicated obstetrics, newborn resuscitation, tropical fever evaluation, and community health survey techniques). I had hands-on skills training on several aspects of helping pregnant mothers survive and the knowledge I have gained will be very useful back home. I plan to conduct the same kind of training for others with a goal for everyone possible to have the same knowledge I have gained and implement it in practice thereby reducing the number of maternal and neonatal deaths.

I am committed to carrying on saving people in remote areas using new skills acquired during my MIH degree and implementing them in my clinic practice to improve the quality and health of patients in my country. For instance, I continue doing a cataract outreach program. Recently I was at Dondi Mission hospital where I did 825 eye consults and 184 cataract surgeries within two weeks. I then went to Bie, Chilessio Mission hospital and did 725 consults and 153 surgeries.

During the May 2024 Humanitarian Health conference, I had an opportunity to present my master's thesis on the spreading threat in Angola of onchocerciasis ("river blindness"), a parasitic eye disease caused by the filarial worm. With this thesis base, I hope to carry on the pioneering research of Dr Walter and Alice Strangway, former missionaries in Chissamba, Angola (and AMSF members). I believe we can find the best cure or solution for this ruinous disease. Please put me in your prayers, for I am on the lookout for a scholarship towards an appropriate PhD program. Thank you once again for your investment in my future which I will always remember with deep respect and gratitude.



Dr Walter & Alice Strangway, Chissamba

BIRD GUIDE & BINOCULARS DONATED TO DONDI AGROFORESTRY PROGRAM

Two binoculars and two Southern Africa Bird Guides (with accompanying song ID app) are being donated to the Dondi Agroforestry Program, in memory of AMSF member Peter deMarsh. He was a passionate birder and advocate of sustainable agroforestry by family and community forest owners. The first book and binoculars have been delivered to Rev Momo Coutinho, member of the Dondi Agroforestry Steering Committee. He is sharing his birding skills with students and colleagues in Dondi. The second book and binoculars will be delivered to Abrantes Chingalule, when

he completes his agricultural engineering program and begins work as staff person for the Dondi Agroforestry Program. Close viewing of birds and other wildlife in Dondi will enhance an appreciation and protection of the local natural resources, including the remaining forest of indigenous species.

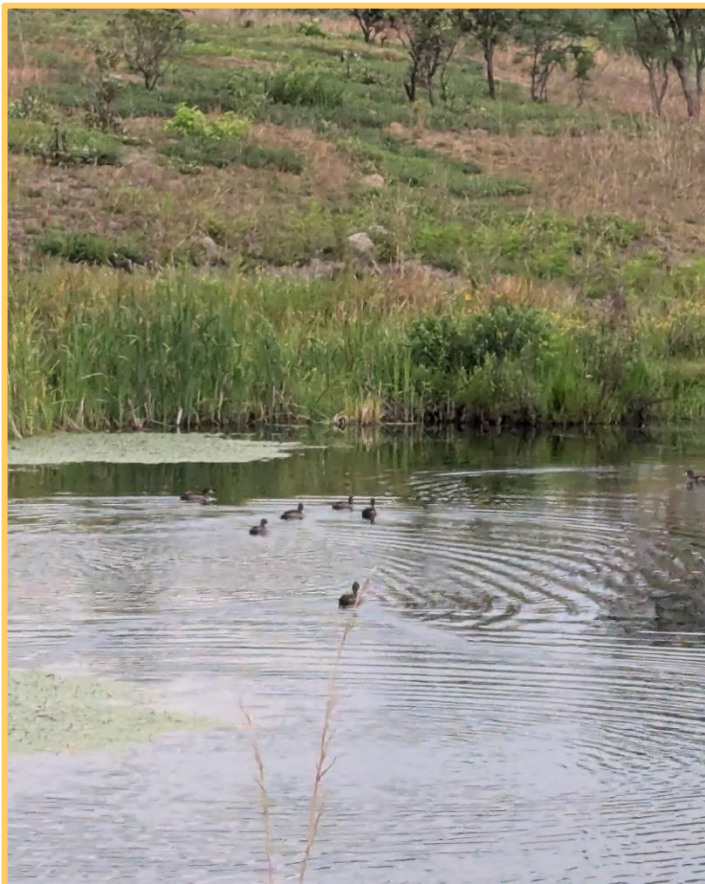
Rev Momo recently reported that there is growing interest among the Seminarians in Dondi in participating in the bird walks he leads when he visits there from Huambo.

He writes, "I am delighted to say that we are excited to learn more about birds. More students have joined the birdwatching journeys around the Seminário Emanuel do Dondi. We have identified Yellow Billed Ducks. They are many and enjoy swimming in a dam created for irrigation in the Lutamo stream."

We also watched many crows and swallows. Many other species have run away due to the loss of a safe place to live as most of the trees were cut. Our birdwatching team is composed of four people: Paulino Ngonga, Jorge Baptista, Julino Atende, Rev Adelaide Catanha (adviser) and me. Catherine Ramey from Canada has been of great help as well with her



Rev Momo, centre, birdwatching in Dondi, with Rev Adelaide Catanha and Emmanuel Seminary students Paulino Ngonga, Jorge Baptista and Julino Atende



Flock of Yellow billed ducks

sound education in the field of nature, social transformation and her good will in caring for nature. We are committed to research the birds and ways of forestry preservation.

We have met with Abrantes while in Dondi. He is a promising person in the field of agriculture. He plans to start a study of Dondi soils. We discussed how to counteract the current deforestation of the Dondi area and he will lead agriculture projects there without damaging the forests further. We honor the contribution of the beloved forebearers who recorded living beings of innumerable species in the Dondi area.. In this endeavor, Peter deMarsh's history is our inspiration. Foot note: Missionary Rev Ken Prior and Dondi students collected specimens of 23 species of small mammals in Dondi, as reported in a 1941 Journal of Mammology issue.

The rainy season is coming. We can't wait to re-start the tree planting. We'll plant in three main locations: Dondi, Bunjei and Yava. We may organize teams from other municipalities to start planting in their own home areas. We are progressing with this ministry with the approval of the IECA General Director for the Department of Social Welfare, Studies and Projects, Onesimo Nunda, and the IECA General Secretary, Rev Chianeque. Thanks for all your support and care for the environment.