

# A new chapter in Congo

Since the Lord called our sister Maizie home in December last year, we have continued to provide financial assistance to the CNCA churches from the gifts which have been sent to us for the work in DR Congo.

For the first time since 1931 we have no UFM missionaries designated for service in Congo. In May I met with two representatives of the CNCA church, Bishop Mehuma and Dr Dauly, in Kampala to discuss this new situation and to consider together the best way for us to continue to help them.

Ted Witmer, a missionary with Crossworld (formerly UFM International) based in Bunia, also joined us. Ted has kindly offered to assist us in the handling of financial resources given for Congo. He is in regular contact with the CNCA church leaders and visits Kisangani. He knows the situation on the ground.

## Memorial Service

The Church had a joyous memorial service in December in Kisangani in memory of Maizie Smyth who died in December. Many gave testimony all night of the blessing she had been in their lives. Scores were helped with their schooling fees, hundreds were blessed by her teaching in Bible schools and conferences, and thousands of children heard the gospel and many believed. She managed many projects for widows, orphans, the blind, and handicapped. She initiated a Christian Radio station, RTEDI, and a Christian bookshop, and she helped to build many places of worship. She served as principal fund raiser and treasurer for the CNCA churches. She was a pillar for the CNCA Church.



We enjoyed a good time of fellowship and agreed the way forward. This agreement has since been confirmed by the UFM Council. Our agreement covers the following points:

1. A new partnership will now be established between CNCA and UFM. CNCA will take full responsibility for its ministries and the financing of them. CNCA will define its future vision and priorities.
2. CNCA will identify priority projects which can realistically be achieved and request financial assistance through UFM, as much as is possible. UFM will seek to provide financial assistance from donations received from Christians and churches in the UK.
3. CNCA requests that UFM seeks a missionary, or missionaries, to be based in Kisangani. Both CNCA and UFM will pray for such people to be raised up.

It was also agreed that UFM will be willing to assist CNCA in establishing links with like-minded churches in other countries and in encouraging the sending of cross-cultural missionaries from CNCA churches.

This agreement means that we will be happy to continue to receive gifts for Congo Projects. In consultation with the CNCA leaders, we will identify specific projects for which we will seek to provide financial assistance. Details of these projects will be sent to those interested in praying for the work and to those wishing to provide financial support. The level of assistance will depend on the total amount of gifts we receive for Congo Projects.

Donors will be able to identify the projects they wish to support or, if they wish, to give an undesignated gift to be used where most needed. Regular news will be sent to donors, and to those who wish to receive it, to keep them in touch with how the various projects are going. We will liaise with Ted Witmer and Crossworld, who are also continuing to assist the CNCA churches.

A regular Congo Update will be prepared. The first edition was available in July. If you would like to receive this and future updates please let us know.

We have reached a point to which those who have served in Congo through the years have worked. The CNCA churches are taking full responsibility for their various ministries. We encourage you to pray for the CNCA churches and for their leaders as they face this new challenge. They are very grateful to the Lord for all that has been done in the past by the many missionaries who have so faithfully served in DR Congo and also for the prayers and financial support of many UK Christians and churches. They will also appreciate any help we are able to give them as they begin this new chapter in the work of God's Kingdom in Congo.

Peter Milsom



# The work goes on



The streets are packed again with bicycles and motorcycles. Life is returning to Kisangani after the war. Saw mills cut wood from the forest for construction, and transport on the mighty Congo River has resumed. But how is the CNCA Church? What is happening?

**Evangelism:** A team from Diguna, a German sister mission, visited Kisangani to prepare for 4 months of evangelism beginning in July in the interior of the country bringing trucks to carry evangelists along the various roads that link Kisangani to the rest of the country. Maizie initiated the program with Diguna.

**Radio:** At the same time the Diguna team installed a new antenna tower 60 feet high for the radio station in preparation for a Dutch team who came in June to install all new digital transmitters for the radio station to make the Christian station one of the most modern and powerful in the city as a platform for preaching the gospel. Maizie initiated the contact with Help for the Brothers (in Germany) to fund the radio project upgrade and the Dutch experts to design and install the new equipment.

**Bible schools:** CNCA has 10 Bible Schools to prepare pastors for ministry. Every year Maizie provided Bibles and basic Bible study books for the graduates to use as they go out into ministry. This year there are over 200 graduates. Obtaining books in French, Swahili and Lingala for pastors to use is extremely difficult and expensive in the middle

of Africa. Maizie, however, was able to stock a supply which will permit 50 graduates to receive a French Bible and about 25 graduates some Bible study books in French. The supply Maizie left is running out, and none remain in African languages. A major project is underway to supply a container load of Swahili Bibles for Christians in Congo.

**Development projects:** In a poor country, creating opportunities for agriculture and work is crucial for the Christians to improve their lives. Recently, the CNCA has been able to distribute machetes and tools for clearing new fields at a number of church locations in order to improve the lives of these people. They continue to raise goats. They would like to open a pig project. The CNCA has started a saw mill to produce lumber for all the development projects of the Church. This gives employment and income to help the church to meet some of the many needs of its people. It has also permitted preaching the gospel to some Muslims who live near the place where the saw mill is operating. The development department also runs a project to teach the many adults who are illiterate how to read and at the same time is able to evangelize those who attend. There is also a micro-enterprise assistance section to this department. Pray for effective development and funds to continue the projects.

**Medical:** The medical department suffered greatly during the war when medicines were unavailable causing many people to die of curable diseases. CNCA now has a supply of medicines arriving in Kisangani and plans a refresher course in lab techniques with a supply of new microscopes in June. The medical department is also starting to build a new teaching hospital to train Christian nurses for rural ministry, areas that are vastly under served in the country. Many health centres need to be refurbished and restored as well.

**Schools:** Over 50% of the population of Congo is under 18 years old. The schools, like this one dedicated on 8 April, are full and overflowing. The Church runs many schools throughout the country, which is a significant means for evangelism of the youth. Many

schools need simple benches, black boards, chalk and encouragement. Others have poor buildings and need new roofs. The needs seem endless, yet are real and produce lasting fruit. The great majority of the leaders of the Church today started in the CNCA primary and secondary schools. The chaplain's department has requested thousands of New Testaments to equip the schools for their task of evangelism.

**Sunday Schools and Women's Ministry:** These ministries now operate with little outside assistance. Please pray that the Congolese in charge of these active ministries will have wisdom and strength to meet the task as the number of children and widows is great after the war.

So ministries of the CNCA churches continue. Jesus Christ is building His Church and we can see in Kisangani the lasting fruit of the life of faithful ministry. The Church has vision for new areas of ministry and evangelism. They need to replace church benches destroyed in the war, and want to develop an Internet café to help Christians learn how to use computers. Many need assistance for their school fees. Faithful men like the CNCA President Mehuma and the new Treasurer Pastor Ngando, pictured with Ted Witmer, are helping to see projects continue and grow in the days ahead.

One great prayer request of the Church is for someone to come from the UK to live in Kisangani and help to provide liaison with the churches in the West. The Church would love to welcome someone with whom they can work in partnership in the work of building Christ's Church in the Congo. Please pray for the Lord to meet this need.

