

Mission 21 Uganda

A report on the training offered to the Church of Uganda (Diocese of Kumi)

by Revd Dean Fostekew and Gill Young of the Scottish Episcopal Church

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The Training

21 lay and ordained leaders from the Diocese of Kumi, plus the Diocesan Secretary, Diocesan Treasurer and the Provincial Mission Co-ordinator met for three days at Green Top Hotel and Conference Centre, in Kumi.

The purpose of the three days was to train the gathered delegates in facilitation and consultancy skills that would enable them to implement an 'Ugandanised' version of Mission 21 into Kumi Diocese as a pilot project for the Church of Uganda as a whole.

Over the three days those gathered were introduced to the Mission 21 philosophy, the foundation material (MYCMI -Making Your Church More Inviting) and trained in basic facilitation and consultancy skills that can be used to implement the foundation material and to train future facilitators in the diocese/s.

The training went well and the participants said that they felt well prepared for the task and that they were able to translate the training/skills to different aspects of their lives as well as to Mission 21. One facilitator, a teacher, said that he was going to train his colleagues before anyone else as the skills he had gained were very appropriate to his role in the classroom. The translators also said they could see how the training related to the foundation materials and how they paved the way for a greater understanding of MYCMI.

The Translation

The translation team said that they had found the experience of translating MYCMI challenging, not just because of the material and its concepts but in the fact that meeting together had been problematic due to distances to be travelled and work/home commitments.

The following are some of the comments made by the translation team:

- It was very exciting work. I liked the content very much and although some bits were not fully appropriate to Kumi we found discussing the replacements stimulating.
- The translation encouraged great co-operation and working together.
- The MYCMI material helped in the translation as it reminded them that they were a team and working through the exercises built them as a team.
- The material inspired us - one member is now exploring a vocation to the priesthood because of the experience.
- A big challenge was breaking the M21 sentences into shorter Ateso ones.
- The material is very relevant to us.
- The translators felt that they had gained an insight into the church in Scotland and that M21 will bring a change in Kumi; especially in involving others in ministry and encouraging lay ministry. The section on encouraging and caring for volunteers was important learning.
- It was not a literal translation but a translation that kept the meaning. Not a transliteration which was good.
- This is the first draft and we will revise it as we use it in response to what people say about it.
- Felt that ones own knowledge of English grew as we learned new words.

The team consisted of 6 men and 1 woman. 2 teachers, a theological college principal, university chaplain, lay leader, diocesan missionary, youth officer for the diocese.

The fact that this draft is a first attempt and will be revised with use is good as it reflects what we did in Scotland in 'tartanising' the original material from the American. Much of what the translators said about the processes they had used and challenges they had faced were again similar to those we experienced in the SEC this filled me with hope.

Implementation

Over the next few weeks the facilitators will identify other facilitators that they will in turn train in facilitation skills. The Ateso version of MYCMI will be shared and congregations identified to be the pilots. Within the next month or so MYCMI will begin to be used. Some of the congregations have already been identified especially those in which we have preached on this and our previous visit.

Each facilitator will have a copy of the Ateso version and the English version and will use them in tandem initially. Unlike Scotland not every

member of the MYCMI team will have a copy of the material; the facilitator will use the material in the most appropriate way.

The facilitators will meet together in the future at least another two times and funding for this has been left for this. The archdeacons who will act as local co-ordinators will also meet with John Omagar (and Johnson Ebong-Oming) in the future as will the translators. Again funding was left for this to occur.

Future Development

Those trained as facilitators will act as co-ordinators in their local areas for Mission 21, identifying individuals to train as facilitators and to prepare congregations for MYCMI. The 21 for Mission 21 will continue to meet as a group to chart the progress of Mission 21 in the Diocese of Kumi and will be supported by the regional archdeacons and the diocesan and provincial missioners.

Dean and Gill and Marjorie have been invited to return to Uganda to evaluate and review the progress and success of Mission 21 in 2005/6.

Conclusions

The training week was intense but rewarding. The responses of the facilitators to the MYCMI material and the facilitator training were positive and encouraging and their comments on the relevance of the ethos and materials in relation to Ugandan culture led us to believe that we had 'got it right'. MYCMI and Mission 21 are now in another continent and God willing it will spread and develop in appropriate cultural ways.

Mission 21 has Gone Global!



After a degree of success in the Scottish Episcopal Church, Mission 21, a facilitator to 'Make Your Church More Inviting', was launched in the Province of Uganda. The newly formed Ugandan Diocese of Kumi carefully chose out 21 people from across their Diocese to be trained and serve as translators and facilitators to adapt

culture.

When ACC-11 (Anglican Consultative Council 11th Meeting) met in Dundee in 1999, Clive Wylie and Dean Fostekew, the then Mission 21 Co-ordinators for the Scottish Episcopal Church, presented Mission 21 to the assembled delegates. This presentation led to requests from various provinces for Mission 21. Over the past four years Pat McBryde (former Deputy General Secretary of the Scottish Episcopal Church), The Revd Canon John Peterson (ACC Secretary General), Marjorie Murphy (ACC Director for Mission and Evangelism), Gill Young and Dean Fostekew, have worked closely together to ensure that the Mission 21 pilot would be a success.

The Revd Johnson Ebong-Oming had identified the Diocese of Kumi as being a good place to launch Mission 21 for various reasons:

- It is a new diocese being 3 years old
- It's bishop was willing for Mission 21 to be introduced to his diocese
- The skills of the Kumi Diocesan Missioner
- The local language Ateso is spoken in two other dioceses in Uganda and one in Kenya, and therefore M21 can be easily shared with them in the future.

Revd Johnson Ebong-Oming, the Provincial Mission Co-ordinator for the Church of Uganda, and Canon John Omagar (Archdeacon of Kumi) visited a parishes in Scotland to see the varying experiences of Mission 21 in large and small churches in both rural and urban situations. They met people engaged with the process who shared their stories of success and struggles and the lessons learnt on the way. It was in meeting these congregations that Johnson and John 'caught the Mission 21 vision' and saw quite clearly how it might



translate both culturally and linguistically into the Church of Uganda. This exciting and encouraging trip enthused them as they return to Uganda and begin to get the team together for the task in Kumi Diocese.



The gifting of Mission 21 is being jointly sponsored by the Sec's International Committee and the Compassrose Society and we are very thankful to them for their generosity, vision and support.

Having chosen 21 key people from the Diocese the team of three from the UK, Dean, Marjorie and Gill went out to Uganda to meet the team there and to gain understanding of the people and their faith and culture.

Uganda, is a green and beautiful country, fertile and with great potential but a country that has lived with civil war for 17 years (How often do you hear that reported in our news?) and suffered so much under the regime of Idi Amin. The Church of Uganda is a church alive with the Spirit and full of hope for the future and yet at the same time it is a church trying to counter inter-tribal rivalry, cultural norms and conservatism for example Bishops can only be bishop of a diocese from which they hail, the translation of bishops and clergy is therefore difficult and means that some dioceses end up without a bishop at times or with few clergy.

Kumi Diocese is the second youngest diocese in the Church of Uganda (3 years old) and is in the Teso region of Uganda which is amongst the three poorest regions in the country. Life is hard for many people, a great dream is to own a bicycle (35,000 Shillings or £11 to us). Kumi is in the plains and as such everything is covered in a dusting of red soil. The soil is fertile and despite the dust reasonably well watered. Most families live on 500 shillings a day (15p) and the woman and children are often seen carrying large 'jerry cans' of water great distances to their homes, a bike would make a great difference. Yet they are a smiling people and a people that have opened their homes and hearts to the thousands displaced by the recent upsurge in civil strife in the north of the region and in Soroti and Lira dioceses. While we were there some 67 people were massacred in Lira, Johnson's home region.



Anglicans in Kumi are large in number but their request for Mission 21 is to help them discover new ways of taking the faithful deeper into spirituality

and prayer; to enable them to put deep roots down into their faith and then to put their faith into action. They also hope to explore new ways of worshipping that does not rely on the prayer book alone. While they want to maintain both the English and Ateso services they hope to develop more hymns and prayers in their local language and to encourage the wider use of native instruments but as of yet they have only just begun to explore alternatives.



Some had travelled for five or more hours by bus, bike or on foot to be there for a 0830 start. The bishop, The Rt Rev'd Thomas Eddison was chauffeured to the meeting on the back of the Diocesan moped! This is the vehicle he uses to do a lot of travelling round his Diocese, when the hospital 4x4 is being used. The Mission 21 facilitators represented a cross-section of the diocese; clergy, lay readers, school teachers and Mother's Union members. Their enthusiasm for Mission 21 was great and five of them are already translating (both culturally and linguistically) the Foundation Phase 'Making Your Church More Inviting' into Ateso.

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