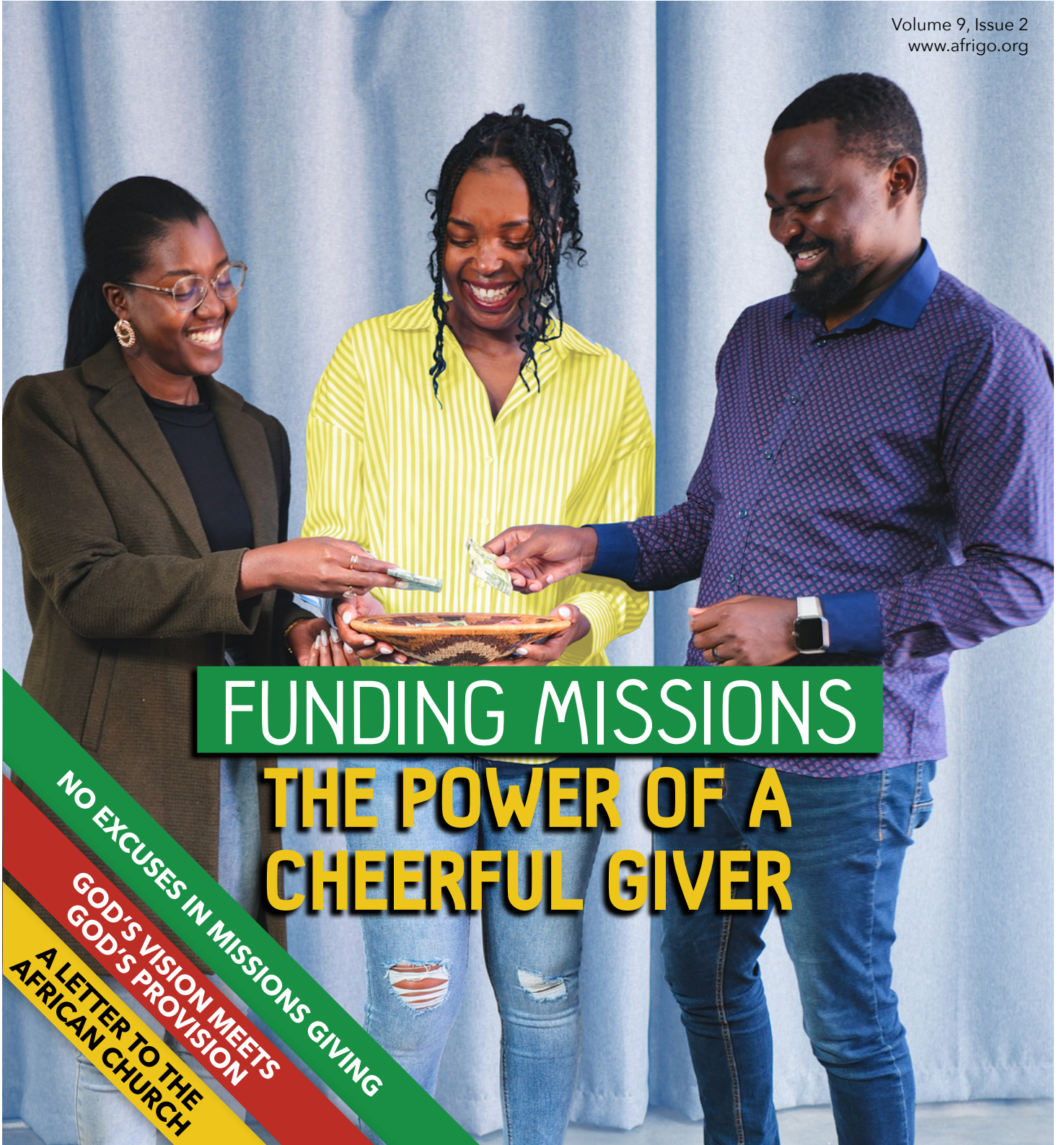


AFRIGO

Encouraging the African Church in world mission

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FUNDING MISSIONS

THE POWER OF A
CHEERFUL GIVER

NO EXCUSES IN MISSIONS GIVING

GOD'S VISION MEETS
GOD'S PROVISION

A LETTER TO THE
AFRICAN CHURCH

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MISSIONS FINANCING IN AFRICA

BY DUNCAN OLUMBE



Bongo, his wife, and five children serve as missionaries in remote north-western Kenya. As Bongo stared into the 47°C sweltering afternoon, he had many questions about financing missions. He recognized that God is indeed raising an army of missionaries from Africa. Many, like him, were stepping out by faith with little assured financial support. Some had gone out as tentmakers or marketplace missionaries, while others had stable and consistent support using the support-raising model of the West.

Bongo knows, however, that financing missions remains a major challenge for Africa. Stories abound of many African missionaries like him who have been sent and “abandoned” in the mission field with inadequate resources for the task God called them into. Various reasons are responsible for this—lack of a biblical understanding, historical experiences, resource stewardship, and current realities of being sent and serving as senders.

A solid biblical foundation of resource and financial stewardship is the first building block to establishing a robust theology of financing missions. This compels us to examine key passages such as “Go and sell all your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me” (Mt. 19:21; Mk. 10:21), the women who supported Jesus’ ministry (Lk. 8:1-3), Paul’s tentmaking (Acts 18:1-4) and support-raising (Phil. 1:3-6) models, and overall biblical stewardship (Lk. 6:38).

Historically, the African Church has struggled to break the shackles of a debilitating dependency syndrome: ‘We are poor and can’t do much,’ ‘only the rich whites can support missions’—which has resulted in a ‘begging bowl’ mentality. This has been coupled with paternalism that disempowers Africans, and power plays by those materially better off who tend to adopt a “messiah complex.”

A poverty mentality and paternalistic attitudes have affected how we view money and missions in Africa. At the core is a perception of inferiority, which leads to ‘copy-and-paste’ approaches on how we resource missions, instead of exploring indigenous ubuntu practices. Furthermore, the pitfalls of materialism and consumerism are emerging among Africa’s

growing middle class. The challenge is how to balance our instinctive desire to escape poverty with the biblical teaching of “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim. 6:6).

Bongo pondered: Whereas the Western support-raising model has resulted in tremendous numbers of missionaries sent during the modern missions era, is it time to ask whether the model is past its “sell-by” date especially for the African Church? Could it be that we as African missionaries and mission senders need to find more suitable models in line with our African ubuntu realities?

Looking into the future with hope, Bongo prayed for both pragmatic and prophetic responses anchored in a biblical theology of community and generosity. Pragmatically, we need a greater focus on biblical stewardship, a sustainable use of God’s resources with accountability to God and men (Rom. 14:12; Gal. 6:1-2), and a long-term view of financing missions innovatively and with good environmental and social policies. Prophetically, we need to cultivate increased generosity out of our poverty (2 Cor. 8:1-3) and greater simplicity (Job 1:21). We must “live simply so that others might simply live” (Ron Sider).

In this edition of AfriGO, be challenged by Baba Akawu’s commitment to missions giving despite his circumstances of being blind and with amputated hands. For our Perspective article, Tshepang Basupi shares different means of raising support for missions. Our feature story highlights CAPRO’s funding experience as an indigenous mission agency and points to God’s faithfulness to provide for his work. Enjoy reading these and more, and share with others!

Duncan Olumbe is a Kenyan missions leader, community development mobilizer, organic farmer, creation care advocate, and mountaineer with almost 30 years of ministry across the nations. He has experience in cross-cultural missions, community development, agribusiness, and student ministry. He serves as Regional Director for Interserve International, and Executive Director for Peer Team Kenya. He is married to Roseline and they are blessed with three young men. He can be reached at duncan.olumbe@gmail.com.

**Financing missions
remains a major
challenge for Africa.**


 CAPRO missionaries at a congress

GOD'S VISION MEETS GOD'S PROVISION

BY KATE AZUMAH

In an attempt to unify the country after Nigeria's civil war, then military head of state, General Yakubu Gowon, introduced the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) programme in 1973, deploying graduates of higher institutions to serve across the country. Among the second set despatched to Kaduna State in 1974 were campus Christian leaders. Contrary to their experience in the south, they observed a paucity of churches and evangelistic activity in the north, and this inspired them to organize a Jesus Film outreach in Zaria city in December of that year.

The inhabitants came en masse and responded to the ensuing altar call. However, things turned sour when some Muslims attacked, vandalizing equipment and pelting the youth corps members with stones. Several ended up in hospital, and all were shocked by the incident.

When the organizers regrouped the following year, the Lord gave them a vision to press on and preach the gospel to Muslims of northern Nigeria

and in francophone West Africa. Thus, CAPRO (Calvary Productions, now Calvary Ministries) was born—an indigenous mission organization with 800 missionaries in 44 countries, and mission training schools in Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, India, the US, the UK, and in Sudan. How have they funded all these? CAPRO's international director, Dondo Iorlamen, tells us more.

A task for all

“Our pioneers were inspired by the rugged faith of Western missionaries like Hudson Taylor and George Muller who believed that only prayer was needed and God would provide. Over time, they modified their methods as they learned that missions was a commission for the whole Church. In addition to prayer, they could invite support by sharing information through newsletters, podcasts, and prayer requests. It's an opportunity for the Body of Christ to invest in God's Kingdom by reaching territories that have not heard the gospel.”

“Sending” and “Going” arms

CAPRO organizes two programmes as points of call for anyone to be involved in missions. The first is the Discipleship and Mission Exposure Programme (D-MEP). This runs for 12 weeks in schools, universities, polytechnics, churches, theological institutions, and other professional bodies. The second is a yearly event dubbed “Last Days Gathering.”

Believers who participate in the two programs are exposed to mission statistics, the conditions of unreached people groups, and their obligation to reach others with the gospel. They are invited to intercede, give financially to missions, or go to the field as missionaries.

Responders are organized into a structured support system called a CAPRO chapter, comprising believers with a common vision to pray, give, mobilize, or go as missionaries. Those who sign up as missionaries are assigned as office staff or field missionaries and together make up CAPRO's “Going”

arm. Those who remain in the chapters to support are the “Sending” arm.

Financing the work

CAPRO missionaries go through one year of missions training after which they are interviewed to determine if they are the right fit for CAPRO.

Dondo explains, “We are a distinct organization with our own culture. Someone may be a great candidate, but may not be called to work with CAPRO. We tell our missionaries that they will not receive any salaries from the ministry—this includes me as the international director. It would only come through the Lord and his people. We believe that if God calls anyone, he will provide for that person.”

“The first thing about financing missions is to ensure that what you want to do is God’s initiative. If it is, the Lord will fund it. The missionary’s task is to pray and discover what the Lord wants to do. In CAPRO, we don’t borrow or take loans. If the Lord does not provide, it’s either not his project or not his time.”

“Next, whatever the Lord puts in your heart to do, write it down and add a budget. Our missionaries submit their written plans for approval, and together, we pray and trust God to provide as the missionary shares with family, friends, and church members.

We encourage our missionaries to give to the project first, because spiritually, this will attract other people to give also. Sometimes, our missionaries only share information or a prayer request, and the Lord himself prompts people to give. We have a minimum amount they must raise before leaving for the field. When it becomes necessary, the office intervenes to raise sponsors for struggling missionaries.”

“In the past, we tried various income-generating activities including running a bakery and a bookshop, but they all failed. We realized that God didn’t want us to engage in any commercial activities to fund his work. Nevertheless, individuals in the ministry may engage in business as long as it doesn’t interfere with their calling. Sometimes, such

If God calls anyone, he will provide for that person.



CAPRO International Office

businesses open doors for missionaries to identify with the community for effective gospel interactions.”

Tough beginnings

CAPRO’s journey of nearly 50 years has been difficult at some points, including crises with leadership, disgruntled missionaries, a Nigerian Church that did not understand missions at the time, and some Western missionaries who wouldn’t accept Africans as authentic colleagues.

“One mission agency that came alongside us in those moments was WEC (Worldwide Evangelization for Christ). We call them our midwife. Together with God’s help, they made CAPRO what it is today through training and exposure. When our leaders faced criticism and discouragement on many sides, WEC strengthened their hands.”

Dondo recounts that as a young CAPRO missionary himself some years back, he had to feed his new wife with grasshoppers and leaves, but today, no CAPRO missionary goes to bed hungry. They may not eat what they prefer, but food is not a problem. God is doing bigger things.

God’s faithfulness

“Our missionaries used to be concerned about funding for their children’s education, but God has raised someone to cater for that. Now, every CAPRO missionary kid (MK) who enters a higher institution gets a full scholarship. About 200 MKs are benefitting currently.”

“Our missionaries are paying rent all over the world, some as high as British £400 and £800 every month. How are

they doing it? The Lord provides. During the war in Sudan, we had to evacuate and resettle 17 missionaries. They spent two months on the road, but God provided the mind-blowing amount we needed in this emergency.”

“Our international office was a rented facility, but God provided funds to purchase it within 90 days when our landlord made the offer. All these are God’s faithful provisions; we never borrowed to do any of them. I could share a thousand more testimonies of God’s supply, but the greatest is seeing previously unreached people groups now come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.”

An African mission

Dondo says that about 80 per cent of CAPRO’s donors are Nigerians, but they hope this changes so more people in other countries share in the funding. The majority of CAPRO’s missionaries are Africans with a few Asians and Americans. The 344 churches planted by CAPRO are not mandated to send any support to CAPRO’s office; rather, they are encouraged to send out their own missionaries and multiply work among their people.

Africa has become the new centre of gravity for world Christianity, and if the Lord is truly calling us to advance his mission to unreached territories, then he has made all the resources and funds available—through his obedient and cheerful givers in his well-endowed African Church.

PLEASE PRAY

- Thank God for his faithfulness to CAPRO missionaries over the years.
- Pray for all African missionaries to receive every support they need.
- Pray for creative funding ideas for African mission agencies.

CALLED: BABA ADAMU AKAWU



AS TOLD TO NENKINAN NEHEMIAH DESHI

Most people wait until they have it all figured out before they engage in missions, but not Baba Adamu Akawu. Born in 1949, Baba Akawu, now 75 years old, is a living testimony that serving God in missions is a heart matter.

In 1986, I got injured through an accident with a hand grenade, and barely survived. The accident left me blind and my hands were amputated. The doctors advised that I be euthanized, but my father objected and told them I would only die when God called me home.

I am a missionary child. My father was one of the first converts to Christianity, and was very involved in mission work in our community in Nimbria, Plateau State, Nigeria. He was among those who built the ECWA church at Nimbria, and later pastored it for 25 years. He raised us to follow God wholeheartedly and be involved in missions as our lives' greatest calling. As the children of a pastor, we learnt a lifestyle of sacrifice and giving from a very young age.

I didn't know why my life was spared, but years later, God's Spirit ministered to me that God had kept me alive to support mission work. I was to do my part to ensure that the gospel reached the ends of the earth. I decided I could not suffer in this world and again in eternity, so I began to sow seeds that will stand the test of time and secure my heavenly reward.

I wanted to share in God's plan to reach the unreached.

PLEASE PRAY:

- For the Lord to provide for Baba Akawu's needs spiritually and physically.
- For EMS's missionary endeavours to bear lasting fruit for God's glory.
- For the Lord to raise many committed missions givers like Baba Akawu, in Africa.

As a missionary child, I knew about EMS and was aware that a body managed their missionary activities. Although I didn't have a job because of my condition, I decided to begin supporting their missionary work. I wanted to share in God's plan to reach the unreached and make disciples of all nations. I determined that whatever support I received from people, I would give part of it to missions.

I started in 2018 with 500 naira (35 cents) a month. I would take my support to my Reverend whenever it was ready. With time, my support increased to 800 naira (57 cents), and then to 1,000 naira (70 cents). I have been giving consistently for six years now. This year, I've already sent my support of 12,000 naira (\$9). EMS gave me an award for supporting missions, and I felt happy and appreciated.

Once you repent and accept Jesus Christ as Lord, you become a witness. I am also a witness. As a witness, if you cannot leave your country and go overseas to preach the gospel, come and let's join hands to support those whom the Lord has moved to go. The

little you have will help, even if it is 10 naira every month. Many have gone back to chasing the world, serving other gods, and deviating from the Lord. But if you choose to do God's will, that is better.

People have been convicted after hearing my story on ECWA TV. They are moved that blind as I am and with no hands, I support missions. My story encourages them to give to God's work too.

The hands and eyes you have are a gift from God for his Kingdom work. Don't neglect missions. If you cannot go to the field yourself, support organizations and missionaries who are going. This life on earth will soon be over; so, we need to store treasures for ourselves in heaven. This is what spurs me to keep supporting missions and I hope to do so till I die.

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

BY TSHEPANG BASUPI

Talk to African missionaries and they will tell you that their biggest stress is money. I know several missionaries who left this vocation due to many years of lack. Shouldn't African missionaries enjoy the blessings of sufficient support like missionaries from other parts of the world do? Is God not supposed to provide for these faithful servants? Why are missionaries lacking money when they are in the centre of God's calling? The answer is probably because for many years we never saw ourselves as missionaries. Now that African missionaries have emerged, churches across the continent don't know how to support them. I have been asked by church leaders, "Why should we pay you to work for another organization?" Fair question, but it demonstrates a lack of understanding of what their role should be.

A matter of trust

When I felt God calling me as a missionary, I prepared ahead. I wanted to learn to trust God because being a missionary would require lots of it. One day, I asked God for an equivalent of \$20. I said if he provided it miraculously, I would know he was calling me as a missionary. That evening, a brother who knew nothing of my prayer gave me the exact amount. He said God told him to give me that money. That began my journey of trusting and seeing God provide in similar fashion over the last 15 years. In these cases, I shared the need only with God and somehow, he whispered to one of his children to meet it. Scripture has many examples of God's divine provision. In Exodus 16, God provided manna and quail for the Israelites in the wilderness. In 1 Kings

17, God sent ravens to deliver bread and meat to Elijah. Is this sufficient? Is prayer all that is needed? Should we do more than pray?

Sharing information

I also pray and share my needs through newsletters and conversations with people, and then God prompts them to give as they get informed. I have experienced God's amazing provision through this means. The Bible records instances where Paul writes letters to different churches and shares his need. To the church in Rome he writes, "I am planning to go to Spain, and when I do, I will stop off in Rome. And after I have enjoyed your fellowship for a little while, you can provide for my journey" (Romans 15:24).

Scripture has many examples of God's divine provision.



Friends, family, and vocations

Missionaries also solicit support from friends and family for their intended mission, and they in turn send the missionary some funds. This method depends heavily on having a community endowed with resources for this endeavour. The community must also have a clear picture of what missions is about and be convinced it is worth their investment. I have been actively raising support for many years and those who have partnered with us had a thorough understanding of missions and wanted to be part of what God was doing through us.

Many missionaries use their vocations and get paid while they serve. Others who are gifted in business leverage that as a platform for ministry and provision for their families. The methods are varied, but it is important to do what works in a given context.

Giving is a privilege

The ultimate provider of money to do missions is God. The mission belongs to him, and it is therefore his responsibility to provide for those who go. God wants all believers to partake in this holy and wonderful task of supporting his mission. It is the job of both the rich and poor alike. For those who support, it is a privilege to partner with God in his global mission. As missionaries, we need to actively teach and share about missions in our communities. Every opportunity to raise money is an avenue to communicate God's purpose to reconcile men back to himself. When people know and can resonate with what God is doing through you, then they will likely support.

Tshepang Basupi serves as the Southern Region Executive Director with AIM International. He is married to Queen, and they have two children. They are currently based in Johannesburg, South Africa. He can be reached at tshepang.basupi@aimint.org.



Photo: Freepik

By Apostle Sampson Dorkunor General Overseer, Living Bread Missions; Director, Reaching the Unreached

If missions is God's heartbeat, then his Church's budget must reflect same in the allocation of funds. However, this is not the usual case, especially in Africa.

Doing missions cross-culturally has major cost components such as living expenses, administrative expenses, structural development expenses, and incidentals. An important but often neglected component for the African context is pensions for missionaries.

Let us consider the cost of living for a typical four-member missionary family serving in Africa. Some mission organizations from the Asian context require a monthly income of \$2,300 to \$2,500. With this amount, the missionary will live with some savings if assigned to a rural community. However, in a city environment, they may live at a survival level. How does this compare with an indigenous African missionary serving cross-culturally?

Inquiries reveal that a Ghanaian missionary leader, for example, receives between \$300 and \$500, whilst some field missionaries receive between \$100 and \$200 per month. Others receive as close to nothing as \$50 per month. Additionally, the typical African has responsibility covering aged parents and other needy members. The Scriptures ask a rhetorical question: who goes to war at his own expense (1 Cor 9:7-10)?

Misconceptions

While some think that mission funding for Africa must come from external sources, there are adequate and biblical reasons to believe that God makes provision for his work in Africa.

Though God sees the local church as the seed-bed and support of missions, there seems to be a wedge between para-church organizations and local churches. Often, the unasked question is: "Why should I, the local church leader, support you, the para-church leader's work?" We seem to forget that the Kingdom of God is the ultimate in missionary endeavour (Matt 24:14).

Undoubtedly, denominations and local churches have plans to evangelize the world, but in reality, the para-church agencies are more active in the frontlines of missionary work.

A call to the African Church

We have a stewardship responsibility to support the funding of God's mission in Africa and beyond. The Church in Africa is rich in manpower, missionary know-how, and finances. The issue is how to partner and raise the money.

- The African Church must mobilize right from the children's department through missions awareness creation. Let us send children to missions camps to learn the practices of praying, giving, sending, and going. Our mission has practiced this

for over 20 years and we see results of young people becoming interested in supporting missionary work.

- Intensify the mobilization of university students and graduates for mission outreaches. A strong component is intentional discipleship—preparing the younger generation to launch into the deep at anytime.
- African Christian youth in the diaspora are responsible for huge remittances back to Africa. This resource needs to be explored in the support of missionary endeavour.
- African Christian businesses that are doing well must be empowered to use their businesses as channels for raising and releasing disciples and disciple-makers. They double as gospel financiers and will refer their friends and partners if they find fulfilment in sponsoring missions.
- Adhering to standards of accountability for funds received and applied is key. Transparency and faithfulness are crucial in God-given partnerships.

For the African Church to reach these goals, consistent pulpit preaching on both the Great Commission and the stewardship of members towards unreached people groups (UPGs) is key. This helps in raising prayer, empowering Christians to go, to give, and also to send missionaries. We must not give up on talking about these open doors for partnering with God.

FUNDING IDEAS

Tim Welch’s book, *New Funding Models for Global Mission, Learning From the Majority World*, shares creative ways to fund missions. We have curated a few to demonstrate how everyone can contribute meaningfully to the Great Commission irrespective of occupational or economic status.

- **Missions Start-up Group (MSG):** A small group of people who keep missions continually alive before the local church by sharing missions information, prayer requests, and advocating financial support for missionary candidates.
- **Mission Designation:** Church members designate a portion of what they have for missions, e.g. sales from eggs laid by a designated “missions hen,” milk from a designated “missions cow,” or profits from sales made on a designated “missions day of the week.” A church could also purchase a “missions taxi,” run a taxi business, and give the profits to missions.
- **Twelve-Church Model:** A local church partners with 11 other churches and each month, one church provides the monthly support needed by a missionary family.



Photo: Freepik

- **A Handful of Rice:** Practiced for over 100 years in India, church women set aside a handful of rice at each meal to be sent to the church and eventually sold to support missions. Churches can adopt this for different items.
- **Missions Pledge Campaigns:** Church members or a family that wants to support missions ask God to help them know how much money to pledge. They may fill out a card indicating the pledge amount and make regular contributions until the full pledge is redeemed.
- **Revolving Savings:** Each week, an amount of money is taken out of the general offering and put into the missions “cash box.” At the end of the month, the total amount is given to missions.
- **Activities and Events:** Churches can organize activities such as plays, music concerts, missions quiz contests, cleaning services, etc. and donate the revenue to missions.

FINANCIAL INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN MISSIONS

By Dan Salamu, Director, SIM West Africa Missions Office

At a training for all our project managers in SIM Burkina Faso, we found Paul’s advice about managing and distributing raised funds very valuable. The churches in Jerusalem were in need because of a serious famine. Over time, Paul raised money for them in Corinth and travelled with a delegation to deliver the funds (2 Cor. 8:19-21).

Paul demonstrated integrity and accountability by assuring the churches at Corinth that the delegation handling the funds was trustworthy. The church chose a highly regarded member to accompany Paul and Titus to deliver the funds to Jerusalem. One might ask: Did the church at Corinth not trust Apostle Paul? Is Paul not the one who initiated the fundraising? We find answers in the passage.

- To avoid criticism: When someone has integrity, it means they live above criticism. We can only live

this way by being accountable to one another. Our human nature makes us prone to sin and we need checks and balances to keep us from falling into temptation.

- To do what is right: The usual thing, especially as Africans, is to say: “Oh, this is God’s money; no need for too much accountability.” We may feel

confident that between us and God, we will do the right thing, but an important principle is to do what is right not only in the eyes of God but also in the eyes of men.

Finally, it is important to understand the African context with its community-focused worldview. This honourable and biblical value can come with the temptation to misappropriate resources in the name of helping community members or kinsmen. This does not result in integrity and accountability.

We must learn to use funds for their designated purposes. We can intentionally set up systems to involve others who would call us to order when things are going off course. In missions, working in a team gives us the opportunity to be influenced by people from different contexts who might have the ability to help us stay in alignment with integrity and accountability.



Photo: Freepik

GO! NEWS OF AFRICA'S MOBILIZING CHURCH

COMPELLING VISUALS TO INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE

In 2020, four young friends started a platform to inform, inspire, and challenge other young people about missions. Their friendship dated back as far as 2011 when they went for their National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) duties in Jos, Nigeria. They all had training across different fields—Economics, Quantity Surveying, Health Education, and Mechanical Engineering—but one thing united them: God's mission.

They decided to use their talents

to further missions across Africa. Realizing that other young people would benefit from a better understanding of the state of missions and Christianity in the world, they created Missionstats, a platform on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to share graphics created from trusted sources like the Joshua Project.

Today, they all work in professional jobs and volunteer their free time to inform and educate with high-quality graphics and text. The platform continues to grow and is providing

quality and well-researched graphics on missions to capture the interest of young people. You can follow them on Facebook and Instagram at Missionstats, and also join their daily missions infographics broadcast on their WhatsApp Channel – Missionstats.



GLOBAL MEMBER CARE CONFERENCE IN KENYA

The Global Member Care Network (GMCN) is converging in Nairobi for their 4th GMCN Conference from 28 October to 1 November, 2024 on the theme: "Caring for the Harvest Force." Topics to be addressed include: "Suffering and Self-care," and "Spiritual and Rational Responses to Mental Health."

This year's edition will focus on content and context of member care in Africa and the development of contextualized member care resources by authors from the Global South. Anyone interested in member care may attend. For more information, visit <https://globalmembercare.com/conference-2024/>.

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SYMPOSIUM ON THEOLOGY AND THE ARTS

The third edition of the Leonora Ewurasi Glover Symposium on Theology and the Arts came off on 10-11 May on the theme: "The Arts, Identity, and Christian Faith." The event, a collaboration between the Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission, and Culture, and the University of Ghana School of Performing Arts, brought together scholars, practitioners, and students in the fields of theology and the arts. Discussions centred on the role and challenges of incorporating African artistic forms into Christian faith. Sessions included plenaries, scholar presentations, scripture engagement, a dance performance, and a discussion on "Disciplining the soul of an artist." The annual symposium provides a forum to bridge the gap in areas of African culture that remain untouched by the gospel, particularly the arts. Read more here: <https://bit.ly/ArtsSymposium>.

GIVING FROM THE BEGINNING

Founded in 1927, the Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church (EKHC) has almost 12 million members in over 12,000 local congregations. From the church's inception, local congregations were expected to share the gospel as soon as they began to follow Jesus, and to empower the church to send people further afield with the message. Pastor Tesfaye Abadura, the Global Missions Director of the EKHC says, "Missions is in our DNA."

The denomination, which in Amharic means "Word of Life," supports 38 missionary couples working cross-culturally within Ethiopia and in Mali, Ghana, Northern Nigeria, South Sudan, Guinea, Northern Kenya, Somaliland, and other African and Asian countries. They plan to send workers to the Middle East and beyond, focusing on the 10/40 Window.

The Gospel Association

The EKHC funds its missionary activity through the Gospel Association. Every church member becomes a part of this association and family members are registered from birth. The EKHC believes that the first ministry of the Church is always missions; therefore, every congregant should contribute

towards the spread of the gospel. They see this obligation as a privilege.

Throughout the country, at the monthly Lord's Supper, members come with their Gospel Association ID cards and their gifts for missions. A regular contribution is expected in the name of each family member. The church joyfully collects these gifts and funds missionaries with them. Some churches have special funding days, or use the Christmas holidays, New Year, or Easter to take special collections. Churches also send part of their tithes for missions, but it is the Gospel Association which powers missions at the EKHC.

A funding culture

It's not just the big churches who are collecting for missions, either. When a new church is planted, it is expected to send out and fund a local evangelist. As the church matures, it should send missionaries to unreached people groups near them, and aim at sending missionaries globally. These global missionaries are chosen and sent at the national level, though up to 10 churches may specifically support one global missionary. Some district leaders have a full-time job to oversee the missions programs and giving at their zonal

churches. Pastor Abadura says, "It goes from the bottom to the top."

Motivation

In Ethiopia, it is culturally inappropriate for a missionary to raise funds for himself or herself; therefore, the leaders do it. The EKHC encourages pastors to speak on missions every week in some manner, so that people will not forget to reach the lost. Three principles underpin their teaching: firstly, the belief that the main purpose of the Church is to do the mission that Jesus commanded. Secondly, Pastor Abadura asks, "How do we express God's love for others if we don't bring the gospel? If we don't preach the gospel, then we are not loving God and expressing God's love." The church understands that withdrawing from doing missions is withdrawing from the love of God. Lastly is the hastening of Christ's return. According to 2 Peter 3:9, Christ wants everyone to come to repentance, and he will not return until every people group has heard the gospel. Therefore, they do their best to give everyone a chance to know Jesus before he returns.

Pastor Abadura has this advice for other denominations to see an increase in their missions giving:

- Make mission the first ministry of the church. It is not an option, but an obligation.
- Ensure a strong prayer team is focusing on missions, because prayer opens the hands of God and the hearts of people.
- Key leaders of the church should continuously teach the Word of God about his mission. If missions is not preached every Sunday, people will not focus on it.
- Unity is important. When churches are united locally and globally, missions work becomes easy.
- Teach that God rewards those who give to missions. According to Revelation 22:12, God will give to each person according to what he or she has done. God is generous and we should be generous by giving to missions.





PEOPLE GROUP:

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS TO AFRICA

Across Africa, Chinese nationals are arriving to do business. Many are middle class people who have come to invest and make money, though some have been hired by other Chinese to work as labourers, factory workers, or even prostitutes. Most come to Africa only for limited periods of time or are highly mobile, traveling back and forth.

The presence of Chinese people in Africa has not been greeted positively across the board, with concerns arising over instances of corruption with local governments facilitating exploitative practices detrimental to the environment, natural resources, and the rights of local people. They arrive in Africa, however, as non-religious people who need Jesus.

Chinese people often consider religious people to

be illogical and impractical. Practicality is a high value in Chinese culture, and working hard to make money and ensure stability is a common goal. Surprisingly, superstitions like lucky numbers and colours have a deep hold in Chinese thinking, and veneration and rituals related to the ancestors are ingrained in the culture. Belief in the spirit world is common, though not necessarily related to an organized religion.

Many Chinese individuals may hold prejudiced views toward Africans, but they can still be reached by Africans with the gospel. For many, the Christians whom they meet in Africa may be the only ones they ever meet, and our kindness may open their eyes to God's love for them.

AT A GLANCE

- China's population was 1.4 billion in 2022, which means that there are about 28 million Christians, many in underground churches.
- China is one of the least religious countries in the world, but her people are still deeply involved in superstitious and spiritual practices.
- Youth camps, Sunday Schools, and other outreaches to young people are forbidden in China, and in some regions, children are not allowed to attend church.

PRAY FOR

- The Holy Spirit to show Chinese people that their feeling of self-sufficiency is false, and that they need Jesus.
- Africans living near Chinese people in Africa to honour God in their lifestyles and practices so that Chinese people may see the difference.
- African people learning Chinese for business opportunities to be called by God to reach out to the Chinese.
- Chinese people to be open to the gospel.

Sources: Dr. Mrs. Pauline Chiu Settles, mission mobilizer with USA Care Ministries International • Mission Network News



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