

## The origin and development of the CCAP in Zambia

### 1882-2004<sup>2</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION

For a very long period of time the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Zambia had no record of its historical roots. As a result many Zambians questioned the independent existence of this church; others called it a "Malawian" church and others a "break away". My hypothesis shows that it is clear from history that the CCAP existed among the Zambian people since the 1880's. In addition it reveals that the CCAP in Zambia traces its roots from the Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland which started its work in Central Africa in 1875 (Laws, 1934:7,16). Through this mission the church is known to have grown to a fully fledged denomination. It is also to be noted that the CCAP in Zambia is also a fruit of the activities of CCAP General Synod members in the urban areas.

#### THE LIVINGSTONIA MISSION

The Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland was formed in memory of the late Dr. David Livingstone who died at Chitambo in Northern Zambia in 1874. Dr. David Livingstone's famous appeal made at a large meeting in the Senate House at Cambridge on 4 December 1857, his three great journeys in Africa, and his reports on the "Open path for commerce, civilisation and Christianity" evoked a response from a wide variety of people (Johnston 1908:28, 29). Through the Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland churches were established in Malawi and Zambia (Laws, 1934:179,185,196). It is to this mission endeavour that the CCAP in Zambia traces its roots.

It is clear from the sources that the formation of the Livingstonia Mission is the brainchild of Dr. James Stewart of Lovedale, South Africa. While attending the Free Church General Assembly which met in May 1874, Dr Stewart suggested the establishment of the Livingstonia Mission in memory of the late David Livingstone's work (Laws, 1934:6; Ransford, 1966:133,134). In 1875, the first group of missionaries landed at Cape Maclear<sup>3</sup> (Johnston, 1908:41). Following a holistic approach - which included attention to education on various levels, health care and agriculture - extensive mission and evangelism work started when the station moved from Cape Maclear to Bandawe in 1881 (Johnston, 1908:42; McIntosh, 1993:74). From Bandawe vast areas in the northern and central region of Malawi, as well as the Northern, Eastern and even the Central areas of Zambia were evangelised (McIntosh, 1993:134,154).

From the earliest days of the mission endeavour, local Christians and Chiefs

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1 Lecturer, Justo Mwale Theological College, Lusaka, Zambia. Doctoral Candidate: University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

2 This article aims at highlighting the main conclusions drawn from the dissertation entitled "The origin and development of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Zambia 1882-2004", presented for the degree of doctor of theology at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

3 Today at the southern point of Lake Malawi in Malawi.

contributed to evangelisation and establishments of churches in this region (Oral interview: Nyirongo, 07-10-2007). It was through the chiefs that the missionaries received permission for evangelisation as well as to acquire land to set up prayer houses, schools and establishing mission stations (Laws, 1934:87; Fraser, 1934:60, 61). In many instances, local evangelists and Christians were the forerunners in the establishment of congregations and mission stations (McCracken, 1977:126,127). The local people accepted to serve the Lord as elders, deacons, local evangelists, Presbytery evangelists, Synod evangelists and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament to the glory of God (Oral interview: Mtonga,07-10-2007). These included men like John Afwenge Banda who ministered to the people of Mwenzo (McCracken 1977:129), Mr. David Julizya Kaunda-Lubwa (Snelson,1974:60), Mr. Philimon Mkamanga-Chitambo ( Oral interview:Nyakanyaso 27-10-06; Oral interview: Chintu 27-10-06), Mr. Timote Jere and Aaron Mbocho Malindi-Kazembe (Minutes: Livingstonia Presbytery Lundazi/Marambo 1912:19,20). This was a very good strategy in mission and evangelism, for the local people knew the cultural contexts of their brothers and sisters before and after the gospel was preached and the Church planted.

It is important to notice that despite many differing developments<sup>4</sup>, there has never been any discontinuity in ministry by and to the CCAP congregations in Zambia (Correspondence: Turner 18 March 1953; Minutes: CCAP Synod 22-26 August 1945:6, 8). This continuation took various forms: there was a continued involvement of the CCAP Livingstonia in the ministry of the CCAP congregations in the Eastern Province of Zambia (Correspondence: Bernard 30 December 1975; Hunter 26 January 1967). Assistance from the Church of Scotland, the Church in Ireland and the supply of local ministry through the Livingstonia CCAP continued to congregations in this part of Zambia.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand there was the impact in the urban areas of Zambia of CCAP migrants from the CCAP synods in Malawi and the Chasefu congregations who held onto their CCAP identity. Therefore the CCAP in Zambia also pays tribute to the CCAP migrants in the urban areas of Zambia, especially from synods in Malawi and Chasefu congregations in the north-eastern regions of Zimbabwe and in adjacent regions of Zambia (Oral interview: Nyirongo, 07-10-2007).

#### THE CHURCH OF CENTRAL AFRICA PRESBYTERIAN: 1924-2004

The formation of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian was a result of the missionary activities of the Livingstonia Mission and the established Church of Scotland of the Blantyre Mission in Central Africa since 1900. The key Missions that participated in the formation of the CCAP Synod in 1924 were the Livingstonia and Blantyre Presbyteries. The Nkhoma Presbytery<sup>6</sup> joined in 1926 (Minutes: CCAP Synod, 17-22 September 1924:4; Minutes: CCAP Synod, 13-15 October 1926:4). In the formation of the CCAP Dr. Robert Laws of the Livingstonia Mission, Dr. Alexander Hetherwick of Blantyre Mission and Rev. Dr. William H. Murray of the DRC Mission of Cape Synod each played their unique role. The three missionary giants knew that disunity

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4 For example the transfer of the Tamanda-work to the Dutch Reformed Church and the controversy that followed, as well as the joining of the northern congregations with the Church of Central Africa in Northern Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe), implying that the whole of the CCAP congregations in Zambia went up in the union.

5 Amongst information already discussed in the dissertation (Tables 2.2, 2.3, 2.4) reveals a time-line of more or less continuous support.

6 The Dutch Reformed Church Mission of the Cape Synod in South Africa and the churches that grew out of their work.

of the Church would drastically hinder the gospel witness in the world (CCAP Ministers' Leadership Seminar, 7– 10 March 1989: 20).

It is against this background that the CCAP in Zambia must be understood. With its roots in the mission work of especially the CCAP of Livingstonia, but also the other synods of the CCAP, the CCAP Synod of Zambia became the fifth synod of this church in 1984 (Minutes: CCAP Livingstonia Special Synod, 27 October 1984:10, 11; Oral interview: Jere 16 October 2004).

#### THE CCAP IN ZAMBIA AND CHURCH UNIFICATION NEGOTIATIONS: 1923-1965

Church unification negotiations in Zambia took a very different stance and almost affecting the Livingstonia mission activities in Zambia (Record of the Consummation of the Church Union and Minutes: of the North- eastern Presbytery of the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia at Chitambo, 1945:1; Minutes: CCAP Synod Standing Committee, 24-27 May 1946:4). From an overview of the negotiations in Zambia it became clear that it had serious repercussions for the CCAP in Zambia. From 1945 to 1978, the CCAP in Zambia concentrated only in the Eastern Province and part of Northern Province because the other CCAP congregations of Mwenzo, Lubwa and Chitambo merged with the London Missionary Society and other Churches (Minutes: CCAP Synod, 16-21 May 1952:15, Appendix 2). It was mainly in the urban areas that CCAP Christians were affected by the unification process. They felt especially estranged from their roots (Minutes: CAR Presbytery, 11 July 1948:4). During the negotiations for the union, the Chusefu congregations were not part of the union process whereby the Livingstonia congregations Mwenzo, Lubwa and Chitambo were united with the London Missionary Society to form the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia (Minutes: CCAP Synod, 22-26 August 1945:6, 8). In line with their historical link they continued to be served from Livingstonia, although geographically they were closer to Loudon Mission station and Livingstonia District Church Council (DCC) than to Mwenzo, Lubwa and Chitambo (Minutes: CCAP Liv Presbytery, 1951:37). In addition, Tumbuka was the main language in all Livingstonia mission stations (Minutes: CCAP Synod, 4-5 September 1968:18). This made communication easier because all these stations were almost in the same geographical area.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF THE LIVINGSTONIA MISSION: 1899-1984

From 1875 to 1899 the Livingstonia Mission had seen tremendous growth in their mission endeavour in Central Africa. Following this development the Free Church of Scotland in 1899 constituted the Presbytery of Livingstonia in Central Africa. It is worthwhile to note that the Livingstonia Mission through the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia in Malawi contributed a lot to the CCAP in Zambia. As a Christian community the CCAP in Zambia traces its roots to the Livingstonia Mission and since the beginning of its work the CCAP had a close bond. The CCAP congregations in the Chusefu area remained structurally part of the CCAP Livingstonia Synod and of the Chusefu/Loudon Presbytery through the different phases of ecclesiological development of the CCAP Livingstonia (Minutes: CAP Synod, 25-29 April 1956:8; Oral interview: Nyirenda, 11 November 2002). The constitution of CCAP Synod of Livingstonia included all the congregations in Zambia, hence its proper function in Zambia (Constitution of the CCAP Livingstonia Synod, 1956, 1959, 1965, and 1969:1; Minutes: CCAP Livingstonia Synod, 2-7 September 1959:118; Correspondence: Turner 18 March 1953). The facts presented indicated that there has never been any discontinuity in the work of the Livingstonia Mission

in Zimbabwe, then Northern Rhodesia. Its work remained mainly in Eastern Zambia under the Chasefu/Loudon District Church Council and Livingstonia/Karonga District Church Council, where Uyombe CCAP congregation in Zambia was adjacent. The Chasefu mission station had four congregations under its supervision, namely Kazembe, Lundazi, Chasefu and Usenga. In the Northern part of Zambia, the Uyombe congregation fell within the boundaries of the Livingstonia District Church Council (Minutes: CCAP Livingstonia Presbytery, 20 July 1946:12; Minutes: CCAP Livingstonia Presbytery, 5 September 1948:1, 2, 11, 12).

Evangelism and stewardship was one major contribution the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia made to the CCAP in Zambia. Through its evangelistic work, many prayer houses were opened. This was followed by many congregations being established in Zambia. The main tools used by CCAP Synod of Livingstonia to evangelise were education, medical work, and the guilds – Women, Youth and Men (Oral interview: Nyirongo, 07-10-2007). These guilds enabled women, men and youth to be fully involved in many villages and people were reached with the gospel in the area (Eastern/Northern Provinces) (Minutes: CCAP Livingstonia GAC, 23-27 August 1966:6, 12; Oral interview: Nyirongo, 07-10-2007). Stewardship was taught in every congregation by ministers, evangelists and elders (Minutes: CCAP Liv, GAC, 24<sup>th</sup> February to 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 1970:13). This has helped the Zambian church to be self-supporting in terms of construction of Church buildings, manses, paying of minister's stipend to mention but a few. The CCAP Livingstonia Synod also contributed to literature distribution as a means of evangelism (Correspondence: Jere, W.M.K Rev. Dr. 1982, 16<sup>th</sup> February). Training of ministers and evangelists continued. It was, however, at a very slow pace compared to the developments in the CCAP Livingstonia in Malawi. The role of missionaries provided through the efforts of the CCAP Livingstonia also strengthened the local church.

The CCAP synod of Livingstonia contributed to the birth, growth and development of CCAP in Zambia by enabling local leadership (Correspondence: Nga'njo, P.G.Rev.1977, and 13<sup>th</sup> October). A milestone in the history of the CCAP in Zambia was the establishment of the Chasefu Presbytery in 1975 (Correspondence: Bernard, Neil C.1975, 30<sup>th</sup> December; Correspondence: Ndolo, R.F. 2<sup>nd</sup> December). One benefit was the growing acknowledgement by outsiders of the CCAP in Zambia as a Zambian church. The fact of a presbytery office on Zambian soils helped in this regard.

## THE CCAP IN THE URBAN AREAS OF ZAMBIA

The spread of Christianity in the urban areas of Zambia is attributed to the economic growth of Northern Rhodesia in the 1920s. Pones (1982:12) observes that the 1950s in Zambia were years of rapid growth in the urban areas, especially the Copper Belt and Lusaka. Christians from Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia and North-eastern Rhodesia and members of the CCAP were amongst those who migrated to these areas. Some joined the newly formed United Missions in the Copperbelt (UMCB), but evidently groups at Wusakile and Luanshya did not feel at home and soon broke away. Efforts by the Livingstonia Synod to persuade them to return were to no avail. In 1958 the Livingstonia Synod accepted the report of its commission, led by the Rev. S.K. Nkhowane (who later joined the PCSA) and made a gentleman's agreement that the CCAP would not open up work in the urban areas from Livingstone to the Copperbelt and advised its members in this area to join one of the sister churches already at work there (Minutes: CCAR Presbytery, 18<sup>th</sup> July 1957: 5, 6).

There were many groups of people in the urban areas with CCAP origins. There was a group, which was from the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia. It associated itself with the CCAR (Oral

interview: Nyirongo, 07-10-2007). But in due course it became dissatisfied with the discipline in the CCAR especially in the urban areas and formed separate CCAP congregations (Oral interview: Lungu, 11-09-03). Another group came from the CCAP Synod of Nkhoma, the CCAP Synod of Blantyre and the CCAP Synod of Harare (Minute No.5.4 of the standing committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1978). When this group was not recognised by the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia, they remained separate CCAP congregations (Correspondence: Mwale, S.Mr.1961, 7<sup>th</sup> November). From 1945 to 1958 almost all those congregations formed in Luanshya, Kitwe, Ndola, Kabwe and Lusaka joined the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, which later became known as the Presbyterian Church of Zambia (Pons 1982:16).

Since then, however, new and unexpected developments took place. Many CCAP members from the Nkhoma Synod who had been worshipping in the African Reformed Church separated themselves and formed a CCAP Congregation at George compound in Lusaka (Oral interview: Zulu, 1701-05). In the same year another CCAP congregation was started at Ndola by mainly members of the CCAP Blantyre Synod (Oral interview: Lungu 11-09-03).

The CCAP General Synod did not ignore this development. The 1978 General Synod of the CCAP reviewed the earlier policy of the Livingstonia Synod not to start work in urban areas (KK). The General Synod of 1979 mandated the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia to evangelise the whole Zambia (Pons 1982:12; Minutes: CCAP Gen Syn Standing Committee, 21<sup>st</sup> June 1979:1).

The members who broke away from sister Synods were mainly CCAP baptised members either from Livingstonia, Nkhoma, Blantyre or Harare CCAP who sought employment in Northern Rhodesia (Minutes: CCAP General Synod, 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> September 1972:6). There were many misunderstandings between the CCAP congregations and sister churches founded in the urban areas, especially the African Reformed Church which later became known as Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ), the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) and the Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa, Zambia (PCSA) (Minutes: CCAP Gen Syn Standing Committee, 9<sup>th</sup> November 1973:1, 3). The CCAP members in these sister churches became dissatisfied with the lack of proper church polity (Oral interview: Lungu, 11-09-03). The poor discipline in those churches was the main issue.

These Christians seemed to have been looking for an opportune time to start CCAP churches in the urban areas. The right time came in 1967 when some CCAP members who were congregating with the African Reformed Church were indefinitely suspended by the African Reformed Church in Lusaka at Matero (Oral interview: Tembo, 20-08-03). This was because they had opposed the transfer of Rev. Jackson Phiri from Madzimoyo to Matero, Lusaka, to replace Rev. Edwin Makewana Zulu. The indefinite suspension was seen by these members as a violation of their Christian rights for they were suspended outside the Church Council. The problem was compounded when their appeal was not considered by the Presbytery and the Synod in 1968 (Minutes: ARCZ Presbytery of Lusaka, 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> July 1969:1, 2; Minutes: ARCZ Synod of Lusaka, 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> August 1968:7)

What caused the major problem in the united churches is related to the issue of Church and order. It is true that every church that desires to plant or extend its works to other areas, needs to avail an order in the church on Scriptural directives. Coertzen (1998:1) observes that, "the existence of an order or particular law in the church can hardly be denied." CCAP members all along had a strong commitment to their particular expression of faith.

The large membership and need for pastoral care for these members forced the CCAP General Synod to adopt the CCAP members in urban areas in 1972 as the responsibility of the CCAP (Minutes: CCAP General Synod 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> September 1972: 6). From that year onwards the CCAP

congregations founded in the urban areas of Zambia came under the supervision of the CCAP General Synod. In 1978 these CCAP congregations were handed over to the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia who already had a Presbytery at Chasefu in Zambia (Minutes: CCAP Gen Syn Standing Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1978; Minutes: CCAP Gen Syn Standing Committee, 21<sup>st</sup> June 1979: 1).

After a long and difficult process members of the CCAP in the Chasefu Presbytery and the various groups in the urban areas could form one church in Zambia. Directly involved was CCAP General Synod who took pastoral responsibility for especially the groups in the urban areas (Minutes: CCAP Gen Syn 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1972:6,7) The further involvement of the CCAP Livingstonia contributed to the eventual organising of the congregations from the various areas into one synod.

The growth of the CCAP Synod of Zambia reflects the growth of the CCAP in central Africa. The CCAP Synod of Zambia is blessed because it has members from almost all the other sister synods (Livingstonia, Nkhima, Blantyre and Harare).

#### THE FORMATION OF THE CCAP SYNOD OF ZAMBIA 28 OCTOBER 1984

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#### THE CCAP SYNOD OF ZAMBIA: 1985-2004

In the final analysis the CCAP Church is being consolidated through its evangelistic campaigns, in both rural and urban areas. Many places are being covered both in rural and urban areas. The Synod now has forty-seven congregations with over 600 prayer houses and with membership of 42,760 members, 32 serving ministers and 10 evangelists synod wide. Although the inception was bad the Synod now has a number of projects and programmes to signify its growth (Oral interview: Nyirongo, 07-10-2007). The Church has maintained its Presbyterian system of church government (Oral interview: Nyirenda, 11-07-02). The Church elders are regarded as ruling elders and the ministers as teaching elders. In its important meetings following its structure, especially in higher courts, such as the Presbytery and Synod, equal numbers of ministers and elders attend (Oral interview: Nyirenda, 11-07-02). It is important to note about the Synod is the fact that it has taken a holistic ministry to the world. It preaches the Gospel, and is, in so far it contributes to the well-being of the people, involved in education, agriculture and health, to mention but a few. However, as a growing Synod, it faces many challenges. Now, and in the near future, these must be considered seriously to enhance the development of this church.

Currently the Church is accepted by the government of the Republic of Zambia. This is signified through various certificates which the government has given the Church<sup>7</sup>. Since the government has recognised the Church as a Zambian Church, no person or sister church questions its existence.

Ecumenically the synod is a member of the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), to mention but a few. The Rev. Moses Lucas Mwale,

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<sup>7</sup> Republic of Zambia ORS/102/66/1013, the Society Rules Certificate of Registration, 9<sup>th</sup> June 1987:1. Certificate of incorporation, Republic of Zambia; Certificate of Incorporation under the Land [perpetual succession] Act CAP 186, 31<sup>st</sup> day of August 2001:1, Customs and Excise Duty and VAT funding (Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Customs and Excise Duty and VAT Funding identification number 498431, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1998:1).

Chairperson of the CCZ, commended the direction the CCAP Synod of Zambia has taken. Mwale observed (07-10-2007) that ecumenisms important for the unity, identity of the church and corporate player emphasized by our Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the book of John 17:1ff, that all may be one. He added that any church that goes its separate way is a sign of a deficient understanding in that church of Christ's prayer that all may be one.

## CONCLUSION

History shows that the CCAP in Zambia has existed among the Zambian people since the 1880's and that it has grown from a mission church to a fully fledged denomination. The research established that the CCAP in Zambia is an indigenous church. On the one hand, it is the fruit of the Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland that first established its mission work in Nyasaland in 1875 and extending its work to the Eastern part of Zambia. On the other hand, it is the fruit of the activities of CCAP Christians in urban areas.

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#### 4.2.2 Minutes

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##### B. CCAP General Synod

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## **4.3 Correspondence**

Correspondence: Bernard, Neil C. Rev. 1954, 2<sup>nd</sup> July. Letter by Rev. Neil C. Bernard, Church of Scotland Mission, Regional Committee for Central Africa P.O. Box 413, Blantyre, Nyasaland, to the Director of Surveys and Lands, P.O. Box 69, Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia. (CCAPLA).

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#### **4.4 Oral Interviews**

- Chintu, T.S. (Dr). 27-10-06. Medical Doctor Anglican, Roads Park, Chief Nkhomeshya Lusaka. Grand daughter of Evangelist Filemon Mkamanga.
- Jere, Whyson (Rev. Dr). 16-10-04. General Secretary first CCAP Synod of Zambia Etchiyeni Village, Chief M'mbelwa, Mzimba District P.O. Box 7, Malawi.
- Lungu, Jairos. 11-09-03. Samboko Village, Chief Chindi Mzimba, Malawi Nyirenda, S.M. (Rev. Dr.). 11-11-02. Zomba Theological College, P.O. Box 130, Zomba, Malawi.
- Sichinga, D. 25-06-06. Elder, CCAP, Chilenje, Chief Nkhomesya, Lusaka Zambia Mwale ML, 07-10-2007. RCZ Synod Moderator – Chairperson of the Council of Churches in Zambia, Justo Mwale Theological College P.O. Box 310199, Lusaka, Zambia.
- Mtonga, H 07-10-2007. Vestry chairperson, Mtendere CCAP congregation, P.O. Box 36643, Lusaka, Zambia Nyirongo WB, 07-10-2007. CCAP Former Synod executive member, Mtendere CCAP Congregation, House Number A476/C P.O. Box 36643.

#### **Key Words**

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