

Missionary

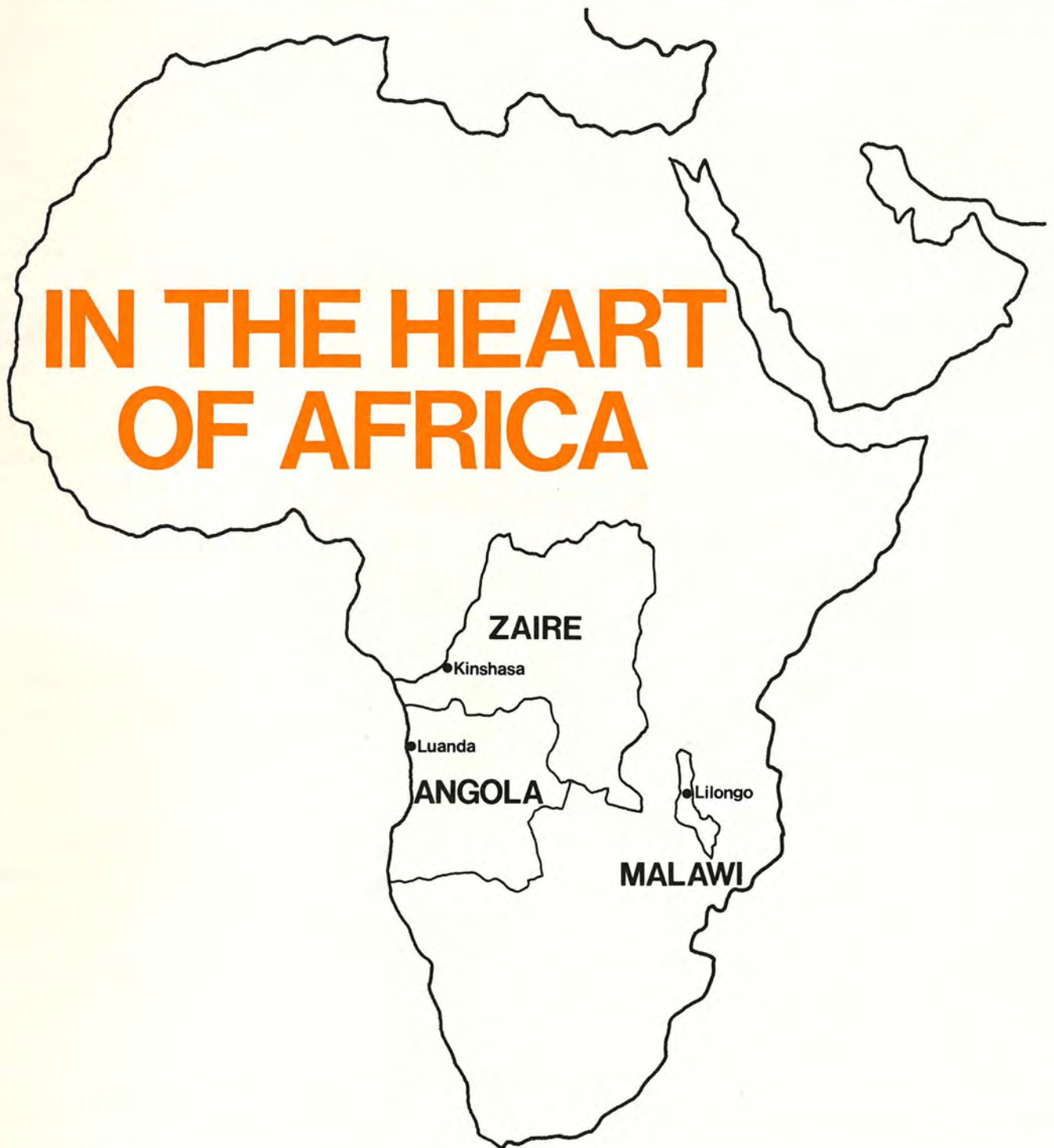
# HERALD

The magazine of the Baptist Missionary Society



DECEMBER 1981  
PRICE 12p

## IN THE HEART OF AFRICA





## MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

### Arrivals

**Mr and Mrs N Baker** on 30 July from Kathmandu, Nepal.

**Miss M Stockwell** on 5 August from Mbanza-Ngungu, Zaire.

**Miss M Bishop** on 8 August from Yakusu, Zaire.

**Miss G Hunter** on 11 August from Kimpese, Zaire.

**Mr R Ahearn** on 14 August from Ngombe Lutete, Zaire.

**Rev E and Mrs Westwood** and family on 15 August from Curitiba, Brazil.

**Miss M Cole** on 15 August from Udayagiri, India.

**Mr A Romanis** on 25 August from Bolobo, Zaire.

**Mrs G Wotton** on 31 August from Curitiba, Brazil.

**Mr and Mrs D J Stockley** on 1 September from Gournadi, Bangladesh.

**Mr A Bishop** on 1 September from Yakusu, Zaire.

**Mr R Welham** on 1 September from Pimu, Zaire.

**Miss S Headlam** on 12 September from Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

**Miss J Henderson-Smith** on 12 September from Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

**Dr R Hart** on 16 September from Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

### Departures

**Mr and Mrs C Laver** and family on 6 August for Dacca, Bangladesh.

**Mr and Mrs C Eaton** and family on 15 August for Kathmandu, Nepal.

**Miss E McCubbin** on 17 August for Colombo, Sri Lanka.

**Miss R Montacute** on 18 August for Kinshasa, Zaire.

**Miss J Ramsbottom** on 18 August for Kinshasa, Zaire.

**Mr and Mrs I Wilson** on 18 August for Upoto, Zaire.

**Mr D Clark** and children on 20 August for Kinshasa, Zaire.

**Mr and Mrs M Abbott** and Kathryn on 20 August for IME, Kimpese, Zaire.

**Miss C Trundle** on 20 August for Pimu, Zaire.

**Miss N Beale** on 1 September for Upoto, Zaire.

**Miss J Maple** on 1 September for Bolobo, Zaire.

**Dr M and Mrs Stagles** and family on 1 September for Kinshasa, Zaire.

**Miss C Preston** on 3 September for Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

**Rev D and Mrs Butler** on 7 September for Bolobo, Zaire.

**Miss R Harris** on 7 September for CECO, Kimpese, Zaire.

**Miss M Bishop** on 8 September for Yakusu, Zaire.

**Miss M Stockwell** on 8 September for Mbanza-Ngungu, Zaire.

**Rev D Doonan** on 11 September for Brazil.

**Miss E Gill** on 14 September for IME, Kimpese, Zaire.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously (3 August-14 September 1981)

### Legacies:

|                   | £        | p |
|-------------------|----------|---|
| Anonymous         | 60.00    |   |
| Miss D E Bird     | 100.00   |   |
| Mrs I F Clavey    | 20.00    |   |
| Miss J C Drew     | 100.00   |   |
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| Miss R Shaw       | 5,400.00 |   |
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**Agriculture:** Anon: £25.00.

**Medical Work:** Anon: £10.00.

## NOTES FOR YOUR PRAYER GUIDE

**Rev Alvaro Rodrigues** (3 December) is now in Angola and has just been appointed General Secretary of IEBA.

**Stephen and Carolyn Green** (10 December) are now at IME Kimpese. Stephen is engaged in paediatric work at the hospital.

**Martin and Annet Stagles** (11 December) are in Kananga *en route* for Yakusu.

**Luke and Kathleen Alexander** (13 December). Kate has not long since had a baby so she is not at present working in the hospital.

**Brenda Earl** (15 December) is home at the present time on sick leave.

**Joan Smith** (23 December) is attending a course of further training.

**Dr J M Das** (24 December) has now moved to another hospital in Asamjarh, India.

**Alan and Anne Goodman** (29 December) are now stationed at Binga in Zaire and engaged in church work.

**Gerald and Margaret Hemp** (30 December) take over as hostel parents in São Paulo at the beginning of next month.

## GOD'S PEACE AND JOY BE YOUR PORTION THIS CHRISTMAS

\* \* \* \* \*

We wish all our readers God's rich blessing for this Season and the New Year.

We look forward to continuing our fellowship in mission overseas during 1982.



## Secretaries

Rev A S Clement  
Rev H F Drake, OBE

## Editor

Rev A E Easter

Enquiries about service to:  
Rev (Mrs) A W Thomas

Films, slide sets, posters, maps, literature  
are available depicting our work

Departments concerned with  
Young People's, Women's, and Medical  
support work are always available to offer  
help and advice

We share in the work of the Church in:

Angola  
Bangladesh  
Brazil  
Hong Kong  
India  
Jamaica  
Nepal  
Sri Lanka  
Tanzania  
Trinidad  
Zaire

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Angola appears on our television screens or in our newspapers from time to time, usually because of some incursion of South African troops from Namibia to carry out, as they claim, punitive raids against the SWAPO guerillas or the media seizes on an attempt by SWAPO to cause some harassment to South Africa.

These occurrences, tragic though they are, and newsworthy though they be, actually involve a very small part of the Angolan population. These incidents occur for the most part in Southern Angola and the country is so large that those in other parts feel remote from the events.

Up until 1961 the BMS work in Angola was centred on the north among people whose tribal affinities overleaped the man-made boundary between Angola and Zaire. That is why when oppression came, so many refugees were able to settle in their thousands in Lower Zaire. They were among their kinsfolk, tribally.

## Day to day living

What then of the news of refugees returned to Angola and especially those with whom BMS was associated in the past? This is information which is not likely to find space in national newspapers nor draw a television film crew to the area, yet it is news of ordinary men and women seeking to re-establish life in their homeland and make it a strong independent country. It is news of our kinsfolk in Christ Jesus and therefore important to the Christian Church in this country.

We are able in this issue of the *Missionary Herald* to give you a report from a missionary who for many years worked in Angola until 1961 when all BMS missionaries were expelled. Recently she was able to visit the new Angola and there met many old friends and saw what the Christian Church is doing.

An Angolan pastor, responsible for a large district, reveals that the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola is energetically outward looking and ready to seize the opportunities presented to it to evangelize new areas.

There is also an account of ordinary day to day living in Angola written by a young lady who was born and grew up as a refugee in Zaire but has now returned with her family to her native land.

## WE HAVE NO CHOICE

It is with regret that we have to raise the price of the *Missionary Herald* to 15p from January 1982. We have held the price for two years during which time costs have risen 30% and we are informed that more rises are on the way. Unless we take this step it will result in a very large deficit on the magazine account next year, but we are sure you will agree that the *Missionary Herald* will still be very good value for money.



# SHALL WE SEND THEM TO SCHOOL?

by Sylvia Hopkins

This is not a question one hears often in the United Kingdom. There the question is usually, 'To which school or college shall our children be sent?' In Zaire, however, the question is whether to educate children at all. Boys have a better chance of receiving some schooling, although where the parents are wealthy the girls may have this same opportunity. In families where an older son or other relative is in employment, the chances of sending one's children to school are greatly increased because these members of a family are expected to help with the cost of education.

However, many families are not so fortunate.

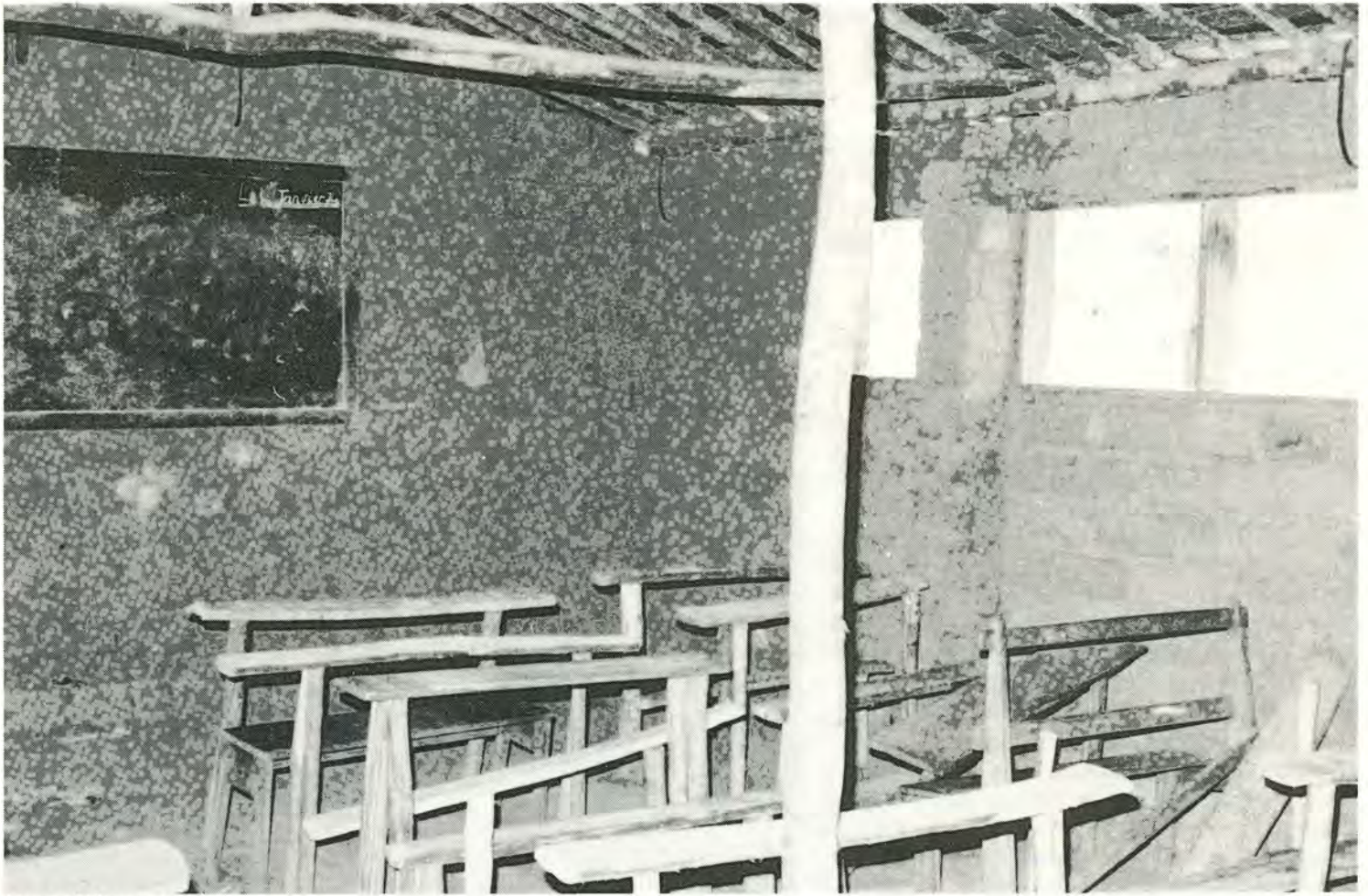
## Standing room only

In order to narrow this problem down to a particular case, let me take you to the school in Pimu. You may not have realized that Pimu can boast a secondary as well as a primary school. The buildings are made of mud bricks and thatched roof with furniture that is sparse and rickety. On most days, three pupils are squeezed on to each of the two-seated benches and when there is a full attendance, a few will have to stand.

School fees must be met by the parents in order to enter their children for schooling at the age of six. Because so many parents are poor, most girls, if they are educated at all, are not sent to school until they are older, as preference is given to the boys. Girls are considered to be more valuable in the home than in the classroom. As there are so few textbooks, most lessons are taught by rote. The chanting of multiplication tables, verbs, poetry and historical facts are common sounds here, as well as the singing which is also part of the daily school routine. Children must bring their own paper and







One of the classrooms

pens to school and each teacher is allowed one stick of chalk each week. PE is covered by football and a lot of marching around the mission.

#### Primary school – at 14

Unlike the British system, whereby a child will move into the next class at a certain age, Zairian children cannot move onto the next stage until they have 'made the grade' – and this applies even to primary school. It is not unusual to see 13 or 14 year-olds still in primary school. There are no provisions for slow learners and no remedial classes.

Money is an important consideration in secondary school. As with primary school, there are fees to be paid and if these are not forthcoming, the children concerned will not be allowed to sit their examinations in January and June. Girls are at a disadvantage at secondary school, also. Many have to leave school because whatever money their parents have is spent on the education of their brothers. Others leave because they become pregnant. By the fifth year stage most girls have dropped out.

Science and biology are taught at Pimu

but there are few textbooks, little equipment and no laboratory! The fifth and sixth formers have the opportunity to use the hospital teaching laboratory in order to gain practical experience. In Zaire, all subjects are taught throughout the school and pupils must pass in all of them each year in order to progress through the school. However, the sixth form here have not had consistent teaching in geography this year and this exam is included in the State Certificate examination. Their dilemma is obvious.

#### Temptation in their path

Family pressures can be very great on the children and sometimes less than honest means are used to obtain good examination results. Christians have a conflict of conscience on their hands. It is wrong to cheat, but their families have sacrificed much to pay for their schooling and are expecting their children to do well and so, in turn, help younger members of the family through school.

Teachers are also under pressure. Their pay is irregular and sometimes they are not paid for months on end. Many have large families to feed, clothe and educate. The temptation to accept a bribe in

exchange for, say, disclosure of the examination questions in advance, is sometimes too great to resist.

#### Questions in the air

At Pimu, the only graduate teacher is the Headmaster who has really built up the school, who exercises discipline no matter whose child is involved and who wants to see the standard of education in the school rise. Unfortunately for Pimu, he has been short-listed for an Inspector's job in a different part of the country. If he leaves, I wonder what will happen to the Secondary School in Pimu? Will the next Headmaster have a sense of professional conscience and the interests of his pupils at heart? Will the children be educated well – or will they even be educated at all?





# LIFE SPRINGS ANEW

by Eileen Motley

We came back heartbroken from Angola in 1961. The country had been torn apart by revolution and counter revolution, thousands had died and many thousands had fled as refugees over the border to Zaire. Now, 20 years later, I have returned from a visit which has been a joy and an inspiration.

Many of you will have read of the great celebrations of the Baptist Church in Angola, which took place at Mbanza Kongo in February. It was at this place, San Salvador as it was then known, that the first Baptist missionaries arrived 103 years ago. Many of you will have heard, too, something of the faith of these people through their long years of exile, or of their hiding and isolation, and of how they have rebuilt their Church, which with its Associate members, now numbers nearly 30,000.

## No more room

During my visit, I met so many of these faithful people. In the centre of Luanda, the capital, they worship in a building that was once a big shop. Now there is standing room only and people overflow onto the wide pavements where passers-by stop to listen to the singing and join the crowd.

In Damba, I joined 136 men and women for Monday morning worship at 7.30 am in the large Roman Catholic church which the Baptists are able to share. Another hundred arrived later, and had to stand outside.

In Toto, which once boasted little more than an air-strip and a 'hotel', there is now a large community. Houses have sprung up everywhere and the people have obtained a sizeable church – quite some progress since the first little group of Baptist folk was formed back in 1975.



*Two Angolan church leaders*

The villages along the road between Toto and Bembe have all disappeared for the second time. Their rebuilding which took so much faith and hard work in 1975, was destroyed again in the fighting of the civil war which followed. In just a few places there are brave souls starting again from scratch, with piles of cement-blocks or sun-dried bricks. Nevertheless, most of the people are either at Toto, or in the little tumbled-down town of Bembe, where the once Portuguese shops are now empty and used for housing. One of these has been altered to become 'God's House' for the Baptist church.

When I arrived at Bembe, it was not long before sunset, and soon the whole town was in an uproar of excitement and welcome, gathered round the house of the Pastor, Jovelino.

It was hard to persuade them to leave us, even when it was long after dark and the only light came from a couple of flickering oil-lamps. Some talking went on long into the night with the two leaders who had made my trip possible, Rev Pedro Manuel Timoteo, who was the General Secretary for all the Baptist Churches, and Rev Alvaro Rodrigues, back



in Angola after a second period in exile, who was responsible for Christian literature and has now succeeded Pedro Timoteo as Secretary. We took with us hundreds of copies of books which Angola pastors have written, and sold them all, with demands for many many more.

Alvaro counted 360 crammed into their church early next morning, with hardly an inch of space left anywhere, and a hundred or more outside. Many had come before it was light and seemed so overjoyed at our reunion that they fell over each other with gifts of bananas, paw-paw, melon seeds, sweet potatoes and roast peanuts. Some of the old folk had never left the nearby forests and we now met again for the first time in maybe 25 years. Many others had been in exile in Zaire, when we were all refugees there. There were also the young folk and the children born during the exile or since, who, led by their choir, gave us their own joyful African welcome in song after song.

#### **Villages growing out of the jungle**

Timoteo and I travelled from Bembe in the Land Rover which was one of the BMS gifts to the Angolan Baptist Church, but it needed all Timoteo's skill, and 4-wheel drive, to get us over the tracks which are all that is left of the not very good roads we used to know. We were aware that many prayers were upholding us in our journey and gave thanks that we managed to pass safely through so many dangerous places. 2,908 kilometres in a week of travel! But how worthwhile it all was.

We arrived at Nsosso, the old 31 de Janeiro district, to find no fewer than 52 deacons from the region, meeting in the half built new church. A crowd from the

town came in the dark, or with lamps, for an evening meeting there.

Sunday morning was spent at Kibokolo, in the church built on the foundations of the old house where I used to live. The sad ruins of nearly everything else we knew are hidden under growing manioc plants, but everywhere, old villages are being rebuilt. About 400 people filled the church to bursting point, with untold numbers left outside, and the 200 or so children who had been at the earlier Sunday school had already been sent home. How good it was to see the old

folk again – and to meet some of the younger men and women leaders of today.

On our return to Luanda we stopped at a place called Bungu, where, since, our passing through on the previous Saturday, the little group of church members and friends had completely cleared the jungle-like site which the community had given them for a church building. From there we went to Uige again, for a 5.30

*continued on page 190*



*No room for them inside*



# A YOUNG COUNTRY

by **Rose-Louise Senguele**, the daughter of an Angolan pastor who spent all her young life as a refugee in Zaire, but now lives in Angola, about which she writes.

In our villages and towns there are now a lot of people. There are not enough houses in the cities and so new ones are being built, including many tall apartment blocks. Even now there is a great number of Angolans in other countries, where they fled for refuge, but the towns and villages are still crowded. At the markets, at meetings and church services, in schools and especially at Thanksgiving times, the crowds are too big to count.

## Always on the move

People are travelling all the time – by lorry, plane, or when the roads are good, by long-distance bus. In the cities everyone travels each day to their place of work, whether by bus, bicycle, car or on foot, women as well as men. Mothers leave their children in a creche while they work. In the villages, it is the same. While the children are at school, those grown-ups who do not have other work, go to the field-gardens.

Others who have no job, leave their village and begin building on the old village sites which are overgrown with forest. These sites were where the old people hid during the fighting, and they have good soil for planting and growing food. Living by these plots saves time being wasted in going back and forth everyday to the fields, often very long distances. They return to the village when somebody dies there, or at the summons of the government or, if they are Christians, for Sunday services. There are only a few houses now that still have walls of mud or grass or roofs of thatching grass. Most of the houses are of brick and when they can, people have roofs of corrugated metal to replace the thatch.

## A ticket to shop

In the cities, people eat rice instead of

manioc, and fish, bread and many other kinds of food. Food is bought from one of the big markets, or at the shops with rows of shelves, called mini-markets, where shoppers usually have to queue outside and wait their turn for a ticket to enter, just a small number at a time. Supplies are usually good, but there may be weeks without, for instance, any tea.

In Luanda, people go to the Island beach to buy their fish. They wait for the little boats to come in, and then they bargain on the shore with the fishermen, against all other would-be buyers, for what they want.

In the villages, the hunters are able to eat the animals they have killed, sometimes



Preparing manioc



deer or buffalo, or smaller creatures. Some children catch field-mice and eat them. The villagers eat all sorts of vegetables, such as the all important manioc, beans, peas, peanuts, tomatoes, corn on the cob and many kinds of greens and fruit in season. Food is scarce when the crops are being planted but plentiful at harvest-time.

#### **There is not enough**

Clothes are a great problem, because Angola has very few factories that make cloth. Most clothing comes from other countries, but it is not enough for everyone.

Hospital treatment is free, if one can reach a hospital. However, in many places there is no doctor and a critical shortage of medicines. In places far from any hospital, babies are born in their mothers' houses and if there is not even a nurse anywhere in the district, mother and baby may suffer. Schooling is also free but there is a great lack of teachers. At all levels, there are far too many children and far too few schools.

Big crowds attend church, but since there is still no Bible Training School, most parishes are without a pastor. Sometimes a teacher or evangelist may act in his place, and deacons, both men and

women, do what they can. In many places, at least until recently, people worship under a shelter of palm branches, for although they have some bricks and roof-tins, they have not nearly enough with which to build.

Angola is a young country with many needs – centres for professional training, clinics, medical equipment such as X-ray machines, pharmacies, schools, printing presses, factories . . . the list seems endless. If there are any of these at all, they are too few.

I hope this is enough to show you a little of what Angola is like.



*Luanda, the capital city*



# OUTREACH IN ANGOLA

by **Pastor Daniel Mabanza**

*Superintendent of the Sacandica and Kwango districts of Angola*

*(This article was translated by Dr John Carrington)*

The Kwango Church District is in the same area as the Sacandica District where Rev David Grenfell and Miss Eileen Motley went to install teachers between 1958 and 1960.

After the exile in Zaire many Angolans returned to their country steeped in sinful ways and no longer acknowledging the Lord Jesus. The Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA) determined to do something about such a situation and appointed pastors to Sacandica district. They sent Pastor Panzo Bedel to open up two parishes, one at Kimpasi and the

other at Koma. These parishes were then served by Pastor Emmanuel Kinzu for a year beginning in 1975.

In 1976 the Assembly of IEBA appointed me as Superintendent of the Sacandica district and today we have 11 parishes totalling 2,600 members.

Sacandica is close to Kwango country and one day when we were staying at Kibanzi, the farthest town in Sacandica, we learned that the people in Kwango were not worshipping God and they had no pastor. We asked them if they would

receive us. When they heard of our request they agreed because during their visits to our area to buy food they had heard us preaching the good news about Jesus Christ and they wanted to hear more.

We asked for the names of their village chiefs and wrote letters to them saying we would like to visit them. On receiving their agreement we sent a delegation of a number of people who spent 37 days, from the 10 February 1980, among them.

## **A forest of charms**

When the delegation arrived in the area we discovered that magical charms were on display everywhere – on crops growing in the fields, on the windows and doors of houses, on the domestic animals and even on the children. The group also found that the people were making idols and worshipping them.

In village after village we found witch hunters and spirit diviners. The people in the area believed in the power of sculptors to make gods and in the power of witch hunters to put charms on the bodies of little children supposedly afflicted with evil spells. The children were, indeed, not well and they were not as big as they should be for their age.

The people argued that our God was just the same as their 'medicine' which they called Nkita. Nkita they insisted could act on a baby even in its mother's womb. We were the first people, they told us, whom they had heard teaching Bakango folk about a God who cannot be seen. But for all their arguments and protestations many gave us great joy because they brought along their magic charms for us to burn.



*An Angolan village*





**Bibles had to be left**

In all we were received in 18 villages. We found no Bibles anywhere though we did come across parts of the Bible – unrecognized as such by the villagers – which they were cutting up into small pieces and smoking like tobacco. Not one of the pastors who went with me on this expedition felt that he could bring back his Bible. We all left our Bibles there so that the people could read them for we had preached that these books contained the Word of God to them; God the Creator of heaven and of earth and of every human being.

From this visit to the Kwango country I realized more than ever how great is

God's love among men. I think I appreciated too how much the early

missionaries must have loved these pagan people – especially when I remembered from the history of the mission how many of them died in Africa in their endeavours to bring salvation to the people of my country.



To date I have spent five years in the Sacandica district. The usual term of service in any one place is three years but IEBA asked me to stay on and I am happy to do so to help the Church here in its proclamation of the gospel unto salvation, though many of my friends are working with the Church in other areas.

Alas, even today, so many die without finding salvation and this urges us to work all the harder for the Lord.

As we travelled round these villages holding our evangelistic meetings we drew such crowds that we found our human voices lacked the strength, however much we shouted, to reach the fringe of the crowd. How we longed for the means to reach them and how much the burden of Matthew chapter 28 verses 19 to 20 was laid upon us.

*Fellowship and work – a church meeting*



# AN OPPORTUNITY SEIZED

by **Dr David Green**, a member of the BMS International Fellowship

About 18 miles south of Lilongo, the new capital of Malawi, is Bunda College, a constituent college of the University of Malawi. Malawi itself is situated in the south-east of Africa and the University was established in 1964, the year of Independence, to train young nationals to professional degree and diploma levels.

I was sent from Aberystwyth to be the head of the Rural Development Department, one of four academic departments in the College, the others being Agricultural, Engineering, Crop Production and Livestock Production. We arrived on 31 December 1975, but it was not the first time I had been to the College. I had made two short visits, one in 1973 and another in 1975, during which I had observed a need for a Sunday School for the children of College staff. When we went over at the end of 1975, Norma, my wife, and I took materials with us in the hope of beginning a Sunday School, but the opportunity to do so was never given. However, what we observed happening among the Christian students was far more wonderful than our own limited vision.

## A link with Livingstone

Bunda College has about 300 students, the University as a whole, many more. It is about 200 miles north of Zomba, the old capital of Malawi, where the Liberal Arts, Science Departments and University administration are established in Chancellor College which has 800 students. The Polytechnic with its 1,200 students, is in Blantyre, Malawi's major commercial centre, named after the birthplace of Dr David Livingstone who explored the region over 100 years ago.

In the predominantly rural economy, those qualified in the applied sciences are

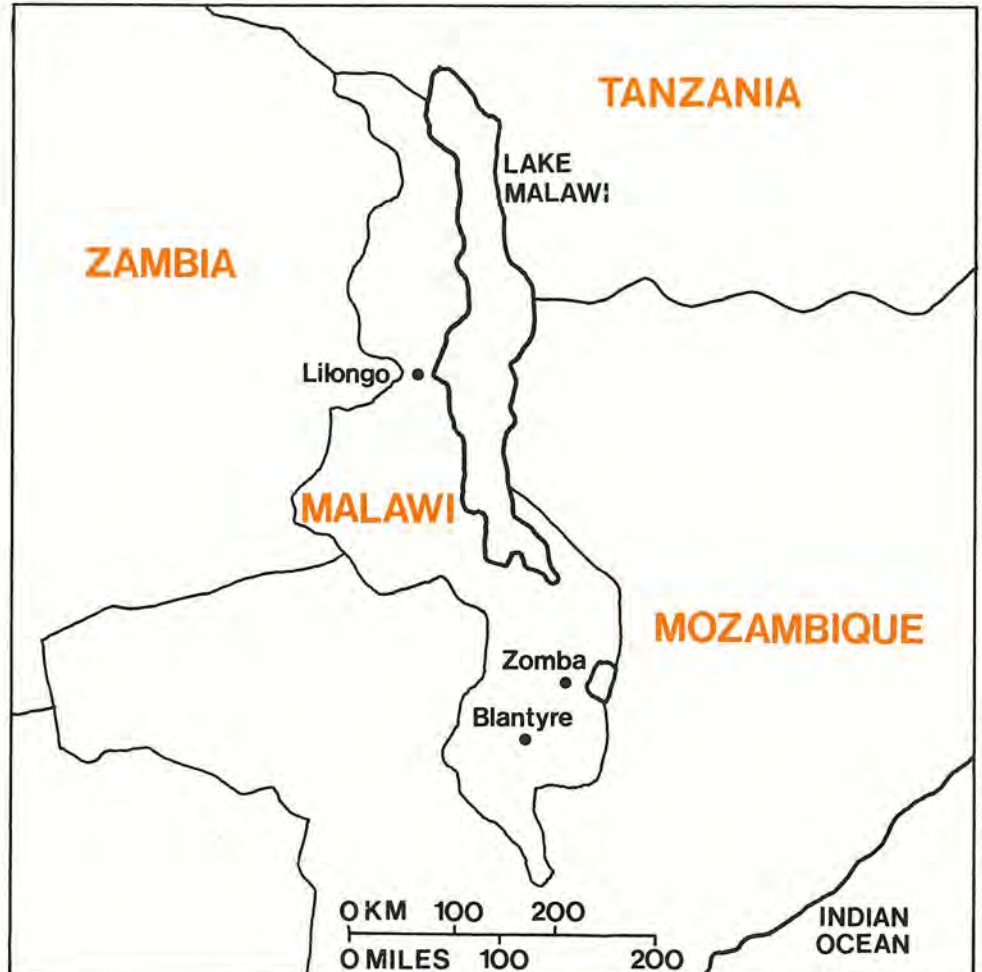
usually employed in the agricultural sector or associated industries. Bunda College was established in 1967 to provide all university level agricultural education in the country. During the year and a half that I stayed there, I saw the Rural Development Department grow from a staff of six to sixteen, and the Malawian/expatriate ratio swing in favour of the nationals.

College entrants, almost all from rural backgrounds, have many opportunities open to them after qualifying, and a large number work in the public sector.

Throughout the country there are numerous rural development projects, part of the National Rural Development Programme. Malawi is about twice the size of Wales and generally rugged with fertile plains. More than 90 per cent of the population make their living from the land.

## A Scottish influence

Christians in Malawi are divided evenly between Protestants and Roman Catholics, but the number of non-Christians is fairly high. The indigenous Yao people are Muslims, the





Asians are either Muslim or Hindu, and many others are animists, in subjection to a wide variety of witchcraft. Surprisingly, the Scottish Presbyterian Church has an important role in Malawi, profoundly influencing both the Chewa people in the centre and south and the Tumbuka people in the north. However, practically all known Christian denominations have some established work in the country, including a very substantial involvement by Seventh Day Adventists.

The Student Christian Organization of Malawi is shared by the Catholics and Protestants of the University, many of whom do not have Christian backgrounds. Christian members of staff usually oversee local activities, and a chaplain ministers to over 2,000 students. Over the past few years the Christian students have gathered strength and had a greater sense of purpose. They are focussing more on those spiritual activities which are central to the Christian life and faith, and less on the social and peripheral.

### **Back to basics**

This is true of Bunda College, whose Christian Student Organization was little more than a social club until a few years ago. However, during my stay there, I saw it move towards more serious and devotional prayer meetings, with an increased enthusiasm for worship. Attendance at weekly Protestant Sunday services now is around 100, with the student choir leading the singing which the Malawians love so much. Christian meetings have concentrated on the essentials of Christian living. Bible studies and discussions, led by visiting ministers and the students themselves, became more popular during this period of growth.



All of a sudden daily prayer meetings began. After the annual Easter retreat in 1977, arranged by the Student Christian Organization, a few students approached Norma for help in beginning a prayer group. She encouraged them to meet together, without any members of staff, to pray for God's direction. Within a week there was a regular daily meeting of some 25 which soon increased to about 40, and we now hear that prayers are held for 15 minutes after the evening meal each day. These prayers are in the College Hall which is needed to accommodate the large numbers who join together for this brief time of spontaneous and relevant waiting on God in prayer and praise.

### **A real involvement**

New Christians were prepared for church membership through the catechumen classes, which I led for two years. It was a tremendous joy to take part in services at which these young men and women were baptized by the chaplain, having committed their lives to Jesus. Fifteen members of the academic, secretarial and technical staff met to study St John's Gospel in our home on Sunday evenings. Contrary to our expectations, this

fellowship did not cease when we left Malawi, but has continued under a Malawian member of staff.

We are convinced of the importance of preparation and prayer. God provides means, resources and circumstances, power and guidance to enable us to be His people and to do His will. We prepared for a Sunday School but the circumstances were never right to start one. However, many other exciting developments emerged for which resources and circumstances were perfect. We had a sense of missionary involvement in God's work. Our professional and Christian responsibilities were interwoven, the one enhancing the other. Missionary involvement demands a prayerful sensitivity to God's Holy Spirit, an aspect of daily living in which it is all too easy to become lethargic.

### **An experience to share**

Even now that we are home, we are aware of matters for prayer. Most especially we pray for indigenous Christian leadership in all aspects of Malawi's social and economic life, as

*continued overleaf*



## AN OPPORTUNITY SEIZED

*continued from previous page*

there cannot be an indefinite dependence on expatriate leadership. God's purposes will be most effectively served by indigenous Christian men and women, professionally well-trained, dedicated to serving the Lord Jesus in whatever capacity they are placed.

It was our privilege to share in these aspects of life in the University of Malawi and experience God at work in His creation. Also, we have ourselves been aware of the prayerful support by many friends in home churches and, as members of the BMS International



*Some of the Christian students*

Fellowship, these are experiences of God's work which we want to share with our Baptist friends. Malawi is not in any formal way a part of BMS work, but God is moving among His people there and

the missionary influence is much wider than the boundaries of any missionary organization. There is no limitation to God's sphere of influence nor the way in which He chooses to work.

## LIFE SPRINGS ANEW

*continued from page 183*

meeting in a big shelter with palm branches for a roof. The church building is not completed yet, and they meet on the foundations.

### **In the capital itself**

In Luanda there are lots of those whom we knew in the north, or in Zaire. Many who are in responsible positions as leaders owe this fact to the opportunity they had, in Zaire, of attending secondary school and University, or other further training. I met old students who work in customs, telecommunications, electronics, for the Angola Oil Company, or as



*Some young people at Kibokolo church*



doctors, nurses or pharmacists. Some work in remote hospitals under difficult circumstances. Isabel Makondekwa is the UNICEF representative for all Angola whose responsibility is ante-natal maternity and baby care. Joao Makondekwa is the representative for the Bible Society and Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga, who was at Selly Oak in 1979-80, is the Secretary for the All-Angola Council of Evangelical Churches.

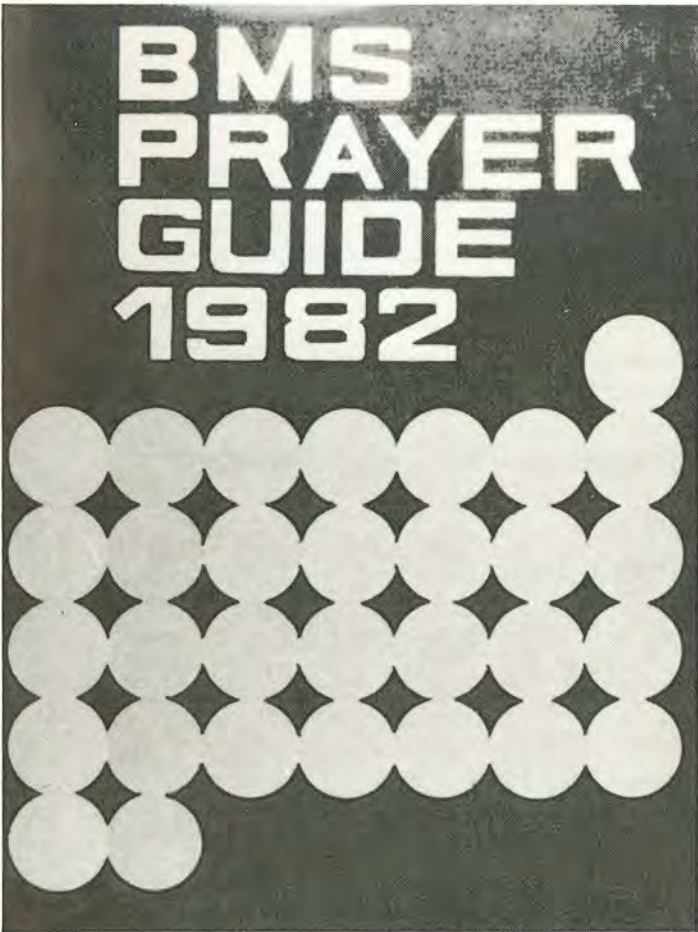
Our Baptist work was always in the north of the country, but now there are Baptist churches in other districts. Particularly

linked with us in Britain are not only hundreds in the north but also now, no less than four fellowships in Luanda. The fourth has been established quite recently in a new suburb about seven and a half miles out of town.

There is still a tremendous shortage of certain items and of qualified people; so many resources and skills went to waste during the years and years of warfare. This year, however, is the Year of Discipline and Control, in which the government and people are trying to make their country a place of which to

be proud. For me there were many proud moments as I recognized those who have come through turmoil, sadness and loss to an even surer Christian faith. There are so many whose honesty, fairness and sheer goodness mark them out as ones in whom all can trust. These are our Lord's witnesses in Angola today.

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