

July to September 2024
APF Prayer and Newsletter



African
Pastors
Fellowship

Impetus.

Ministry in the Digital Age

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Continue



From the CEO

At the time of writing I am taking a break from checking through the footnotes of my final dissertation for the Masters in Digital Theology I commenced a little over two years ago. The title of my research project is 'The Smart Pastor' and it is an in-depth exploration of the training needs and opportunities for church leaders in Africa in our digital age.

I want to take this moment to publicly thank the trustees of APF for allowing me the chance to study. I realise this debt of gratitude places me in a similar category to the thousands of African pastors who benefit from access to training, resources and encouragement through the ministry of APF.

To celebrate the completion of my course I am inviting APF supporters to participate in an online digital theology taster session later in the year. This will be similar in content to the sessions I have presented in Africa over the past two years. Details of when these will take place will be published in the next edition of *Impetus*, but it would be helpful to get an indication of interest, so please drop me an email to dave@africanpastors.org if you think this might be something you would like to join.

In the meantime, I hope you find the articles and updates in this edition of *Impetus* inspiring and informative. Thank you, as ever, for your prayers and financial support as APF works to enable effective ministry in Africa through our dedicated training partners.

In Christ,

Revd Dave Stedman

In the UK

Thank you!

We are always immensely grateful to all the UK churches that give so generously to support pastors in Africa. Some churches give annually, others monthly. Others, like Lacock Church in Wiltshire (pictured), made donation to APF from their Lent Lunches. Thank you!



Trustees

It was great to have two of our newer trustees with us in person for the AGM in May. Prof. Peter Flew and Kingston Ogango each gave significant input to our considerations around safeguarding and the use of technology in the African church respectively. Kingston also led our devotions.



**Kingston
Ogango**

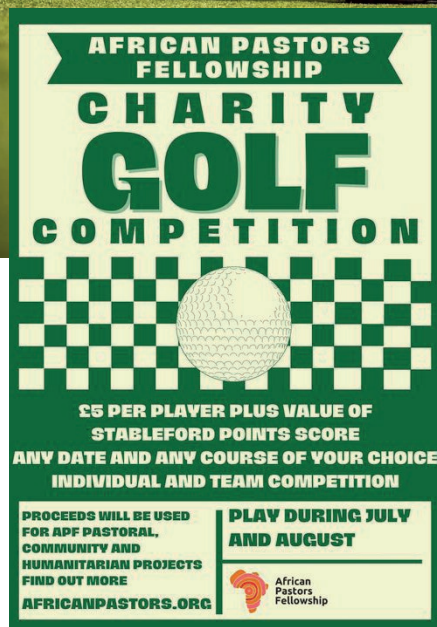
We continue to seek new trustees to join the board. If you, or those known to you, might have capacity for this we



**Prof Peter
Flew**

would be delighted to hear from you for an initial conversation, especially if you have skills in IT, theological education in Africa or fundraising. Please contact Dave at: dave@africanpastors.org

APF Charity Golf Competition



During July and August golfers are being invited to dedicate a round of golf to APF.

Because of the geographic spread of our supporters it is difficult to find a venue that is accessible for a gathered golf day so this year golfers can play with their friends at any course on any day they choose, donating the value of their Stapleford point score to the charity. More information is available on the website: africanpastors.org/golf

In the UK (continued)

Nasareth to Bethlehem Bike Ride

Later this year, probably during early Advent, our CEO (and hopefully a few friends!) will be doing a sponsored cycle from Nasareth (in north Wales) to Bethlehem (in south Wales).

If you would like to join the ride, just let us know and we will share more information. The sponsorship page is already open:

[JustGiving.com/page/APFbikeride](https://www.justgiving.com/page/APFbikeride)



APF Quiz Night

A number of churches have hosted an APF Quiz Night which have been fun occasions and provide a way of sharing information about Africa and the work of APF in a light-touch way.



We have the questions ready, together with video clips and slides so it is easy for anyone to use or could form part of an APF church weekend if you wanted to combine it with a Sunday speaking engagement for Dave or Geoff.

De-clutter for APF

The summer is traditionally a quiet season for APF, especially financially. But if you're drowning in clutter, you could get rid of some no longer needed items and support Africa pastors at the same time. Mobilise your family, friends and church community to donate items for sale at car boot fairs over the summer.



African Training Partner Conference

Between 24th and 27th September, APF is hosting an exciting and significant conference for twenty key African Training Partners (ATPs). Our partners will be jetting into Uganda for the conference from across Africa where they'll be joined by APF's UK staff team of Dave and Geoff.

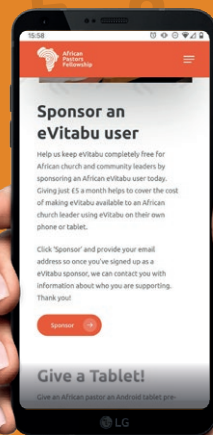
Hannah Fleming-Hill, who helps APF with social media; Jonathan Haddock, who develops the eVitabu app; as well as APF trustees including Peter Flew, Rose Mugabi and Kingston Ogango will also be attending the event in Kampala.

The purpose of the conference is to encourage networking and fellowship between our core partners, review eVitabu usage, explore the strategic plan to provide ATPs with annual training grants, film inspiring stories for sharing with supporters, and to honour, bless and thank our ATPs for their faithful service, not just to APF, but to the ministry of the church in Africa.

The conference will take place at the campus of Pastors Discipleship Network in Bweyogorere. Please pray for the preparation, logistics, funding and delivery of this major event in the APF calendar.

Sponsor a pastor using eVitabu in Africa.

1. On your phone, tablet or laptop, go online and visit: www.africanpastors.org/evitabu
2. Click on the 'Sponsor' link button in the 'Sponsor an eVitabu user' section.
3. Complete the secure online payment form to set up your sponsorship direct debit. Just £5 per month, less than the price of a paperback book, will give an African church leader access to an entire library of books and training resources.
4. You will be allocated an African church leader already using eVitabu to sponsor.
5. You'll receive an email telling you a little about who you are sponsoring including their name, where they live and their ministry background.
6. Your monthly sponsorship will be used by APF to make eVitabu better for the person you are sponsoring and hundreds of other users all over the continent of Africa.



Around Africa



Revs Aberdeen Gargi and Clinton Gbawah

Liberia



Revd Aberdeen Gargli (on left in photo above), Principal of the Evangelical Theological College of Liberia and Revd Clinton Gbawah, Legal Representative of the Evangelical Church Network of Liberia, met to talk about eVitabu at the college in Monrovia. The two men have been connected through their shared links with APF and eVitabu.

The True King

10Giving, the charitable partner of online Christian bookshop 10ofThose, contacted APF recently wondering if we could help them distribute spare copies of the brilliant children's book *The True King* by Nancy Guthrie and Jenny Brake. APF partners Love and Care for the Child Ministries, Faith Babies Home and Walubu Jude were able to distribute hundreds of copies to children in central Uganda. The book, written for children aged 3 to 7, is beautifully illustrated and introduces children to the big story of the Bible — the story of the True King who rules over his people in perfect goodness and a kingdom that will last forever.



South Sudan



APF partner in South Sudan, Saints Revival Committee, distributed Bibles to pastors from over twenty denominations in rural Aweil South County with support from an APF local language Bible grant.



Zambia



Bike grants were received by eight pastors in Zambia. Also, Lawson Limao from Word of God ministries received a grant to install solar lighting in the homes of pastors without access to electricity.

Uganda



Revd Esomu Francis (in pink shirt) is pictured here with local pastors from Karamoja Region in northern Uganda. Francis is the founder and principal of Atirir Bible School in Teso Region. APF supports ABS trains pastors and church leaders in theology to certificate level, and also helps Francis travel to remote regions to run workshops with untrained rural leaders. Francis told us:

"These native pastors are an active and vibrant part of the ministry in Abim and Otuke Districts of Karamoja. They are pastoring rural churches, doing



extensive evangelism outreach into unreached areas and planting churches to expand the Kingdom of God. Since these church leaders make their living through farming, many struggle to meet the financial needs of their families, theological education for themselves and fees for their children. Ministry travel expenses and food are also challenging factors."



Kenya



While Dave was in Kenya in April, he was invited to talk about eVitabu and Digital Theology at the Baptist Convention of Kenya's general assembly. This is the denomination's largest annual gathering where around 2,000 Baptist Christians come together.

Ministry in the Digital Age



By Revd Dave Stedman

During my recent visit to Kenya I was privileged to be the one of the speakers at the Baptist Convention of Kenya general assembly. More than 2,000 delegates gathered at Kanduyi in Bungoma County not far from the border with Uganda for the event. In addition to sharing information about eVitabu, I was invited to speak about Christian ministry in the digital age. The talk was well received and several exciting new contacts were made, not least with the Kenya Baptist Theological College and the Aberdare Baptist Convention that covers eight counties in central Kenya, around 300 churches, and borders the Central Rift Baptist Convention with which we have partnered over the past decade.

Here is an edited version of what I shared at the convention:

The world has changed. We are more connected than ever. Twenty years ago, before my first ever visit to sub-Saharan Africa, a simple email exchange took several weeks. My contact in Uganda lived deep in the village and had to walk several kilometres to find a *boda-boda* (motorcycle) to carry him to a *matatu* (taxi bus) stage where he could get a ride into Soroti Town. On reaching town there may or may not be power and regardless, there was never a guarantee of an internet connection at the cybercafe. The round trip was both costly and time consuming.

Today, that same man still lives deep in the village but with his smartphone he can send instant messages, make video calls, take selfies, engage with social media and bank online. The world has changed, and this new digital age has implications for both ministry and mission in Africa.

As followers of Jesus, and especially as Christian leaders, how do we share the everlasting gospel in this ever-changing media landscape? Luke 4:14-30 provides some transferrable lessons that can help us navigate our response and engagement to the increasingly embedded, embodied and everyday reality of mobile media technology. You can like it or loathe it, but you cannot ignore it. For most it is impossible to avoid.



Jesus engaged with the technology of his day.

“Jesus took the scroll, read from it, then rolled it up.” Jesus often used the technology of the day to enhance his ministry: boarding a boat for a pulpit, fashioning a whip in the temple, even being executed on a piece of hideous technology. Human beings are technological creatures, participants in God’s creative process. We should not fear digital technology any more than any other form of technology but it should be handled with care; deliberately, intentionally and strategically for the Kingdom.

Meredith Gould wrote this prayer back in 2010. It is a contemporary take on Saint Teresa of Avila’s prayer ‘Christ Has No Body’ and is helpful as we consider our online engagement:

*Christ has no online presence but yours,
No blog, no Facebook page but yours,
Yours are the tweets through which love
touches this world,
Yours are the posts through which the
Gospel is shared,
Yours are the updates through which hope
is revealed.
Christ has no online presence but yours,
No blog, no Facebook page but yours.*

— Meredith Gould

Ministry in the Digital Age (continued)

Jesus was in his hometown but announced a mission to the nations.

Jesus reads from Isaiah 61 with its Jewish notion of 'jubilee' - a day when debts would be cancelled, slaves set free, land laid fallow and the sick restored. This message met with everyone's approval. You can almost sense sage heads nodding and the amens being raised. But he then suggests that jubilee is not confined to the ethnic nation of Israel but is for widows from Sidon and lepers from Syria. Jubilee is for foreigners, for Gentiles as well as Jews: a mission to the nations.

The Church has a long tradition of missionary endeavour, faithful servants travelling to the ends of the earth to share Christ. But I want to suggest in the digital age we carry the nations in our pocket, the ends of the earth are a swipe away. There are a myriad of new communities, cultures and people groups online not limited by borders. This is a mission-field as much, perhaps more, than the geographic nations. The church needs to be there, not just present, but active. We need a mission to the Metaverse!

Jesus faced opposition but was resolute and determined.

The suggestion that the gospel was for gentiles as well as Jews was not well received. The religious elite take Jesus to a precipice and want to throw him off

the cliff. Somehow he escapes but the episode highlights the reality that the announcement of the gospel will not always be welcome, and may even make us unpopular. As much care needs to be taken online as with in-person interactions to share the truth in love. We must not to use anonymity to be unnecessarily provocative, unloving or unkind but promote peace and pastoral concern in every engagement.

The key phrase in the entire text comes in verse 21 when Jesus says, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing". The time has come, the Kingdom is near. This means today, not just one day in the distant future, but now and every day, present and continuous. Today, this technology is our technology! Today, this freedom is our freedom! Today, this mission is our mission and today, the Spirit who anointed Jesus, is our Spiritual power-bank too! Most of us are called to mission at home, others to the nations, but who is being called to the Metaverse?





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Dealers in Church Robes, Academic Gowns, Embroider and all Kinds of Uniforms

Remembering Revd Canon Apuuli Kinobe

In the last edition of Impetus I posed the question, How African is African Pastors Fellowship? The concluding paragraph mentioned the possibility of having an African Director overseeing African operations. In a curious serendipity it transpires this is not a new idea, but that there was an APF regional worker, based at the Church of Uganda provincial offices at Namirembe, Kampala back in the 1990s.

As you might imagine, APF receive a lot of speculative emails from wannabe partners from all over Africa (and elsewhere, as it happens). These correspondents often request school fees or iron roofing sheets for a church roof and once a 4x4 vehicle. We try to reply to the majority of these, usually explaining that we don't have capacity for new partnerships and signposting them to eVitabu.

Occasionally an email catches my attention. One such came from Muringi Solomon during my recent stay in Uganda. He explained that he was the son of Rev Canon Apuuli Kinobe, a former regional worker for APF responsible for Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Who knew? It was certainly news to me! In our email exchange, Solomon outlined Canon Kinobe's work for APF: coordinating trips for our founder Derek Blundell, visiting dioceses to identify the most worthy requests for training partnerships and delivering much of that training too. Solomon also sent photos that confirmed any lingering doubt I may have had about

his story. He explained that his mother had often asked if APF still existed. His Google search showed that it did, hence his introductory message.

One of the benefits of visiting Africa and staying for several weeks is that it provides time to follow up on unexpected opportunities. So, while in Uganda, I was able to meet Solomon, his mother, Grace, and sister, Brenda, at their shop in Kampala. It was great to hear their reminiscences of sharing in ministry with Derek and Jill Blundell. We looked through an entire album of photographs of African ministry tours, regional events and sightseeing visits in the UK with APF.

Solomon continues to run a clerical tailoring business which APF helped to establish decades ago. I believe APF shipped ten sewing machines and paid for Grace and others to learn tailoring skills to help support Canon Kinobe's ministry. Solomon claims the business is now the leading outfitters of vestments in the whole of Uganda.

Remembering Revd Canon Apuuli Kinbo (continued)



Revd Canon Apuuli and Grace Kinobe

On the day I visited the shop, he received a call from Bishop Data from Morobi Diocese in South Sudan enquiring about purchasing new vestments. We know Bishop Data and have supported priests in the diocese in recent years with grants for bikes and Bibles!

After bidding Solomon, Grace and Brenda farewell, I reflected that there is nothing new under the sun and that the vision APF has to empower African Training Partners, identify coordinators and even appoint an African Director is not without precedent. It also made me reflect and give thanks for Canon Kinobe's life and legacy, and the seed that APF was able to plant many years ago which continues to provide for his family and clothe African clergy not just with beautifully handcrafted vestments but, we pray, even power from on high!

Canon Kinobe died in 2012 and his obituary was published in New Vision, one of Uganda's leading newspapers. It makes

good reading, so in memory of a former colleague, someone that a handful of supporters may remember or might have even met, we are copying it in full.

Celebrating life: He never ate without me

He opened his home to all sorts of needy people, from those who needed a place to stay, to those in need of school fees, transport fare or had pending hospital bills. Many children and people whose parents could not raise school fees were put through school by the Canon.

Born on September 23, 1944, he studied at Duhaga Secondary School, Bukuku Theological College and Bishop Tucker Theological College Mukono. On January 18, 1975, he married Grace Kinobe and together they bore five children: Sam Paul, Simon Peter, Brenda, Barbara and Solomon. Grace recalls that as a husband, Apuuli was always loving, considerate and full of surprises.

"My husband never ate till I came home; he would wait for me. He used to buy me cosmetics, jewellery and beautiful clothes because he always wanted me to look good," Grace reminisces, a gentle smile curving her face. "I miss his company most of all. I had adjusted my whole life to him; Apuuli was my father, my husband, my counsellor and my friend," she adds.

Her son, Sam Paul Kinobe, remembers his father as a disciplinarian who did not take education lightly. "School was paramount and he always made sure we had our shoes polished and ready for school," he says.

As a father, he always took time to do things with his children. Sam remembers the days he hesitated to step on the brakes while learning how to drive. His father, who was seated beside him, suddenly pulled the handbrake and lightly rebuked him.

His children never lacked because he generously provided for all their needs. If he could not meet their needs immediately, he said Yesu afaayo, meaning Jesus cares.

He always advised his children: "Let us do the work of the world as if we will never die and to do the Lord's work as if we will die tomorrow."

by Rebecca Nalunga
New Vision (July 24, 2012)

Let this Work Continue

Lawson Limao from Word of God Ministries in Zambia has been supported by APF and Operation Agri to train rural communities to make compost. In the midst of Zambia's cost-of-living crisis, he explains why something as simple as compost is so essential.

You are what you eat

Today, Zambia is in real crisis. The cost-of-living crisis is affecting so many people and dragging the majority down. Perhaps its biggest impact is on our diets. Low salaries and insecure incomes mean most just eat what they can, regardless of whether the food is good, healthy and wholesome. Afterall, you are what you eat.

Commercial farms run by big businesses try and keep the markets supplied but their use of commercial, genetically modified and infertile seed varieties relies on huge amounts of chemical fertiliser. These crops might be fast growing but large-scale industrial farming is leading to deforestation, soil erosion, and land and water pollution. It is pushing small-scale farmers off their land. It is also expensive.

Let this Work Continue (continued)

To maintain yields, more and more chemical fertiliser is needed but the cost of fertiliser is going up all the time.

Smallholders and fertilisers

You might think that the high food price is good news for poor small-holder farmers in Zambia who would benefit from a better price for their crops, but that is not really the case. Poor farmers still sell most of their crops at harvest when prices are lower to payback debts built up from buying farm inputs like fertiliser and seed, or to pay their children's school fees. While they sell their crops at harvest when the price is lower, they buy food to feed their family throughout the year, even when the price is high.

While large commercial farms can access government support to buy chemical fertiliser at subsidised prices through schemes like the Farmers Input Support Program, most farmers live on small family farms of just a few hectares and simply cannot access the schemes. The majority of these farmers are also women, and they are hugely disadvantaged. It is a big political issue.

For many years now, people have been taught that the only way to get a successful crop is through using chemical fertiliser, so they spend more and more on it each year. As the soil structure breaks down, they need more fertiliser to produce a crop, so the problem simply gets worse. This pushes prices up and means the percentage of their income a



Lawson Limao

family uses to buy food becomes an even greater part of the overall.

Organic fertiliser project

This is why the project we have been running with support from APF and Operation Agri is so important. We are running the project in Petauke District, in the area overseen by the Nyampende chief. This is in Zambia's Eastern Province, not far from the Mozambique border, and it is an area heavily dependent on agriculture. Like much of Zambia, maize is the main crop here.

We started by working with local leaders and together we identified 400 farmers to be part of the project. Village headmen and headwomen, the local churches and agronomists were all consulted, and the farmers gathered for training.

We began by taking about the needs of the soil and the crops. We shared stories and people were all in agreement about how worried they were about the future.

How could they continue when the cost of inputs was making their lives so hard? How could they afford school fees, animals or food? Many were cutting down trees and selling charcoal so they could afford to buy chemical fertiliser.

We then taught about how to make different types of organic fertilisers such as thermal compost and organic liquid feeds. Thermal compost only takes a number of months before it is ready and replaces the chemical fertiliser normally used at planting. To make liquid feeds we demonstrated how to mix cow, chicken, pig or goat manure in an old sack and suspend it like a teabag in a drum of water. The organic infusion is so rich it can be diluted and used to feed the crops as they grow.

The project has been a great success as the training was so well received. Afterwards, everyone was saying how using what they thought of as waste to support their soil and their crops was going to be a big transformation. Knowing that another way was possible was going to save them so much.

They asked me to extend the training to other areas in Petauke District where friends and relatives lived so they could also learn these skills. They told us, *'Uyu utumiki upitilize!'* meaning, 'Let this work continue!'

Drought affecting Southern Africa

The good news story of the organic fertiliser project's success has been seriously impacted by the ongoing drought that has affecting Southern Africa this year. We would normally expect rain in December through to February or March, however, this year many farmers are still waiting. The drought is partly due to the ongoing El Niño climate cycle, which has changed rainfall patterns during our growing season, but localised deforestation has made this bad situation worse. As part of the training, we shared how trees can support soil structure, fix nitrogen, and even cool the land which encourages clouds and rain. Please pray for the farmers in the organic fertiliser training project and others across Zambia as they struggle through the current drought.



Compost training and checking crops in Petauke District, rural Zambia.

The vision of APF is to enable African Christian leaders, of all denominations, to minister effectively in thriving local churches that serve flourishing communities.

Giving to APF

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If you would like to donate to APF, please visit www.africanpastors.org/donate where you can make a one-off gift or set up a regular donation. Alternatively, post a cheque to our address or use one of the services below:

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