

SCOPE :

Even before we had time to wish the family a blessed and happy new year in this first edition of the Afro-scope in 2011 a lot has gone under the bridge. The tumultuous events in North Africa and spreading to the Middle East are socio-political tsunamis that have a potential to change significantly the course of world history. We cannot be oblivious of the earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan with the oceans throwing out their content on dry land with unimaginable disaster on even the most disaster prepared nation on earth! It makes us shudder and I believe all eyes turn to God in one way or the other. I find the scripture in Isaiah 5:6 sobering but reassuring: *“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail.”*

God continues to reign from His throne; working out His purposes even when we do not understand Him and his salvation is assured. May his name be praised; we have our being and move in Him. This informs our prayer concerns for this quarter.

Please also meet our new Colleagues and uphold them in your prayers. Be informed of some of the activities we were involved with in the last three months and do not forget to share this newsletter with your particular constituents as we desire to connect with nearly 100,000,000 individual Christians round the Continent. Get back to us with any thoughts, concerns or suggestions for the course of Christ in Africa. *Happy reading....*

VISION AFRICA CONFERENCE



We could not have started this year’s activities in a better way than being part of a vision conference for the transformation of Africa. This conference attracted nearly 600 participants from all walks of life (ministry) to launch a new initiative in an effort to mobilise the church for integral mission for the development of Africa. The vision was hatched by Rev. Dr. Moise Napon of CREDO in Burkina Faso. The key objective of the project was for the church to identify strategies for the development of Africa. The issues addressed during the conference consisted of theological and spiritual questions, intellectual and moral questions, beside problems of historical, geographical, economic, sociological or anthropological and even metaphysical nature.

This initiative looks forward to being part of the larger Association of Evangelicals in Africa. The AEA General Secretary participated in the conference and he gave a talk on AEA’s journey in the development of Africa as he spoke on the theme- ***The Past, Present and Future of AEA towards the Integral Development of Africa.***

The General Secretary in his presentation pointed out that all eyes

are now turned to Africa as a leading region committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom values. He revealed that since its birth in 1966, the Association of Evangelicals in Africa has not remained passive as far as the integral development of Africa was concerned. A look into the past shows that AEA has encouraged theological reflection and engaged the church in transformational discipleship through integral mission. It has also established several commissions to serve the church by making it (the church) a major force to take the gospel to the rest of Africa and the world, and also to position it as a major social force in the political and socio-economic development of Africa.

Presently much of AEA’s task is building the broken walls of the Evangelical movement in Africa. The task is similar to the task Nehemiah was given in the past, with the same challenges. He challenged the Church in Africa to emulate Nehemiah as far as the broken walls of Africa are concerned. The task is doable, he said. Looking into the future and with reference to AEA’s Mission statement, he listed the following task: providing a rallying point for Evangelicals in Africa, where they will feel and celebrate the truth of being one body of Christ; uniting Evangelical churches and Mission Agencies in Africa for joint action; mobilizing Evangelicals in Africa for wholistic ministries; empowering National Evangelical Alliances to enable them realize their fullest potentials, and finally, providing a link with

the World Evangelical Alliance and other International bodies globally and regionally. Additionally, he remarked that the focus should as well be on development of godly, quality and just leadership for a prosperous and peaceful nation, bringing clarity on the biblical mandate and objectives of the Church, sensitizing theological institutions in Africa about the need for wholistic development in their academic curriculum, and finally, developing local funding sources and promoting accountability and good stewardship of resources

Children Emissaries to the Republic of Chad

The General Secretary (GS) of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA), Rev. Aiah Foday-Khabenje visited the evangelicals in Chad Republic on February 24th through 27th. It was a visit with an emphasis on Children Ministry as the visit was jointly organized and implemented with Brother Jonas Robert SAWADOGO, Regional Advocacy Director of Compassion International for Africa.

Upon arrival on Thursday February 24th, the AEA General Secretary visited the office of the National Fellowship called EEMET (Entente des Eglises et Missions Evangéliques au Tchad), and had a short meeting with Pastor SOUINA Potifar, the General Secretary of EEMET together with the Compassion International Africa Advocacy Director who arrived the previous night in N'Djamena. The four day visit was full of meetings with the various church leader including AEEPT (Alliance des Eglises Evangéliques de la Pentecôte au Tchad) and EEMET.

Rev. Aiah Foday-Khabenje shared with them about AEA and the importance of the national fellowship as well as the power of strategizing together. He also supported Brother Jonas in sharing the vision of focusing on children through the 4-14 Window movement. Rev. René Daidanso, President of the church denomination ACT (Assemblée Chrétienne au Tchad), invited the AEA General Secretary to their 41st General Assembly that was going on since Tuesday 22nd in Bongor (230 km from N'Djamena). Rev. René Daidanso's support to AEA is well recognized, and it was an opportunity for the AEA General Secretary to be

grateful to this assembly from which Rev. Daidanso comes from. That visit was on Saturday February 26th.

On Sunday 27th, the AEA General Secretary attended the Sunday service at the ACT local church "Bonne Nouvelle", a congregation of over 500 people and where Rev. Agouna Deccia, former GS of EEMET serves as pastor. Rev. Aiah Foday-Khabenje delivered the sermon built upon John 11: 34-44. He made a plea for Christians to bring their worrying situations to Jesus with faith; for the Lord still wants to demonstrate His grace into our lives but through our hands. Many believers turned to Jesus with their personal challenges by coming before the pulpit for prayer.

Although short, this visit allowed the visitors to learn about the country and its people. The main outcomes of this visit would be as Rev. SOUINA Potifar, the GS of EEMET puts it:

1. A more encouraged evangelical community in their efforts of Christians' unity
2. A better knowledge of the AEA and some of its strategic objectives
3. A commitment of the evangelical leaders to facilitate more involvement of the evangelical churches in Chad on Holistic Children Ministry.



Eye-Witness Account of AEA Monitors of Southern Sudan Referendum for Self-Determination

Sudan, Africa's largest country has for decades been embroiled in conflict between North and the South. This conflict left more than two million people dead, four million internally displaced and over 600,000 refugees. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), brokered in January 2005 was meant to end the [Second Sudanese Civil War](#), develop democratic governance countrywide and share oil revenues under the oversight of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). It further set a timetable by which [Southern Sudan](#) would have [a referendum](#) for self determination.



The Referendum was conducted over a seven day period – 9th – 15th January 2011 in Sudan as well as eight other countries; Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Egypt, Australia, Canada, US and the UK. The turnout was overwhelming as the Sudanese in all these countries turned up in large numbers. Not even the scorching sun or long queues could deter the Sudanese from participating many for the first time in their lives in this historic event for self determination!

At the close of the seven day exercise overseen by the South Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC) and the International Office of Immigration (IOM), in the different tallying centres, the officials repeatedly shouted “infasal” (cessation in Arabic), to the jubilation of the expectant crowds. Later as the official announcement was made, the world was greeted with the news; an overwhelming majority of 98.83% voted for separation while only 1.17% voted for unity. As this announcement was made, euphoria hit the streets of Juba as well as other major towns where voting had taken place. A new anthem was sung, the Sudanese rejoiced as did those who had stood and prayed for a peaceful referendum!

The evangelical fraternity stands with the citizens of the Republic of South Sudan as they commence the long road to nation building; we pray the God will strengthen the Church to serve the citizens for His edification.

NEGST Receives Charter as Fully Fledged University- Africa International University

This was a joyous occasion; a moment the institution had been waiting for. For many of our members this came with some anxiety for the future of theological education. On the occasion of the granting of the Charter by the Government of Kenya Rev. Dr. Canon Modupe Taylor-Pearce, Ph.D, G.C.O.R., D.C.L *First Full-time African Principal (1986-1993)* conveys a goodwill message that strikes a chord in the hearts of many of us and we reproduce it here to serve as prayer focus and a perpetual reminder for AIU leadership and faculty. The message reads:



“Congratulations to the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST) on reaching this significant milestone, the receiving of a Charter from the Government of Kenya.”

Over the years, NEGST has justified the hopes and dreams of the founding fathers, to provide, leaders for the Church in Africa, who would be able to meet the challenging demands of Church and society. Since its inception, NEGST has developed Christian men and women who have manned strategic and significant positions in the continent. Graduates of NEGST have become Bishops, Vice-Chancellors, Deans, College Principals, Heads of Departments, Lecturers, Teachers, and Administrators etc. Many have pursued and obtained higher degrees including those who participated in the Spouses’ programme. One of the basic drives of the founding fathers was the passion for evangelism and the promotion of the gospel without compromise, syncretism or watering down. Let this drive continue and intensify with the granting of the Charter.

There are pitfalls to watch out for, and it is necessary to be warned about them. One of them relates to the depth of our Christianity. In the past, some people stated that the Christianity of Africa was one mile long and one inch deep. We need to ensure that this cynical comment belongs to the past, and that the products of NEGST and our theological schools, are Christians, assured of their salvation, deeply rooted and grounded

in the word of God. The products of NEGST should be Christians who do the will of God in a practical way, and also teach and lead others to do so.

The Lord Jesus Christ urges us in John 13:17 “Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them” and in James 1:22 we are urged to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” It is by being doers of the word of God that we can have a Christianity that is not only one mile long, but also one mile deep, We need men and women of consistent Christian character to make Africa the “praise of the earth” (Is. 62: 7)

Another pitfall relates to the change that has happened to some theological colleges founded long ago. At the time of their founding, they were Christian and theological. Today, some of them have little or no resemblance to a Christian theological college --they have become secular and have “lost their first love” (Rev.2:4) It must not be so with NEGST. Let it not be so with NEGST. We are the salt and light of Africa (Mat. 5 13-14) The need for the production of men and women with robust and consistent Christian character to man the spiritual, political, social, business and general sectors of the continent of Africa is urgent and immediate. Our Continent is potentially great and we have demonstrated this by producing great men and women from time to time. The only way to produce lasting character is to have the mind of Christ.

Go forward then NEGST. The hopes of the founding fathers and indeed of needy Africa is upon you. You have performed well. Go on to excellence, not the worldly one, but the one led by the Holy Spirit to “bring many sons to glory” (Heb. 2 10)”



New Recruits to Enhance the Service Team at AEA H.Q.

It is with a great sense of joy and happiness that we welcome two new members of staff to join the General Secretary to constitute a management team at the Secretariat in Nairobi. Mr. Josephat Wangila comes in as Missions Coordinator and Dr. Emily Obwaka as our new Women's Commission (PACWA) Coordinator.



Josephat Wangila
Missions Coordinator

Josephat, a Kenyan national, married to Rose and a father of Joy and John Smith. Josephat made his commitment to live and follow Jesus Christ while in High School, a commitment that revolutionised his life ambitions to one that is a fulfilling lifelong service to his saviour.

He comes to AEA from a background of active evangelism, discipleship and pastoral ministry for the last 20 years. He has been involved in organisation and planning of conferences that mobilise the church for mission both in Kenya and in the East African region. For the last six years he served as pastor for Evangelism and outreach at the All Saints Cathedral (Anglican), a church of over 6000 congregants at the centre of Nairobi the capital of Kenya.

Josephat is a graduate of Kenyatta University and our own Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology. He holds a degree in Education (B Ed Science) and Master of Arts in mission studies respectively. As mission coordinator, Josephat will be working under the General Secretary to do more or less the work that was to be done by the Evangelism and Missions commission. He has a specific brief to advice, research; mobilize AEA on how to reach the Muslims.

Seven years ago Dr. Emily Obwaka left PACWA after serving for a couple of years. In response to God's call, she had come to join women whose heart was to see the continent of Africa restored and women arise to become all that God made them to be. It was not to be then, but now, in the fullness of time, God has made it possible.



Dr. Emily Obwaka
PACWA Coordinator

Dr. Emily Obwaka, has a medical background (Dental Surgery and Public Health) and is a trained theologian (MA, Missions). She has worked with Johns Hopkins University/Center for Communication Programs (JHU/PCS) initially as a program officer, Country Representative then as Regional Technical Advisor, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) as Chief of Party for a regional program, and most recently as the Country Director for Life in Abundance Kenya (LIA-K). She served as chairperson for the Kenya Medical Women's Association (1996 – 2000) and is currently the Chairperson for Christ Inspired Pastoral Initiatives (CIPI). Through these experiences she has come to greatly value good leadership which she herself seeks to provide with God's help. She serves as an Associate Minister with Christ is the Answer Ministries (CITAM) or Nairobi Pentecostal Churches. Emily is married to Dr. William Obwaka, a specialist obstetrician/gynecologist in private practice. She has four daughters; Angela (22), Joan (20), Dora (16) and Nelly (7) and two grandsons; Yeshua and Ethan.

Also, newly recruited is Ms. Faith Mutua. Faith joined AEA has a temporary staff just before the General Assembly in August last year. She has now been offered a full time employment with AEA as the Front Office Receptionist with effect from January 2011.



Faith Mutua
Receptionist

Retirements (re-tyred????)



As we welcome our new colleagues to AEA we also bade farewell to two former long serving colleagues. These are Mr. Solomon Gacece who served for 18 years as Youth and Sports Coordinator and Mrs. Abigail Okumali who served for 15 years, mostly as Secretary with the PACWA Commission. These had a befitting farewell, with a treat at a colourful farewell party at the neighbouring Silver Springs Hotel close to AEA offices in Nairobi on January 19, 2011.

Speaking at the function, the General Secretary thanked the outgoing staff members for their faithful and continuous service to the Lord through AEA, even during its most difficult moments and implored them for their continuous support in prayer. It was the considered view of the staff team that Mr. Solomon Gacece will be remembered for his devotion, diligence and discipline while Mrs. Abigail Okumali would be remembered as one of AEA's prayer warriors. They both received gifts as token of appreciation from AEA. A short exhortation and words of encouragement were given by the Chairman of AEA, Eastern Africa Region, Bishop Arthur Kitonga. He read from 2 Timothy 4:7-8, on "finishing strong". The General Secretary of Evangelical Alliance of Kenya, Dr. Wellington Mutiso said the concluding prayer.

Theology Conference on Children



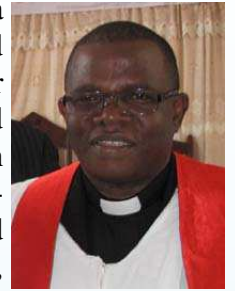
Nairobi was host to a select group of world renowned theologians from the four corners of the world in March 9-12, 2011. Some 100 theologians, church leaders and Children Ministry workers met at the Kenya Commercial Bank Leadership Training Centre in Karen, Nairobi to focus on the place of children in the ministry of the church; taking a cue from our Master Jesus when He put the child at the centre on His discourse on “The Greatest in the Kingdom of God” in Mathew 18.

The objective here is to reposition our horns to anoint the child King in our churches like Samuel did for David. It is divine that such a historic conference was hosted in Africa, home for the world’s greatest number of children and where the children have very little opportunity to be kingly—a far cry from Jesus’ point of view.

It is also an opportune time for such a conference in Africa, following on the enthusiasm and conversation going on globally and in Africa around the 4-14 Initiative since the launching of this in September 2009 in New York and the Africa launch of this in Addis Ababa in April 2010. Watch this space for the next steps of how AEA is going to engage the church in Africa or rather how the children in the midst of the church in Africa will bring about transformation.

Praise and Supplications

► The Presbyterian Church of Sierra Leone acknowledged the call of God on the General Secretary as minister of the Gospel when he was licensed in a colorful ceremony of ordination on January 30, 2011 at the First Presbyterian Church in Freetown. God knows why we called you Bishop, Pastor, Reverend even before this time. Congratulations, Reverend Aiah Foday-Khabenje and our prayers for you as you shepherd the sheep of God in Africa.



► Dr. Douglas Carew, the Vice-Chancellor of AIU was honoured with the “Oscar” Award, on Sunday February 6th, 2011, at the Nairobi Chapel, for his service in the community. A section of the citation reads: “We honour Dr. Carew with an “Oscar” for his leadership because this institution has shaped and impacted African Christianity profoundly through training of many, many Africa-wide Church leaders”. Congratulations, Dr. Carew and family.

► Praise God for the Charter granted to NEGST on March 4, 2011 and for the new University – Africa International University with three constituent schools; i.e. NEGST, School of Professional Studies and Institute for the Study of African Realities.

► Many of us would not be aware of a “Iron Curtain” where the church is underground and persecuted in sub-Saharan Africa. This is the plight of the church in Eritrea where the evangelical church leaders continue to be incarcerated and subjected to hard labour and torture. We are calling on the rest of the church in Africa to pray for that nation and for the church in particular. If you require more information please contact us.

► Pray for Japan and New Zealand and the victims of the earthquake and tsunami in these nations.

► We are also requesting prayer for the political upheavals in North Africa and the need freer society and respect for basic and universal human rights in that region in particular.