



Mission letter August 20th 2020

Beloved people of God who support us with your intercession in prayer before our Lord Jesus Christ and accompany us in our missionary walks through the lands of Africa; I greet you from Eastern Angola.

In these times of the pandemic, I am most glad to know that I am not alone and that I can count on sisters and brothers in the faith from different parts of the planet. By means of this letter, I want to bring you up to date concerning the work that I have been doing together with my wife, the Reverend Cleivy Benitez, M.D., during the months of July and August 2020.

We continue the fight against covid-19 in the United Methodist Church of Eastern Angola

The covid-19 virus has forced people to live a hard reality in many places of the world, including Angola. The United Methodist Church in this country has had to find different means to offer to God the worship he deserves.



Pastors in the district of Malanje in the United Methodist Church of Eastern Angola meet to plan new strategies of work, which will enable them to deal with new challenges in this time of pandemic. Photo by the Reverend Cleivy Benitez.

In this context, I was invited by the District Superintendent of Malanje Province in East Angola, the Reverend Daniel Chitali, to offer two training activities concerning the disease of covid-19. Immediately I felt the Holy Spirit inspiring me in preparation in spiritual, theological and medical aspects. When the time came for those meetings, there was a valuable exchange of experiences, useful for pastoral praxis.

First, I presented a medical lecture about the hygienic-sanitary measures that are basic to the prevention of covid-19 measures which should be implemented by the leaders and pastors in their respective churches.



Dr. Leo Garcia offers training for pastors on prevention of the coronavirus. Photo by the Rev. Cleivy Benitez.

Subsequently we offered for 30 pastors of the same district, another seminar entitled "The Holy Communion in times of Pandemic: New Ways to Share in the Table of the Lord."

The invitation of our Lord to come to His table is still valid even in times of pandemic. It is up to God's people to accept this invitation and share in the banquet, which the Lord has prepared for us.



Practical Seminar entitled "The Holy Communion in times of Covid-19: New ways to share in the Table of the Lord." Photo by the Reverend Victorino de Almeida.

When we finished the training session, we were all agreed that Holy Communion must be celebrated with due spiritual, but also hygienic responsibility. While we participated with devotion in the Sacrament, we saw clearly that measures of prevention must be observed in the congregations to avoid the spread of Coronavirus





Pastors of the District of Malanje put into practice the means of prevention of covid-19 in their district training session. Photo by the Reverend Bartolome Diaz Sapalo.

We continue the fight against Covid-19 in the Health Center of Quessua.

The health team of Quessua in Eastern Angola continues to comply with the community program of prevention against Covid-19. As I mentioned in my previous mission letter, the group, which oversees the promotion of health in the Methodist Conference of Eastern Angola, began the project in the villages, which are found in the area of the Methodist Mission of Quessua. There we distributed more than 900 buckets to store water, which the farm families bring from the nearest river to their villages.

In that first phase, we also donated bars of soap which today they use to wash their hands often, in response to the sanitary education, which we offered to the community. Moreover, our effort in this fight against Covid-19 has not let up.

On this occasion, we continue training with the purpose of guaranteeing the prevention, avoiding contagion from the new coronavirus. Therefore, with the authorization of the Direction of the Health Center of Quessua, we gave a medical lecture to the nurses and physicians who belong to the professional staff of the Center. The subject of the lecture was correct use of the equipment of individual protection.



Training on prevention of Covid-19, administered by the missionary Dr. Leonardo Garcia for the doctors and nurses of the health center of Quessua in times of Covid-19.

After presenting the Seminar to the health personnel, we used financial resources of the project to make a small donation of means of biosecurity to the Health Center of Quessua.

In this way, the institution could have available resources such as soap, alcohol in gel, masks, face shields, etc.



This photo shows the donation of means of biosecurity to the Health Center of Quessua for the prevention of covid-19.

This missionary experience, which my wife Cleivy and I are living in African lands, has been marked by struggle against the pandemic. For us it is difficult and at the same time challenging. Each day in our morning prayer, we ask the Lord to protect us from dread diseases such as covid-19, but also Malaria, Typhoid Fever, Leprosy, and many others to which we are exposed in this context. In the midst of this difficult reality, the Lord is the one who teaches us day by day how to fight against all those diseases through Health prevention. For this reason, I share with you what I have learned in this area.



In times of Coronavirus, the Missionary Dr. Leonardo Garcia is giving consultations in Internal Medicine to adults at the Health Center of Quessua. Photo by the Licentiate William Kawele.





At present, we feel great satisfaction when we enter the Health Center of Quessua for medical consultations and observe the health professionals there using adequately the means of protection of biosecurity which were donated.



Health professionals using means of biosecurity
Photo by Licentiate Domingas Sebastião

All the health professionals, duly protected against covid-19, remain willing to offer the best service possible to a vulnerable population, which come seeking health, and finds a medical assistance, offered with love and dignity. When the patients come for consultation, they wear masks or face shields. They are also invited to wash their hands with soap and water; their temperature is taken and, before they enter the Health Center, their feet are disinfected.



Preventive control to avoid the covid-19 virus in the Health Center of Quessua.
Photo by the Reverend Cleivy Benitez.

While patients wait for their medical consultation, they receive sanitary education in which they are given necessary preventive information to avoid contagion from the Coronavirus, as may be seen in the following image.



Sanitary Education for the prevention of covid-19, being offered by nursing professionals at the Health Center of Quessua.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I have tried to bring you up to date concerning our experience in Angola, and I urge you to continue supporting us through your intercessory prayers.

All you dear friends who pray for our Missionary Ministry in Eastern Angola: Cleivy and I thank God for your lives. Today we can testify that in response to your prayers, the Lord is allowing us to see a small light, which is growing every day, even in the midst of the darkest tunnel.

Carrying out the mission, we live one day at a time, and fraternal ties bind us together with persons of good will in this fierce combat against covid-19. With full trust in God, we invite you to share in our support. If you desire to support us financially, you may use the following number of Mission Advance, and the Lord will surely reward you.

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