

Covenant College Zambia Trust

In the bush 400km east of Lusaka near Petauke in Zambia's Eastern Province, lies Covenant College Zambia (CCZT). The rural setting is appropriate to the college's threefold ministry, i.e. reformed evangelical theological training for predominantly rural pastors, farm training (for the pastor-farmers and others from the locality) and a children's education ministry aimed particularly at the very rural villages of Eastern Province.

There is a great opening for the Gospel and an appetite for Biblical teaching in the numerous small towns and villages across Eastern Province. Although there are very many people who would consider themselves Christians their understanding of Scripture and the Gospel is minimal, and often mingled with traditional religion and veneration of ancestors. Churches also abound, but doctrinal ignorance and error is widespread, even amongst the leadership. Nevertheless, there is always a hearing for the truth. This opportunity needs to be seized by those who are Biblically equipped in character and ability. It is the vision of CCZT and its supporters, to teach and train men who show such potential, some in English, and some in Chichewa, the local language used across Eastern Province and in neighbouring Malawi from where the College also attracts students.

Covenant College opened in February 2001, having developed out of a mission station pioneered by Virgil Tountas, of Frontline Fellowship, from South Africa. The first principal was Rev David Fraser, originally from Scotland but serving in Capetown, South Africa when he responded to Virgil Tountas' appeals. Virgil himself assisted as lecturer, using his training in Agriculture and Theology.

The college year comprised two terms of ten weeks, with lectures from Tuesday to Friday, and included agricultural as well as theological studies. This arrangement allowed students to return to their families and churches at weekends, and to tend their farms during seedtime and harvest, thus supporting their families using better farming techniques. Sixteen students graduated in 2003.

In 2003 CCZT was formally identified as an interdenominational reformed college, recognising *the Westminster Confession, the Three Forms of Unity, the 1689 London Baptist Confession, the 39 Articles of the Church of England* and similar bases of faith. Whilst CCZT was formed as an autonomous Zambian trust, its financial support comes largely from Western and South African partner churches, organisations and individuals.

This development coincided with the move to the college's present site under a new principal, Rev Jan van Straaten, South Africa. Mr. Philip Bailey, recruited from England, led the farm ministry and training. The new property incorporating a lecture hall, dormitory and kitchen, was constructed primarily by three volunteers, Cameron Macleay (Scotland), Geoff Bailey (England, Phil's brother) and Neville Rasmussen (South Africa). They ensured that the college was made habitable within two months and classes resumed in March 2004.

In January 2017, having been led by a number of overseas principals, the College appointed its first indigenous leader, Rev. Emmanuel Sakala who is still in office and is now the longest serving principal.

Pastor Training

Since the original construction, another lecture hall, a library, and accommodation for staff and visiting lecturers have been added. The College maintains a small staff including the principal, a lecturer, an administrator and a bookkeeper. Further financial support is necessary to enable the recruitment of other staff especially another lecturer. In the meantime, the college is supported by guest lecturers mostly from abroad, sponsored by their churches and our donor partners. This enables it to run at optimal costs keeping fees at a very modest level for students of limited means.

Students are offered Certificate and Diploma courses (one year and two years respectively). The curriculum includes Hermeneutics, Historical Theology, Systematic Theology and Practical Theology. A total of 19 students graduated in 2019. A vernacular certificate class (Chichewa / Chinyanja) started in 2020 with ten students. Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the 2020 academic year being discontinued, with all students due to return in 2021 as the situation allows.

College Farm

The farm raises livestock and grows vegetables and maize for the students and staff, as well as cash crops to supplement donations. In addition the farm provides a service to the community with its maize mill and sunflower oil expeller.

During his tenure Phil Bailey introduced a work-for-food program, training the students (who are mostly subsistence farmers) as well as farmers from the wider community, with farm courses based on 'Farming God's Way' which applies a Biblical approach to conservation farming.

Christian Education Ministry (CEM)

Christian Education Ministry (CEM) was instituted in 2003 in order to address the needs presented by the substantially humanistic input observed in the state schools, and their inability to serve the outlying villages. Targeted schools were helped with basic supplies, together with the encouragement and training of their teachers, thus stimulating an overall Christian ethos.

In 2007, with the arrival of Marjanne Hendriksen from the Netherlands the work flourished, with around 50 pre-schools currently supported. In 2018, Marjanne and the Principal expanded the vision and ministry to encompass the whole country and neighbouring countries. The feedback from the new areas has been very encouraging with pleas for more workshops and seminars. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to the development of online training which is also being received eagerly.

Needs

1. Prayer

Informed prayer support and interest in the work. Please pray for us as we are constantly buffeted by the evil one disrupting the Lord's work; the struggles of not yet perfect believers working together in close proximity from day to day pose a challenge. As stated before, the great need is for men of godly character with a thorough grasp of the Scriptures, well grounded in Christian doctrine and the principles of the pastoral ministry. Regular prayer letters are circulated from the College or Zambian Mission Support (contact details below).

2. Financial support

We are particularly keen to build a network of informed, prayerful donor churches and individuals giving modest regular sums so as to provide more certainty in meeting day to day expenses, removing the need to rely heavily on a few major donors and giving us the scope to use periodic appeals for special projects. Donations can be made via the College or Zambian Mission Support (details below). The approximate per student is K40,000 / \$2,500 / £1,800 p.a..

3. Practical support

The site has developed over the years, and needs regular maintenance and periodic refurbishment and upgrades. In 2019 a team from South Africa organised by our trustee Attie van Der Walt, visited to refurbish the visiting lecturers' accommodation. The College would greatly appreciate further such efforts. Teams would need to be able to organise themselves in planning, financing, and executing such projects. Accommodation is available. Interested parties should contact Emmanuel Sakala, details below.

4. Guest lecturers

Visiting lecturers to assist the principal and local lecturers in delivering the Mukhanyo syllabus. Lecturers generally need to be accredited for this purpose and able to finance their international travel. CCZ is usually able to arrange for transport between Lusaka international airport and the college. Those wishing to offer their services should contact Emmanuel Sakala, details below.

5. Literature

Some students have had only basic education, and many have very limited resources to enhance their training. Resources such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries, interlinear Bibles, study Bibles, and modern systematic theological books etc., would be welcome as a major resource avenue for the college.

Contact details etc:

Covenant College:

Principal: Emmanuel Sakala - email: sakalaemmanuel@gmail.com

Board of Trustees Contacts:

Chairman: Albert Ngoma (pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Chipata, Zambia) Email: ngomabert@gmail.com

Secretary: Dr. Conrad Mbewe (pastor, Kabwata Baptist Church, Lusaka, Zambia). Email: conradmbewe@gmail.com

Treasurer: Andrew Alsop. Email: andrewjalsop@gmail.com

CCZ's interests in the UK are represented by Zambian Mission Support (ZMS), (charity number 1109726)

Secretary: Geoff Bailey (regular prayer letters). Email: info@zambianmissionsupport.org

Treasurer: Roger Osborne (donations and Gift Aid). Email: rogerjosborne@ntlworld.com

ZMS-CCZ trustee Andrew Alsop. Email: andrewjalsop@gmail.com

Website: www.zambianmissionsupport.org

Bank account details:

Currency: Sterling / GBP / £

Bank: Barclays

Account name: Zambian Mission Support

Sort code: 20 39 07

Account number: 10072761

IBAN: GB61 BARC 2039 0710 0727 61

SWIFTBIC: BARC GB22

Currency: US Dollars / \$

Bank: Zambia National Commercial Bank

Account name: Covenant College Zambia Trust

Account number: 1035293500266

Swift code: ZNCOZMLU

Currency: Zambian Kwacha / ZMW

Bank: Zambia National Commercial Bank

Account name: Covenant College Zambia Trust

Account number: 1035293100142

Currency: South African Rand (ZAR)

Bank: First National Bank (FNB)

Account name: Tessa Trust

Account number: 62166983687