



Lucusse Adventist School, Angola

Photo courtesy of Agostinho De Assunção Paulino.

Lucusse Mission, Angola

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Lucusse Mission was one of the pioneering Seventh-day Adventist mission stations in the eastern part of the country of Angola.

Origin of Adventist Work at Lucusse Mission

Lucusse Mission is located in the eastern part of Angola in Moxico province, 145 kilometers south of Luena city. It is among the Luchaze, Luvale, Bunda and Luímbi tribes.

In 1932, O. O. Brendenkamp and his wife arrived in Angola at Lobito Bay. When he reached Huambo, the capital city of Huambo province, Elder W. H. Anderson told him that he wanted him to go and open a new mission station at Lucusse. From Huambo, Brendenkamp and his wife traveled to Luz Mission in the northeast where he left his wife. Then Brendenkamp and Elder J. D. Baker went to Lucusse and chose a site to establish a mission.¹

The territory was very flat, so they chose the only place that had a bit of elevation. Then they went back to Luz Mission to collect Brendenkamp's family and traveled by truck to Lucusse Mission.

Upon arriving there during the evening, they spent the night at a nearby village. The following day they asked the local people to help carry their belongings to the site. For some time, they waited for the approval of their application to establish work in Moxico district.² According to *Adventist Bulletin*, Pastor O. O. Brendenkamp described how when he explored the Lucusse Mission:

Then I was asked to go to Lucusse in the Moxico district. Here too we laid the foundations of the work since there was absolutely nothing when we arrived. We had to wait a long time before we were allowed to open the Mission. While we waited for permission, we lived in a grass house that burned down one night. The fire was caused by a lamp that was too full. We lost a lot of what we had. At this point the chief of the Post came to our rescue and allowed us to live in a house he was building for himself. After that, we were given permission to open the Mission, and then we relentlessly surrendered the buildings.³

The work moved slowly because they were dealing with people who had not yet come into contact with Christianity, yet the message was having a subduing influence. From Lucusse the work spread to the Northern Rhodesian (Zambian) border, reaching the Mbunda and Luchaze tribes where they opened the first school in 1935. In July 1935, during their campmeetings at which elders S. A. Wellman and L. L. Moffit spoke, six people participated in the first baptism among the people.

In 1939, J. F. Wright, president of the African Division, visited Lucusse Mission for campmeeting work, and based on what he may have been told by the residents at that mission, he said:

This is one of our newest stations in Angola, and it has surely been faced with many adverse conditions. The people in this section are exceedingly raw and wild, yet the message is having a subduing influence. It takes a lot of patience, courage, and devotion to work in such a difficult centre, yet Elder and Mrs. Giddings, under God's blessing, are breaking the barriers and hearts are being won through the appeal of the message. The mission is well developed, and a fine little school is conducted by Brother Oliviera. Aside from this, we have three native workers (trained at the Bongo Training School) who are now giving all their time to the evangelical side of the work. In time these efforts will certainly bear fruit.⁴

Regarding the preparedness of the missionary couple to serve at Lucusse Mission and Angola in general, Elder Wright noted:

Brother and Sister Giddings have done very well in acquiring the Portuguese language. In fact, Brother Giddings was able to do all of the interpreting for Elder Cormack and me, which speaks well of the achievement. It is a pleasure to report that these fellow missionaries have the full co-operation of the Government officials, so the future is more bright[er] with promise than was the case some years ago.⁵

Divine providence revealed that Lucusse Mission was a strategic point for a three-dimensional work aimed at reaching the people with the Three Angels' messages. This place had, until now, remained an unentered territory. The incidents exposed by the passing of time and a whole set of factors worked favorably toward the establishment of this noble mission.

Educational Work

After authorization was granted, the missionary couple began to clear the bush and then began to build their houses. In addition to the residence for the director, they erected a temporary school building (replaced in 1952 by a permanent structure) and a dispensary. They planted fruit trees and flowers, making the place look very beautiful. The Mission School was built in 1952, and its first director was Pastor António Coquenão Lopes.

According to Isaac Paulo, some of the pastors who studied at Lucusse Mission included: Daniel Ângelo, Victor Tomás, Joaquim Tito, Joaquim Horacio Paulino, Jorge Tomás, Eduardo, Domingos Sacassemene, and João Elias Samungina (who also taught at this Mission during the time of Pastor João Esteves)⁶ Other pastors were Simão Camisa, Elindo Almeida, Fernando Chala, Dixon, Armindo Chipya, and two workers – Manuel Muzaza and Eduardo Mucijunga. The first pastor to be ordained from the Luvala Tribe was Pastor Daniel Ângelo.⁷

Pastor João Esteves and his wife Nurse Lourença Esteves remained at the mission until 1968 when he was forced out by the civil war in the region. So, Lucusse Mission lasted for about 34 years and, in 1968, it was destroyed by the war. However, the gospel seed had been sown among the Luvala such that, in this region, the Adventist Church remains the predominant church. The Angolan liberation war, and the civil war that followed after independence in 1975, lasted until 2002. During all this period and beyond, the Lucusse Mission remained in ruins and closed.

Future Plans

About 40 years after the interruption of the missionary work (in 2007), Lucusse resumed its work of winning souls for heaven and preparing people for eternal life.⁸ The recent visit to the site by Dr. Emanuel Esteves from Portugal met the aspirations of the leaders of the East Association Mission to restore the work of God in the Lucusse region. Thus, since September 2007, several actions have been developed in the area with the help of the neighboring population of the Mission. Along with the restoration work that is moving along slowly, evangelistic campaigns have won many souls to God. In October 2007, 55 new souls were baptized in the

Lucócu River, which crosses the beautiful Mission of Lucusse.⁹

During his time as the president of Angola Union Mission, Pastor Teodoro Elias sent Pastor Sucatela to Lucusse to conduct a survey of the extent of the Mission property. His intention was to transform Lucusse into a university with national and international standards. It was to reflect the characteristics of the region's population, who were former emigrants (and refugees) in Zambia and who require high levels of academic training.

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NOTES

1. O. O. Bredenkamp, "Lucusse Mission," *Southern African Division Outlook*, September 1, 1935, 4.

2. W. B. Commin (Editor), "News Notes," *Southern African Division Outlook*, April 1, 1932, 16.

3. Alexandro Justino, *Pregoeiros da Verdade Presente: Historia da Igreja Adventista do Setimo Dia (1924-2004)*, 2007, 136.

4. J. F. Wright, "Camp-meetings in the Angola Union," *Southern African Division Outlook*, November 1, 1939, 2.

5. Ibid.

6. Isaac Paulo, *Guiados: A Obra Medica e Missionaria Adventista em Angola os Parsons e a Missao do Bongo* (Printed in Portugal, 2013), 301.

7. Alexandro Justino, *Pregoeiros da Verdade Presente: Historia da Igreja Adventista do Setimo Dia (1924-2004)* (Benedita, Portugal: Relgrafica, 2007), 136.

8. Paulo, 301.

9. Ibid., 303.

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