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Where we came from

Historic Congregationalism came to America with the Separatist Pilgrims of Plymouth and the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Congregationalism originated in English Puritanism, being the more radical wing of a Reformed movement that believed it impossible to renew the Church of England from within. By 1608 a group of Separatists had taken refuge from persecution at Leiden in the Netherlands. In 1620 a band of Pilgrims settled in Plymouth, Massachusetts. In 1629, the non-separatists English Puritans, fleeing persecution under Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645) in England, established settlements around Boston, Massachusetts.

From 1646 to 1648 the religious leaders of New England met several times in a Synod at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and there decided to accept the Westminster Confession of Faith as their doctrinal statement. They also drafted and adopted the Cambridge Platform defining their polity. Codifying the mixed polity of Puritan theorists, they described a government of Local, independent churches that was shared by church members and church officers. It is the earliest document setting forth American Congregational faith and church government and served as the constitution of the Congregational way well into the nineteenth century.

The Great Awakening, which peaked in the years 1740-1742 and spread throughout the colonies, had great impact on New England Congregationalism. On the one hand there was the revival of a heart-felt religion that was profoundly evangelical in character. The Congregationalist minister and theologian of the movement, Jonathan Edwards, was perhaps the greatest intellect early American Congregationalism produced, and he set the agenda for the tradition of New England Theology that was carried on well into the nineteenth century. On the other hand, a significant number of congregational clergy opposed the revivals, and a rift developed that was to seriously divide Congregationalism into liberal and evangelical wings and profoundly affect American religious and political life in general.

However the Congregationalists regrouped and the Burial Hill Declaration of 1865 was signed. It proclaimed that with the whole church we confess the common sinfulness and ruin of our race, and acknowledge that it is only through the work accomplished by the life and expiatory death of Christ that believers in him are justified before God, receive the remission of sins, and through the presence and grace of the Holy Comforter are delivered from the power of sin and perfected in holiness.

THE PENETRATION INTO AFRICA

The ABCFM was formed on 5 September 1810 in Boston USA, Massachusetts to spearhead the spreading of the gospel in the whole world. On 8 February 1812, the Hay Stack Brethren who used to come together for prayers on Sunday afternoons were ordained. In the same year, a charter was granted to the ABCFM to send missionaries to the whole world, effectively creating the first Missionary Society in the USA. In 1833 Rev Dr J Phillips the Superintendent of the London Missionary Society wrote to J. B. Purney describing the conditions in which the Americans would do the mission work. He explained the conditions and the character of the Zulus. Upon the knowledge and understanding of the people of Zululand, the ABCFM became convinced that they should extend their mission work to this side of the world, South Africa.

The ABCFM decided to send two groups of missionaries to South Africa. Three MARITIME MISSION families were assigned to Durban. They finally arrived in Durban in 1836. With the help of Dingaan Shaka's successor, they started the Zulu Mission in Natal. They faced many challenges as the chief virtually owned everything. They made great strides as they established some missions in Zululand.

THE PENETRATION INTO GAZALAND

In 1880 Rev Myron Pinkerton attempted to explore the interior North of the Zulu Mission, unfortunately he died of fever on his way to Umzila's kraal in Gazaland. He was buried by his African carriers at the Gabuzi River in the Sabi Valley.

In 1881 Rev E.H. Richards continued the expedition and he eventually arrived at the chief's kraal. After exchanging gifts Rev Richards was startled when the chief said he wanted five missionaries and their wives. The American churches failed to answer this call for many years.

In 1888 another expedition, composed of Rev G. Wilder, Mr Bates and three Zulu Evangelists went to visit the new chief Ngungunyana, son of Mzila. They waited for too long in seeking the audience of the chief. After being granted the opportunity, they were only told that they be too late as the Portuguese had come first.

This encouraged the ABCFM to make another attempt to set up work in the area. Rev Wilcox and Dr Thompson set out for Beira by boat and then they moved inland. By God's coincidence they travelled on the same boat with Cecil John Rhodes. Who was much interested in their plans for evangelism and industrial training. On 21 September 1891, using a map belonging to Dr Thompson, Mr Rhodes took a pencil and made a cross and thus assigned them an area of about 1 500 hectares for mission work on the plateau overlooking Mzila's old kraal but he did not give them the title to the land.

On June 21 1893, the pioneer team consisting of Rev & Mrs Wilder and their two children, Dr and Mrs. Thompson, Mr and Mrs Bunker, Mr. Bates and four Zulu Evangelists with their families, set out from Durban, Natal. It is interesting to note that Dr and Mrs. Thompson were married at Edsidumbini in Natal on June 14th, a week before leaving. The four evangelists were Mr and Mrs T. Zonzo Cele, Mr and Mrs. Laduma Njapa, Mr and Mrs. Elijah Hlanti and Mr and Mrs. Henry Mbesa. They were of great assistance in terms of translation because Zulu was the language by the people.

The journey by steamer, sailboat, dug-out canoe, machila and on foot took three month. It was October 19 1893 before the whole group was reunited at Mt Selinda. This is considered the birthday of Mt Selinda Mission. At the same time, efforts were made to have churches in Gogoyo and Beira by the same missionaries. The missionaries also attempted to cross the Save river to preach the gospel in Ziki area. This was discontinued because of the economic depression in the late 1920s in the USA.

WHO WE ARE

How the name “United Church of Christ” came into being

In 1938 a union of the General Council of Congregational and Christian churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church was proposed, but it was until 1957 that a body of delegates from both denominations, meeting at Cleveland, Ohio, elected a constitutional committee. In July 1961, in Philadelphia, a constitution was adopted and the United Church of Christ was established.

Administration of the Church in the early years

The American Board Mission in Rhodesia (now the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe) was established on 19 October 1893 at Mount Selinda Mission through the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). The ABCFM later became known as the United Church Board for World Ministries (UCBWM) and is now called the Global Ministries made up of the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ both in the USA. In 1895, Chikore Mission, about 45 kilometres from Mount Selinda, was also established. Other stations were also established and by 1970 the UCCZ had more than 60 Primary schools in Chipinge District.

The first church congregation was started in 1897 at Mount Selinda and the Mount selinda church building was built in 1919. Almost at the same time, the first church congregation also started at Chikore. A number of preaching points were established in Chipinge before the first urban congregation was started in Harare in 1955. Key to the preaching of the gospel was the need to translate the Bible into native language, work which started in 1908 and continued until the printing press was burnt by devastating fires in 1915.

Right from the onset, the American Board, according to a report in 1920 by W. T. Lawrence, adopted a four pronged programme towards evangelism aimed at preparing boys and girls for “useful and abundant life through the fullest development of christian character and train them in professions or trades which they can server people and contribute to the progress and welfare of their country”. Both the spiritual and the service aspects of mission work were being administered by the Missionaries. Major challenges related to securing resources to ensure that the Church was self reliant. In 1959, the African Secretary of the UCBWM, Dr. Rueling visited Zimbabwe – then Rhodesia – to address the issue of self reliance in term of financial, material and human resources. It was hoped that once the Church was self reliant, it could be weaned off so that it can run with minimum support from the Board. In 1963 the American Board decided to handover the evangelism side of the administration of the UCCZ to locals and Rev. Elijah T. Mwadira was appointed Superintendent of the Churches with full administrative powers over the spiritual welfare of the UCCZ. The administration of the service aspects (Education, Health, Agriculture, and Mission Stations) remained the prerogative of the missionaries until in 1973 when Rev. Dr. W. Mkwakwami took leadership not only of the churches but also the service ministry.

From Missionary Administration to Local Administration

From 1893 Up to 1971, the administration of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe was run by the Conference of the United Church of Christ in Rhodesia under the American Board Mission (ABM). In 1973 local leadership was handed full administrative powers resulting in the effective handover of the leadership of the church to locals. The Conference of the United Church of Christ was, for the first time, called the Association of the United Church of Christ in Rhodesia. Leadership was confined strictly to Ministers of Religion who were serving in the highest capacity of Superintendent of Churches. The first Superintendent of

the churches was Rev. E. J. Mwadira in 1963 up to 1968. The second Superintendent was Rev. Dr. W. M. Mkwakwami who was also handed the entire denomination (Association of the UCC in Zimbabwe) in 1973. The handover resulted in the Association being known as the Evangelism Council under a chairman of the Evangelism Council of the UCCZ and the Head of the denomination became known as the President. The first person to be accorded the title of President of the United Church of Christ in the then Rhodesia is Rev. Dr. F. J. Gomendo in 1978 and Rev. M. C. Kuchera was the Vice President and Chairman of the Evangelism Council. Rev. Dr. F. J. Gomendo (1977-1980, 1989-1992) and Rev. Dr. W. M. Mkwakwami (1973-1976, 1981-1988, 1993-1996) exchanged the leadership of the UCCZ by popular vote of the membership of the Church up to 1996.

There were fundamental changes in 1997 where church leadership had to be shared between the clergy and the laity. The President (clergy) remained the head of the denomination handling both the administrative and spiritual transactions of the church. A Superintendent (clergy) would be appointed to lead the evangelism side of the church and effectively overseeing the local ministers in the churches, mission stations, schools and chaplains in UCCZ institutions. The Moderator (laity) would be elected at an Annual General Meeting to be the chairperson of the Synod meetings. While the President and the Superintendent were in full time ministry of the UCCZ, the Moderator, Synod General Secretary and Synod General Treasure would hold honorary positions. The first Moderator of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe was Mr. MacMillan Major.

Discussions towards the establishment of three Superintendants started around 1992 and a vote for such was passed. Implementation of the 1992 vote for the establishment of three Superintendants was reactivated at the Annual General Meeting of 1997. The conferences were established in March 1998, each under an acting Superintendent. The conferences were Eastern Conference, Northern Conference and Western Conference.

IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

There are outstanding people who played a pivotal role towards spreading the Good news in Gazaland. They sacrificed a lot to in order to ensure that the UCCZ is where it is today. Some of these people were called into the Clergy to serve as Ministers and Evangelists while others served the Lord and provided leadership in the UCCZ as the Laity. Below are lists of such people:

The Clergy

1. **Rev. G. Wilder** was one of the missionaries who committed himself to Gazaland. He grew up in South Africa but his parents were from USA. He learnt the Zulu language and he loved the culture to the extent that he secured himself the name “MAFAVUKE” meaning white elephant. He was very instrumental in starting Chikore Mission and the Church acknowledges his contribution towards this achievement.
2. **Rev. Ngangeni Dhlakama** was the first UCCZ African Minister. He was ordained in 1923. Rev. Dhlakama worked at Chikore Church until his untimely death in 1926.
3. **Rev. Hohoza Dube** was ordained on 12 July 1931 before serving in various preaching points including Zamchiya, Mabee, Makoho, Mutema and New Year’s Gift. He was married to Miss Daisy Hlatywayo after whom the Mount Selinda Children’s home is named in honour of her work in caring for orphaned children.
4. **Rev. Zuka Hlekisana** was ordained in 1941. He worked at Chikore until 1947 when he was moved to Mt Selinda. He was the second African marriage officer.
5. **Rev. Elijah Dhlwayo** was borne around 1903-1905 and was ordained in 1945. He worked as a Methodist church Evangelist in Bulawayo from 1935-1941. He was invited by Rev. Marsh to teach at Emerald School in 1942 when he had the opportunity to do further theological studies. He worked in Makoho, Chisumbanje and Zamchiya.
6. **Rev E.T. Mwadira (Sithole)** was born in 1914 and ordained at Chikore church in 1946 before serving in numerous churches including Chikore up to 1957 when he was moved to Harare. He became the first African Superintendent of Churches in 1963 based at Chikore Mission. As Extension Minister, he opened a number of preaching points including: Chinhoyi, Mhangura, Masvingo, Zvishavane, Chegutu, Tracey Farm near Hartley, Kadoma, Kwekwe and Karoi.
7. **Rev. N. Sithole** Served Mt Selinda Gwenzi Circuit and Chikore before being selected to be principal at Chikore upper primary.
8. **Rev. Dr. W.M. Mkwakwami** was born in 1934 at Sone, Chikore Mission Farm. He trained at Epworth Theological College and was ordained into full time ministry in 1965. He was elected Church Superintendent in 1971, becoming the head of the UCCZ on the departure of the Field Secretary, Mr. George Grant. He served as the head of the President and Head of Denomination from 1973 to 1977, 1981 to 1988 and again from 1992-1996 by popular vote of the UCZ membership. He served as church Superintendent from 1989 to 1992. He also served as President of the Volunteers Council and also as Chairman of Heads of Denominations.
9. **REV DR. F. J. Gomendo** was elected Superintendent of the Churches in 1977 and the UCCZ Head Office was moved to Roslin House in Harare. In 1978, the head of the denomination was designated President and Rev Gomendo was the first to bear that title. Rev. M.C. Kuchera was elected Vice-President.
10. **Rev. J. Dube** was born in 1927 at Emerald and was called into full time ministry in 1957 when he was requested to practice full time ministry as an Evangelist in Chivhunze area

in Chipinge. After completing theological training at Rusitu Bible College in 1963 he became chaplain at Mount Selinda Hospital until 1969 before being asked to serve as an Evangelist in Mutare Circuit up to 1974. After further theological training at Epworth Theological College (1975-78), he served as a Minister in Bulawayo (1983-84) and was Church Superintendant (1985-88) before serving in various other churches including Mutema, Chibuwe and Rimbi. He is renowned for his leadership of the Volunteer Council as President.

- 11. Rev. S. K Mundeta** was born at Pfidza in 1920, trained as a Minister at Rusitu Bible College in 1954 and ordained while serving Chikore Church in 1958 at a ceremony held at Mount Selinda Church. He worked at Chikore and Mount Selinda as a Minister and occasionally as Hospital Chaplain doing Healing Ministry in the hospitals.
- 12. Rev. T. M. Rufasha** trained at Rusitu Bible College, served as Hospital Chaplain and Ambulance driver at Chikore. He also served as Minister in Charge of Chipinge, Chibuwe, Rimbi, Zamchiya, Sakubva, Mount Selinda, Mpopoma, Luveve, Zimunya, Nyanyadzi and Bocha. He retires from active Ministry after having won several souls to Christ in obedience to the Great Commission.
- 13. Rev. L. G. Muzite** was born 1942, a graduate of Rusitu Bible College and The Bible College of South Africa(Cape Town). He was ordained on 9 July 1978. He served Zamchiya Makoho, Mt Selinda, Gwenzi, Harare and in various capacities in the Ministry including as Superintendant of Churches, but renowned for his work at the Bible Society of Zimbabwe as a Translator of the New Ndau Bible version. He served Harare Church before his retirement and currently is at Zengeza UCCZ as a retired Minister.
- 14. Rev. Dr. L. Thabedhe** was born in 1929 at Mount Selinda, graduated from UTC in 1969 and was ordained in 1971 at Rimbi. Rev. Thabedhe is a development oriented Minister, supposedly inspired by his carpentry background. He has been Vice President of the Denomination, Youth Minister, Christian Education Minister and served in several churches as Minister-In-Charge.
- 15. Rev. R. C. Maposa** was born in Chikore in 1937, graduated as a Minister at the United Theological College in 1982 and was ordained in 1984 while serving as Chaplain at Chikore Mission. He served in various capacities including Vice President of the UCCZ, Headmaster (Chinaa and Chikore Secondary Schools), Chaplain (Chinaa and Chikore Secondary Schools), Youth Minister and Minister-In-Charge (Chikore/Tuzuka Circuit).
- 16. Rev. M. C. Kuchera** was born on 22 March 1940 (although on record he was born 8 years later). He graduated from the United Theological College in 1970 and was ordained in 1973 at Harare Church while serving at Mount Selinda Church. Rev. Kuchera is accredited for having started the Harvest/Hukuro concept in the UCCZ, the Pension Scheme for Ministers and planning for development through development plans and later as President of the UCCZ, strategic planning. In the ZCC, Rev. Kuchera worked as Urban and Rural Mission Secretary, General Secretary and had the opportunity to attend the Lancaster House peace negotiations for the liberation of Zimbabwe. Several development initiatives were undertaken during the tenure of Rev. Kuchera at ZCC including the establishment of ZCC Regional Offices, the purchase of properties including the Kentucky Hotel and the starting of a number of development and ecumenical programmes. Rev. Kuchera is highly regarded as a National opinion maker to the extent that he, from 2005-2011, was the chairman of the National AIDS Council where he managed to put measures that decreased the HIV prevalence rate to 13% from 24%. He is retired but exudes exceptional energy when asked to assist in providing ideas in the

governance of the UCCZ in which he was President for eight years (1997-2004) and Superintendent from 1979 to 1980.

- 17. Rev. Edward M. Matuvhunye** was born in 1958 at Mount Selinda, graduated at the United Theological College in 1986 and ordained in 1988 while serving at Bulawayo Circuit. He served in various capacities over the years including Church President (2005-2012), Church Superintendent (1993-1996), Chaplain and Minister-in-charge of several churches. As President, Rev. Matuvhunye successfully implemented a number of projects including the revival of Ukama Partnership with the New Hampshire Conference in the USA, medical donations that saw hospitals elevated and a lot of people being healed, mission stations and conferences received vehicles and ambulances were procured for the Hospitals, intensified efforts to improve the livelihood of the clergy among others.
- 18. Rev. Dr. P. U. M. Mlambo** was ordained in 1974. He is presently Chaplain at Bindura University of Science Education.
- 19. Rev. John B. Foroma** was ordained on 12 July 1964 at Chibuwe Church. Rev. Foroma worked as a Headmaster at Mount Selinda Primary School, Chaplain at Chipinge College of Horticulture and as a Minister in various Churches.
- 20. Rev. Dr. C. J. Machukera** was born in 1940, graduated from UTC in 1978 and was ordained in 1980 while serving at Highfield Church. He served the church in many capacities including Vice President of the Denomination, Principal at the UTC for four years, Lecturer at UTC for eleven years, National Youth Director, Stewardship Director, Chaplain and was Minister-In-Charge of several churches.
- 21. Rev. Dr. M. E. Mpofu** was ordained in 1979 at Mutare. He is presently Chaplain at Midlands State University where he was seconded after serving the church in various capacities including: Vice President, Development Officer and Minister-In-Charge of several churches. During his tenure as Development Officer, He is accolade for bringing electricity to Chikore Mission, a project that was officially opened by the State President, His Excellency, Comrade R. G. Mugabe on 29 July 1989.
- 22. Rev. A. G. Mhururu** was born on 13 March 1956 and was ordained in 1985 at Highfield UCCZ. He served as Superintendent of the Northern Conference from 2001-2008, President of the Volunteers Council for several years, Chairman of the UKAMA Partnership and Minister-In-Charge of a number of churches including Highfield, Chipinge/Southdown/Tanganda, Chibuwe/Rimbi, Mutare City Central and Harare. He is currently the Minister in Charge of Glen View Church and National Volunteers President.
- 23. Rev. E. T. C. Ngadziore** is the current President of the UCCZ. He was born in 1970, graduated from UTC in 1993 and ordained in June 1994 at the invitation of Gweru Church. He served in the UCCZ in the following capacities Western Conference Superintendent in 1997 in acting capacity and 2000-2008 as a full time Superintendent. Rev. Ngadziore became Minister-in-Charge of Masvingo Church from 2009-2012. He chaired the Ministers' Retreat from 1996-1998 was Ruwadzano National Advisor from 1997-1999 and ZCC Provincial Co-ordinator (Midlands 2005-2008, Masvingo 2009-2012).
- 24. Rev G. Dhundu** was born on the 20th of June 1965. He did his primary education at Big Tree School and Secondary Education at Mt Selinda High School. Rev. Dhundu trained as Minister of Religion at United Theological College from 1993 to 1996 and worked as a Pastor for Tuzuka Church before being appointed Minister in Charge of Chibuwe Church which invited him for ordination on the 20th April 1998. He was elected as a Substantive

Superintendent for the Eastern Conference on the 10th of June 1999 where he worked for eight (8) years up to 2007. In 2008, he was called to serve Rimbi Church before being called by the Youth Council to work as a Youth Minister in 2011. Rev Dhundu is the sitting Vice President of United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe.

25. **Rev. W. Sitotombe** was born 1954, graduated from Central Christian College in 1976 and was ordained in 1981 at the invitation of Mount Selinda/Gwenzi Circuit. He was posted to Gweru/Shabani/Masvingo Circuit, Mount Selinda/Gwenzi Circuit, Bulawayo Circuit, and Harare Circuit before being seconded to Zimbabwe Corps of Chaplains in the Zimbabwe National Army. In 2000 he went to the UK where from 2008 to 2012 he served as part-time Minister to UCCZ-UK London Church.
26. **Rev. Richard Gomendo** was born on 12 November 1971. He did his primary education at various schools in Harare and Chipinge, typical of children of Ministers. He graduated from the UTC in 1997 and from Midlands State University in 2013 with a BA Honors Theology and Religious Studies. He holds several other Diplomas in Theology, Religious Studies and in Church Administration. Rev. Gomendo was ordained on 6 June 1999 at the invitation of Zengeza Church and has had the opportunity to minister at Hwange, Tanganda, Gwenzi, Mafumise, Rosecommon Preaching Point as a student pastor and at Zengeza (June 1997 - December 2001), Bulawayo Church (January 2002 - February 2004) before being appointed the inaugural Administrative Assistant to the President from March 2004 to December 2007. He is presently the Western Conference Church Superintendent since January 2008.
27. **Rev. T. Mucheri** is the current Superintendant of the Eastern Conference a position he was elected to after serving as Minister-In-Charge in a number of Churches.
28. **Rev. T. Magumo** is the sitting Superintendant of the Northern Conference. He was Minister-In-Charge of several churches including Eastlea and Mount Selinda.
29. **Rev. F. Mutumbeyi** is the immediate past Superintendant of the Eastern Conference. He was born in 1967, graduated from Rusitu Bible College in 1993 and ordained in 1997 while serving in Chisumbanje Circuit. He served in several churches including Dangamvura and Southdown. He is currently on Sabbatical leave studying at Andover Newton Theological School in USA.

PRESIDENTS AND SUPERINTENDENTS WHO HAVE SERVED THE CHURCH

ELECTED PRESIDENTS

1977-1980	Rev. Dr. F. J. Gomendo
1981-1988	Rev. Dr. W Mkwakwami
1989-1992	Rev. Dr. F. J. Gomendo
1993-1996	Rev. Dr. W. Mkwakwami
1997-2004	Rev. Dr. M.C. Kuchera
2005-2012	Rev. E.M. Matuvhunye
2013- present	Rev. E. T. C. Ngadziore

ELECTED CHURCH SUPERINTENDENTS

1946-1954	Rev. J. S. Marsh
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1955-1963	Rev. J. C. Heinrich (on leave 1957)
1957	Rev. C P Blankey
1964-1972	Rev. E.T. Mwadira
1973-1976	Rev. W. Mkwakwami
1977-1978	Rev. F. J. Gomendo
1979-1980	Rev. M. C. Kuchera
1981-1984	Rev. L.G. Mzite
1985-1988	Rev. J. Dube
1989-1992	Rev. W.M. Mkwakwami
1993-1996	Rev. E.M. Matuvhunye

The Constitution was amended several times (1973, 1983, 1999) and in 1999 it was amended to give birth to, among other development, three Conferences. The Conferences are: **EASTERN**, **WESTERN** and **NORTHERN**.

Eastern Conference

2000-2007	Rev G. Dundu
2008-2011	Rev F T Mutsumbei
2012-present	Rev T. Mucheri

Western Conference

2000-2007	Rev E T C Ngadziore
2008-present	Rev R. Gomendo

Northern Conference

1999- 2000	Rev W. Sitotombe(interim)
2001- 2008	Rev A.G. Mhururu
2009-present	Rev T. Magumo

LAY LEADERS WHO HAVE SERVED THE CHURCH

The constitution of the UCCZ was changed in 1998 in order to give “power to the people”. The lay members of the Church were, for the first time given the opportunity to run the affairs of the church at local and synod Levels.

The Church Leaders who served in key Synod Positions since then are:

YEAR	Synod Moderator	Synod Secretary	Synod Treasurer
1996-1998		Ganyani Khosa	
1999 - 2000	Mr. Mac Major	Mr. Ganyani Khosa	Mr. TT. Pahla
2001-2002	Mr. Mac Major	Mr. Ganyani Khosa	Mr. TT. Pahla
2003-2004	Mr. Dakarai Dhliwayo	Mr. Needmore Maposa	Mr. D. Mangemba
2005-2006	Mr. P. Nera	Mr. Tarwiwa Chitombo	Mr D Mangemba (acting, 2008)
2007-2008	Mr. P. Nera	Mr. Ganyani Khosa	Mr D Mangemba
2009-2010	Dr. Lovemore Madhuku	Mr. Ganyani Khosa	Mr D Mangemba
2011-2012	Dr. Lovemore Madhuku	Mr. Tarwiwa Chitombo	Mr. Antony Siyaganda
2013-2014	Mr. Farai Munyamani	Mr. Canfred Pambuka	Mr. Antony Siyaganda
2015-2016	Mr. Phil Mlambo	Mr. Ganyani Khosa	Mr. Albert Nduna

2017-2018	Mr. Phil Mlambo	Mr. Needmore Maposa	Mr. Albert Nduna
2019-2020	Mr. Ganyani Khosa	Mr. Moses Matsiya	Mrs. Grace Mshoperi
2021-2022	Mr. Ganyani Khosa	Mr. Moses Matsiya	Mrs. Grace Mshoperi

120 YEARS OF SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT TO COMMUNITIES

The UCCZ practices faith in action through what are now known as Spiritual Councils, the biggest of them being the Conferences. Prior to 1998, the single Conference was known as the “Association of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe”. In 1998 the Synod of the UCCZ passed a vote for the establishment of three Conferences of the UCCZ namely the Eastern Conference with thirty-five (35) churches, the Northern Conference with twenty (20) churches and the Western Conference with eleven churches (11). Further to the Conferences, the UCCZ provides specialised fellowship through specialised Councils for different interests groups namely **Junior Sunday School** catering for boys and girls under the age of twelve years, **Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF)** catering for boys and girls above the age of twelve years old, **Ruwadzano** catering for women who are full and voting members of the UCCZ, **Volunteers** specialising in providing in depth spiritual guidance to men, women, boys and girls wishing to preach the gospel locally and abroad as a way of enhancing evangelism and **Christian Men’s Fellowship** which is a gathering of men only to discuss spiritual topics of interest to their spiritual growth and that of their families. Summarised below are the key achievements of the spiritual councils:

The Eastern Conference

Established in the year 1998, with a total of thirty (30) Churches, the Eastern Conference now has thirty-five Churches, some of them listed below:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1 Checheche | 12 Devuli | 23 Ngaone |
| 2 Chibuwe | 13 Emerald | 24 Pfidza |
| 3 Chikanga | 14 Fern Valley | 25 Rimbi |
| 4 Chikore | 15 Gwenzi | 26 Rufumiso |
| 5 Chipinge Town | 16 Mafumise | 27 Rusape |
| 6 Chipinge Gaza | 17 Makoho | 28 Sakubva |
| 7 Gaza Extension | 18 Mariya | 29 Southdown |
| 8 Chiredzi | 19 Mt. Silinda | 30 Tanganda |
| 9 Chisumbanje | 20 Mtema | 31 Tuzuka |
| 10 City Central Circuit | 21 Musani | 32 Zamchiya |
| 11 Dangamvura | 22 Mwacheta | 33 UCCZ-SA |

The Northern Conference

The Northern Conference was established in the year 1998, with not more than twelve (12) Churches. Now there are twenty (20) Churches listed below:

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Bindura | 8. Hatfield | 15. Norton |
| 2. Budiriro | 9. Highfield | 16. Ruwa |
| 3. Chinhoyi | 10. Kambuzuma | 17. Seke |
| 4. Eastlea | 11. Kuwadzana | 18. Warren Park |
| 5. Glen Norah | 12. Mabvuku | 19. Waterfalls |
| 6. Glen View | 13. Marondera | 20. Zengeza |
| 7. Harare | 14. Mufakose | 21. UCCZ-UK |

The Western Conference

The Conference was established in the year 1998, with six Churches. There are now nine (9) Churches as shown:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Bulawayo City | 4. Kwekwe | 7. Mpopoma |
| 2. Gweru | 5. Luveve | 8. Nketa |
| 3. Iveme | 6. Masvingo | 9. Zvishavane |

Further details about the Conferences can be found on the UCCZ website (www.uccz.org) .

Junior Sunday School

This is an emerging concept in the UCCZ where children under the age of twelve years old are given an opportunity to worship together and fellowship at their level. In their draft constitution (August 2011), this emerging Council of the UCCZ gave themselves the name “Junior Sunday School Council of U.C.C.Z. (J.S.S.U.C.C.Z.)”. The Council exists to:

- spread the gospel through children ministries.
- encourage children to live a Godly life.
- instruct children to live in the counsel of the Lord.

The administrative structure of the Council falls in line with that of any other Spiritual Council of the UCCZ. They have National, Regional and Local Executive Committees and hold meetings at the three levels for business and worship. They have a uniform comprising a black skirt for girls, black trousers for boys worn with a white Junior Sunday School t-shirt.

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Junior Sunday School t-shirt front and back

Christian Youth Fellowship

National Leadership of the UCCZ CYF Council since its formation to present

National CYF President	Period of Leadership	National CYF President	Period
Ephraim Muhlaba (National Coordinator)	1973 - 1974	Phillimon Mlambo	1998 - 2000
Samuel Mandhlazi (National Coordinator)	1974 - 1975	Collen Madhuku	2000 - 2004
Joseph Magusha (Late)	1975 - 1976	Balance Chibangwa (Late)	2004 - 2006
Phineas Kuzuwazuwa	1976 - 1980	Stanley Mtetwa	2006 - 2007
Peter Nerah	1980 - 1982	Claris Madhuku	2007 - 2008
Godwin Hlatywayo	1982 - 1988	Trymore Sithole	2008 - 2010
Kennedy Chaita	1988 - 1990	Caroline Mlambo	2010 - 2011
Lovemore Madhuku	1990 – 1991,1993-1996	Edmore Mahlangise	2011 - 2012
Mwateta Tusu	1991 - 1992	Liberty Chidoko	2012 - 2013
Tarwiwa Chitombo	1992 - 1993	Tellme Madidi	2013-Present
Edmore Sigauke	1996 - 1998		

National Youth Ministers

National UCCZ CYF Youth Ministers
Rev. Bruce Hansen
Rev Dr. L.M Thabedhe
Rev Dr. M.E. Mpofu

National UCCZ CYF Youth Ministers
Rev. Dr. C.J. Machukera
Rev. Watson Bundwa (Part Time)
Rev. Thomas Muchayi (Not Installed)

It should be of interest to note that of all the Ministers in the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, present and past, Rev. Godfrey Dhundu, the current Youth Minister is the only UCCZ Minister who has been a member of the UCCZ CYF National Executive as a Highlands Representative between 1985-1987.

Constitutional Establishment of the UCCZ CYF Council

The period 1973 to 1975 was led by coordination committees before the adoption of the UCCZ CYF Constitution at St. Gideon Mhlanga High School in 1975 which then created the position of CYF President. The current UCCZ CYF Badge was designed by the then brother **Cames Khosa** (current Chibwe High School Headmaster) and was adopted as part of the symbol for admitting CYF into full voting membership. The first National UCCZ CYF Annual General Meeting was held in Chipinge in 1973, led by a group of students from Mt. Selinda High School. The initial UCCZ CYF was made up of all unmarried UCCZ members aged between twelve and thirty years old.

Major changes in the UCCZ CYF

- i. Every mission school used to have a CYF group partly sponsored by the school for AGM transport and related expenses where it was mandatory for every child paying school fees to pay a fund for the CYF Pledges and the Youth Minister's fund.
- ii. The CYF Council is known for moulding well nurtured individuals within and without the church.
- iii. The 12years to 30years UCCZ CYF age limit was changed through the UCCZ CYF Constitutional changes adopted in 1996 to 12years to until marriage.
- iv. There used to be a full time Youth Minister as Youth Director and this changed to a part time Youth Minister and to date reverted to full time Youth Minister.

Key Achievements of the UCCZ CYF Council since it started

Most of the achievements of the UCCZ CYF Council are very qualitative and the following stand out as easily recognisable.

- i. The building of 1311 Gaza Township CYF House in Chipinge completed in 2001.
- ii. Running of Chikore Youth Training Centre between 1974 and 1987 under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Thabedhe and Rev. Dr. M.E. Mpofu as Youth Ministers.
- iii. The 1997 bicycling sponsored fundraising campaign from Harare to Mount Selinda to raise funds to rehabilitate Mt Selinda Teachers College.
- iv. Securing a partnership Norwegian Refugee Council for skills training at Chipinge College of Horticulture from 2012–2013. The project also helped in rehabilitating the infrastructure at the UCCZ Chipinge College of Horticulture.
- v. The CYF Council has moulded the leadership of the church, business community, education sector and the civic society at various levels of governance.

Weaknesses and Challenges

- i. Failure to start and sustain the CYF Council's financial life.
- ii. The immobility of the National Executive.

The main purpose of CYF is to bring the young Christians together in the church to learn more about Jesus Christ and the love of God, to strengthen their faith and to help them overcome their physical

and spiritual problems guided by 1 Timothy 4 V 12 which reads “Do not let anyone despise your youth, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”

Contributed by **Tellme Madidi (UCCZ CYF President, 2013-2014)** with profound appreciation for information from baba Phineas Kuzuwazuwa, baba Edmore Sigauke, baba Phillimon Mlambo, baba Joseph Sibiya, baba Mathias Murehwa, baba Tarwiwa Chitombo, Rev. Watson Bundwa, Rev. Dr. Murombedzi Chikanga Kuchera and Rev. Godfrey Dhundu.

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The CYF Uniform front and back

Ruwadzano

EARLY YEARS

The church women used to meet in their homes for prayers, teaching each other how to cook nice meals, sewing for the family, knitting jerseys, caring for husbands and children, families at large and many other duties. These could be referred to as clubs in our modern day society. Some of the women Mrs Rev Daisy Dube worked with were Mrs Bangwayo, Mrs Tom Mhlanga, Miss Norah Tamela, Mrs Dorothy Marsh, Mrs E.K. Hlatywayo, Mrs M. Mbaimbai, Mrs Mlambo Mwaiyepi, Mrs B. Kumbula, Mrs Mafixo, Mrs Thondlana, Mrs Dixon, Miss Nyembezi amongst many others.

Ruwadzano as an organization was founded in 1934 by the women mentioned earlier on. The idea was brought to these women by Mrs Rev Ngonyamo whose husband was a Pastor with United Methodist Church (Old Umtali).

Mrs Rev Ngonyamo invited Mrs Rev Daisy Dube and others to Old Umtali to witness a United Methodist Ruwadzano meeting (camp) between 1936 and 1937. Mrs Rev Daisy Dube together with Mrs Gupe Bangwayo, Mrs Tata Dube, Mrs Mahaka, Mrs Mwatamisa Mtetwa, Mrs Sidhuna and others attended this meeting. When they came back they were loaded with new things and they liked the idea. They sat down and decided to start something similar the following year. One of their main objectives was to spread the Word of God, far and wide, to teach women to love and care for their families/ relatives and also to take care of the sick, bereaved and the needy.

In the following year, 1938, they decided to camp as women away from homes but didn't have a place. They approached farmers around for space. The first Ruwadzano camp site was at Gambadziya (near Chikore) after a Mr P.J. Horus (Haraisi) offered the women open space (King Nyaututu).

During the first Ruwadzano meeting some men from the church including Mr Sidhuna, Phillip Dube, Mr Sambo and Mr Jambaya helped the women build temporary shelter (zvimichacha). UCCZ women reciprocated by inviting United Methodist women and Mrs Rev Ngonyamo. She was accompanied by Mrs Rev Rugaya, Mrs Kanyangarara and Mrs Chimonyo and many others.

When they started gathering, men were not eager to let their wives attend. The positive changes observed in the Ruwadzano women encouraged some husbands to become believers and others accompanied their wives to the camps. Also other women were encouraged to join Ruwadzano.

They also got another area that was near water and this was Muzilizwi, now known as Musirizwi, donated to them by a white farmer, Odendaal. Usually they gathered at these two sites Gambadziya and Musilizwi. From there the organization has managed to spread to all four borders of Zimbabwe and across the eastern border into Mozambique, Glory to God the Most High.

1940's

As the organization grew, the women decided on a uniform. Miss A.D. Nyembezi spoke on the uniform she had seen in Natal at a Zulu Women's meeting at Adam's College and this is the uniform we use to date. A black skirt, white blouse and white doek. The uniform was neat attractive and made them look closer to God or to missionaries in smartness. Which sane man would not want his wife to be associated with these women? Growth continued to take place many joined the organization. Maphaka was a very special and important time for these women. These are prayer times, people take time to go and pray with prayer partners, friends or pastors away from many. These women were very serious with their business.

The first uniform was worn in 1943 and these women were the first to be blessed (kupfekedzwa); Mrs Rev Daisy Dube, Mrs Evangelist Bangwao, Mrs T.Mhlanga, Mrs G.Dhlakama, Mrs J.Mapepa, Mrs F.Dube and Mrs J.Mlambo.

It was not easy to get bloused. Before being bloused the husbands were asked if they agreed their wives were good wives to their families first. If not one was not bloused.

1950's

1958 was the last year Ruwadzano was held outdoor at Musilizwi. This was due to heavy storms that swept across the Eastern Highlands whilst the women were at the camp. Many goods were destroyed, washed away since they had no roof above their heads. Some fell sick, others lost their suitcases and went home with clothes wrapped in pieces of cloths (mabutwa). Because of this mishap they began to meet in schools for cover and protection. The organization continued to grow spiritually and numerically. Members were happy with their achievements as women.

God moved in mysterious ways, as the women prayed and cried for their children who had moved to towns and there were no churches. A worshipping group was established in Bulawayo by people who attended Gazaland football club in 1956. In 1957 a small group of worshippers began meeting for prayers at Mr B.K. Mashawa's house. This was followed by Women's Ruwadzano.

Rev Mwadira established Harare (Mbare) Salisbury Church in 1958 and Ruwadzano followed.

Due to speedy growth, the women decided to move to schools, the first was at Rebai School in 1959. With the advent of buses and lorries it became easier to travel to distant venues in big numbers.

Between the 1950's and 1960's the women spent much time holding Executive meetings trying to come up with a written Constitution to help/guide the women since the group was growing tremendously.

They did not elect the entire Executive at one time. The Vice to every position became the new incumbent to the position. This they believed helped with continuity.

1960's

This was when the Constitution was introduced. The organization continued to grow bigger, the Constitution helped in managing the group and in making decisions. National Executive moved from one Circuit to another educating, advising and getting suggestions. This was the Advisor's responsibility. During the same year an invitation from Ivory Coast got to them and Mrs G.D. Mhlanga who was the Secretary then attended the Conference. When she came back, she brought back the idea of "least Coin", a small amount of money contributed by each member for administration purposes of the organization.

Also the idea of projects for the organization started around 1968.

1970's

The denomination changed its name from American Board Congregational Church to United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. In 1970 urban women started cooking for themselves.

In 1973 Mrs Rev Mkwakwami took over from Mrs J. Lowe. Women were taught giving and the spirit of giving manifested in these women. They collected monies which they used to build a girls dormitory at Gedion Mhlanga Secondary School. Also women from urban centres found it hard to carry utensils and food to cook for themselves. It was agreed they put money together and food would be cooked for them. Rural folks continued to cook for themselves.

1980's

Embarked on another project, Old People's Home at Chikore Mission. Mrs Rev P.U. Mlambo was the President of Ruwadzano at the time in 1986. Building of Ruwadzano Old People's Home started at Chikore mission with the help of Rev and Mrs Mundeta who was the Minister-in-Charge then. Money was raised and a slab was built. It was a tall order since money was collected only once a year at NAGM's. As time progressed the women found out that Old People's Home involved a lot, so, they changed direction to turn it into a house for rent. In 1991, some missionaries came to Zimbabwe, visited the Ruwadzano project. After realizing the noble idea behind it, they dug into their pockets and raised enough money to build 3 rooms to completion. This house is being rented out to date.

During NAGM's some Ruwadzano members donated significantly in 1986 and 1988 Mrs Muyambo from Vheneka donated 2 beasts. Some donate clothes to orphanages, paint to our schools Mt Selinda and Chikore, washing soap and Ruwadzano uniforms to the aged Ruwadzano members.

There was also the introduction of Leadership training and Council meetings. Leadership training was for those in positions at church up to National level. Council meeting was business for National Ruwadzano since it had been found to be time consuming at national AGM's.

1990's

1993 marked 100 years celebration for the denomination. Ruwadzano took advantage of these celebrations printed some Zambia material to sell as part of fundraising for the organization. Mrs Rev Maphosa was the Advisor and then Mrs C. Dube took over from her. She taught growing of mushroom; making of laundry soap, growing herbal trees, building water tanks to store water during the rainy season. In 1997 Ruwadzano held 2 NAGM's one at Torwood, Kwekwe and the other at Chikore Mission. The Torwood NAGM gave birth to Torwood Ruwadzano building project. The land was donated by the Redcliff Mayor during the NAGM. At this site, Ruwadzano is planning to build a Skills Training centre for the benefit of the community and nation at large. More funds are required to see this project to completion. When completed the centre will require computers, sewing machines and other training equipment.

1998 was the introduction of the 3 conferences followed in 1999 by Ruwadzano Regional Annual General Meetings (RAGM). The first three superintendents were Western conference – Rev E.T.C Ngadziore, Northern Conference – Rev. Sitothombe (acting)/ Rev E. Mhururu and Eastern Conference – Rev C. Dhundu and their wives automatically became Ruwadzano Advisors until after two terms, when elections were held. In 1990 Mbuya Hlatywayo donated a beast, 1992 Z\$600 and in 2006 a beast towards the NAGM.

NEW MILLENIUM

There is Musirizwi building project near Musirizwi river. A lot of work has been put on site. Electricity has been installed, 5 water tanks have been erected and a few buildings are standing at the moment. Lots of fund still needed to complete the project especially the building of dormitories.

Northern Conference has also embarked on purchasing land in the Dema area, outskirts of Harare for building a Ruwadzano Centre. This project is still in its early stages and yet to get fully underway. National Ruwadzano has also embarked on fundraising projects like selling jerseys, bags, Bible covers, maZambia to raise funds to sustain the organization.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

Vast growth of Ruwadzano membership has led to a number of problems being encountered: -

1. Venues to hold NAGM have become very difficult to locate
2. The venues have become costly to the Ruwadzano Council.
3. Due to the distance between members' homes and venues of NAGM's not all members are able to attend as they wish.
4. Also due to vast growth of membership, discipline during NAGM's has become difficult to instil.

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The Ruwadzano Uniform. In the middle is progress on developments taking place at the Ruwadzano Kwekwe Project

Volunteers

The idea of a Men's Fellowship started in 1925 when some men returning from South Africa decided to create a men's fellowship called Vabvuwi. The idea of Vabvuwi was borrowed from the Blacks only Bantu Congregational Church in South Africa led by Rev. Mvuyana and where most Zimbabwean men fellowshiped while in South Africa.

In 1926, the first Men's Movement emerged and was called Mabempha (eMweya), Mahlahlandlela or Marombe. This group comprised of Mr. Manzini Hlatywayo (from Mount Selinda), Ev. Jonasi Mapepa (Chikore), Mr. Sam Mkwakwami (Chikore), Mr. Sam Chikoo (Chikore), Mr. Johnson Vhayeya (Chikore), Mr. Joshua Mlambo (Chikore) Mr. Magodhi Sigauke (Southdown), Mr. Joel Kundhlande (Mutema), Mr. Matoranheme (Chikore) and Mr. Magaa (Chikore). These laity men pushed the idea of Men's Fellowship through their Churches (Mount Selinda, Chikore Southdown, Mutema and others that were established) assisted by Rev. Ngangeni who was working at Southdown Church then. Rev. Ngangeni moved to Mount Selinda Church where he continued to spearhead the movement. When Rev. Dube Hohodza was appointed Minister-in-charge at Mount Selinda Church replacing Rev. Ngangeni, the idea of the Men's Fellowship intensified.

Rev. Bates (a missionary) who was the head of evangelism in the UCCZ in 1939 used Mabempha to evangelise and in that year four hundred and fourteen (414) new converts were realised. This was a great achievement for the church. The following year, in 1940, three men Mr. Manzini Hlatywayo (from Mount Selinda), Ev. Jonasi Mapepa (Chikore), Mr. Sam Mkwakwami (Chikore) met at Mount Selinda to officially establish Vabvuwi as a movement of men with a passion to evangelise. Vabvuwi became so powerful that in 1944 when Rev. Elijah Dhliwayo was assigned to Makoho Church he was pleasantly surprised to realise that Vabvuwi were already well established.

Between 1944 and 1954 vabvuwi slowed down and this was of great concern to Revs. Elijah Mwadira and John Heinrick who in 1954 wrote letter to Churches persuading them to rejuvenate Vabvuwi with renewed energy and vigour. One of the letters invited Vabvuwi to a meeting at Gwenzi where a number of Harare men from the UCCZ and United Methodist Church (UMC) attended to strengthen each other. The men from Harare include Johnn Dhliwayo (UMC), Philemon Dhliwayo (UMC), William Magusha (UMC – badged Mubvuwi), Edson Dhlakama, Benjami Dhliwayo, Lincon

Thabedhe, John Mapeto and Mr. Mushoperi. At this Gwenzi meeting all the men from Harare were badged into full Vabvuwi together with other men from other churches including Chief Bernard Zamuchiya (Zamuchiya Makoho Church), Mr. Petros Thabedhe (Mount Selinda-Gwenzi Circuit) and Mr. Jenya. Badging was symbolised by a V-cut piece of black cloth affixed with a pin on the left hand side of the chest of the member. Also badged at this Gwenzi meeting is the first Lady Mubvuwi, Mrs Zondwayo (daughter of Mr. And Mrs Meibard Mlambo). A National executive was chosen comprising Rev. Elijah Mwadira (Chairman), Rev. Ntuli (Secretary), Mr. P. Thabedhe (Treasurer) and Rev. Heinrick (Advisor). This meant that as the church grew in towns around Zimbabwe through the leadership of Rev. Mwadira, also did Vabvuwi or Mahlahlandhlela as Rev. Mwadira preferred to call them.

At the 1958 Annual General Meeting, the black V-cut cloth was withdrawn as a symbol of membership and badging. It was replaced by a khakhi sash (bhandire or bhande) with the word Volunteer written on it in white. The sash had a black hem and black frill. The colours meant that we have sinned (black) but by the blood of Jesus Christ we have been cleansed and made holy (white). This effectively and officially adopted the name **Volunteers**. The full uniform (White Shirt, Black Tie, Charcoal trousers, Khaki Jacket, Black shoes, Black socks and a round pin with the abbreviation VUCCZ inscribed in gold on a black background) as it is known to this day was introduced at the AGM of 1960.

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The Volunteers' Uniform

Around 1970, following a decline in membership both in the Church and in the Volunteers, youths and women were invited to be part of the Volunteers in order to boost evangelism and membership.

Leadership of the Council at National level over the years include:

- Rev. A. G. Mhururu
- Rev. J. Dube
- Rev. Dr. W. Mkwakwami
- Rev. T. Magumo
- Rev. D. Peyiye Dube

Christian Men's Fellowship

Following the inclusion of the youths and women in the Volunteers Council around 1970, discussions started around 1995 over the creation of a purely men only grouping so that men can discuss their issues and fellowship together in the absence of their children and wives. This way, men can discuss intricate issues that affect them and advise each other on how to be good heads of their respective households. In continuing discussions, it is hoped that the Men's Fellowship will develop into a fully fledged Spiritual Council of the UCCZ, Christian Men's Fellowship that will have its constitution and structure but without "killing" the Volunteer Council which Volunteer Council will be focussing more on its reason for creation; Evangelism.

120 years of Service to individuals, churches and communities in Zimbabwe

Mission Stations

There are primarily two mission stations, Mount Selinda and Chikore. There is a farm at Southdown that could have been turned into a Mission Station a long time ago. Another farm was established in Chimanimani around 1920 by the UCCZ but has not been developed into a formal Mission Station. Suggestions were brought forward at the peak of the land reforms in Zimbabwe to partition the Chimanimani farm into residential stands for Ministers. This might need to be followed up. Efforts are under way to create mission stations at Kaukunga in Hwange and Dangamvura in Mutare. With the continued support of our partners, the church should be able to realise this goal.

UCCZ Contribution to Education

Producing students of note through our Schools

Most Primary schools established in Chipinge district except Chipinge Primary School were established with input and intervention of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. Between 1965 and 1968 the church was compelled to relinquish some of the schools to Chipinge Rural District Council to remain with 8 primary schools and two secondary schools.

After independence in 1980, the UCCZ started to gradually develop the Secondary Schools into High Schools offering Advanced Level subjects. More secondary schools were established and some of the schools that were relinquished to government are now re-admitted (Emerald Schools and Gwenzi Schools) to be run under the UCCZ as their responsible authority. The status of UCCZ schools presently stands as shown in the table below:

Secondary Schools	Primary Schools
1. Bangira Secondary School	1. Bangira Primary School
2. Beacon Hill High School (est. 1984)	2. Beacon Hill Primary School
3. Chikore High School	3. Big Tree Primary School
4. China High School (est. 1984)	4. Chinaa Primary School
5. Gwenzi Secondary School	5. Gwenzi Primary School
6. Mafumhe Secondary School	6. Mafumhe Primary School
7. Mount Selinda High School	7. Mount Selinda Primary School
8. Shekwa Secondary School	8. Rebai Primary School
	9. Shekwa Primary School
	10. Southdown Primary School

Producing quality graduates and workforce through Technical, Vocational and Professional Education

Teacher Training College: The College was in operation around 1940. It was closed at the peak of the war of liberation and was not opened again. The closure, albeit, was not before

producing a number of teachers most of them only retiring now after long service to communities.

Agricultural Training School: The School was established in 1952 as the Alvord Agricultural School. It started community irrigation schemes in Nyanyadzi, Chibuwe, Mutema and Devili. Before Chikore High School became a high school, the institute trained a number of agricultural extension officers (madhomeni). Known graduates of that school include Prof. Gordon Chavhunduka who ended up as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe.

Mount Selinda Nursing School has been training State Certified Nurses up to 1996 when training was abandoned at the peak of the war of liberation. Nursing Training resumed in 2001 with the training of Primary Care Nurses under the Primary care Nursing (PCN) Programme. PCN training continued, until 2011, to produce quality primary care nurses who served in the locally and also the Mozambican hospitals. From 2011 to date the School is specialising in midwifery. Progress is at an advanced stage for a full State Registered General Nurses' Program.

Chipinge College of Horticulture: The College was donated to the UCCZ by Dr. H. Moyana (Former Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Egypt) in 1996 and started training horticultural graduates immediately. Dr. Liberty Mhlanga (UCCZ) and Mr. Ignitius Mufukari (Chipinge DA) helped in providing the college with land that became its permanent location. The graduates from the college are in high demand nationally, regionally and internationally. Some of the graduates went into the horticulture industry as private farmers through the government empowerment programme. The College is being managed and financed purely by the UCCZ with minimum support from any other partners.

Life Skills Training Centre: The Life Skills Training Centre for self employment and employment creation which is currently running as a Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) and hosted by Chipinge College of Horticulture is being kindly sponsored by the Norwegian Aid. The Centre started in 1975 at Chikore Mission Station empowering young people with essential life skills up to 1984. From 1984, the Centre evolved into Chikore Community Development Programme (CCPD) focusing more on such vocational skills as dressmaking, poultry farming, carpentry and welding. Continuing efforts are underway to transform the centre into a fully fledged Technical and Vocational College.

Gazaland University and Chipinge Teachers' College: The United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, as part of its long term strategy, would like to establish a teacher training college and a university in the Chipinge district as a way of strengthening its leadership role and position in developing the district. Land for the University has already been secured and a team of experts has been identified to produce the university charter and take leadership in this intervention. The Charter is now in place and progress will be realised.

UCCZ Contribution to Sustainable Food Security and Water Harvesting

The Church took heed of the words of James 2 verses 15-16 that faith should be with deeds and that a brother destitute of daily food should be fed. As such, food security is at the core of the Church's thrust since inception in 1893. To date, the Church has four (4) stations namely Mount Selinda, Chikore, Southdown and Chipinge College of Horticulture where

agricultural activities are taking place producing enough for the local community and to share with others. Fully fledged commercial farming is taking place only at Mount Selinda Station with plans for extending the same to Chipinge College of Horticulture and Chikore. Plant and equipment are already dispatched to Chikore and Chipinge College of Horticulture so that commercial farming also starts at these stations in the 2013-2014 agricultural season.

The Church appreciates that sustainable food security depends very much on a sustainable water harvesting and management strategy. Consequently, the Church had to put in place facilities for harvesting rain water and managing its distribution to communities and to the fields for irrigation. Some of these facilities are:

Mount Selinda: A small dam was constructed along the Zona River. The dam has been in existence for some time now that it needs attention so that leaks are sealed and the silt filling the dam is scooped. Some boreholes were also sunk in order to supplement the water from the dam.

Chikore: One borehole was sunk for the farm although it is also serving the community in Chikore mission. Bangira dam will also be refurbished and repaired so that it supports the water supply from the boreholes.

Chipinge College of Horticulture: Water is drawn from the Save river through pipes and canals feeding the Tongogara refugee camp. Two boreholes were sunk in the farm to provide water but the borehole water is only suitable for animal and not for irrigation purposes since it is salty.

Community-based water Supply: The Church sunk a number of boreholes in order to provide communities with drinking water. The church also provided tanks and house-hold gutters so that house-holds can harvest rain water for domestic use.

In addition to engaging in commercial agriculture, the Church also found it prudent to give out part of the mission farm land to tenants for residential and small scale quasi-commercial farming. To date, the Southdown farm has five (5) tenants, Chikore farm has six hundred and fifteen (615) tenants while Mount Selinda farm has one hundred and twenty-five (125) tenants. The Church continuously provides knowledge, advice and traction power in the form of tractors and other agricultural implements. Agricultural equipment is for hire.

Other food security initiatives include:

1. The Heifer Project which started in 1984 and to date has given out over 500 heifers to Chikore and Gunura communities in the Chipinge district.
2. Mission farms are continuing to produce grain, beans and sweet potatoes for internal consumption and for sale. In the last season 20 tonnes of grain was produced. The idea of producing these agricultural products is to provide food to students, nursing staff, patients and the community at large thereby reducing the costs and making services available to the needy at minimal cost.
3. Piggery and cattle ranching.

Medical Contribution of the UCCZ

Medical Missionary work of the UCCZ was closely linked to the spiritual welfare and was a vital cog in evangelising. The early missionaries believed in preaching to a healthy body and as such established facilities for the care and treatment of the sick in a Christian atmosphere

as well as for the training of medical professionals of note and community health practitioners.

Dr W. L. Thompson became the first permanent medical missionary in Zimbabwe stationed at Mount Selinda Hospital (then a small medical dispensary) in October 1893. The hospital was officially opened in 1912 as The Willis F. Pierce Memorial Hospital. Dr. Thompson was followed seven years later by a fellow American medical missionary Dr William T. Lawrence who opened a small hospital at Chikore mission in 1900.

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In 1930, a three year-training course for African nurses, with Standard IV as the minimum entrance qualification, was launched with seven student nurses in training. In 1934 there were nine student nurses in training.

In 1936 Dr Willis H. Willis joined Dr Lawrence at Mount Selinda hospital together with American nurses Miss Minnie A. Tontz, Miss Edith J. Fuller and Miss Nellie Myers. On 15 December, 1938 Miss Theresa Buck, who had trained as a nurse at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, joined Mount Selinda hospital.

Numerous satellite clinics in Chipinge were established by the UCCZ including Maronga Clinic, Rimbi Clinic, Zamchiya Clinic, and Gwenzi Clinic were under the direct administration of the UCCZ. These were run by the UCCZ up to 1968 when some of them were taken over by the government.

Currently, the UCCZ is running two hospitals (The Willis F. Pierce Memorial Hospital commonly known as Mount Selinda Hospital and Sister Buck Memorial Hospital popularly known as Chikore Hospital) and two clinics (Gwenzi Clinic and Muswera Clinic).

The UCCZ has been able to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure in the hospitals including provision of water (boreholes), transport (ambulances and utility cars such as lorries and cars for use by the medical staff), electricity supply, x-ray and medical equipment, etc. The Church has also been able to maintain regular supply of essential drugs and ensuring decent welfare for medical staff.

The procurement of medical supplies and drugs remains a priority for the church in its current strategic plan. Also key to this strategy is the need to ensure that there are adequate medical professionals to provide both training and healthcare services to the communities in a Christian environment.

UCCZ GOING FORWARD STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM INTO IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The UCCZ is implementing its third strategic plan running from 2013-2016. In that plan the UCCZ has put in place a development oriented action plan designed to facilitate the implementation of its third strategic plan. The plan has the following key pillars:

Photo removed

SO 1. RESULTS BASED EVANGELISM FOR CHURCH GROWTH

At the core of the UCCZ's third strategic plan is Evangelism with the following key objectives:

1. Evangelism contributing to a 15% membership growth.
2. A unified evangelism plan for all UCCZ Conferences.
3. Resuscitate Church School (Christian Education).
4. Develop lay evangelist programs.
5. Communication strategies that motivate members and clergy to implement evangelism plan.
6. Intentionally develop a loving and caring relationship and community.
7. Prayer as a lifestyle for all members.
8. Institutionalize Music Competitions at Conferences and National levels.
9. Constituting Men's Fellowship as a Council.
10. Provision of transport to ministers by churches.

SO 2. PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL HEALTH CARE TO OUR COMMUNITY AND THE NATION

Through the Medical Council, the UCCZ wishes to achieve the following objectives in the next four years.

1. Increase staff establishment
2. Staff development in critical areas
3. More focus on maternal and child health
4. Sourcing critical equipment for all UCCZ clinics and hospitals
5. Engage a qualified Health Secretary
6. Cost reduction by employing efficient systems

SO 3. PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR A BETTER FUTURE THROUGH QUALITY EDUCATION

1. Increase pass rate by 25% across the board
2. Provide water and sanitation facilities in all UCCZ schools
3. Improve infrastructure in the schools
4. Engage a fully qualified Education Secretary
5. Develop a monitoring plan for the policies and programs for the Council and Government.
6. Engage fully qualified and resourceful Education Secretary.

SO 4. FOOD SECURITY THROUGH IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY IN THE MISSION FARMS

1. Improve tenure system in the farms
2. Mechanise production in the farms
3. Engage a qualified Agriculture Secretary/Farm Manager

4. Improve productivity in the farms

SO 5. IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIVES FOR OUR MEMBERS AND COMMUNITIES

1. Improve quality of life for woman and youth
2. Initiate self help programs for church members and communities

The Gazaland University Project – Developing a University of today and the future

Significant development has taken place since the idea of a University was mooted and the Ground breaking Ceremony conducted on 2 November 2002 at the University site in Chipinge. Key among these being:

1. The University Charter has been developed and awaits the approval process.
2. The University site measuring 120 hectares was surveyed by a private surveyor and allocated stand number 5901.
3. The University master plan was drawn.
 - Project Number: MAN A273
 - Drawing Number: 1113/85Y
4. The University bank account was opened with **Metbank, Account No. 2107218101115**, Chipinge Branch.
5. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) was signed so that studies could commence using ZOU Charter as the UCCZ awaits its own charter.
6. Students have been conducting tutorials at Chikore High School since 2011.

In order to move the agenda for the Gazaland University forward, a number of initiatives have been put in place including:

1. A resource mobilisation strategy to finance the operations of the University.
2. A University strategic plan to drive the University Taskforce.
3. A database that will be developed by the University taskforce through the UCCZ Education Secretary with contact details of all UCCZ members and well-wishers locally and in the Diaspora. This will be used to ensure that there is regular contact between the University administration and the stakeholders.
4. A Gazaland University Website and social media platforms will be created in order to raise the visibility of the University through marketing and publicity.

The Chipinge community and the UCCZ Denomination are excited about the Gazaland University Programme. There is no going back as the Gazaland University Program will be realised.

For comments and suggestions towards the success of the University programme, individuals and cooperates can get in touch with the following using the email ucczedncouncil@gmail.com or the given cell numbers:

Education Council Chairman, Mr S. Nyabanga, +263 774 091 816

Education Council Secretary, Mr L. Mugobo, +263 773 354 625

Education Council Treasurer, Mrs O. Chingwara, +263 772 590 136

University Task Force Secretary, **Mrs Sabarauta, +263 772 213 908**

University Task Force Chairman, **Professor Pfukwa, +263 712 878 809**

Our Ecumenical Partners

The UCCZ is affiliated to a number of local, regional and international ecumenical movements and bodies in most of which the church pioneered and is a founding member. The following paragraphs summarises some of these ecumenical partners.

Global Ministries

The Global Ministries is our biggest international partner which exists to receive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ by joining with global and local partners to work for justice, reconciliation and peace (<http://globalministries.org/>). With Over 270 partner churches and organizations in about 70 countries around the world (Zimbabwe included); the Global Ministries is governed by the Common Global Ministries Board (CGMB) composed of six international partners, 20 Division of Overseas Ministries (Disciples) board members and 20 Wider Church Ministries (UCC) board members. The long history of the Global Ministries is outlined on their webpage <http://globalministries.org/about-us/history.html> where details can be accessed together with the interventions undertaken over the years.

UKAMA Partnership

The Ukama/Partnership (<http://www.ukama.net>) started around 1995 and exists to share with each other and to learn from each other about the spiritual, mental and physical needs of our members and to grow together in our faithful response to our call to witness and ministry. This is a partnership between the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe and the New Hampshire Conference of the UCC-USA and Disciples of Christ in the USA. Forty three (43) churches in the UCCZ and New Hampshire Conference are partnered and details of such can be found on the partnership webpage, http://www.ukama.net/partnered_churches.html.

Local Ecumenical Partners

- **Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC):** The UCCZ became a member in 1964 and for fifteen years, one of the senior Ministers of the UCCZ, Rev. M. C. Kuchera was the Secretary General. Mr. Mangemba, a senior member of the UCCZ has also been the Treasurer General for about 5 years.
- **Christian Care:** The UCCZ became a member in 1967 and has been involved in all the activities of the organisation at national and grassroots levels.
- **Zimbabwe Association of Church Related Hospitals (ZACH):** UCCZ became a member in 1975.
- Zimbabwe Ecumenical Church Loan Fund (ZECLOF) to which the UCCZ became affiliated in 1981.
- All Africa Council of Churches (AACC) which the Church joined in 1974
- World Council of Churches (WCC): UCCZ joined in 1998.

Also partnering with the UCCZ are:

- The **United Theological College (UTC)** to which the UCCZ joined in 1955. The UCCZ is continuing to send Ministerial candidates to this college for training as Ministers. One of the Church's senior Ministers, Rev. Dr. C. J. Machukera has been Principal and Senior Lecturer of the College for many years. Rev. B. Nyoni and number of other UCCZ ministers are also Lecturer at the same College on full time and part time basis.
- **Rusitu Bible College** where the Church continues to send Ministerial candidates for theological training as Evangelists.

Projects Administered by the UCCZ 1982-1992

Area	Project	Year
Mount Selinda	Mt. Selinda/Zona Water	1982
	Dairy Cooperative	1985
	Children's home (Orphanage)	1985
	High School A-Level Laboratory	1986
	Primary Health Care	1987
	Soap Making	1988
	Hospital Renovations	1992

Area	Project	Year
Chibuwe	Chibuwe/Masimbe Sewing	1988
Chipinge	Purchase of hand operated Rig	1982
	Schools Reconstruction	1985
	Rudo Ward Water and Sanitation	1986
	Grassroots education Development	
Hakwata	Hakwata School Leavers Agriculture	1988
Harare	Highfield/Glenview Church Building	1985
Manesa	Manesa/Tawona water	1985
Mtema	Mtema water Sanitation	1989
Musani	Musani Women's Poultry	1985
Ngaone	Ngaone Fisheries	1992
Rimbi	Rimbi Primary School Roofing	1985
Southdown	Southdown School Gravity Water	1982
Tuzuka	Tuzuka Women's Food Production	1985
Zamchiya	Zamchiya Community Water	1985

Area	Project	Year
Chikore	Chikore Secondary School Phase II	1982
	Bangira Revolving Loan Fund	1983
	Chikore Gravity Flow Water	1983
	Chikore Dairy development	1984
	Dzika Sewing Club	1985
	Bangira Women's Craft	1985
	Chikore Community Poultry	1985
	Dzika Water Supply	1985
	Budirirai Sewing Club	1985
	Big Tree School Agricultural Tools	1985
	Nyagadza/Craigmore Dairy and Beef	1986
	Hospital Kitchen	1986
	Chikore Electrification	1987
	Chikore Emergency Water Supply	1987
	School Leavers Brick moulding	1988
	Bangira Water and Sanitation	1988
	Shekwa Water	1988
	Chikore School Leavers Carpentry	1988
	Chikore Dam and Gardening	1992

Projects Administered by the UCCZ 1993-2013

Below are the projects that were administered by the UCCZ in the last twenty years. The indicated years are approximate.

Project	Year
Revival of the Nursing School offering Primary Care Nursing (PCN) Programme	2001
Construction of a temporal Office at the Gazaland University Site	2004
Refurbishment of Schools	2004
Purchase of new church buildings	2004
Assistance with Building of Churches	2004
On going top up for the Resident Medical Doctors	2004
Chiedza- Gunira Cattle Project	2004
Rain Water Harvesting	2004
Musani Garden Project Rehabilitation	2004
Tuzuka Madhadha Nguruwe and Tie and Dye project	2004
Rimbi Bio-Gas Project	2004
Soap making Project	2004
Sewing Project	2004
Mushroom Project	2004

Chisumbanje/ Madhuku garden Project	2004
The Seed Project sponsored by the Global ministries.	2004
Acquisition and distribution of over 100 wheel chairs	2008
Toyota Hilux – Double Cab, Reg. Number AAL 1210 for the Head Office	2008
Mazda 323 Sedan Reg. Number AAH 4404 for the Western Conference.	2008
Mazda Bongo Ambulance for Rimbi-Chikore with the assistance of Ms Thelma Sithole.	2008
Land Cruiser Ambulance for Mt. Selinda Hospital with the assistance of First Congregational Church, Madison, United Church of Canada, Netherlands and the Global Ministries	2008
Mazda Double Cab to the Eastern Conference.	2008
Resuscitated Child Sponsorship Program	2008
Construction of a water reservoir at Chikore Hospital	2008
Procured a spare Electric Motor for Chikore Mission	2008
Seven Computers, given to Mt. Selinda High, Mt. Selinda Hospital, Chikore High, Chikore Hospital and three for the Head Office.	2008
Generator for Chikore Hospital	2008
Hunger Relief Appeal - US\$ 26 936.93 raised	2008

About this Publication

This publication is intended to provide guests who will be witnessing the celebration of one hundred and twenty years of faith in action in the UCCZ. The Celebrations are taking place in Mount Selinda Mission Station from 19- 20 October 2013 will be marking one hundred and twenty years since the establishment of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. It is intended to provide a brief history of the church, building from a similar publication entitled: God at work in Gazaland- 1893-1993 which was prepared in time for the centenary celebrations in 1993.

The publication was compiled by an adhoc documentation committee of the 120 Celebrations comprising:

Mr. Ganyani Khosa - Chairman	
Rev. Dr. C. J. Machukera – Resource Person	Rev. R. Gomendo – Documentation
Rev. Dr. M. C. Kuchera – Resource Person	Rev. F. Thondhlana - Documentation

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Messages @ 120

From The UCCZ President

UCCZ will be guided into the future by its Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016. The future will continue to pursue the original basic mission that includes the following:-

- Evangelism under Conferences
- Medical work under Medical Council
- Education work under Education Council
- Infrastructure Development under Station Councils
- Agriculture work under Agriculture Council

The spiritual work will be under the Ruwadzano, Volunteers and CYF. The future will work to formalize the two groups that is Sunday School and Christian Mens' Fellowship into full councils.

As a Denomination started 1893 to date the infrastructures acquired or built now need great renovations or to destroy and start building new ones.

The Station Councils have already started this great work. The target is to make sure all the staff members' houses are renovated to the best before the rains. The Head Office and the President's house are already renovated and painted. The Admin Assistant to the President's house also to be renovated before the rains or year end. Early next year 2014 we will start with the Offices in Chipinge and houses at Gaza.

The Building of "Waterview primary School" in Mutare, Danganvura is to start with immediate effect after ground breaking in November on the 24th. I would like to thank Mutare Churches members who have already donated some building materials for the school. Next year the school building will be our major priority including the Gazaland University Programme. The Gazaland University Task Force has done tremendous work of formalizing the University Stand and we now have got a Stand No. 5901 St. Kelvin, Chipinge and our land is 120 Hectares.

In two years time, we should have our Ruwadzano Centers, Musirizwi, Kwekwe/Torwood and Dema finished. We are happy with progress made so far.

Food for Security Programme is going on well though at times we face challenges. The tractors are in the fields ploughing as they are hired by our members and none members for a minimum fee. The idea is to produce adequate food for our communities.

WATER:

Water is life, so we need to help our communities to have clean adequate water by assisting them to drill boreholes.

THEOLOGICAL TRAINING:

The Denomination needs more Pastors, Ministers and Evangelists. As a denomination we need to contribute more resources for theological training.

CHAPLAINCY:

There is need to increase our participation in the area of Chaplaincy in our Schools. We need to equip our Ministers with transport so that they are able to lead devotions in our schools.

CONFERENCES:

Our Conferences need to intensify Evangelism by opening more worshipping groups, preaching points and churches. The Eastern Conference and Northern Conference need to be divided into two (2) Conferences. Western Conference need to be resourced. We are happy that they are all having transport. Some Churches have done good work of buying transport

for their Ministers. Hatfield Church is the most recent one that has bought a quality and smart vehicle – thank you!

The Synod will work together with Conferences to build the Conference Centers. Northern Conference has already started gathering some building materials after the approval of their building plan by Harare City Council. Western Conference will be assisted to look for a Conference Center.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIP:

The future should see UCCM and UCCZ strengthening working relationship. Already the Beira Committee is now working. Our relationship with Global Ministries will continue to be strengthened. Ukama/Partnership is to be continued and more exchange visits should be planned.

UCCZ – UK:

There is need to find the best way of handling this special Church. As a denomination we tried to send the former President to the UK but it has faced some challenges. We hope in the near future a Minister will be able to go.

South Africa has opened a Worshipping Group in Joburg and Cape Town. Eastern Conference should send a Minister to shepherd these members as early as possible.

RETIRED MINISTERS:

The Denomination needs to increase its support for the retired personnel especially Ministers and the surviving spouses. The Pension Fund is not doing well.

STEWARDSHIP:

Workshops are to be done on giving. The Denomination needs to strengthen the collection of 10% for this will boost the local Church, Conferences and Synod. Our membership should be taught tithing.

UCCZ 1893 - 2013 The Journey of Faith in Action - The Synod Moderator, Mr. Farai Munyamani Sithole

Background

The United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (UCCZ) formerly American Board Mission was established in 1893 in Mt Selinda, Gaza state then. The first missionaries to visit Chief Ngungunyana around 1888 included Rev. and Mrs. Wilder, Mr. Bates, Mr. and Mrs. Bunker, Dr and Mrs Thompson and other Zulu evangelists. Due to various challenges associated with travelling at that time the team had to split along the way. However the whole team converged at Mt. Selinda on 19 October 1893 which marks the birth of missionary work in Gazaland. This is the date we celebrate the birth of UCCZ and this year we are celebrating **one hundred and twenty years (120 years) of Faith in Action**. Indeed we are one of the oldest churches in Zimbabwe and we have made milestone achievements in various spheres of human development. The church has been focusing mainly but not limited to Evangelism, Education, Medical, Agriculture and Infrastructure development.

Evangelism

During the early evangelism, preaching was done in Zulu and the Zulu evangelist assisted greatly in spreading the Gospel to our fore parents. Within two months of preaching, about a hundred people

were already attending church service from the preaching points that had been established in Mt. Selinda. The first church established at Mt. Selinda mission in 1893 was quickly joined by the formation of Chikore church in about 1895. This seed of evangelism has grown to about seventy five churches today with a huge following across the country from Mt. Selinda Mission to Hwange's Kankunga Mission station recently founded. After Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, the church experienced phenomenal growth with freedom of worship and association brought by the people's government. This was in contrast to the belief that "*chechi yemaNdau*". Early ministerial work was tough for those called to his service as it was purely for free and largely needed personal commitment. While today's church may not as comfortable as may be desired, to some significant levels, this call service has been professionalised and greater things are sure to come with the new generation of members coming up. *Vhangeri raBaba ngariparidze panyika peshe (Acts 1v8)*.

As evangelism grew, the church developed spiritual councils. These are church branches that deal with the spiritual lives of members in their various categories. Currently there are three spiritual councils running. These are Ruwadzano (Mothers Union), Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF) and Volunteers. Ruwadzano is the biggest and oldest council having been formed between 1935 and 1941. Their first meeting was at Umsilizwe in 1943 where the current uniform was adopted for use. The youth group was started about 1969 by Rev. Bruce Hansen who was based at Chisumbanje. The volunteer (originally Vabvuwi) was initially formed as a men's grouping early 1940s. However during its growth it faced extinction and women were called to join to keep the membership afloat. The current scenario of having women in this council started in 1975. Currently men are grouping to form a men's fellowship grouping.

Like any other mainline/congregational church the church faced stiff competition for membership from newly formed and more charismatic churches largely Pentecostal from the early 1990s. Some members who felt they wanted to embrace the fashionable change left the church and freely joined the new churches. In some instances there were frictions within the church as some members sought to change the practices and traditions of the church to meet their fashionable expectations. However, the church through its governance structures remained steady fast in maintaining its identity. This does not necessarily mean the has not changed from 1893, agreed changes have been taken on board but not compromising the fundamental values and norms that make us who we were, who we are and who we will be. Change is good but it needs to be managed.

Education

The first formal and regular school was started at Mt. Selinda in December 1893 by Miss Jones. From 1896 primary schools started developing and enrolment grew. Primary education is believed to have started around 1895 through Dr. Wilder. After establishment of primary education, Chikore developed industrial training which trained practical courses which included carpentry and bricklaying. This school of training was later moved to Mt. Selinda where it became a big training college where renowned citizens of this country went through. The late Vice President Joseph Msika and national liberation hero the late Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole went through the school of training. At one time before and during the

liberation struggle the church owned most if not all schools in Chipinge district. However with the challenges of the liberation war challenges the church most of the schools to then Rhodesian government. After the liberation the church took back some of its schools back and this process is own going with some schools like Gwenzi schools being on line.

Currently the church has eleven primary schools and seven secondary schools in Chipinge. There is an extensive expansion programme coming up in the coming years targeting Mutare and Hwange. Mt. Selinda Mission remains the flagship of our schools with the best infrastructure and the best results in Chipinge district. The church has a horticulture college based at Tongogara refugee camp in Chipinge South which is currently also offering vocational skills to youth in the area. A Gazaland University establishment is almost done with various requirements being followed through by a dedicated task force.

Medical

Dr. Thompson who came in 1893 was the first resident medical for the church. The first medical centre was established at Mt. Selinda on their arrival. Between 1923 and 1933 there was remarkable growth in medical work that led to the opening of the training school at Mt. Selinda which is still running today. Mt. Selinda and Chikore hospitals still provide significant medical assistance to the people of Chipinge and beyond. Mt. Selinda has two resident doctors who are also visiting doctors to Chikore hospital. Mt Selinda Hospital also houses a children's home (Daisy Dube Children's home). However like any other medical institution in the country, these hospitals have suffered from the past and present economic challenges which have led to serious shortages of drugs and manpower.

Agriculture

The church had four farms in the beginning. One was at Mt. Selinda and three at Chikore. E.D Alvord and wife were the first Agricultural missionaries to be seconded by the American Board in 1919. Alvord did great in the improvement of agricultural practices in the country that even during the droughts the area had enough food to feed its people. In 1926, Alvord was given work by the government after seeming his amazing work in Gazaland. While working for the government he opened the Chibuwe, Nyanyadzi, Birchenough Bridge and Mutema irrigation schemes which still exist. On retirement he returned to the church and opened an agriculture school at Chikore. Many African farmers were trained and farm plots were then allocated to those who qualified especially in Emerald. The church helped to revolutionise agriculture as Alvord moved to Waddilove in 1953. Early agriculture managers were trained through the Alvord School of agriculture.

Currently the church is running food programme on the farms where it grows largely maize for selling at subsidized price to the local communities of Mt. Selinda and Chikore missions. We recently received new two tractors from the Rotary Club for agricultural production.

Development

Between 1962 and 1976, the church implemented various development and empowerment project for the Gazaland community. Initial projects had women mostly. Rev. Mrs. Heinrich taught housewifery, sewing, cooking and nutritional child care. Orchards and chicken rearing started in various areas of

Chipinge. Roads and boreholes were developed in Chikore and Mt. Selinda which made life easy for the people.

After the liberation a number of development projects continued to happen. World vision participated in the Chikore Community Development project. However the biggest project was the bringing of electricity to Chikore when Rev. Dr. M. Mpofu was the church's project officer. The electricity project was officially commissioned by His Excellency the President Cde Robert Mugabe on 29 July 1989. Dr. Mpofu also did the heifer project which was meant to restock the cattle herd in Zimbabwe. The church continues to implement development projects that help her members and all Zimbabweans.

Church Governance.

On its establishment in 1893 the church was administered and funded by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). With the expansion of the church, the foreign missionaries encouraged the growth of indigenous leadership into the ministry. The first African minister was Rev. Ngangeni Dhlakama who was ordained in 1923. Rev. E.T. Mwadira was chosen as the first African superintendent of churches. From there on, the church governance and funding gradually moved from the missionaries to the indigenous people of this country. This trend continued to today where the church is wholly owned and funded by the local Zimbabweans.

Despite the economic challenges the country has faced in the recent past the church has remained resilient and is poised for further growth and we assure Zimbabweans that until the second coming of Jesus, the church will continue to preach, educate, develop and heal the people of Zimbabwe and its future generations.

From Churches and Individuals

<p>UCCZ Kuwadzana Church congratulates the UCCZ for the One-ness throughout the 120 years of faith in Action. Makorokoto, Amhlope!! www.uccz.org/kuwadzana</p>	<p>Had it not been through the UCCZ would I have heard, seen and received all these heavenly blessings? I and my family congratulate the UCCZ for attaining 120 years. Cannias Duri</p>	<p>The Matikiti family wishes the UCCZ well on celebrating "120 years of faith in action". Dr. Robert Matikiti and family</p>
<p>Mt. Selinda Church (Mbuya) Chinyuka wishes to congratulate the UCCZ denomination in its entirety for attaining 120 years. May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ continue to guide all members and the leadership in our denomination. Congratulations, Makorokoto, Amhlope.</p>		<p>Mhuri yekwa Khosa inokorokotedzao UCCZ ngegumisa makore 120 yakabatana mumweya. Ndiyo Church yakatirera. Inserted by Ganyani Khosa and family</p>

Rev John Musakaruka Dube, born 06/06/27 and passed on on 19 October 2010. It is three years now since you left us. Today as we commemorate 120 years, we also remember your 64 years of UCCZ.

May your soul rest in peace. John 14 vs 1

Dube Family.

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e-mail: info@uniquemethodsconsultants.org

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2057 Marlborough Lane
New Marlborough
Harare, Zimbabwe
+263 7722 884 058

ptmlambo@yahoo.co.uk ; www.reguide.co.zw