



## TRAGEDY IN MOZAMBIQUE



Cyclone Idai, closely followed by Cyclone Kenneth, have wreaked havoc in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe. These storms have destroyed 90% of the city of Beira, the second city of Mozambique. Many people were swept out to sea or buried under rivers of mud by Cyclone Idai. Their remains have not been found. Cyclone Kenneth has just made landfall and is pummeling already devastated communities, making 700,000 people homeless. After a two week wait at the border, Bishop Wellington Murinda has at last been allowed to visit his people in Manicaland (a vast flood plain) and in Beira. He found utter devastation, no buildings, bridges or roads, and the smell of death everywhere. Most of these people had no electricity for TV's with weather forecasts or satellite phones, and the storm surprised them completely.

He writes:

*"Dearest Lord Bishop Michael,*

*I made a visit to Beira, Mozambique after the devastating Cyclone Idai. My main aim was to personally see the after effects of the cyclone.*

*The Beira Congregation at St Paul's Mission Centre suffered heavily. The whole congregation of 75 people and their families perished including their Deacon Steven Mamombe Chidzwa and 3 catechists perished.*

*The church building was completely washed away.*

*Mozambique as a country suffered heavy loses. Over 1000 people were confirmed dead and thousands are feared missing. The Roman Catholic mission next to St Pauls was completely destroyed,"*

The same Cyclones have also hit Eastern Zimbabwe, in the area of Chimanimani, in the region of Mutare. Bishop Murinda continues:

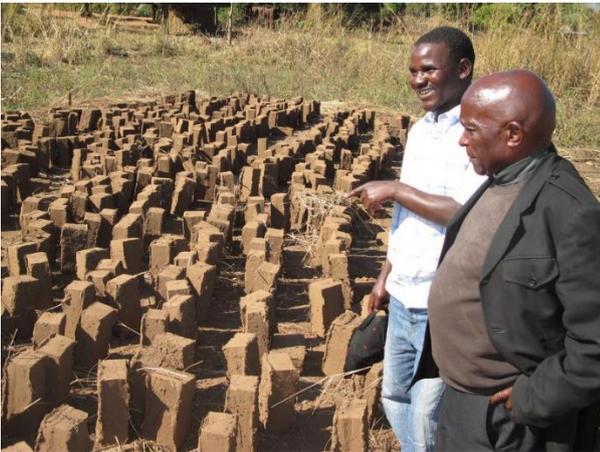
*"Zimbabwe also suffered heavy loss of human life, infrastructure and buildings, in Chimanimani we lost 5 families as a church at St James."*

Bishop Wellington leaves tomorrow for Mozambique again. He says:

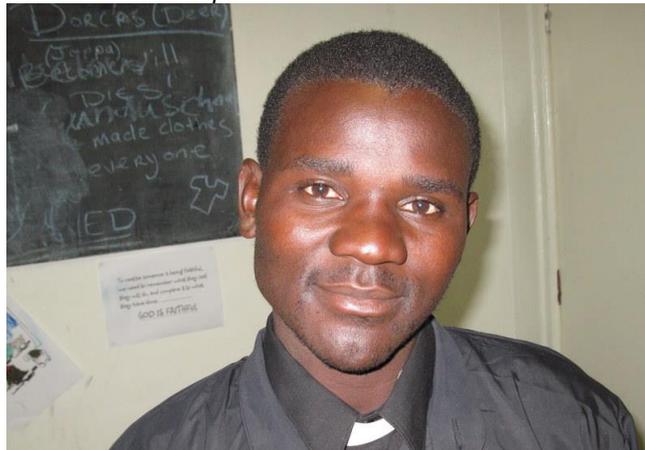
*"I intend to make a third visit to Mozambique with an aim to console with surviving relatives and other survivors and possibly make way for the start of a new church."*

Bishop Murinda has spent a great deal of his last five years building up the Parish of St Paul in Beira and it was a thriving Traditional Anglican community. It is now gone...nothing and no one remains.

Our greatest loss is the lives of our people – good honest Christians, simple and devout; and Bishop Wellington and I are inconsolable – our people are lost, swept away, and we cannot even find them. Amongst them is our dear brother, Deacon Stephen Mamombe Chidzwa, a dedicated and simple man of faith who had walked 60kms to his Ordination in Mutare. I have visited his remote parish in Manicaland with Bishop Wellington and found a simple, devout man, authentic in his belief – a real disciple of Jesus. What a loss to the church! He leaves a wife and child.



Upper Left. Bishop Wellington and Dn Stephen look at newly baked bricks for a new church Right: The people of St James  
Below left: Dn Stephen at his Ordination in Mutare in 2009



God bless you Deacon Stephen Mamombe Chidzwa, good and faithful servant of Jesus your Lord, and God bless all your brethren. They are in the arms of the Lord. May they Rest in Peace.

Please pray for the people of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. They had nothing to begin with and now even that which they had managed to build is gone. It is a scene of utter hopelessness, devastation and pain. We do not know what we can do.....not even the neighbouring countries or international aid agencies can realistically cope with loss on such a scale.

I know you share in our pain. I thank you for your support and love. Please pray for the safety of Bishop Wellington as he journeys again to Mozambique. Please pray for our people there.

Lord have mercy upon them. Christ Jesus, comfort them in their grief. Lord have mercy upon them.

Yours in Christ our Lord  
+Michael – Southern Africa