
Bishop Vicente Msosa's Visit to London July 2018

For ALMA Sunday and 20th Anniversary of ALMA

By Revd Sheenagh Burrell ALMA Co-ordinator



Bishop Vicente Msosa, Bishop of Niassa, returned to London in July to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the ALMA partnership and to visit MANNA.

In February 2018 Bishop Vicente and Bishop Carlos Matsinhe (Lebombo) had spent a few days in London after attending the new Bishops course in Canterbury, but this July visit was Bishop Vicente's first formal visit as an ALMA Bishop, (the youngest in the entire Anglican Communion) to join us for the celebrations of the 20th ALMA Sunday.

8th July ALMA Sunday

First we gathered at **St Vedast** for a relaxed afternoon tea in that beautiful courtyard. ALMA Reps and friends had the opportunity to meet Bishop Vicente and the group of eight from St Stephen's Golfe Luanda who were visiting their link parish St Stephen's Canonbury to mark the retirement of Ven Emmanuel Dacosta. During the tea we [videoed Bishop Rob \(London's Bishop for ALMA\) and Bishop Vicente in conversation](#) to show at Diocesan Synod later in July as unfortunately his flight timing meant Bishop Vicente couldn't attend Synod. This **video** can be **downloaded** and Niassa link parishes may want to share this in their churches too.



We left St Vedast together for the **ALMA Sunday Eucharist at St Paul's Cathedral**

It was such a joy to have Bishop Vicente preaching, Archdeacon Dacosta reading and several of the Angolan visitors taking part in the intercessions alongside long standing Niassa link representatives, Sylvia Daniels and Dinis Kousoulou, and in the Act of Commitment.



See the ALMA Sunday Service Sheet [here](#).
Read Bishop Vicente's Sermon [here](#)

A key aspect of this visit was for Bishop Vicente to visit the London churches with links in the Niassa and Zambezia areas of Niassa Diocese, to meet their clergy and build relationships. Of course not everyone can have a Sunday visit but he did manage to visit nine link parishes:

Sunday 8 July

St Barnabas Northolt twinned with Chigoma on the Lakeshore - for Sunday morning Eucharist. This was a very helpful visit as Fr Edmund Cargill-Thomas is going to Niassa as part of the Rooted In Jesus training team in November



Tuesday 10 July

St Mary's Hampton twinned with Mandimba on the Malawian border. We shared Evening Prayer and an informal supper with many from the parish who had previously visited Mandimba or helped support the 'Good Seeds' programme which assists orphaned and vulnerable children with high school costs, uniform and books. St Mary's is visiting Mandimba in October so it was good for new Vicar, Revd Ben Lovell, and the team including Fiona, Carrie and Isobel to meet Bishop Vicente.



Wednesday 11 July

St Paul's Old Ford twinned with Sao Paulo Lichinga, the church in the market place, where Bishop Vicente had previously been the priest. The Lichinga Church was built over several years with local support and support from Old Ford and was re-named to honour this partnership. We joined the Wednesday lunchtime bible study group with Revd James Hughesdon, met his family, saw round this inspirational church and went on a special visit to the new outreach to the Olympic Park: St Columba's the canal boat floating church. Bishop Vicente felt a boat like this would be helpful on Lake Niassa!



Thursday 12.July

St Peters Hammersmith twinned with Messumba Cathedral on the Lakeshore

We had met briefly with Revd Charles Clapham and David Board in February and this visit was planned around visiting St Peter's School to explore linking with Messumba School. We visited the school with potential new ALMA Reps too, spoke in Assembly, visited each classroom. Everyone is keen to progress this link. The week after our visit we helped contribute to a Messumba prayer station at the school prayer day - featuring the ALMA Tutudesk and a video of Messumba School sent by the village chief or Regulo.



St Augustine's Whitton twinned with Mecanhelas

We had afternoon tea with Revd Stephen Caple, his wife Eileen and the church warden, sharing the history of the link, the huge size of the Mecanhelas parish zone with over 50 satellite churches, and visiting the church where their ALMA banner, identical to the one they made for Mecanhelas. We also visited the hugely impressive dementia day care unit that St Augustine's runs.



Friday 13 July

St Andrew's Sudbury twinned with Chuanga on other side of River to Messumba on the Lakeshore. We went to meet Revd Greville Thomas, to reflect on the very considerable past engagement by St Andrew's (the huge altar backdrop that hangs in Messumba Cathedral and the refurbishment of the Messumba health clinic, helping repair the Chuanga church roof), and to discuss how to re-vitalise the link. We visited the church and explored options over coffee. Chuanga church has even more serious structural cracks now and the community has started gathering stones for foundations for a new church.

Saturday 14 July

Southall Group of five churches linked with Lichinga Area

Bishop Vicente spent the afternoon with these churches who had previously visited Lichinga, been one of the partners contributing to the building of Yohannah Abdullah Church, supporting Lay ministry training and financing the well outside Yohannah Abdallah. Bishop Vicente Spoke to the local Southall Community at St Mary's Norwood Green as part of their village fete. Environment and creation care is a common bond in this link.

Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 July

St Andrew's Enfield linked with St James Morrumbala

Bishop Vicente went from Southall to Enfield with Dinos Kousoulou and caught the end of the Enfield church fete too. On Sunday he preached and was memorably prayed for by the children of the church. Later on Sunday Dinos took him to meet Revd Bunmi at Holy Trinity Tottenham which is also part of the Morrumbala link.

Tuesday 17 July

St John's Isleworth linked with Ngofi on the Lakeshore

We met the new Vicar at St John's and his Brazilian wife sharing stories of Ngofi and exploring ways of re-vitalising this link

In addition to these link parish visits, Bishop Vicente

- Attended the 25th Anniversary of **St Paul's Harringey**
- Joined the **St Paul's Ealing** (Sheenagh's church) Seniors Group for midweek communion and to catch up with his intercessors! The Anglican communion picked up this photo and included in a short film for international friendship day

There were also Key ALMA meetings

- with the twinning team which was accompanied but the 100th Anniversary of the RAF fly past, complete with the Red Arrows, which we watched from the balcony of Room B
- with the Finance and Projects sub group

He also met with several Mission agencies who work with the Diocese of Niassa:

- **Rooted in Jesus** with Alison Morgan and Edmund Cargill Thompson to plan the RinJ conferences in Nampula and Messumba from 28 October – 13 November. Bishop Martin and Colleen Breytenbach from Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist, in South Africa and a Zambian priest, Fr Kapomba Sekeleti, make up the rest of the team. One of the logistics difficulties Rooted in Jesus has is getting their resources to conference venues, so it was good to be able to ask some of the ALMA parishes visiting Niassa this autumn to help with this major training initiative by taking some of the pamphlets as they travel.
- **USPG** Bishop Vicente met Richard Bartlett, who was twice the ALMA Twinning Officer!



Tearfund

Met with Donald Mavundse and felt very welcomed - it was the first time we encountered a personalised parking cone.



SEAN - whose theological education by extension, Mike Clarke, helped translate and which has been used in both Angola and Niassa.

Mission Action

Who both translate and provide theological materials in multiple languages - abundant resources

Reflections on Visit

- Key role of prayer - in many moving encounters from Bishop Vicente praying for Helen before she set off on a SOMA mission trip to DRC to Bishop Vicente being prayed for by the children of St Andrew's Enfield



- Deep connection between longstanding Niassa links and a sense of new friendships being forged as new incumbents met Bishop Vicente
- Awareness of the challenges facing partner dioceses and the importance of income generating projects that can help with meeting the core costs of the diocese.
- Good to see that there are several visits to Niassa planned for this autumn which will build on the momentum of the visit and help cement the relationships

Revd Chris and Sandy Swift from St Nicholas Shepperton visit Milange for two weeks, **12 – 30 October** with two parishioners, Paul and Elaine Cooper, joining them for the second week 21 – 30 October

Revd Ben Lovell, Carrie Lees, Fiona Rowett and Isabel Fernando from St Mary's Hampton to Mandimba **19 – 29 October** with visits to Lichinga and Cuamba to visit one of the Good Seeds Young People who they are supporting through her nurse's training

Dinos Kousoulou, from the ALMA Strategy Group, to Nampula and Lichinga to assist with systems, process and income generating. Dates to be arranged.

Revd Edmund Cargill Thompson with the Rooted in Jesus Training team to conferences in Nampula and Lichinga **28 October – 13 November**