



56 ❖ A new young church in Kinshasa

After independence many young people moved to Kinshasa to find work. The result was that a considerable number of former Mennonite mission students ended up living in the capital. Among these new residents were Paul Kadima, a former professor at the Nyanga pedagogical institute, and his family.

The first new residents founded an association, Former Students of Ndjoko Punda. They soon added former students from Nyanga, Mukedi, Kamayala, and Kandala missions and changed the name to Former Mennonite Students of Congo. Their precise objectives were to help one another in their social and spiritual lives, help graduates of these schools find work, and combat tribal discrimination.

As the group grew in numbers, they felt the need to add worship to their activities. They addressed the denominational leadership and received authorization to gather in the name of the Mennonite church. On the initiative of Kadima and others, the Mennonite Church of Congo was established in Kinshasa. Paul Kadima was ordained pastor because of his leadership and ability to train his peers.

The young pastor gained notice for his conduct in his family as well as in the congregation. As a boy who was respectful of his parents, he never allowed his mother to walk up hills to get water. Although this was always a woman's duty, he took it on himself. He led the choir and composed songs for it. He encouraged his friends to gather around him and other pastors and help with their work

photo—Paul Kadima

for the congregation. He said, “A servant of God is not equipped to respond alone to all the needs of the church. We are obliged to be at the side of the pastor for other responsibilities, so that the servant of God will have plenty of time to prepare good biblical messages.”

Hearing of this, one pastor felt the need to meet this young man and his parents in order to thank them and learn where he had gotten this idea. The whole denomination rejoices in his initiative to found the CMCo in Kinshasa, which was outside of territory marked out for Mennonites. Pastor Paul Kadima is still living.

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