

CCP Stories Highlight Global Opportunities

Annanie Gasiriba (Rwanda)

Annanie Gasiriba is an 81-year-old retired United Methodist pastor, who rents a house in the southern province of Rwanda. He was a Pentecostal Christian before joining the UMC in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and was immediately appointed as a parish pastor. Pastor Gasiriba moved to Rwanda in 1997 where he continued his mission until he retired in UMC Kigali District.

After spending two years in retirement, Pastor Gasiriba began receiving benefits through CCP, once the Rwanda CCP program began.

“This program started on my second year of retirement, those two years before the program were the most miserable years of my life which implicates the impact and good effect it had on me in terms of livelihood quality, I really appreciate that from the bottom of my heart.”

—PASTOR GASIRIBA

Gasiriba added that when he receives the money, he immediately takes a tenth of it to church as his beliefs encourage him to.



Video

Retired clergy from the Philippines share the value of CCP in their own words

Check out video clips of retired clergy from the Philippines who share the value of CCP in their own words. As one participant (pictured, top left) Teresita Supetran shares, “I am happy because what we receive from our pension is an encouragement to all of us.”

<https://www.wespath.org/r/CCPStories>

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Reverend István Csernák (Hungary)

During his years of service to the UMC, Rev. Csernák saw his country transition out of communism, toward a representative democracy.

Rev. Csernák's service began at the age of 18, when he traveled by bus on Sundays to the outskirts of the small town of Alsózsolca in Northern Hungary as a volunteer. There he volunteered to teach Sunday school to the small United Methodist congregation. With no church building available they met in the homes of the church members and read the Bible, sang hymns, played soccer and partook in each other's lives. This became a life changing experience, as Rev. Csernák was shaken to his core when he encountered the extreme poverty and discrimination experienced by this marginalized community. It was here that he first felt the call to full-time ministry. Rev. Csernák was ordained in 1984.

When Rev. Csernák was elected superintendent in 1996, he and Bishop Heinrich Bolleter, who was based in Switzerland, led the church through a time of transformation. The UMC in Hungary started to form



Reverend István Csernák is joined by his wife, Eva.

new faith communities, built churches, visited prisoners and even started a home for the elderly.

Rev. Csernák retired in 2016 after having served for 44 years. He is immensely grateful for the support of the CCP fund. This pension allows Rev. Csernák, his wife Eva, and his family to live a life full of dignity, without having to work in retirement to survive. For Rev. Csernák, CCP is a God-sent gift.

“ For us, receiving from the CCP is a great source of relief and peace of mind. ”

Akuume Rose (Uganda)

Akuume Rose is a retired pastor and small business owner in the Jinja District of eastern Uganda. The benefits provided by CCP have enabled her to start and sustain a small business selling food and drinks.



Mrs. Seraphine Nzinahora (Burundi)

“...Last year I could have faced serious problems in terms of food security if it were not [for] the money that [I received] from the pension program. As people who depend on crops that we harvest from our fields, last year was a difficult year to many of us of [with] less harvest due to shortage of rain. The funds we are receiving enabled me to buy food stuff and other necessities.”



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Patience Mbeyu Nguta-Kathengi (Kenya)

Patience Mbeyu Nguta-Kathengi, United Methodist pastor and mother of three, was already suffering loss when the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the globe. In 2012 she lost her eyesight while pregnant with her third child, and her world changed forever. Although blindness left Patience unable to provide for her family in the same way, pension benefits from her years of service at the UMC—Tazama Christ, through the East Africa pension plan funded by CCP, allowed her some continued support.

Then in April, tragedy struck again when Patience's husband passed away from COVID-19. Prior to his passing, he had worked as a night guard, helping to support the family. His death is yet another reminder that the impacts of COVID-19 are especially devastating for many already-disadvantaged populations across the globe. While Patience is incredibly grateful for the benefits she continues to receive from the CCP program, her family's loss is deep. She continues to look for support from her neighbors and others.

“Life took a painful twist in 2012 when I lost my sight while expectant. I had to depend on my husband for survival and my children for moral support. My church ... and Pastor Rev. Mudiri have been of great help too. I thank them for praying for me and my family. To date, I survive on the pension I receive...”

—PATIENCE MBEYU NGUTA-KATHENGI



Reverend Simiao Naene Machava Finds Support with CCP Program

Rev. Simiao Naene Machava was born in 1935 in the Morrumbene District of Inhambane Province in Mozambique.

In 1966 he finished a theology course and he had his first assignment in the Tome District of Massinga Province of Inhambane. Although it was the same province, the Portuguese colonial government did not allow him to work in Tome, alleging that he was not a native of that area.

He moved on to another posting in South Africa where he worked with the Mozambican miners under an agreement between the Portuguese colonial government and the South African government. Following this placement, Rev. Machava returned to Mozambique.

Rev. Machava retired in 2000 and lost his wife in 2017. **He is grateful for the pension he receives because he is able to support himself and two nephews who live with him.**

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Reverend Zbigniew Kamiński Feels the Support of the UMC Family

The Reverend Zbigniew Kamiński's experiences as a pastor in Poland during and after communist rule demonstrate the value of an interconnected church and faith community.

Kamiński received his first appointment in 1978 in Krakow, Poland, spending his first decade as a United Methodist pastor in a communist country. The experience of living and working for the Church under communist rule left Kamiński with a host of memories he won't soon forget. More and more Methodists became part of the opposition, he said, and the movement for freedom, which culminated with the dissolution of the communist government and the switch to a democratic government in 1989.

After the fall of the communist government Kamiński went out into the streets to share the gospel and openly invite people to church for the first time. For over 20 years, Kamiński served as the ecumenical consultant for Christian programs on Polish TV and chaired the ecumenical commission for Christian broadcasting on radio and TV.

Following his 2018 retirement, Kamiński began to receive support from CCP as one of three sources of retirement income. In 1960, the Church in Poland created a small social fund to support pastors in retirement and with health benefits that still exists today. In addition, in 1989, clergy were added to the government's social security system. However, they are only able to contribute the minimum, so the creation of CCP was a great relief.



Andres Gomes (center) with central conference representatives Moss Kapumha (left) and Alcides Martinez (right).

Andres Gomes—A Pastor's Son's Story in Angola

Andres Gomes is 39-years-old but he never went to school and is unable to work due to learning challenges. He was wholly dependent on his parents until their death

and now lives alone in the house that his parents left for him. Andres's father was a pastor who served the church for 50 years. During his father's tenure, Andres remembers many harrowing experiences as the son of a pastor growing up in Angola.

In 1993, during that country's civil war, Andres witnessed the death of a church leader, one of his father's contemporaries. Another time, when he was traveling on a motorbike with his father, they hit a landmine which exploded. Fortunately, they were not injured. When a soldier asked his father what his profession was, he said he was a pastor. The soldier said his God had served him well, because the type of mine they hit was very dangerous.

Andres expressed gratitude to donors to CCP. As his only source of income, Andres uses the pension money for food, clothing, medicine and utility bills.