

*Bishop Charles Sekelwa has served for 38 years in various leadership capacities in Tanzania, Africa with the Charismatic Episcopal Church (CEC, cec-na.org), a tradition that is evangelical, liturgical, and charismatic. He started out as a local evangelist, became a pastor, and then was consecrated as bishop in 2005. He has oversight of churches throughout several areas in Africa.*

In all these years of serving God in Africa, and particularly in Tanzania, we have had many young men and women who have felt called to serve Him, and we were eager to send them as pastors and missionaries because they were well acquainted with the cultures of the tribes and people they would encounter.

But we have not been able to send as many workers to rural and urban areas as we wanted because we lacked effective training consistent with our tradition. It is not that Africa is without training centers, but they were designed for other traditions that did not fit well in our context. Many, many years went by as we looked for an affordable and effective way to train our people, as did the other leaders in African evangelical and charismatic movements.

Then in 2015, I attended an Orlando conference with my fellow African leaders. It was there that I met Dr. Don Davis and Rev. Don Allsman from The Urban Ministry Institute (TUMI, tumi.org). They presented how their training worked, where someone like me could take their materials (*The Capstone Curriculum*) and use it to fit my context and tradition.

I was very impressed. This was the kind of thing I had been looking for many years, the kind of excellent curriculum I could use to establish a training center for our leaders, yet flexible to fit own tradition. We could finally begin to train our people to boldly take the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to far-off places.

When I left Orlando, I did not waste time. I organized my pastors and evangelists to launch The Capstone Curriculum training TUMI offered. Very soon after we launched the TUMI CEC Theological Seminary - Buswelu, Mwanza Tanzania, which has been in operation since 2017.

I want to thank God so much because, in the period of five years we have been able to train 55 church leaders who felt called to church leadership. As soon as they graduated, we ordained them and sent them out to pastor the people in rural and urban areas. As we continued developing church leaders using The Capstone Curriculum, in 2019 something interesting happened. TUMI introduced me to another resource they had, their *Evangel* training. The primary work of *Evangel* is to train people to plant

churches, which is another thing I was eager to offer to the many young men and women with a calling to this kind of ministry.

We have also been blessed to have an on-going relationship with TUMI through Al Ewert, who has visited us in Africa and connected us with other believers around the world.

I thank God for TUMI because before we joined hands, our ministry was moving slowly. We had no place to effectively train our pastors, and we lacked the strategies and support programs to equip church planters. But over these last five years we have seen God moving in a mighty way and TUMI has been a driving force behind our efforts.

Many years ago, Christianity was introduced in our country by missionaries. But now we can train local people who can be empowered with all the resources they need to do much greater things for the glory of God. Now it is time for us in Africa, for indigenous leaders, to do the work of Christ.