



**Lutheran Church
of Rwanda**

THE HISTORY OF LUTHERAN CHURCH OF RWANDA 1994 – 2019

Anniversary of 25 years of the evangelism of
Lutheran Church of Rwanda in Rwanda

“The Lord has done great things for us, and we
are filled with joy” (**Psalm 126:3**).

October 2019

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We first thank Almighty God for helping us write this storybook that reminds us all of what he has done to us. The king David said about it well that “Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is he, who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture (Psalm 100:2 – 3).

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ACRONYM

ACT	: Actin by Churches together
AD	: Ano Domino (Umwaka w’umwami) ikoreshwa kuvuga nyuma ya Kristo.
BA	: Bachelor of Arts
BW	: Bwana
CPR	: Council Protestant of Rwanda
CV	: Curriculum Vitae
DMD	: Department of Mission and Development
EAC	: East African Community
EELR	: Eglise Evangelique Lutherienne du Rwanda
ELERWA	: Eglise Lutherienne Evangelique du Rwanda.
EV	: Evangelist
ILC	: International Lutheran Council
KIST	: Kigali Institute of Science and Technology
LUCCEA	: Lutheran Communion Central and East Africa
LCR	: Lutheran Church of Rwanda
LWF	: Lutheran World Federation
MA	: Master of Arts
MLTC	: Matongo Lutheran Theological College
REV	: Reverend
PG	: Page
RPA	: Rwandese Patriotic Army.
RPF	: Rwandese Patriotic Front
SIDA	: Syndrome Immuno – deficitaire Acquis
SPS	: Sierra Pacific Synod
UPI	: Unique Parcel Identification.
USD	: United State Doller
WFP	: World Food Program
YAGM.	: Young Adult Global Mission

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INTRODUCION

History is important to us as follows: (i) we recognize where God has taken us; (ii) from where He has helped us to go through; (iii) from where He brought us today; (iv) Where He wants us to reach.

This history book of the Lutheran Church of Rwanda has been written in such a way as to bring together all the church histories in the last 25 years since the church began its evangelization in Rwanda.

The word "jubilee" is derived from the Hebrew word jobel, which means "ram's horn"; since it was precisely that horn which was used as a trumpet, whose sound indicated to everybody the beginning of the jubilee year. In this way, it is compulsory for all Christian members of Lutheran church of Rwanda and their partners to praises God loudly together in same spirit, giving thanks to God as fragrant incense. Like the Word of God says, "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name" (Hebrews. 13:15). "Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen!" (Revelation. 7:12).

The main purpose of editing this story is to evaluate the beginning of the LCR to date. The first congregations started in different regions. For example, congregations under a tree represent 37.5%. Congregations started in rent are estimated at 8.3%; Congregations started in the homes of their members represent 50%; congregations that started in the classrooms are estimated at 37.5%; congregations on rocks are estimated at 4.1%; congregations that started in warehouses are estimated at 4.1%; congregations that started in schools are estimated at 4.1%; congregations that started in LWF sites are 4.1%; the congregations that started in the garage are 4.1%. This shows that no other congregation that started in favorable conditions as God in his miracles, he changed the story.

In this book, we will develop how the church was established (it is a church that revolves around the world today), other stories will guide us in the reform of the church by Dr. Martin Luther and

his colleagues. Explore the cornerstone of evangelism that has formed the doctrines we have followed so far.

This evangelization of Lutherans occurred in Rwanda through the German Bethel mission organization, at that time, they started the church in 1907, nine years after its beginning, the First World War broke out and the Germans left Rwanda since then the church was suspended.

God revived his plan to Rwanda when the Lutheran church of Rwanda returned in 1994 by Rwandans from exile who were returning to their homeland after the 1994 genocide against Tutsi. Bishop George Wilson Kalisa declared, "This church will never disappear again in this country before the return of Jesus Christ".

This story also demonstrated the growth of the churches at each parish and congregation; how the leadership structure has been advanced over time, according to the constitution and vision of the church; how church leaders approved the church's constitution on behalf of whole church members; the strategies that were used to obtain other reverends and the opportunities that have been invested in the church to lighten the burden of its members who sacrificed their properties to develop a church by themselves or with the help of other local or international churches. Despite that, the church had met challenges while growing. During this journey, the members of church learned a lot of lessons through these stories to help church development in the future. The closing of this story recognizes the attributes of all who have supported the church growth up to date.

"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." (Psalms 126:3).

1. The beginning of the church.

The beginning of the Lutheran church in the world. (Reformation)

We will categorize the history of the Lutheran Church into seven categories:

- The first church and church at the time of the Apostles (30 - 100 AD)
- The church during the tribulation (64 - 313 AD)
- The church during the kingdoms (313 - 476 AD)
- The church during the mean time (476-1453 AD)
- The church during the reforms (1453 - 1648 AD)
- The church with the mission (1648 - 1914 AD)
- The church in the last days (1914 after up today).

In this book story, we will express the history of the church during the reforms. We cannot retrace the history of the Lutheran church in general without mentioning its founder, Dr. Martin Luther.

2. The story of Dr. Martin Luther and the reform of the church.

Martin Luther was born to Hans Luder (or Ludher, later Luther) and his wife Margarethe (née Lindemann) on 10 November 1483 in Eisleben, County of Mansfeld in the Holy Roman Empire. Luther was baptized the next morning on the feast day of St. Martin of Tours. His family moved to Mansfeld in 1484, where his father was a leaseholder of copper mines and smelters and served as one of four citizen representatives on the local council; in 1492, he was elected as a town councilor. The name Martin comes from the Latin name Martinus, which is a late derived form of the name of the Roman god Mars, the protective godhead of the Latins, and therefore the god of war.

His father Hansi Luther sent Martin to Latin schools in Mansfeld, then Magdeburg in 1497, where he attended a school operated by a lay group called the Brethren of the Common Life,

and Eisenach in 1498. He did not want him to study theology because the priests were not allowed to marry meanwhile he wanted a family growth. Martin Luther attend the three schools that focused on the so-called "trivium": grammar, rhetoric, and logic.

2.1 The education background of Dr. Martin Luther.

In our days, our students study in English or French, but in Martin Luther's time, around the sixteenth century, all students in Europe studeceased in Latin. In the summer of 1484, he learned a lot of Latin because, at that time, many theologian writers used Latin while writing, for example prayers, confession, the 10 commandments, the doctrine of the disciples, the psalms and the songs all of them were written in Latin. That encouraged him to concentrate on Latin language.

At the age of 14, at the Easter of 1497, he continued his studies in Magdeburg. It was there that he discovered the Bible for the first time; it was chained in the library, then he bought a book contains the biblical lessons that was being used in congregation for whole year (biblical calendar or reading bible book). In 1498 – 1501, he continued studies to Eisenach.

At the age of 17 in 1501, he attended the University of Erfurt where he was awarded for a Bachelor of Arts on 29/09/1502.

He continued his studies, after three years on 7/1/1505; he obtained a Master of Arts. He was the second among 17 students. The model of their study was from at 4:00AM up to 8:00PM. They also had daily prayers in their chambers. The style of studying was to listen to the lecturer while in class and note the necessaries. They were given time to read books once in a week and having time to presenter. All those things were to preparing Martin Luther to pursuit courses of laws. What surprisingly, Martin Luther received a vocation to work with monks instead of going to study laws. Here we can explain why he made such an unexpected decision.

2.2. Monastery

There is many reasons he made decision of becoming a monk. Among them, we can say the followings:

- 1) On 2/7/1505, Martin Luther during a trip there was a terrible storm, everyone prayed to survive, so Martin Luther also prayed God to save him, he said: Saint Anne save me, I will be a monk. He swore that if he survives, he will dedicate himself to the Augustinian order that that how he decided to become a monk. For us today, this swearing is no longer valid but at that time in sixteen century, this swearing was normal.
- 2) Martin Luther himself exposed the second reason: he wanted the mercy of God to praise him. People of that time supposed that the time of Jesus Christ's coming was near and supposing that God was angry and merciful. They knew Jesus as a sword judge. That is why they pray through Saint Marry to save them from the sword of his son.
- 3) They wanted mercy form God before meeting Him angrily, as the monk was known as a best way of praising God. Therefore, it is not surprisingly that Martin Luther fled to monk to save himself from the anger of God and receive peace and life.

When people realize Martin Luther's life when he was a monk, he behaved well. This time, a monk had to swear after a year of testing. Martin Luther performed well during this period. In 1506, he was ordained monk. Most of the time, his leaders evaluated him, they even called him the second Apostle Paul. In 1512, he was appointed deputy chief of their encampment. After three years, he was appointed provincial vicar (11 homes under his leadership)

2.3 Time of priest

At that time, the monk could not become a priest, but the leaders of Martin Luther considered him one of the other candidates for priesthood. This time, he was not destined to learn other long periods, but rather a short period. Because this time he only needed the bishop's appointment to be consecrated to the church. This had to be done on public congregation to consecrate a priest. The main purpose of this was to allow him serving in church during congregations. In April 1507, Martin Luther was ordained as a priest, the following month he led a congregation for his

first time. Until this time, we do not yet anything new for Martin Luther. He was trying his best to do good righteously and honestly but doubting that he should do something not righteous.

2.4 Schooling

Because only few monks have studies, the leaders of Martin Luther selected him to continue philosophy and theology to prepare him to be a professor in the future. Because the monk encampment was located in the capital of Erfurt, it had helped Martin Luther to pursuit his doctorate in Theology at the University of Erfurt.

On 19 October 1512, he was awarded his Doctor of Theology and, on 21 October 1512, was received into the senate of the theological faculty of the University of Wittenberg, having succeeded Staupitz as chair of theology. He spent the rest of his career in this position at the University of Wittenberg. On April 1515, he started teaching the book of Apostle Paul on Romans. On 27/10/1516, he taught the book of Apostle Paul on Galatians. All the time he prepared his courses carefully which was a boost to reform a church. The students fond of his teachings because of good explanations he was giving them, as he knew well the bible explanations. He knew how to explain the bible very well in Dutch and he was not afraid to explain his opinions.

2.5. The Holy fight

When you look back in the life of Martin Luther, it was nice and he was well educated at the level of decorate, he was a priest and a professor at the university but even though, this was a good life, Martin Luther was not happy, he was filled of doubts, which we can call it a Holy fight which later provoked the reforms.

Associating to his triumphs, we can say that Martin Luther had achieved his goals but for himself thought the opposite. He was realizing, as he did not do enough for God. This led him to compromise himself even though he was in good monk headquarters. His main concern was “how can God express His mercy to a sinful people like me?” he was ful of fear. The next time he explained his life as monk that was not threaten by women or property, rather than that, he was not believing that God can accept him mercifully and clean his sins. He reached where he did not believe God by faith, instead he started charity activities in order to look for God’s mercy, he explained all those ideas to his leaders, and they told him to try many different ways.

To be a monk was a better way of scarifying one's life and become a righteous people who praise God every time and worship him. This is what Martin Luther did and well. He followed all doctrinal faith of monk and other hard doctrines for example, fasting for more than three days, to lay in coldness without a shelter, kneeling walk; confessing all his sins silently in quiet place, but it was not enough for him to believe that God has accepted him for all what he has done but his leaders used to advise him to try many different ways.

Martin Luther changed his method of looking for peace of mind by help of church's banquets like (1) baptism, (2) Eucharist (3) Chrism, (4) penance (5) orders, (6) marriage, (7) unction. Nevertheless, it was not easy to comply with all of them. He used another method called, "mysticism" is what lets you transcend the physical to experience enlightenment on spiritual connection and union with God.

Another method he used was the prayers of others. Who were they? It was those who have done more righteousness things more than what God requires, he should ask them to pray God for him so that God would hear them. Then he chose 21 saints who would pray for him at least every week.

For long time, he never doubt the evangelism of catholic, he was doubting the person itself so he started considering a sin is not evils only, but no control over one's own will and pride are also sins. He discovered it with the help of evangelizations of Apostle Paul and Augustin. Some years later, his view changed and he came to believe that Christians could be saved only by true repentance and their faith in Christ's promise of salvation. He rejected the doctrine that acts of penance and good works were the keys to heaven. Martin Luther followed all the requirements of the cloister - prayer, fasting, living a Spartan life - but carried everything to such an extreme that his superiors were worried about him. He wore out his confessor with marathon sessions of confessing, going over every thought in detail, then starting again from the beginning

In 1510, Martin Luther with another monk were selected by his party to go to Rome on an errand for his order. Within two months, they were working at least 30 miles. Martin Luther was very happy to see the saints, he visited many churches, and he had seen the remaining of crown of thorns wore by Jesus Christ, the pieces cups which was used to offer Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall when he was on cross (Mt. 27:34), the woods formed a cross of Jesus Christ, a staff of Moses, the breads that was used by Jesus Christ to feed 5,000 thousands people, etc. he saw one

of the coins Judas used to betray Jesus Christ and certificate he was received of be forgiven all his sins for all 14,000 years. Martin Luther did all his best to benefit from entering in the holy city of Rome. However, in other hands, he was sad because of the way Romans priests used to lead congregation without giving it an honor and work on it harshly which resulting an insult to the divine congregations. He also saw disgraceful activities that were carried out by leaders of catholic, so he returned home in Erfurt.

2.6 The victory before God

He finally found the answer of his problem when he was preparing the teachings at the university. Why every time he had a problem with a word says that “righteousness to God”. He used to understand the righteousness to God as the way other professors knew in middle age. However, when he observes Psalms chapter 31; 71 and Rom. 1:16-17 it was saying the opposite so he became so confused. Because he did not feel the word “God’s righteousness”, he failed to understand how the evangelism speaks out of it but later on he discovered that the God’s righteousness is not how God judges His own people but it is His merciful way of forgiving people through faith. After discovering this, he was relieved from doubting the justice of God as he used to be.

It is not easy to understand the challenge that have improved the life of Martin Luther and his theology. When assessing you find out how it has brought a change for the way, Luther was thinking of salvation. The person has no other choice of praising God than only His mercy. Therefore, any other way that can but used by a person to be accepted by God was put aside. Believing the Word of God is the same as believing Jesus Christ as he promised us. We are not sure for when Martin Luther had this vision but it is in a middle of 1514, 1512 & 1516. This gave Luther a way to pay attention to New Testament whereas all priests and Christians got such capacity through the baptism. Since then, he started slowly to antagonize the rule of pope that had put the terrorism on priest activities. Luther also confirmed that we do not believe God by our intelligence but through His Word in Holy Bible. Because he got all the answers from the Holy Bible, he insisted that only the Bible has the power to reinforce Christian belief. It was normal for Martin Luther that every time he spoke of the Bible, he was linked the Holy Spirit.

The Bible is the Word of God because it is guided by the Holy Spirit to let people know Lord Jesus.

The Lutheran church believes that a person can have intelligence to know about Jesus Christ but not believing Him. Believing Jesus Christ is for individual not in general.

This new theology of Martin Luther provokes people to wonder many questions, if it was still necessary for Luther to keep working together with his college of monks in preaching, evangelization and keep a position of leadership. This question helps us to comprehend how he had reformed church by that time.

2.7 INDULGENCE SYSTEM

The catholic church of Rome had a plan of building a temple for Saint Peter Basilica, because they needed a lot of money to do so, they set up different ways of finding money. One of them was to pieces of paper being sold to escape Purgatory and get God's mercy. Luther started fighting against that process of selling out those pieces of paper. We can say that was the beginning of church reforms.

Pope Julius II (1503 -13), and Pope Leo X 1513 -21) are the ones who had published the communique of buying those papers of Purgatory the person in charge was Tetzer a Dominican from Leipzig. He taught that whoever buys that paper get God's mercy immediately without confession. The 1st November is known as a day of all Saints. In the year of 1517, many Christians took journey to Wittenberg so that they could buy those papers of God's mercy. Nevertheless, in 1516 Luther had already taken time to teach all about those papers.

On October 31, 1517, Luther nailed his ninety-five theses, or points of discussion, on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. The document was in Latin and invited other scholars to debate the statements set out. He did not abuse Pope or Catholic Church activities, he even stated that Pope was innocent in this case but his closest were so dangerous. Luther said that the main property of church is Holy Bible should not but used for personal interests, he said that those

indulgences could clean the debts of a Christian in church but not a sin before God. He clarified that, those indulgences can help the living people not who are in purgatory and should not be sold for money. This issue raised these two following consequences:

- a) Some people translated those indulgences in Dutch for others to understand it well, which move people into demonstration; people were so happy for someone else who dared to ask pope for his doings that was unusual for anyone else to question pope as they considered as peasants who don't value in front of pope.
- b) Many professors stood up and provided explanations to those indulgences.

On 13/7/1525, Martin Luther got married with Katherine Vov Bora.

Briefly, some of the questions that Martin Luther was wondering are blow:

- 1) What can a person should do in order to get mercies from God?
- 2) The Church authority starts where and ends where? (because in Roman's era, there was three thing that had same authority, Church, Bible, and tradition)
- 3) What is Church?
- 4) What is important in Christian life?

Martin Luther answered those questions in Latin as follow:

- Sola scriptura – only Word of God.
- Sola gratia – only God's Grace
- Sola fidei – only God's Faith

The first people who followed the teachings of Martin Luther were named "Protestants" but the first Protestants and Lutherans started in Germany as well as the reforms of church. The history shows us how the church grew and changed because of country and situation at that time. History tells us how the church grew and changed because of the country and the situation at that time. Noted that Dr. Martin Luther's mission was not to establish a church, but it was to correct errors in church and let life go on.

2.8 Articles and doctrines Martin Luther has confirmed

There is doctrines that have put in place to fight against wretches, for example:

Doctrine of Nicaea AD 325;

Constantinople AD 381.

Ephesian A.D 431

Karisidoni A.D 451

Second Constantinople A.D 553

Third Constantinople A.D 680

Second Nicaea A.D 787

However, Martin Luther accepted the three doctrinal faith, which is the one we are using in our church. That doctrinal faith is the following:

Doctrinal faith of Nicaea and Athanasio (these doctrines aim to fight against false preaching) these doctrines have 37 articles.

We can say that the misbehavior of people at the time was too serious to change more things, which led to consulting other sermons that were used at that time. For example, "God, innate sin, sons of God, justice (righteousness), religious services, offices of evangelism, respect, church, what is a church, baptism, holy communion, confession of sins, repetition, the value of consecration, church programs, church doctrines, family affairs, public affairs, the return of Christ, will and freedom, the cause of sin, faith and deeds , holy congregations, marriage, pastors' marriage, church communions, food, swearing, authority in the church, bishop's authority, burial services, salvation, trinity ; the papacy, the homes of priests, sin, the laws, the gospel, the baptism of children, openness, expulsion into the church, ordination, etc. the evangelists who pronounce them in public and in church. These sermons kept having evangelists who pronounced them in public and church leadership.

There was other articles of Augsburg have great evangelism. Martin Luther himself has written other teaching letters of Simlikadi in 1537. These teachings deserved more explanations in synod of Mantova.

In 1529, Martin Luther himself has also written a big and small catechism to help the Christian families and members of church to know how to mind themselves before God. In this catechism there is following articles:

- The Ten Commandments
- Doctrine and explanations
- The prayer and explanations

- Baptism and explanations
- Confession and repentance
- Holy supper
- Other prayers (morning/evening prayer)
- Blessing of daily meal
- The responsibilities of bishops and evangelists
- The men, women and children

Each article has what it has declined / recognized in relation to what already existed. This is why the Lutheran church is originated from the Holy Bible.

2.9 Conclusion

Martin Luther is a good example for all Christians in all areas, such as vocation, integrity, support for the Word of God, instead of praising those who speak it. He concluded by saying, "Here I stand". He must have risen from the Word of God. Luther had been ill off and on for most of his life and his health had been deteriorating, as he got older. He deceased on a visit to Eisleben, the town of his birth, in 1546 at the age of 62.

He was buried in the Castle Church in Wittenberg in front of the pulpit where he delivered many of his sermons. His grave is still there.

The first congregation of Protestants was on Christmas 25/12/152 in Saint Mary church and led by Jahannes Bugenhagen.

3.1 Doctrinal faith of Lutheran Church.

The Lutheran Church accept the following:

- Holy Bible that contains Old Testament (39 Books) and New Testament (27 Books)
- God in Trinity.

3.2 DOCTRINAL FAITH BASED ON THIRD CENTURY

- Doctrine of Apostles (this doctrine helps in baptism teachings)
- Doctrine of Nicaea (this doctrine has existed for the following reasons: heresy in the time of Constantino, some of its debates came from Africa in the followers of Donatus who has made himself a bishop after his expulsion in the church. Heresy also came from Arius a Presbyterian (an old man who was advisor) in Alexandria, this man preached that Jesus was not God from the beginning but Bishop Alexander expelled him from church. In 325, the 318 bishops met in Nicaea, Bithynia to discuss how to fight against that heresy. After the death of Bishop Alexander, Athanasius who was later referred to the doctrine of Athanasius replaced him.
- Trinity (God Father, Son and Holy Spirit). This doctrine helped the illiterate pastors to answer hard questions of philosophy. Even nowadays, you can answer any question to your belief by this doctrine and catechism.
- The church that is united and justified by bible and consecration. The Lutheran Church has only two sacraments (Baptism and Holy supper)

The Lutheran calendar says the beginning of the Lutheran church in the world and begins to the time Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. This is why on 31/10/2017 all churches that founded in reforms of Martin Luther have celebrated the anniversary of 500 years of reform.

With regard to the Lutheran Church of Rwanda, this anniversary was celebrated on 10/12/2017 in the Eastern Province, Bugarama Parish, with the theme: "**We have given freedom by grace. Here we stand (Ephesians 2: 8-9)**"



Dr. Martin Luther made reform of church on 31/10/ 1517 AD.

4. RWANDA

Rwanda is a country in Africa located a few degrees south of the Equator, Rwanda is bordered by Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Rwanda is in the African Great Lakes region and is highly elevated;

Rwanda has 26,338 square kilometers (10,169 sq. mi); its geography is dominated by mountains in the west and savanna to the east, with numerous lakes throughout the country. Rwanda's highest volcano (and Africa's 11th highest mountain), is Mount Karisimbi, towering over the rest of the Virunga range, snow can be found at the summit during dry season. The climate is temperate to subtropical, with two rainy seasons and two dry seasons each year. Rwanda is the world's 149th-largest country and the fourth smallest on the African mainland after Gambia, Eswatini, and Djibouti. The population of Rwanda was 12,501,156 according to the census of 2018.

Rwanda is divided into 4 Provinces, Kigali City, and 30 Districts. Eastern Province has Bugesera, Gatsibo, Kayonza, Kirehe, Ngoma, Nyagatare, and Rwamagana. Norther Province has Burera, Gakenke, Gicumbi, Musanze and Rulindo. Southern Province has Gisagara, Huye,

Kamonyi, Muhanga, Nyamagabe, Nyanza, Nyaruguru and Ruhango. Kigali City has Gasabo, Kicukiro and Nyarugenge

The beginnings of the Lutheran church in Rwanda during the period of the colonial administration (1907 – 1916)

The Lutheran church began operations in Rwanda by the Germans in 1907 after 390 years of church reforms. The public ceremonies of its beginning took place on June 8, 1907 following the report of year 1905 on Pastor Ernest Johanssen's trip with Bethel's missionary leader, Mr. Wilhelm Trittelvitz in Uganda.

Since then, they have made the decision to launch missionary in East Africa to turn its citizens into Christians. It also aimed to exclude Islam in East African countries. The German colonials who were in the part of Africa as Rwanda included, adopted this decision.

In 1907, they sent missionaries to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ and establish churches from Bukoba (Tanganyika) to the island of Ijwi (Belgium, Congo).

On May 5, 1907, they sent Dr. Ernst Johanssen (1864-1934) and Pastor Gerhard Ruccius (1871-1940) to begin evangelization in Rwanda.

They arrived in Mombasa on May 6, 1907 and continued in Rwanda where they arrived on June 8, 1907, then began a church in Zinga (Gisaka) on August 3, 1907.

The first missionaries arrived in Rwanda in 1900. They were Catholic and were sent to Nyanza and Save. Later, they arrived in other parts of Rwanda.

The first Protestants who reached Rwanda with the gospel of salvation of Jesus Christ were Lutheran missionaries of German. They came from the "Mouvement Evangelique de Bethel/Evangelical Movement of Bethel", near Bielefeld, Germany. Those are Pastor Ernst Johanssen and Pastor Gerhard Ruccius accompanied by Tanzanian evangelists. They rushed to form parishes, so they began Zinga followed by Kirinda in 1907. They began Rubengera parish in 1908 and Giteme (Ijwi island, DRC) in 1909; Remera Rukoma in 1912.

The main activities of that time were the first baptism in 1911, primary schools, Dispensaries, teaching agriculture, professions at their parishes

Pastor Johanssen and Ruccius crossed the Akagera River on June 8, 1907 and reached Zaza (Gisaka). Catholic missionaries (White Fathers) warmly welcomed them. Therefore, they decided that Catholics would stay in Rwanda, then Protestants in Burundi. They left for Burundi after a few days. However, when they arrived in Burundi, the king of Burundi refused to operate in Burundi, so they returned to Rwanda. They left Bujumbura by Rusizi and went to Nyanza on July 22, 2007. This trip lasted two and a half months.

In Nyanza, King Musinga warmly welcomed them and gave them permission to operate in Rwanda. They assured King to teach him German and to set up hospitals in Kirinda and Rubengera in 1914. Since then, they started teaching population the literacy, agriculture and planting trees. This angered catholic missionaries then they demonstrated but king Musinga gave them cows to appease their anger and this was ended there. Another challenge was that people who became Christians after hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ retained their traditional religion when they return home.

1. **Zinga:** the first congregation was on 03/08/1907. Pastor Otto Morchen, deacons Henrich Herbert and Ernst Von der Heyden also came in Rwanda but they left behind their families at Bukoba, Tanganyika
2. **Kirinda:** They reached there on 28/08/1907, they were welcome by the chief of territory, Mr. Kanimba, and he gave them his brother as a mentor of Kinyarwanda. They started education schools on 26/10/1908. The first baptism there was done on 21/10/1909.
3. **Comercial:** in 1912, they received missionaries who will do businesses that link Dar-es-Salam, Kigoma (Lac Tanganyika) Cangugu and Kigali. That why they rushed to open stations at Rubengera (Kibuye), Giteme (Ijwi island) in order to use boats in Lake Kivu. In a process of developing missionary and business, they started five stations in Burundi, which was Rubura, Musema, Kogabami, Muyebe and Kivimba.

4. **Rukira & Nyakahanga:** Rukira (Gisaka) started in 1914 and Nyakahanga (Tanzaniya) in 1914.

Briefly, the Lutheran Church of Rwanda have done many works in Rwanda until when they were halted by First World War in 1914. The war broke out when they had 11 big plots and churches (stations), 4 small churches, 8 African pastors, 5 deacons (men), 1 female deacon, a missionary who was a nurse, and 280 students. There many others who were taught the professions, agriculture, business and missionary (Dr. Rugambage Samuel, *document*).

In 1916, German missionaries were forced to return to their home country, Germany. Thus the evangelization of Lutherans ruined in Rwanda.

The churches created by German missionaries were abandoned without anyone taking care of them, but Lutheran Christians led by Harerimana and Segatwa Mose formed groups to help each other. The famine of 1917 - 1918 ruined everything and many Lutheran Christians deceased, including their leader Harerimana, others fled their homes to seek food and jobs. Later, a member of the Adventist Church, Delhove came to Kirinda and gathered the few remaining Christians and thus they commenced praying on Saturday instead of Sunday.

After some period, the Belgium regime realized that the properties of German missionaries were unoccupied in Rwanda; they asked an organization of Protestants in Democratic Republic of Congo to occupy it. This organization was composed of Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, and reformed churches

A man called Mr. Hyden Von was the first one who reached in Kirinda; he was sent by Protestants organization of missionaries, on the other hand, this forced Mose and Delhove together with their Christians to move to Gitwe.

Belgium had Protestants but few and poor, they could not handle the missionary in Rwanda, they had also failed to run Zinga and Rukira church. In effect, in 1956, they formed a synod; his mission was to reunite Kirinda, Rubengera and Remera in one church.

In 1959, the union of Protestants handed over the management of church to synod, since then, the synod started to control all church activities. Synod, moreover, sought to set up a single church that would evangelize the gospel of Jesus Christ itself; that is why they gave it a new name "Presbyterian Church in Rwanda". Since then, to this day, they still operate in Rwanda.

Rutaganda Desire, Duhugurane umwaka wa mbere. (Butare: Corvt, 2002) pg. 48- 54.



Rev. Ernest Johannse and his wife.



Rev. Ernest Johannsen (together with his family)



Rev. Ernest Johannsen, the German pastor who brought the gospel of Jesus Christ in Rwanda, 1907 (that was the first time, Protestants reached in Rwanda).

After 78 years later, the Lutheran Church without any activity in Rwanda, God resumed his plan and sought a way to restore it in Rwanda to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ's salvation and to carry out other development activities. Since then, they started evangelization while seeking the legal personality until 2002 when it was granted.

6. The origin of opinions and meetings that created Lutheran Church of Rwanda

In 1994, after liberating Rwanda, the Rwandan refugees living in different countries returned to their home country. Many of these returnees were Lutheran. These Rwandans decided to establish the Lutheran Church of Rwanda. Even before returning to Rwanda, a meeting sought strategies of starting the Lutheran Church of Rwanda.

That meeting made the following decisions:

- (i) Preparing to return to their home country;

- (ii) Continuing Lutheran Church while in Rwanda;
- (iii) Summon the pastors for consultative process; those pastors were Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin (deceased), Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Rev. Mahirane G. William, and Rev. Viane Mbotera (deceased);

On September 1994, all Rwandan pastors who were operating in Karagwe diocese, Rev. Dean George Wilson Kaliisa (Dean of Karagwe Diocese), Rev. Sarambuye Celestin (Reverend of Kayungu parish) and late Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin (Reverend of Nyakahanga parish). They seized opportunity of meeting at Omurushaka in the trial of Celestin Gashakamba, so they discussed. The agenda was to assess how they will initiate the Lutheran Church in Rwanda. They made decision that everyone who has the responsibilities in the diocese of Karagwe or wherever, either, Pastor, Reverend or evangelist, once they return in Rwanda, everyone will initiate a Lutheran Church wherever he will be living in return.

The second meeting was held on October 21, 1994 in Kabwera, Kimuli and attended by late Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin (chairperson of the meeting), Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Ev. Muzigura Faustin (Secretary of the meeting), late Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya, Ev. Twahirwa Eldard, Mrs. Sesiriya Gerard, late Odorada Martin, late Mzee James Karegeya, and late Godberta Matayo.

That meeting made the following:

- (i) Return to Rwanda and establish the Lutheran Church of Rwanda;
- (ii) Looking for logistics, like cars, motorbikes, books, and other materials that serves in church;
- (iii) To convene the last meeting on October 28, 1994 that will gather other reverends who did not attend the recent meetings. That meeting was held in Nyakahanga, congregation of Nyakashenyi, where late Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin was a church leader.

The last meeting was held on October 28, 1994 Nyakahanga, congregation of Nyakashenyi, and gathered the following: Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin (chairperson of the meeting), Rev. Mahirane G. William, Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Ev. Muzigura Faustin (Secretary of the meeting), Ev. Isaya Ntagwabira, Dean Rev. Kaliisa G. Wilson, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John, and Ev. Twahirwa Elidard.

The meeting made the following decisions:

- (i) Returning home, Rwanda;
- (ii) Holding a meeting while in Rwanda, that will set up where the church should start from;
- (iii) The reverends agreed to return in Rwanda up to January, 1995;
- (iv) Scheduling a meeting in Rwanda, on January 28, 1995. However, this meeting was later shifted to March 04, 1995.

Despite that, the first congregation was done in Kirehe on November 11, 1994; there was no any meeting that took place in Rwanda to prepare the Lutheran Christians and evangelization in Rwanda. Because of many issues raised by Lutheran Christians, late Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin gathered a meeting on March 04, 1995. In that meeting, late Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin said that, the Lutheran Christians kept complaining how other protestant churches do sacraments that is differently of their Lutheran church, so they want to form their church as long as they have returned with their reverends. He meant that his answer to them was to be patient a bit but it is not the concrete solution. Therefore, we need to provide an adequate solution to this case.

The meeting discussed and made decision of starting the Lutheran Church publically and expand for these following reasons: (i) the Lutheran Christians did not want to join other protestant churches; (ii) a person has rights to serve in a church he/she wants, as they wanted their Lutheran Church desperately; (iii) the Lutheran church followers were to many in Rwanda at that time and they wanted their own church; (iv) a church is a strategic way to develop a country; so once the Lutheran church of Rwanda is established will bring more development to the country.

In this meeting, they elected a provincial reverend who would later applies on behalf of Lutheran Church of Rwanda the permissions of conducting congregations on Sunday or other week days lawfully. The elected people were late Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin, and Rev. Mahirane Gerard.

They also elected late Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin, Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, and Rev. Rutsindintwarane John to represent the Lutheran church of Rwanda in application of legal document. This meeting of Lutheran church of Rwanda seized this opportunity to elect executive committee at country level as follow: Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin, Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Rev. Mahirane Gerard, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John, Rev. Ruhinda Theonest (he was elected before he reaches in Rwanda), Ev. Muzigura Faustin, late Ev, Ntagwabira Isaya, Mrs. Epiphanie Kaliisa,

Mr. Bushayija Francis, Mr. Ibambasi T. Eduward, Mr. Sesonga Boniface, Mr. Muringwa Francis, Mr. Rwamuhinda Denis, Mrs. Sabina Kalisa, Mr. Muthambarungu Thomas, and Ev. Twahirwa Elidard. (*The minutes of first general assembly of Lutheran Church of Rwanda on 04/03/1995 – Rukira*)

7. THE BEGINNING OF LCR EVANGELIZATION IN RWANDA

Following the meeting of Omurushaka, that made decision that everyone who has the responsibilities in the diocese of Karagwe or wherever, either, Pastor, Reverend or evangelist, once they return in Rwanda, everyone will initiate a Lutheran Church wherever he will be living in return; the exiled Rwandans crossed different borders while returning home, for example, some crossed Kagitumba border from Uganda or Tanzania, others through Rusumo border from Tanzania, others through Gatuna border, Rusizi border, Nemba border from Burundi, etc.

The returnees from Tanzania especially, those who came from Karagwe Diocese and Bukoba, most of them were Lutheran Christians, and who crossed Kagitumba border. The most of returnees when they reached Rwanda, most of them used to stay near the border, which they used, that is how mostly Lutheran Christians preferred to stay in Kirehe, Ngoma, Kayonza, and Nyagatare in sectors of Matimba and Rwimiyaga.

The first congregation was done at the schools of Kirehe on 20/11/1994 as decided in the meeting held in Omurushaka where Rev. Celestin Gashakamba was a church leader. Ev MUZIGURA Faustin led this congregation. (He is now a Reverend) and late Ev. NTAGWABIRA Isaya (he later became a Reverend but he deceased on 30/10/2014). It gathered 172 Christians and offerings were 8,715Rwf. The Christians were wondering why they did not congregate before meanwhile they had church leaders in place. Some of Christian families were family of Ev. Mugabo Athanazi, Ev. Muzigura Faustin, Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya, Rwabufigiri, Sesonga Kalisa Calixte, Kayitare Deogratiasi, Siboyintore, Mudaheranwa Miel, and family of Mutabazi Peter.

Because of a few number of reverends, Rusumo did not get a reverend at time, Rev.Habiyakare J. Martin and Rev. Sarambuye Celestin were in charge of Kirehe before it becomes parish in 1998 and led by Rev. Kaliisa G. Wilson until 2001 when it was divide into Kirehe and Rwanteru.

Rev. Mugabo Evarister and Ev. Mugabo Athanase led Kirehe. Late Rev. Kayitana John and Ev led Rwanteru. Siringiya Augustin. Since then, Kirehe become a parish, started building a strong church

The general assembly of March 04, 1995 followed by executive committee meeting on June 06, 1995 at Rulenge, and presided by late Rev. Habiyakare J Martin. The participants were Rev. Sarambuye Celestin (Dean), Rev. Mahirane Gerard, Ev. Muzigura Faustin, late Ev. Mutabazi Ntagwabira Isaya, Mr. Muringwa Francis, Geld Gerard and Sabina Kalisa. The agenda was to implement the decisions of recent general assembly. Secondly, to request a land in the districts. The meeting appointed a commission of Mr. Busahyija Francis, Rev. Mahirane Gerard, and Rev. Sarambuye Celestin to apply for it. Thirdly, the executive committee meeting appointed Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin and Rev. Mahirane Gerard to lead Byumba and Kibungo; Rev. Sarambuye Celestin and Rev. Rutsindintwarane John to lead Kigali.

This meeting set the first training of evangelists on 26 – 30/6/1995 and proposed to prepare the book of liturgy in Kinyarwanda language as they were still using what they brought from Tanzania that were in Swahili.

The representative of LCR told the meeting that he met one of leaders of LWF to look for help and he addressed him to the department of evangelization (DMD). He also stated the challenges of traveling so the meeting fundraised as follow: Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya 500Rwf, Sabina Kalisa 500Rwf, Geld Gerard 300Rwf, Busahyija Francis 2000Rwf, Rev. Mahirane Gerard 300Rwf, and Muringwa Francis, 100Rwf. Late Mutembe Gaitan, an employee at Arusha ELCT/ALICE offered a church to do translations.

The next meeting was on 31/8/1996 at Kayonza to follow up on application of legal document of LCR. The meeting was informed that the application was pending in the prime minister's office. The meeting also elected the financial committee as follow: Mr. Bushayija Francis, (Chairman), Mr. Rugero David, Mrs. Epiphanie Mukantarindwa, Mrs. Suzana Shumbusho, Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John. The meeting received a report of financial support from North Elbian Centre for World Mission of Federal Republic of Germany of DM 35,000. This fund was used for rent of Church in Kigali, buying motorcycles of Reverends, supporting the

construction of churches at Kagitumba and Matimba, and buying books of using in congregations (Bible, book of songs and liturgy). The meeting was reported that among two tape writer, one of them was stolen, another is damaged so one of participants donated on machine.

In the executive committee meeting of 16/11/1996, the General Secretary of LCR, Rev Rutsindintwarane John reminded the participants that the legal personality was not yet granted but they got temporary to be using until they get permanent.

In the executive committee meeting of 22/3/1997 at Kayonza, welcomed Dean Rev. George Wilson Kaliisa for his first time attendance in Rwanda. This meeting was informed about donors, who supported the church so that they decided to set up salaries of Reverend 15,000Rwf, evangelist who have learned biblical studies would receive 8,000Rwf and 6,000Rwf for evangelists who did not attend the biblical studies. The meeting made decision that every parish will have to submit the financial monthly report in order to divide it as follow: 10% for congregation, 50% for parish, and 40% for headquarters. This was adopted to start in January 1997. The meeting elected the Rev. Ruhinda Theonest as a project manager; it had also shifted the Legal representative of LCR from Rukira to Kigali on 7/4/1997. The meeting appointed Rev. Sarambuye Celestin and Ev. Mugabo Evalister to lead Rusumo where the legal representative was controlling while staying in Rukira. Ev. Andrea Ruganintwari replaced Ev. Mugabo Evalister in Gatarama, Rev. Sarambuye had to control Rukira. The meeting made decision of selecting a team of two people, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John and Mrs. Suzana Shumbusho for going to Kenya, meet the Director of LUCCEA, and request the membership of Lutheran Church of Rwanda in LWF.

8. THE GROWTH OF CHURCH. 1995 – 1996

The average number of Christian LCR at the beginning was about 2,000 Christians. In the report submitted on 30/5/1996, it appears that 3,950 Christians are increased. This means that in the five months following the beginning of the LCR, the number of Christians increased by 1950. In 2019, the LCR has more than eight thousand Christians in the country. This means that in the 25 years, the number of Christians in the church has increased by 250 per year.

Year	Parish	Attended	Baptized	Confirmation	Holy	New	Returned	Deceased
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					supper	Christian	in LCR	
1995	Rusumo	3,141	21	16	515	0	6	5
1995	Rukira							
1995	Kigali	255	3		47			
1995	Mutara	530	8		11			
1996	Rusumo	8,068	77	37	784	4	11	3
1996	Rukira							
1996	Mutara	587	22		39			1

8.1 THE COMPARISON OF SPIRITUAL MAPPING OF LCR BETWEEN 1995 & 1996.

In 1996, Rusumo had increased by 4,927 of Christians. The new baptized were increased by 56; confirmation by two; who appeared on holy supper were 269; the returnees in the church were five; new Christian members were four; the deceased were three.

In 1996, Rukira (no updates)

In 1996, Kigali had 636. The new baptized were one; the Christians who appeared on Holy supper were 55; the new Christian members were three.

In 1995, Mutara had increased by 57. The new baptized were 63.6%; the Christians who appeared on Holy supper were 28, the deceased was one.

8.2 THE COMPARISON OF 1995 & 1996.

In 1995, Rusumo received 53,945Rwf and in 1996 was 113, 585Rwf. This means that they were increased by 59,640rwf.

In 1995 & 1996, Rukira (no updates)

In 1995, Kigali received (no updates); in 1996 was 55,600Rwf.

In 1995, Mutara received 2,615Rwf; in 1996 was 18,887rwf. This means that they were increased by 16,272Rwf.

The other report was submitted in May 1996 up to May 1997. It appears as follow:

Kigali: Christian members were 165; Reverends were two; Evangelist was 1; the new baptized (adults) were 8, the new baptized (children) were 3, for confirmation were 6; offerings were 11,680Rwf.

Rulenge: Christian members were 865, Reverends was 1, Evangelist were 2, the new baptized (adults) were 101, the new baptized (children) were 46, for confirmation were 36, marriage were 4, the deceased were 6, offerings were 43,250Rwf.

Kirehe: Christian members were 701, Evangelists were 2, the new baptized (adults) were 81, the new baptized (children) were 74, for confirmation were 21, the deceased were 7, offerings were 35,050Rwf.

Kibara: Christian members were 105, evangelist was one, the new baptized (adults) were 33, the new baptized (children) were 23, for confirmation were 4, offerings were 5,250Rwf.

Rwanteru: Christian members were 509, reverend was 1, Evangelist was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 26, the new baptized (children) was 1, for confirmation were 46, marriage was 5, the deceased were 4, offerings were 25,450Rwf.

These figures show that the Lutheran church of Rwanda was growing fast.

Rurama/Buriba: Christian members were 92, evangelist was one, the new baptized (adults) were three, the new baptized (children) were 95, the deceased was 1, offerings were 4,600Rwf.

Rugando: Christian members were 326, evangelist was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 13, the new baptized (children) were 38, for confirmation were 19, the deceased were 2, offerings were 16,300Rwf.

Curazo: Christian members were 65, evangelist was one, the new baptized (children) were 38, and offerings were 3,250Rwf.

Kigarama: Christian members were 605, reverends were 2, evangelists were 2, the new baptized (adults) were 6, the new baptized (children) were 21, for confirmation were 71, for marriage were 3, the deceased was 1, offerings were 30.250Rwf.

Gatarama: Christian members were 265, evangelist was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 38, the new baptized (children) were 6, for confirmation were 51, for marriage was 1, offerings were 13, 250Rwf.

Matimba: Christian members were 235, reverend was 1, evangelist was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 16, the new baptized (children) were 36, for confirmation were 14, for marriage were 3, the deceased were 2, offerings were 11,750.

Kagitumba: Christian members were 206, evangelist was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 38, the new baptized (children) were 12, for confirmation were 16, for marriage were 2, the deceased were 3, offerings were 10,300Rwf.

Gasenyi: Christian members were 172, reverend was one, evangelist was one, the new baptized (adults) were three, the new baptized (children) were seven, and offerings were 8,600Rwf.

Kibaya: Christian members were 91, evangelist was one, for confirmation were three, for marriage were two, offerings were 4,550Rwf.

Mukivanja: Christian members were 149, the new baptized (adults) were four, the new baptized (children) were 8, for confirmation were 12, offerings were 7,540Rwf.

Nyagashanga: Christian members were 241, evangelist was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 8, the new baptized (children) were 4, for confirmation were 9, for marriage were 2, offerings were 12, 500Rwf.

Rwinkuba: Christian members were 237, the new baptized (adults) was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 3, for confirmation were 13, for marriage there was 1, offerings were 11, 980Rwf.

Nyarubuye: Christian members were 165, the new baptized (adults) were 10, the new baptized (child) was one, and offerings were 8,370Rwf.

Musaza: Christian members were 253, evangelist was one, the new baptized (adults) were 2, the new baptized (children) were 8, for confirmation were 6, offerings were 13,280Rwf.

Karangazi: Christian members were 142, evangelist was 1, the new baptized (adults) were 4, the new baptized (children) were 5, for confirmation were 13, for marriage were 2, offerings were 7,200Rwf.

Kayonza: Christian members were 156, for confirmation 2, the deceased was one, and the offerings were 7,500Rwf.

Ntoma: Christian members were 77, offerings were 2,560Rwf.

In the whole year, from May 1996 up to May 1997, the LCR had 5,822 of Christian members; 7 Reverends; 20 Evangelists; 280 of adults who were baptized; 459 of children who were baptized; 317 who got confirmation, 26 of marriages; 14 of deceased; and 293,950Rwf of offerings.

Note: This year, most people did not choose residences in Rwanda, they moved frequently to another places. This population displacement led to an increase in the number of Christians who moved and eventually joined other churches where they moved and did not find the nearby Lutheran church in Rwanda.

The 1997 report of LCR up to November 1998, showed these figures below:

Congregation of Kigali: it was having 180 Christians, 2reverends, 1evangelist, 3 new baptized (adults), 8 new baptized (adults), 6 confirmations, 6 marriages, 4 deceased, 250,000Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Rulenge: 685 Christians, one reverend, 2 evangelists, 101 new baptized (adults), 46 new baptized (children), 20 confirmations, 3 marriages, and 8 deceased, 37,070Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Kirehe: 596 Christians, two evangelists, 81 new baptized (adults), 74 new baptized (children), 11 confirmations, two deceased, and 23,400Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Kibara: 105 Christians, one evangelist, 33 new baptized (adults), 23 new baptized (children), four confirmation, and 5,300Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Rwanteru: 509 Christians, one reverend, one evangelist, 26 new baptized (adults), one new baptized (child), 36 confirmation, five marriages, and 27,350Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Rurama/Buriba: 92 Christians, one evangelist, 3 new baptized (adults), 95 new baptized (children), two deceased and 2,600Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Rugando: 326 Christians, 13 new baptized (adults), 38 new baptized (Children), 19 confirmation, and 15,440Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Curazo: 65 Christians, one evangelist, 18 new baptized (adults), 38 new baptized (children), 3,500Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Kigarama: 605 Christians, one reverend, 2 evangelists, 6 new baptized (adults), 21 new baptized (adults), 71 confirmation, three marriages, and 31,000Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Gatarama: 265 Christians, one reverend, 2 evangelists, 38 new baptized (adults), 6 new baptized (adults), 51 confirmation, one marriage, and 12,050Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Matimba: 235 Christians, one reverend, one evangelist, 16 new baptized (adults), 36 new baptized (children), 14 confirmations, 3 marriages, and 2 deceased, 12,000Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Kagitumba: 206 Christians, one evangelist, 38 new baptized (adults), 12 new baptized (adults), 16 confirmations, 3 marriages, and 4 deceased 9,750Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Gasenyi: 172 Christians, one reverend, one evangelist, 3 new baptized (adults), 7 new baptized (children), 8,000Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Kibaya: 91 Christians, one evangelist, 4 new baptized (adults), three confirmation, two marriages, and 5,560Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Kijanja: 149 Christians, 4 new baptized (adults), 8 new baptized (children), 12 new baptized (children), 2 deceased 6,240Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Nyagashanga: 241 Christians, one evangelist, 8 new baptized (adults), 4 new baptized (children), nine confirmation, and 12,500Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Rwinkuba: 237 Christians, one new baptized (adults), 3 new baptized (children), 13 confirmation, one marriage, and 13,805Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Nyarubuye: 165 Christians, one evangelist, 10 new baptized (children), one confirmation, five marriages, and 8,400Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Musaza: 253 Christians, one evangelist, 2 new baptized (adults), 8 new baptized (children), 6 confirmations, 4 deceased, 12,200Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Karangazi: 142 Christians, one evangelist, 4 new baptized (adults), 5 new baptized (adults), 13 confirmation, two marriages, and 7,300Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Kayonza: 156 Christians, 2 confirmations, 1 deceased 6,000Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Ntoma: 77 Christians, 4 marriages, 2,500Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Ndego I&II: 122 Christians, one evangelist, 6 new baptized (children), eight confirmations, two deceased, and 7,880Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Rugando: 181 Christians, 2 evangelists, 980Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Gatari: 63 Christians, one evangelist, 3,270Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Byumba: 58 Christians, one evangelist, 30 new baptized (adults), 33 new baptized (children), 26 confirmation, and 2,010Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Ngarama: 180 Christians, 6 evangelists, 6 new baptized (adults), 18 new baptized (adults), 36 confirmation, and 4,450Rwf offerings.

Congregation of Bukora: 88 Christians, one evangelist, 6,600Rwf offerings.

The summary of total figures of 1997 – 1998.

LCR had **6,394** Christians, **7** Reverends, **31** Evangelists, **433** new baptized (adults), **482** new baptized (children), **341** confirmations, **40** marriages, **and 31** deceased, and **537, 155Rwf** offerings.

In 1996 – 1997, all Christians were 5,822. In 1997 – 1998, all Christians were 6,394 this means that the church increased by 572.

In 1996 – 1997, the church had only six Reverends. In 1997 – 1998, the church had six Reverends. This means that, there was no increment.

In 1996 – 1997, the Church had only 20 Evangelists. In 1997 – 1998 the church had 31 Evangelists, this means that the evangelists increased by 11.

In 1996 – 1997, new baptized (adults) were 280. In 1997 – 1998 the new baptized (children) were 433, this means that the new baptized (adults) increased by 153.

In 1996 – 1997, new baptized (children) were 459. In 1997 – 1998 the new baptized (children) 482, this means that the new baptized (children) increased by 23.

In 1996 – 1997, there was new confirmation of 317 Christians. In 1997 – 1998 new confirmation were 341, this means that the new confirmation Christians increased by 24.

In 1996 – 1997, the marriages were 26. In 1997 – 1998 all marriages were 40 this means that there was increment of 14 marriages.

In 1996 – 1997, 14 Christians deceased. In 1997 – 1998, all deceased were 31 this means that the church lost 17 Christians.

In 1996 – 1997, the offerings were 293, 950Rwf. In 1997 – 1998, the offerings were 537,155Rwf. This means that the financial support increased by 243,205Rwf.

9. APPLICATION OF LEGAL PERSONALITY.

With reference to the meeting of 4/3/1995, the application of legal documents to operate legally in Rwanda was one of the decisions taken. Church leaders submitted the application for legal personality to the office of the Minister of Justice, as required by law. In the application of the legal personality, we proposed "Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rwanda", but while analyzing our request in the office of the Minister of Justice, they told us that at that time, two other Lutheran churches were in activity in Rwanda; one of them was the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rwanda (EELR) in Kibuye, led by Reverend Ndutiye; he had acquired legal personality before the 1994 genocide against Tutsi; the second was "Eglise Luthérienne Evangelique du Rwanda (ELERWA)" in Gisenyi, led by Reverend Mbarushimana Bernard. The

latter did not yet have legal personality, but they had already submitted their applications before us. Definitely, we realized that it was almost impossible for the Lutheran Church of Rwanda to obtain legal personality when there is other Lutheran church in Rwanda. The leaders of the LCR decided to start looking for these Lutheran churches and introduce each other.

On October 8, 1995, Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin (deceased), a legal representative at time, and general secretary, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John met Rev. Ndutiye of "Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rwanda" in Kibuye; he told them that he knew Lutheran church when he was studying at Nazareth in Kenya, so when he returned to Rwanda, he thought of initiating the Lutheran church in Rwanda with the help of reverends of Presbyterian church in Rwanda. The activities of that church were linked to his project, "AMIZERO" which was aiming at supporting the orphans in Kibuye.

In 1996, Rev. Ruhinda Theonest and Ev. Ntidendereza David went to Ngarama, Kimbugu, the objective was to meet Rev. Mbarushimana Bernard of "Eglise Lutherienne Evangelique du Rwanda (ELERWA)" and assess if the church was really operating like any other Lutheran church around the world. When they reach there at Kimbugu, he was not around and his home was closed so they left message to his neighbor asking him to come and meet at Matimba. After two days, Rev. Mbarushimana Bernard came to Matimba and met Ev. Ntidendereza David, he linked him to LCR leaders at headquarters in Kigali. Later on, the LCR, EELR, and ELERWA met in a meeting. After the introduction among themselves, LCR leaders figured out that those churches were too different from the doctrines of Lutheran church in the world. The difference was in these following articles:

These churches EELR, and ELERWA, do not accept the baptism of children, they say that, a child is born innocently, he/she cannot get baptism when he is not mature, and they referred to the evangelism of Mark 10:13 – 16.

Another difference is that, these churches use the baptism of a lot of water and do not recognize the authority of the bishop (apostolic succession). This belief was very different from the doctrines of the Lutheran Church of Rwanda, because we recognize that there is an innate sin.

The Lutheran church of Rwanda baptizes the children based on the evangelism from *Mathew 28:19-20* "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Acts 2:38-39a *“Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off”*

The children have an innate sin; they need to be released from that through baptism. *Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit[a] gives birth to spirit. (John 3:5-6)*

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath (Ephesians 2:3).

Other dissimilarities were the following:

- The process of ordaining a Pastor: we learned that the church leaders of EELR, and ELERWA have not been ordained in the same way as Lutheran church in the world, so we did not recognize them as reverends.
- Their doctrine is definitely different from doctrines of Lutheran church in the world, for example, the big and small catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, doctrine of Augustus, Nicaea, Apostles, Athanasio and others...

All of this compromises the doctrinal faith of the Lutheran Church in Rwanda, but we have continued to look for ways to work together harmoniously. We then met at another meeting as three churches: LCR, EELR and ELERWA; we decided to form a commission of the congress composed of Reverend Habiyakare J. Martin (president), Reverend Nduziye Bernard (vice-president), Rev. Rutsindintwarane John (general secretary) and Reverend Mbarushimana Bernard (treasurer). Their mission was to put in place strategies for working together.

We also elected a committee composed of Janvier Sekamana, Dean Rev. George Wilson Kaliisa, Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Rev. Mahano Fabian, Rev. Ruhinda Theonest, Rev. Nduziye Bernard, Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin, Rev. Mbarushimana Bernard, Rev. Ruzagiriza Boniface, Rev.

Rutsindintwarane John, and Sendegeya Amos. Afterwards we scheduled our meetings for the dates of 9th September; 23rd September; and 7th October, 1997.

On 31st December 1997, the general assembly of LCR gathered. The LCR leaders reported their meetings with EELR and ELERWA. The general assembly analyzed these followings:

- (i) Doctrines of EELR and ELERWA;
- (ii) The sanctification of leaders of EELR and ELERWA if there eligible to be reverends of Lutheran church;
- (iii) Checking out their CV;
- (iv) How to find and assess their experiences so that it would help LWF, LUCCEA and ELCA to understand the purpose of union;
- (v) The leaders of EELR and ELERWA also had rights to question the qualifications of LCR, ordination, leaders, CV, and their experiences

The general assembly took time of discussions then made the following decisions:

- The Lutheran Church of Rwanda won't waste time to seek cooperation with the churches which have doctrines that differ from doctrines of Lutheran church in the world rather than that, the general assembly decided to change the name which was proposed earlier "Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rwanda" because it was already taken by church of Ndutiye instead, they selected "Lutheran Church of Rwanda" (LCR). This name was used to get legal personality.

After learning that, EELR and ELERWA did not bring what they were required, LCR took the following decisions:

- Those people are welcome to LCR;
- Welcoming them as laymen (not reverend);
- Facilitating them to get scholarships of studying Lutheran theology in the schools of Lutherans;
- Ensuring them, to be ordained when they will be eligible.

This case was not settled, instead, the LCR requested the membership in LUCCEA so that it would adhere to LWF. LCR sent applications to LUCCEA in Nairobi, Kenya. This application

met other two applications of EELR and ELERWA there, too for the same reasons. For that reason, LUCCEA decide to visit Rwanda in order to inspect the following:

- a. Do these churches apply the principles and doctrines of Lutheran churches?
- b. If they are qualified to be a Lutheran church, why should not they work together?
- c. How does a church apply the principles of Lutherans?
- d. Check other basic conditions to consider a church like the other Lutheran churches in the world.

LUCCEA sent a delegation of three people: Reverend Yadessa Daba, Legal Representative of the Lutheran Church of Ethiopia (Makene Yesus) and LUCCEA, Bishop Dr. Samson Mushemba, Legal Representative of the Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) and deputy legal representative of LUCCEA and Matthew Dambala, secretary of the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC) and secretary general of LUCCEA. Rev. Yadessa Daba arrived at Kanombe airport on February 26, 1998; Bishop Dr. Samson Mushemba and Mr. Matthew Dambala arrived in Rwanda on February 27, 1998 and welcomed by leaders of LCR, EELR and ELERWA.

On February 28, 1998, LUCCEA, LCR, EELR and ELERWA held a meeting. LUCCEA inspected every church and found out that LCR applies all doctrines of Lutheran church of world and its leaders have studied theology of Lutherans, served Tanzania ELCT/Karagwe Diocese, their pastors were consecrated in accordance with rules of Lutheran church of world. For EELR and ELERWA, their leaders have not studied theology of Lutherans; their consecration was not done in accordance with rules of Lutheran church of world, and had nowhere served in other Lutheran churches. However, LUCCEA did not make any decision yet in this meeting, rather they wanted to also inspect their congregations especially on Sunday.

On Sunday March 01, 1998 from 09:00AM until 10:30AM, they attended church services at LCR in Kanombe and preachman was Bishop Dr. Samson Mushemba. Afterwards they continued to the EELR led by Ndutiye at Kabeza. Surprisingly, they congregated in tents at his home, and church services was planned as wedding ceremonies because they did not know liturgy of Lutherans! LUCCEA advised Mr. Ndutiye to join LCR but he refused because he wanted LCR to join him instead as he had legal personality so LUCCEA did not push it. For ELERWA led by Mbarushimana, knew that he had not anything connected to the Lutheran churches of world so he decided with other ELERWA members to join LCR and then, LCR

recognized him as “senior Evangelist” until when he will be consecrated by Lutheran church of Rwanda. His decision pleased LUCCEA delegation, they promised him to look for him a scholarship of theology.

This partnership of ELERWA and LCR followed by the process of integration of people from ELERWA and shape its members to the level of other Christian members of LCR.

On March 22, 1998, LCR organized the first concert at Ngarama – Byumba that aimed to welcome the ELERWA followers from Kimbugu, Katabagemu, Mukono, Kinyami, Kibari, Mukarange, and Kahi. From 15 – 20/6/1998, LCR organized a training of evangelists from Ngarama, Gituza, Kinyami, Kahi, and Muvumba. The region kept evangelism in the areas of Ngarama and Byumba with the help of “nkumbuye ijuru choir” from Mutara.

On 15/11/1998, the LCR leaders visited Rwasama in Byumba and gathered near Gatuna - Kigali road where they also established a congregation. The attendees come from the areas of Kibali, Mukarange, and Kinyami. The region of Kigali and headquarters opened a mission of helping Byumba – Rwasama.

In the report, Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin, the legal representative of LCR said that, we give thanks to Almighty God who gave this opportunity to visit our Christian members in Byumba, Kibari, Mukarange, and Bwesige. We arrived at Rwasama on 14/2/1999 around 3:30AM; Christian members led by Ev. Ntibesigwa Onesphore and other evangelists gave us warmly welcome and attendance of Christians was around 450 people. On that day, 48 were baptized (children and adults), 33 confirmations, 22 new Christians joined us and 86 on Holy supper.

On 4/3/1998, the delegates of LUCCEA and LCR leaders visited the Lutheran lecturer in KIST of Tanzania origin. Those lecturers helped a lot in evangelism of LCR in Rwanda, some of them was Leonard Manga, Stephene Kiwia, Mushuza, Mfinanga, Peter, Andrea, etc.

On 6/3/1998, the envoys of LUCCEA went back. On 12/07/1998, the Lutheran Church of Rwanda received a report from LUCCEA affirming the Lutheran church of Rwanda (LCR) led by Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin applies the doctrines and ethics of Lutherans and is qualified to be among other Lutheran churches. The remaining (EELR and ELERWA) were not Lutheran churches as they did not apply anything related to the ethics and doctrines of Lutherans. This

report was also copied to other church members of LUCCEA, justice minister of Rwanda and the office of LWF Geneva. The report played a big role as follow:

- (i) It became a speaker of Lutheran church of Rwanda as well as registration of LCR in the forum of Lutheran Churches of world, and thus boosting the process of acquiring the legal personality in Rwanda. The Lutheran church of Rwanda was later granted the legal personality on 11/7/2002 which allowed them to get easily the membership in LUCCEA, CPR, and LWF. Since 1998, the leaders of LCR received the invitation to attend the meetings of LUCCEA. On 2/9/2002 the LCR became a member of LWF.
- (ii) Because of few number of reverends though had experienced evangelists with biblical study background, LUCCEA organized the training for short period of three for them so that they would later become reverends. The training began on march 2001 in Kigali, Kabeza (Kajeki), and later on was shifted to the church of LCR at Kanombe. The training was ended by consecration of reverends Rev. Ntidendereza David, Rev. Muzigura Faustin, Rev. Mugabo Evalister, Rev. Rwangarinde Private, Rev. Twahirwa Elidard, Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya (deceased), Rev. Nzajyibwami Silas, Rev. Mbarushimana Bernard, (former leader of ELERWA), and Rev. Kayitana John (deceased) and ten Congolese reverends, Rev. Kakumbwa Kanyanza, Rev. Kafizi Mugigi Honort, Rev. Tambwe Muyololo Mahamudi, Rev. Kilosho Wasso, Rev. Bulenga Nyirambo, Rev. Wakilongo Mufa, Rev. Mubake Banyakwa Petero, Rev. Milenge Kitembe, Rev. Mashimango Isaac, and Rev. Fataki Mwetamirwa Pierre.

The consecration of these reverends of LCR and Lutheran Congolese was presided by Bishop Dr. Samson Mushemba, the bishop of Lutheran church, Diocese Bukoba in Tanzania and commenced by inauguration of Kigali Church of LCR on May 27, 2001 at Kanombe; the LUCCEA envoy, Mr. Matthew Dambala and new elected Bishop Sendegeya of EAR, Diocese Kibungo also attended.

Getting the legal personality was not easy because of following reasons: government concerns, we won't say much about this than what former president of Rwanda Pasteur Bizimungu said at that time when he was explaining our issue regardless of request. Our name was removed on the pending list of legal personality requests. (*Inyandiko ya raporo y'ibyakoze kuri komite nkuru y'itorero kwitariki 31/7 – 1/8/1999. Pg 2*). Nevertheless, we were granted the legal personality on July 11, 2002 and membership of LUCCEA on September 02, 2002.

10. THE BACKGROUND OF EVERY PARISH OF LUTHERAN CHURCH OF RWANDA

10.1. KIREHE:

As we said above in brief, how the Lutheran Church of Rwanda began in Kirehe, the first congregation led by Ev. Muzigura Faustin and Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya (deceased) was held on 20/11/1994 at Kirehe Primary school; the attendance was 172 including the families of Muzigura Faustin, Ntagwabira Isaya, Mugabo Athanase, Kayitare Deo, Rwabufigiri Alphonse, Sesonga Bonifasi, Siboyintore Anthony, Mudaheranwa Miel, Kalisa Calixte, Mutabazi Peter (deceased), and 8,715Rwf offerings. After some period, Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin (deceased) and Rev. Sarambuye Celestin became reverends of that parish when they came from theological schools. The Christians built a church by tents in a piece of land given by district with the help of Mr. Kanamugire Clever who was in charge of social affairs in the district.

Rusumo became a parish in 1998 and was headed by Reverend George Wilson Kaliisa until 2001, when the parish was divided into three parishes, Kirehe, Mumeya and Rwanteru. The parish of Kirehe was led by Reverend Mugabo Evarister; Parish of Mumeya by Reverend Nzajyibwami Silas; and Rwanteru was led by Reverend Kayitana John (deceased). Ev. Mugabo Athanase became head of the congregation of Kirehe, Ev. Harerimana Calixte led the congregation of Mumeya and Rwanteru by Ev. Siringiya Augustin. Actually, the Kirehe congregation in Kirehe Parish has a modern church, a primary school and other projects such as compassion, welding and tailoring school.

10. 2. KIREHE – THE CONGREGATION OF KIGARAMA

The congregation of Kigarama was created on 16/11/1995 by Ev. Muzigura Faustin and three families composed by 15 Christians. The religious service took place in the house of one of the Christian members. Actually this congregation has modern church.

10.3 KIREHE – THE CONGREGATION OF RUGANDO

The Rugando congregation was created on 16/7/1995 by Ev. Mugabo Evarister (He is actually the Bishop of LCR), Ev. Kayitana (deceased) and three families composed by 8 Christians after

its expulsion to Rwanteru Primary School. Actually this church is suspended temporarily to comply with government requirements.

10.2.1 THE CONGREGATION OF RUKIRA

The Rukira congregation is one of the first congregations to have been established in Rukira. The congregation of Rulenge was created on February 2, 1995 by Reverend Habiyakare J Martin (deceased), Reverend Mahirane William Gerard and ten families composed of 50 Christians. This changed location to B because there was in the center of Christian members from Rulenge, B and Rurama areas. After a while, Mr. Habimana John, a Christian member of the LCR, donated land for the construction of a church. On April 9, 1995, the first religious service was held at B in tents and led by Reverend Sarambuye and Ev. Muzigura Faustin. Actually, there is youth groups of choirs, sewing, and others. In the field of education, there is a kindergarten and the church has helped young people to study in different schools. In the field of social work, the church takes care of orphans and needy through compassion, in the field of development, in the partnership of St. John Lutheran Church, the church has built the accommodations, offices, water tank, and also planted bananas. In the field of evangelism, the church bought instrument of music, motorcycle of reverend, books, chairs, and so on. In the background, the church started temporarily under tents in the Rulenge VTC compound, but today there is a modern church. However, the church ended up facing the challenges of some hanging churches like Buriba, the loss of a prominent Christian member, Reverend Habiyakare Martin. So today, the congregation has nearly 750; In fact, the parish of Rukira has four evangelists and one reverend. This story gave a great lesson of commitment, unity and encouragement.

10.2.2. THE CONGREGATION OF KIBAYA

The congregation of Kibaya is actually controlled by Rukira parish. The congregation started in 1995 by Rev. Mahirane W Gerard and Karegeya James with ten families composed by 50 Christians at the classroom of VTC and later, they built a temporary church.

10.2.3. THE CONGREGATION OF BURIBA

The Buriba congregation was created on July 16, 1995 by Reverend Habiyakare J. Martin (deceased), Reverend Sarambuye Celestin and ten families of 50 Christians. The religious service was held at Yakobo Mutigita's house and later, transferred to Buriba primary School.

10.2. 4. THE CONGREGATION OF SIYONI

The history sometimes repeat itself, we have seen that the congregation of Rukira (B) started in Rulenge then shifted to B, after 21 years it was developed and create another congregation called Siyoni. Siyone congregation was created on September 11, 2016 at Rukira bible school of LCR. The first religious service was attended by 140, led by Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin and Rev. Mulisa Emmanuel and they offered 9,640Rwf. Until nowadays, they still in Rukira bible school and having 138 Christian members.

10.3. 1. THE CONGREGATION OF KAGITUMBA

The congregation of Kagitumba was created on March 12, 1995 by Ev. Twahirwa Elidard (he later became reverend). The first religious service was organized at home by 15 Christians, consisting of 2 men, 4 women, who offered 100 Ugandan shillings. After six months and twelve days, the Kagitumba congregation received Reverend Ruhinda Theonest and led the first service on February 25, 1996.

From 1995 to 1999, the Kagitumba congregation developed greatly as it established the new congregation of Matimba, Rwentanga and Ntoma. Evangelization relied on the unity and reconciliation of Rwandans. There were also other church activities like mentoring new converts, baptism, confirmation, concerts, bible studies, different trainings supported by partners and youth choir “**nkumbuye ijuru**”. this choir was optional in Kagitumba parish and in LCR as whole. Three reverends and an evangelist were raised from this congregation. The congregation also formed new evangelists for a short period and sent them to lead new established congregations.

10.3.2. Youth Activities

The young people were trained in Lutheran doctrines, baptism, confirmation, singing and evangelism through their choir and made trips as in Kigali, Ngarama, etc.

10.3.3. Education Activities (1995 – 1999)

Kagitumba parish has accomplished the educational activities like teaching religion for two days within a week in Kagitumba, Nyabwishongwezi and Bugaragara primary schools. The religion teachers were Ev. Ntidendereza David, Ev. Twahirwa Elidard and Reverend Ruhinda Theonest. Actually, Kagitumba parish has a nursery school composed by Baby, middle and top class.

10.3.4. Financial Activities

Most of the activities in Kagitumba parish were conducted with partners. The parish also used its land to sustain their reverend and other activities.

10.3.5. Church Building

As history tells us, Christians in the parish of Kagitumba started in the home of their Christian members. After a while, Mr. Kamanzi Musirikare, one of the Christian members, sought a land for parish. They settled on their own land and served under the Kibere tree, near the tarmac road, but later on, they have built a wooden church covered with grass. After a while, they replaced this wood and grass building with a wooden and roof of galvanized iron, although they never inaugurated any of them.

11.1. THE CONGREGATION OF MATIMBA

Matimba congregation was created on February 11, 1996 by Rev. Ruhinda Theonest na Ev. Ntidendereza David. On that day, Ruhinda Theonest preached Isaiah 43:18 – 23, Ev. Ntidendereza David led liturgy. The first religious service was held at home of Mr. Mpambara Ernest, attendance Christians was 12 on church service, 5 on supper, and 200rwf of offerings. After a while, the congregation obtained government land at Reverend Ruhinda Theonest's request, so the Christian members left the house of Mpambara Erenest and began serving under the Kibere tree.

In a short time, they built a church with shits offered by the LWF. Later, they replaced it with another temporary church (covered with irons) with the support of 500,000 RWF sent by the LCR headquarters. They then dressed bricks on its walls but unfortunately these bricks have notched.

The Matimba congregation has carried out many evangelistic activities, such as a prayer altar where people possessed of evil spirits called abarangi have been delivered; he also organized numerous concerts with Tanzanian choirs from Karagwe as Imani and disciples from Nkwenda and Kuyali from Kigali; entrepreneurship training for women, such as making soap, youth training and training of local church leaders.

In education field, they established a nursery school even though it has been closed recently. Actually there is a church building renovated and music rooms. Matimba congregation has partnership with Americans from Sierra Pacific Synod – Advent – Citrus Hegt headed by Natalie Jones. This partnership helps in parish activities and sustaining the reverend of parish.

11.2 THE CONGREGATION OF NTOMA.

Ntoma Congregation was established on July 28, 1996 by Reverend Ruhinda Theonest and Ev. Ntidendereza David under the umugenge tree. That day Reverend Ruhinda preached Mathew 7:13 - 23; Ev. Ntidendereza David directed the liturgy; 21 Christian members attended (11 adults and 10 children) and offered 200 Ush. Late Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya then headed it. In evangelism, Ntoma organized 4 concerts, a Bible training on resilience, youth raised funds and bought uniforms, and women set up a savings and credit program. In the education program, they tried to create a nursery school but failed. In terms of social protection, they provided material for children from poor families, goats, and a cow for a Christian member. In financial activities, Ntoma congregation invested in its land to start building a church and bought musical instruments.

The story of the congregation of Ntoma shows us that the church began under the tree and later in the iron-roofed church. From 2014, they began to build a modern church, which is now still goes on. Actually, Ntoma has 105 Christian members, 11 men, 30 women, 18 youth, and 46 children. Those Christians are in social class as follow: 4 in first class, 99 in 2nd class, 3 in 3rd

class none in 4th class. From this history, they learned time management and unit. Ntoma congregation gives attributes Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya (deceased) who has done a lot to develop their church like establishment of Ntoma, Bugaragara, Kizirakome, and Nyagashanga.

11.3. THE CONGREGATION OF RWENTANGA

Rwentanga congregation was created on September 8, 1997 by Rev. Ruhinda Theonest, and Ev. Rubayita (deceased). The first religious service was held at home of one of its Christian members but it was moved to the classroom of Rwentanga primary school. That school was built in partnership with LWF but unfortunately, the small church built afterwards was demolished by winds. In brief, the congregations of Kagitumba, Matimba and Ntoma composed Matimba parish.

On May 27, 2001, the LCR ordained nine reverends (their names are mentioned in articles saying about legal personality), after their ordination, they were deployed in new established parishes.

Kagitumba parish was derived into three parishes, Kagitumba, Matimba, and Ntoma. Kagitumba led by Rev. Twahirwa Elidard, Matimba was led Rev. Ruhinda Bugaragara and Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya (deceased) for Ntoma. These parishes kept developing whereas Kagitumba parish has initiated a congregation of Rwentanga and Matimba parish created Bwera congregation.

Let us see how Bwera was initiated:

11.4. MATIMBA - BWERERA.

At the request of Christians from Bwera, Numukobwa Beransira and Stela Bahoraga who kept claiming to have their own congregation nearby instead of going far to Matimba, on October 14, 2012, Bwera congregation was established by Reverend Ruhinda Theonest together with Ev. Ruyenzi Apolo, Stela and Numukobwa Beransira. The first religious service was held at Stella's house. 16 Christians attended and offered 900rwf. Next time, Numukobwa Beransira lent her plot to the church and then they built the building established a nursery school where Stella became a teacher. After a period, they applied for a land to local government. But Rev. Ruhinda Theonest was replaced by Rev. Twesige George who kept working on it until when they got it

later. When they get land, they built a church, classrooms, offices and toilets. To accomplish all of this, they applied communion works of church members and funds from Sierra Pacific Synod.

Actually, the church has 182 Christian members, a church building, nursery school (Baby, middle, and top class) and primary school from P1 to P6. Bugaragara parish also developed in evangelization where they established four more congregations, Kabare, Nyakagando, Kizirakome, and Nyagashanga.

Let us see how they were initiated

12.1. BUGARAGARA – KABARE

The congregation of Kabare was initiated in 2001, by Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya, and Ev. Byangabo Patrice. But it failed to continue.

12.2. BUGARAGARA – NYAKAGANDO

The Nyakagando congregation was created on August 12, 1999 by Ev. Muzigura Faustin. The first religious service was held at Zakariya Nkaka. After a while, the government gave them land registered on UPI 5/02/13/05/23 and has 36,209sqm although they started providing services under the planted trees that were there. Later on, they built a small church with an iron roof but today they have a modern church building. The church also bought another land to establish Bugaragara but it was recently suspended to comply with government requirements.

The congregation of Nyakagando is composed of 179 Christian members and has done a lot of development activities like buying curriculum books for schools, musical instruments and office materials (Computers & accessories). They also had chance to possess a compassion project in place and building classrooms.

12.3. BUGARAGARA – KIZIRAKOME

Before Kizirakome became a parish, it was one of the congregations of Bugaragara parish. Kizirakome was created on April 12, 2002 by Reverend Ntagwabira Isaya (deceased) and Ev. Byangabo Patrick. The first religious service was held at Mr. Mahundaza Justice. Later, the government donated land that is now registered to UPI on 5/02/03/03/378 and Christian members also built a temporarily ironed building church.

13.1. THE PARISH OF KIZIRAKOME

After ordaining the new reverends, Rev. Kabahungu Angelo, Rev. Sekamana Jean Claude, Rev. Uwambajimana Jean, Rev. Musafiri Jackson, Rev. Muteteri Henarriet, Rev. Rutayisire Tharasis and Rev. Manirarora Emmanuel in, Umutara region; on December 10, 2017, the parish of Bugaragara was divided into which are Kizirakome and Nyagashanga. Rev. Dr. Ntidendereza David inaugurated them on behalf of Bishop (Bishop Mugabo Evariste).

On January 21, 2018, Reverend Uwambaye Jean was dedicated to lead the parish of Kizirakome. In reality, this parish has only one congregation. They planted trees around the church, renovated it, and evangelism is progressing well.

13.2. BUGARAGARA – NYAGASHANGA

Before Nyagashanga becomes parish, it has been a one of congregations of Bugaragara parish. At that time, it was called Karangazi parish. This congregation was initiated on February 16, 2002 by Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya (deceased) and Ev. Byangabo Patric. Afterwards, it became a parish. The first congregation was held at a Christian member's home. Later, they obtained land and built a small church with an iron roof. But nowadays, they are building a modern church, it is almost finished.

14. NYAGASHANGA PARISH

Umutara region has got more seven reverends so far. On December 10, 2017, Bugaragara parish was divided into Ntoma, Kizirakome and Nyagashanga. Nyagashanga parish was inaugurated on January 21, 2018 by regional reverend on behalf of Bishop

15.1. NGARAMA

In Article 9 above explaining "legal personality", we spoke of the Ngarama issue. The Christian members of Ngarama Parish came from ELERWA, which was headed by Mbarushimana Bernard after the LUCCEA report of 12/07/1998 recognized only the LCR among other Rwanda Lutheran petitioners. Those Christians came from the areas of Kinyami, Kibari, Mukarange, Kahi, Ngarama, Gituza, na Muvumba. At that time, their leader also joined LCR together with other evangelists.

Kimbugu, Katabagemu and Ngarama were created by Reverend Ruhinda Theonest and Nkumbuye ijuru Choir. At that time, Ngarama was not yet a parish. On May 27, 2001, LCR leaders ordained the nine reverends, including Mbarushimana Bernard, that when Garama became a parish and led by Reverend Mbarushimana Bernard, who later became a regional reverend of Byumba.

Lutheran church of Rwanda bought land in Rushenyi village, Karambi cell, in Ngarama sector Ngarama (Kimbugu) for 12,000Rwf. So the Christians built there a temporary church roofed by banana leaves.

In 2006, the partners from America in Sierra Pacific Synod came and met Ngarama parish leaders but they failed to reach that land because it was located far on mountain. In 2007, Mbarushimana Bernard accepted to exchange his land at Kimbugu with LCR's land to facilitate them to relocate near road. They built a church there roofed by 30 irons, by the end of 2015 Mbarushimana Bernard left LCR and initiate his own and return that land which he had exchanged with LCR forcefully including the church building.

15.2. NGARAMA - KIMBUGU

Kimbugu was created by ELERWA in 1993. This congregation became a congregation of the LCR in 1998. The religious services were organized under trees until they obtained land, as we indicated in the previous paragraph. The first services led by Mbarushimana Bernard in which 6 Christians participated (3 men, 2 women and one child). That day, they offered 300rwf.

The Kimbugu congregation built a church and sent Mbarushimana Bernard to study on scholarship at Cameron for a year. The capacity building project sponsored RWF 100,000 for youth to set up a saving and credit cooperative. In education, the church sponsored two young people to learn a welding job; two high school students and health insurance for the needy.

The parish has encountered doctrinal difficulties, loss of land and property, division and suspension of its churches in the process of compliance with government requirements despite the rapid closure of Ngarama and Katabagemu for lack of Christian members. Actually, Ngarama has 44 Christian members (12 men, 15 women and 17 young people and children). The good lesson of this story is autonomy and good management.

16.1. RWANTERU PARISH

The parish of Rwanteru was created in 2001 by five congregations, Rwanteru, Gasenyi, Gatarama, Kigarama and Bukora. Reverend Kayitana John and Reverend Mugabo Athanasius had led it, but in reality the parish has four congregations, one of which is suspended to comply with government policies.

16.2. RWANTERU

Rwanteru congregation was established at the Anglican School of Kigina on February 19, 1995 by five families of Mugabo Evarister, Nkurikiyinka Faustin, Kanyamuhungu Augustine and Silingiya. The first congregation was led by Ev. Mugabo Evarister (the current bishop of LCR). After a while, they moved to Félicien's house, but after a short time they got land.

The first Holy Supper was organized on May 14, 1995 and led by Rev. Habiyakare Martin with 43 among 89 of attendance and congregation had about 200 Christian members. The parish have done a lot of activities including a modern church, the primary school, offices equipped by materials and water tank. The evangelization goes well up to date.

16.3. RWANTERU – GASENYI

The congregation was created on November 5, 1995 by Ev. Mugabo Evarister. The first service took place in the Seventh-day Adventist Church building and gathered only seven Christians. In 2004, the number of worshipers increased to 150. Nowadays, this congregation has been suspended in the process of complying with the policies of the government, the Christians temporarily serving the congregation of Rwanteru.

16.4. GATARAMA.

The congregation of Gatarama was created on November 26, 1996 by Ev. Mugabo Evarister and Rev. Sarambuye Celestin. The congregation had 50 members and first religious service was held in the house of Christian member by 25. Ev. Ruganintwari Andrea and Christians were transferred to Nyamugari to reduce big distance.

16.5. KIGARAMA

The congregation of Kigarama was created on November 26, 1995 by Ev. Muzigura Faustin. The congregation had 80 members and first religious service was held in the house of Christian member by 15 composed of three families. Actually, it is one of congregations of Kirehe parish and has a modern church.

16.6. BUKORA I

The congregation of Bukora was created on November 11, 1997 by Rev. George Wilson Kaliisa and Ev. Mugabo Evarister. The first religious service was held in the room of primary school constructed by Lutheran World Federation (LWF) by 8. Actually, it has a modern church of 300.

17.1. KIGALI

Geographically, Kigali is in the center of the country and is a capital of Rwanda. The Kigali congregation was created on April 24, 1996 and inaugurated by Reverend Sarambuye Celestin and Reverend Rutsindintwarane John. It was not easy to start the first religious service because of reverends and evangelists who feared to operate in the capital for the following reasons: (i) housing problem, (ii) poverty, (iii) food security, (iv) the Lutheran church was anonymous in Rwanda, (v) the Lutheran Christians were trapped, (vi) the returnees had not yet decided where to stay, (vii) Rwandans exiled on their arrival were not familiar with other who were in country before 1994 Genocide against Tutsi, (viii) logistics problem, (ix) shortage of books like some of catechism, liturgy and bible; language issues whereas most returning were using Swahili and English which was new in Rwanda. But in villages, to begin a church was not difficult as in town, because at time, you should even begin a church and serve it under tree. But in town, the easy way was renting.

The congregation and its leaders have rent two houses near Amahoro stadium for 100,000rwf (about \$222 at a time). One was used as office and accommodation; another was used as church. Late Ezekiel was Evangelist and Sarambuye was a reverend.

The first general assembly of the church was held on December 23, 1996 and was deployed in the following manner: Reverend Habiyakare Martin stayed in Rusumo, Reverend Sarambuye Celestin moved from Kigali to Rukira, Reverend Ruhinda Theonest from Mutara to Kigali Reverend Mahirane G William from Rukira to Kayonza, Reverend Rutsindintwarane John stayed in Kigali, Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya from Curazo to Matimba, Ev. Twahirwa Elidard remained Kagitumba, Ev. Muzigura Faustin from Gatarama to Relenge - Rukira, Ev. Ntidendereza David of Matimba in Kigali, Ev. Mugabo Athanase stayed in Kirehe.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) accepted to help church for two main things: (i) lending church offices at Kiyovu of Deputy Kayuku where there was computer and printer in it. The LWF also offered a means of transportation for church leaders and the purchase of land for the church. Since then, the church has been looking for land everywhere, they first found land near the Remera Mosque, but it was not bought because its non-registration, the same way as land found near Remera cement. Finally, the church found a land in Kanome for 1,500,000Rwf where is located up to date. Later, the problem occurred when the road crossed our parcel. So we decided to buy Rugundana's land at 600,000Rwf for the road to pass instead. The Christians were conducting religious services in that parcel and the trees, but after a little while, Mrs Epiphanie Kaliisa (Mama Eli) donated a big tent which was installed in the parcel. Actually, there's a church building.

The Christians were serving in the tent and there was a wooden box, table, chairs and other church equipment that was stored at the neighbor Habasi Hamadi's house. In this condition, Christians led by KIST professors, late Stephine Kiwia, Mr. Leonard Manga, Mr. Silas Mushuza, Mr. Mfinanga, Mr. Andrea and Mr. Leaders, Reverend Habiyakare Martin, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John, Dean Reverend Sarambuye Celestin, thought of building a church. The congregation was led by Ev. Ntidendereza David, counselors, Mutambarungu and Thomas Mukwihere Fayce (they will not be forgotten because of their great contribution). When George Wilson Kaliisa became a bishop, he worked on the construction process, from foundation to roof (2001-2011).

In 2001, the LWF assisted LCR with the finishing work, which enabled them to leave the offices that the LWF had lent them. In youth, the church has formed its groups, organized training, evangelized through songs, local and international travels.

For development, in 2009, LCR launched a soap production project; tailoring and shaving projects, even if they failed to continue; Soccer; dancing and so on. The first choir was created in the Kigali congregation by six people, Ev. Ntidendereza David, Rose Mukundwa, Tina Manga, Muramira Peace, Rudakubana Emmanuel and Diana under the name of "tuyishime". It is now advanced enough to sing here and abroad. Women have done great work in the areas of evangelism, capacity building and social and economic development. Later, the church bought two other plots near the church building. The LCR evangelized from house to house by Reverend Habiyakare's walk J. Martin, Ev. Ntidendereza David and Muthambarungu Thomas bazengurukaga around Kigali.

After the consecration of May 27, 2001, Reverend Muzigura Faustin was appointed head of Kigali. He opened partnership with the parish of Nyamirembe where he served as an evangelist. This partnership played a big role in establishing choirs with the help of Ngara, called "UKINGA".

17.2. KIGALI -KABUGA

Although it was not easy to initiate other congregations while others were not yet very strong, especially in Kigali-Kanombe, on November 20, 2005, the LCR created the parish of Kabuga by Reverend Ntidendereza David. The first congregation was held in a rented house by 35 people. Shortly after, Reverend Bashosho Pascal came from the Anglican Church and became a Reverend of Kabuga. Subsequently, the LCR initiated a restoration project to support the church, but later failed because of financial problems.

18. RWASAMA

In 1999, the congregation started in the city of Byumba. The first congregation was held in the rented house by Reverend Habiyakare J. Martin together with Ev. Ntidendereza David. Most Christians and evangelists were from ELERWA, led by Mbarushimana Bernard. After some time in 2000, about 400 people from the congregation were transferred from Byumba town to Rwasama, near the road leading to the border of Gatuna between Rwanda and Uganda. As the church grew, the reverends baptized 100 new Christians and welcomed 200 new Christians. At that time, the LCR headquarters in Kigali, led by Reverend Muzigura Faustin, constantly monitored the spiritual development.

After the consecration of new reverends in 2001, Rwasama received Reverend Rwangarinde Privat and was later retired and replaced by Gatari Jean Paul. Subsequently, he resigned shortly thereafter. The parish of Rwasama has got partners from Santa Clara Synod of Hope, led by Reverend John Sullivan. This church supported financially the rent of the parish of Rwasama and the Reverend's travels.

19.1. NYAMATA - MAYANGE

The congregation of Mayange in Nyamata was created on December 08, 2002 by Reverend Muzigura Faustin, Reverend of Kigali and Dr. Rugango Dismas (deceased), their attendance was 22 Christians composed of 11 families and offered 5,200Rwf. This congregation was conducting religious services in a warehouse but after a while, they got land in Mayange and built a small church through a partnership with Grace Phoenix's community and the support of Rev. Tim Wright. The partners also supported Mayange by offering scholarships to students, renovating a church and a reverend residence.

Today Nyamata Parish has various activities, including activities for young people. They are trained and bought bibles for their own. Women were trained in the Word of God, the small catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, and entrepreneurship; in education, they provide materials for students, send two people to study the Bible, support those in need, and support delivered women.

Under development, the church trained and supported groups of credit and savings, raised goats (but failed) and built modern toilets. For evangelism, they bought musical instruments and Christian members increased to 163.

19.2. NYAMATA – MIGINA

The parish of Nyamata established a new congregation of Migina on December 30, 2012 by Reverend Muzigura Faustin and Murekezi Daniel. This congregation started in the house of Kalori Sentama by 36 Christians composed of 17 families, but later they bought a piece of land and built a church there.

20.1. NDEGO I

The parish of Ndego I consists of three congregations, Ndego I, Mahumbezi and Humure. The first congregation was created on December 5, 1998 by pastors Sarambuye Celestin and Serutagoma Joseph together with twelve families composed of 45 Christians. The first religious service was done under the trees. In 2003, they had 130 but now have 350 Christians. They also built a modern church, offices and a reverend residence.

20.2. NDEGO II

The Congregation of Ndego II was created on July 30, 2000 by Rev. Sarambuye Celestin and Ev. Muwese Dominic (deceased) with eighteen Christians from six families, but these Christians were not Lutherans before, except a reverend and an evangelist and the first religious service was celebrated under the trees. In 1999, the congregation had between 15 and 30 Christians, but in 2003 it was increased by 45 – 50.

In 2017, Ndego II Parish established a partnership with the church from United States in Sierra Pacific synod, Good shepherd Reno led by Ginny McBride before others and donated goats. This church supported them in the construction of the church and supported their Reverend.

21.1. KAYONZA.

The parish of Kayonza consists of three congregations, Mukiyanja and Kayonza town.

21.2. KAYONZA – MUKIYANJA

Mukiyanja congregation was created on March 9, 1997 by Reverend Mahirane Gerard and Helena Gatera (a sister of Karagwe Diocese). The first congregation was held at the home of Rose Gatera, mother of Helen (deceased), by 18 Christians from three families. In 2003, the congregation had 70 Christians; they got a piece of land and built a church and a nursery school there.

After a period, the congregation lost a reverend and an evangelist so Reverend Habiyakare J. Martin of Kigali has therefore prepared a program of volunteers among reverends, evangelists and preachers such as Rev. Rutsindintwarane John, Ev. Ntidendereza David, Rwangarinde

Privat, Mr. Mahundaza Justice (deceased) and Mr. Bageni Museruka so that they alternate evangelizing this parish until they got new leaders.

21.3. KAYONZA – TOWN

The congregation of Kayonza town was created on June 04, 2000 by Rev. Sarambuye Celestin and Ev. Twahirwa Elidard with 17 christians from three families. The first congregation was held at the home of a Christian member, then in garage but finally, they got land and built a temporary church (built by woods and roofed by irons) but later on they decided to build a strong church.

In 2005, LCR renovated the church in order to establish a school of bible study within it. On leadership of Rev. Seburikoko Celestin, young people made 40,000 bricks, but unfortunately, those bricks were stolen. Despite those circumstances, in 2015, through the help of LCR headquartes, they finished a good church.

Actually, Kayonza has accomplished different goals like buying music instruments, initiating a nursery school, tailoring project, credit and saving groups, organizing the trainings on capacity building and partnership between the choir from Shinyanga diocese and Mwanza. Moreover, Shinyanga diocese have donated 94 sacks of cement.

Kayonza had some challenges particularly, the case of their leader Rev. Seburikoko Celestin who divide them and nearly stealing them the donated 94 sacks of cement. Rev. Karangwa Innocent came and worked for little while then resigned the same as Rev. Gatari Jean Paul but fortunately, Ev. Shema came and later became a reverend up to now.

22. NYARUBUYE

The congregation of Nyarubuye was created on April 14, 2002 by Ev. Mugabo Evarister with the assistance of Mzee Bizima Ananias and Roza the wife of Sylvester. The first congregation was attended by 9 Christians from 3families. In 2003, the congregation had 30 members, government donated them land in 2013 then built a strong church.

After becoming a parish, it was led by the following reverends, Rev. Mahirane Gerard, Rev. Bashosho Pascal, Rev. Kayitana John, Rev. Nyundo Nathanael, and Rev. Rutakinikwa Thomas

up to date. Through evangelization, they established another congregation of Rulenge, it is now led by Ev. Dusabe Heri (there is a built church there).

Nyarubuye parish has partnership with Sierra Pacific Synod – Good shepherd – Sacramento led by Rev. Todd Wallace. This partnership has played a big role in building a good church and sustaining the reverend.

23. MUMEYA

The congregation of Curazo was established in March, 1995 before other congregations of Mumeya by Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya and 70 members mostly children, on their first religious service, they offered 1,000Rwf. Among the founders, there is advisors Athanase, Sebanjanji Silas, and Uwimana Leoncia.

In 2000, the congregation of Curazo have lost the land that had been given by local authorities. By that time, Mukundehe lend them a house until 2001 when they built a church in the banana land that LCR bought for them. After the transfer of Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya in Umutara, Ev. Nzajyibwami Silas replaced him.

On May 27, 2001, Ev. Nzajyibwami Silas was consecrated and stayed there where he initiated the congregation of Kiha. They started religious church on rock as 20 and offered 200rwf. On that day, Ev. Twagirumukiza Innocent was appointed there up to date. Rev. Nzajyibwami Silas continued establishing congregation of Mumeya in December, 2001. The first religious service was done in the forest by 40 and offered 600rwf. On that day, Rev. Silas appointed Ev. Harerimana Calixte there, and Ev. Ndikumana Edson to the congregation of Curazo. On June, 2002, Rev. Silas established the congregation of Gasarabwayi. The first religious service was conducted under cassava tree by 10 people, offered 120rwf and liturgy was led by himself. Later on, he appointed Ev. Karinda Emmanuel and bought land by his own money and lent it the church.

In 2005, the congregation on Gasarabwayi became a parish and Rukumba and Gasenyi were established on that day; nowadays, they are demolished because of expropriation.

The parish of Mumeya has got partnership with Sierra Pacific Synod – Mt Calvary, sugar Pine from America. This partnership was represented by Carol Floyd Jim and have played a big role in evangelism and sustaining the reverend.

Then Gasarabwayi has now partnership with Sierra Pacific Synod – Peace, San Bruno represented by Gashema Frednand.

24. NYAGATARE

The congregation of Nyagatare was established on December 5, 2005 by Rev. Ruhinda Theonest and Ev. Mukundane Robert (has later became reverend). The first religious service was held in the compound of LWF by two families consist of 4 men, 2 women, and five children, but in 2008, the congregation was raised up to 150 members. In 2006, Rev. Dr. Ntidendereza David was transferred to Nyagatare parish so he continued developing the church with the help of Christians.

This congregation was likely to use the LWF's place in a storage room and were hoping to take it over when it leaves but after the departure of LWF, Nyagatare district fired the church based on its agreement with LWF. Nevertheless, Nyagatare parish was able to take some materials like chairs, cupboard and three containers. It was not easy as such to relocate a parish however, in arrangement, the Christians started praying from home to another of their members. Later on, they held a meeting where they decided to sell all materials they had in order to buy land and construct a church. Fortunately, they got a financial support from their partners from America in Sierra Pacific Synod - Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church San Jose represented by Rev John Freezman. That support, helped them to build a modern church within two months. Afterwards, they bought another land to expand parcel. The land is now registered on UPI 5/02/12/08/322 and the church there was officially inaugurated by bishop of LCR. Moreover, they parish has also built the offices of region, residence of reverend, bathrooms, musical instruments (keyboard, mixer, speaker, 4 microphones) and water tank of 5m³.

Spiritual mapping of this parish from 2005 – 2018 is as follow: 39 baptism, 27 confirmations, 30 new members, 4 concerts, 4 youth seminars and training of fight against HIV/AIDS. The parish has increased to 104 Christian members (13 men, 32 women, 39youth and children).

The parish gives attributes to **Mr. Mukunzi A. Emmanuel and his family for their contributions.** He has done the following, donated land to the parish, advocacy, advisory, financial support of two million to support the parish in the compliance with government standards, two bathrooms, door of regional offices, and offerings. Nyagatare parish also established another congregation in town but it had closed.

25. KAMEMBE

On December 17, 1997 Mr. Rwampamira Godwin amember of Lutheran church since in Tanzania, Karagwe Diocese, wanted to establish a Lutheran church of Rwanda in Cyangugu. On April 24, 2001, proposed his idea to reverend Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin so they started preparations in 2001 – 2004 but it was not easy to initiate a church there because of long distance. But Bishop Kaliisa planned to visit Cyangugu on March 13, 2005 but unfortunately, he had an accident on March 7, 200 so Rev. Dean Sarambuye Celestin went there on his behalf.

On march 12, 2005, Rev. Sarambuye went with Rev. Ntidendereza David, Rev. Rwangarinde Privat but on their way in Butare, they were informed that Bishop Kaliisa was very sick so they decided to return so that they could transfer him in the advanced hospital abroad. But upon their return, they sent Rev. Rwangarinde Privat to attend religious services in Cyangugu as planned but he was not allowed to establish a congregation. So on March 13, 2005, the had religious services without official opening of congregation.

On July 20, 2008, Bishop George Wilson Kaliisa escorted by Rev. Dean Sarambuye Celestin had visited Cyangugu missionary. On that day, they served in Anglican church as 12, offered 7,000rwf and liturgy was led by Rev. Dean Sarambuye Celestin then bishop preached. They baptized 4 children and 4 adults. Afterwards, they started praying as normal in the house of Rwampamira Godwin but after a short time, they rented the house at the Mount Cyangug in the institution of “mwana wiriwe ute” and finally moved to Murangi in where they bought land and built a strong church.

On December 11, 2011 Rev. Rwampamira Godwin was ordained to lead Kamembe parish. This parish has increased to 30 members so far.

26.1. KIBUNGO.

Kibungo parish has two congregations, Kibungo Sakara but Kibungo congregation was closed recently because it is located in high risk zone.

26.2. KIBUNGO – SAKARA.

The congregation of Sakara was created on November 10, 2013. The first religious service was held in the house of Ntasingwa Benjamin by himself, 34 people attended (6 men, 8 women, 5 youths, and 15 children) and offered 870Rwf.

From 2013 – 2018, the congregation has got 30 baptisms, 42 confirmations, 64 new members, 7 concerts, 5 seminars of bible study, and training on capacity building, social groups, English center for children and “ubumwe” saving&credit group. However, they started in rental house, moved to tents, under tree, and finally bought land with the help of LCR headquarters. The congregation has now 117 members (16 men, 46 women, 15 youth and 40 children). Moreover, the parish of Kibungo has partnership with Sierra Pacific Synod – Bethlehem, Auburn, represented by Tia Desplancke from USA.

27. RWAMAGANA

The congregation of Rwamagana was established in 2004. The first religious services were held in rental house in town by Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Seburikoko Celestin, Rev. Ntidendereza David, Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya, Rev. Muzigura Faustin, Rev. Twahirwa Elidard, Rev. Nzajyibwami Silas, Rev. and Rev. Kayitana John.

In 2006, the group of partners from Sierra Pacific Synod represented by Smith came to Rwanda including the group from Bethlehem, Santa Rosa a partner of Rwamagana. After analyzing the case of Rwamagana parish, they pledged to buy land for them. By that time, the parish was in process of buying land to construct a secondary school (it was headed by Robin Rutsindintwarane, the missionary of LCR). so finally, they bought a piece of land and built a church, office of bishop, and school. Since then, the congregation of Rwamagana moved into the room of school but on February 9, 2019, the leaders of Rwamagana secondary school dismissed LCR and it was closed up to now. Some of Christians go to Kayonza parish.

28. MUNEZERO

In 2006, when the returnees from Tanzania come, the population of Gakagati Village inclusively Kagorora John, Muteteri Henarriet, Bazimya Dan, and Kabera Charles held a meeting on December 21, 2006 at Bwera, Gakagati in Rwimiyaga sector. on December 27, 2006 Gakagati congregation was established by Rev. Twahirwa Elidard and Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya. The first religious service was held by 48 (14 men, 20 women, 14 youth) and offered 3,800Rwf. It was not easy to initiate a church there though the LCR head office provided 30 iron sheets but where the church was built on mountain, the old and weak people were not able to reach there.

This congregation was led by Ev. Kagorora John, after he realizes that it won't be easy for the rest of Christians to go on mountain, he donated his own land where they built a temporary church which was constructed by mud, wood and roofed by iron sheets. Unfortunately, this building did not resist so it was destroyed and they failed to reconstruct because of many issues including, legal documents and materials.

On December 10, 2017, the LCR ordained seven reverends including Muteteri Henarriet who was appointed to Munezero parish up to date. Before that, on January 28, 2018 Rev. Dr. Ntidendereza David established Munezero parish on behalf of Bishop.

The parish gives thanks to Rev. Ngabonziza John Kagorora for all of his compassion and donation of his own land to Munezero parish.

29. RWIMBOGO

The idea of establishing the Lutheran church of Rwanda at Rwimbogo, was based on the wish of Christians from ADEPR who wanted to join Lutherans. They called bishop Mugabo Evarister for help then he sent Rev. Ruhinda Theonest who was a regional reverend of Umutara.

On June 05, 2016 Ndama congregation was established by Rev. Ruhinda Theonest with 95 (18 men, 22 women, 25 youth and 30 children). They held religious service on ground of Ndama primary school and offered 8,200Rwf.

They were praying on that ground for a while, then moved to the room of Ndama primary school, afterwards to the tents and finally in the house of Mbaraga Julius.

Later on, the church helped them to buy land, they built a hall within ongoing construction so they serve from there. LCR kept helping in many different ways in order to obtain a church, so the activities are still ongoing

On December 10, 2017, the region of Umutara got seven reverends including and Manirarora Emmanuel. On 11/2/2018 Rev. Dr. Ntidendereza David established the parish of Rwimbogo. On that day, Rev. Manirarora was appointed to this parish up to date.

Rwimbogo from 2016 – 2018, have got 59 of baptism, 19 of confirmation, 34 new members, 4 trainings of bible study, 2 training on capacity building and 5 concerts.

There is youth choir, save and credit group of women, sewing and agaseke project. The church helped the needy by providing food, husbandry, materials for 23 children and 2 young people got chances of learning welding.

Actually, the congregation has increased to 49 (8 men, 14 women, 10 youth and 17 children).

The parish gives thanks to Mbaraga Julius and his family for lending his house to the church for long period.

30.1. KIRAMURUZI

The parish of Kiramuruzi has 4 congregations, Kawangire, Mbogo, Bugarura, and Kiramuruzi.

30.2. KIRAMURUZI – KAWANGIRE

On 05/06/2008 Kawangire was established among kayonza congregations. The meeting that made this decision was held on 04/07/2008. The first service was held on ground near dams and led by Bishop George Wilson Kaliisa, Rev. Seburikoko Celestin, Rev Muzigura Faustin led the liturgy. 12 attended (8 men, 2 women, 1 youth and 1 child) they offered 1,000rwf.

From 2008 – 2018, the congregation got 60 of baptism, 20 of confirmation, 40 newmembers, 2 concerts, and a training of evangelist. They also donated clothes to the needy. Recently, the church was dismissed due to government requirements but the church leaders visit Christians at their home for the time being. The Christian members are now 70 (10 men, 15 women, 20 youth and 25 children).

30.3. KIRAMURUZI – MBOGO

The idea of establishing the congregation of Mbogo came from the church of Nyakabungo. The first religious service was held on 10/11/2018 on the compound of Christian home by 70 people and led by Rev. Rutayisire Tharasisi and Rev. Manirarora Emmanuel. They offered 3,200Rwf.

From 2018 – 2019, the church got 18 of baptism, 12 of confirmation, 9 new members. But recently, the church was dismissed due to government requirements

30.4. THE CONGREGATION OF KIRAMURUZI

The congregation of Kiramuruzi was created on 25/02/2013 by Rev. Seburikoko Celestin. The first religious service was held on 22/03/2013, at the house of a Christian. The attendance was 50 (10 men, 10 women, 20 youth, 20 children) and liturgy was led by Ev. Rutarisire Tharasisi

From 2013 – 2018. The congregation got 20 of baptism, 21 of confirmation, 20 new members. In social, they provided health insurance to the needy. But recently, the church was dismissed due to government requirements. Nevertheless, the LCR helped to buy piece of land.

30.5. KIRAMURUZI – BUGARURA

The congregation of Bugarura was established on 21/04/2015 at home of Christian. The liturgy was led by Ev. Shyaka Enock, attendance was 4 and offered 200rwf. In January 2015, Rev. Ruhinda Theonest, the regional reverend visited them during that time, a Christian donated land with a small house in it but at condition of giving him only a small house elsewhere equally like the one left in the plot. So the LCR head office helped out to settle it so afterwards, they even started praying in that small house until recently when the government closed the congregation due to the process of compliance with government standards on church buildings.

31. GICUMBI

Sometimes the history repeats itself. We have seen that Rwasama congregation was terminated in that area but later on, God plan came upon Gicumbi again. On 19/3/2017, Gicumbi congregation was established. On that day, liturgy was led by Caleb Havugimana and attendance was 8 (6 men, 2 women) and offered 1,200rwf. They have also tried to raise funds of 2 plastic

chairs and a registration book. The congregation was started in Gatare village, Nyamiraga cell, Kageyo sector in Gicumbi district. On 31/3/2017 bishop Mugabo Evarister had visited them and met 13 Christian members. On 4/6/2017, Rev. Muzigura Faustin of Kigali region had received 43 new members, then again, on 17/09/2017, Bishop and Mugabo Evalister and Mzee Bageni Museruka visited Gicumbi and 17 Christians were confirmed.

In 2017, 60 of attendance and attendance 161 in 2018. In this year, we have reached 100 of attendees so far. This congregation has one evangelist sent for bible study.

The parish of Byumba is moving on in evangelization. They have organized the training of capacity building, having two groups now; 7 training of bible study; in education, the congregation sustains the children for three times in a week by mentorship and providing school materials.

Financially, the congregation has now bought the land composed of one big house, two offices, and one hall. They have started renovating the hall in order to use it as church building, there's also a choir of youth

32.THE CONGREGATION OF MUNINI.

The Congregation of Bukora started on 19/04/1998 after the Rwandan returnees. It was started by Dean Rev. George Wilson Kaliisa and Ev. Mugabo Evalister. The six families composed by 18 members begin this congregation under a tree, near the center and the office of Munini's cell. After a while, the Christians left that place and settled in the schools built by the LWF. The local authorities gave them the plot and the congregation built the church there.

33. THE PARISH OF MUNINI

The Parish of Munini started on 30/12/2017. It was at this time that Rwanteru Parish was regenerated the new pastor called Hagumubuzima Seth. This Parish was divided into two parts; one was kept to the parish of Munini. So far the parish is led by Rev. Mugabo Athanase and the parish of Rwanteru is led by Rev. Hagumubuzima Seth. The Parish of Munini has 453 Christians. They built the parish at the good level of development.

34. KAGEYO B.

Kageyo we say here is different from the Kageyo of Gicumbi called Byumba. This Kageyo is located in Rugeyo Village, Kageyo Cell, Mwiri Sector, Kayonza District, Eastern Province. The congregation of Kageyo started on 21/09/2017. The first day, they met in a rental house. They were 8 members on the service headed by Daniel Murekezi. Thanksgiving was two hundred Rwandan francs (200Frw)! On 19/11/2017 Reverend Murekezi Daniel was ordained to be a pastor of Kageyo Parish.

35. THE CONGREGATION OF NYAMAGANDA.

The congregation of Nyamaganda is located in Nyamaganda village, Mubuga cell, Shyogwe Sector, Muhanga District. This congregation started on 17/02/2018, by Rev. Shema Vincent and Mukabucyana Vestina with 37 persons from 18 families. At the first service, the members used the house of Mukabucyana Vestina and thanksgiving were two thousand three hundred (2,300Frw).

36. THE CONGREGATION OF MASAKA.

The congregation of Masaka is located in the Inyange village, Gitaraga cell, Masaka Sector. Started on 29/09/2019, by Rev. Makara Edward and Rev. Muzigura Faustin. During this day they used primary school of O'Leander. The members gathered there were 35 from 10 families. They collected the contribution of renting the place they are going to use in three months equal to one hundred fifty thousands 150,000rwf.

37. LEADERSHIP OF LUTHERAN CHURCH OF RWANDA (LCR)

The leadership of Lutheran Church of Rwanda (LCR) was altering by the flowing ways: since 1994 to 2001 the representative of the church was Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin, and the deputy representative was Rev. Dean Sarambuye Celestin, The General secretary was Rev. Rutsindintwarane John.

On 18/08/2001, Rev George Wilson Kaliisa elected to be the first Bishop of Lutheran church of Rwanda, Dean Rev. Sarambuye Celestin was the deputy of the Bishop, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John elected to be the General secretary of LCR, Rev. Ruhinda Theonest elected to be the vice of General secretary of the church.

In 2008, there was also elections, Dean Rev. Sarambuye Celestin chosen to be deputy of Bishop, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John voted to be General secretary of the church, Mr. Mahundaza Justice (he dead) elected to be the general secretary. On 15/12/ 2010 there was also elections of leadership, Rev Mugabo Evarister elected as Bishop to replace Retired Bishop George Wilson Kaliisa. (Bishop Mugabo Evarister was consecrated on 15/05/2011). During those elections, Dean Rev. Seburikoko Celestin was chosen (He was received from other church and confirmed by the LCR on 18/04/2004) to be the deputy Bishop. Then, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John elected to be the General secretary of the church and Mr. Mahundaza Justice, become the vice general Secretary. During 2012, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John resigned on his work of being the General secretary of the church.

On 29/12/2012, there was the general assembly meeting held at Rwamagana. On agenda, they fixed the elections of the church leadership. Dean Rev. Seburikoko continued to be the deputy of the Bishop and Rev. Dr. Ntidendereza David elected to be the general secretary of the church. Mr. Muvunyi Gerard elected to be the assistant general secretary and assigned to be in charge of managing projects of the church.

In 2014 Dean Rev. Seburikoko Celestin resigned on his work, said that he is going to study but sincerely speaking he was going to start his own church. Rev. Rutsindintwarane John elected to be the deputy of the Bishop (to end up the rest of time in office of Dean Rev. Seburikoko).

On 14/01/2016, the general assembly convened to elect new leaders because the ones in place were finished their period. Rev. Dean Rutsindintwarane John elected again to be the deputy of the Bishop, Rev. Prince A. Kaliisa elected to be the General secretary, Mr. Rurangwa Meshack elected as vice general secretary and Mr. Rugero David elected as treasurer of the church.

On 14 – 15/4/2018 the Executive committee decided, during in its meeting, to release the Vice Bishop Rev. Rutsindintwarane John because he was not fulfilling his duties. From that period up to now, this position is still empty.

38. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHURCH

As stipulated in the statute of the church, after its establishment, the law was signed by the members of the general assembly and deposited in the government institution which is in charge.

Therefore, the first statute of the church was composed in 1996. It was the only one that was based on for granting of legal personality to the church on 11 July 2002.

The first statute was signed on by the following persons: Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin, Rev. Sarambuye Celestin, Rev. Mahirane G. William, Rev. Rutsindintwarane John, Rev. Ruhinda Theonest, Rev. Kalisa G. Wilson, Rev. Rwangarinde Privat, Ev. Ntagwabira Isaya, Ev. Muzigura Faustin, Ev. Mugabo Evarister, Ev. Mugabo Athanase, Ev. Twahirwa Elidard, Ev. Ntidendereza David, Mrs. Mukantarindwa K. Epiphanie, Mr. Mukunzi Emmanuel, Mrs. Mukwihere Fayce, Mrs. Peace Ngarambe, Mrs. Mukagacinya Agatha, Mrs Uwizera Esperance, Mrs. Mukundwa Rose, Mrs. Umuraza Josephine, Mr. Bushayija Francis, Mr. Mutambarungu Thomas, Mr. Marere Matthew, Mr. Rugero David, Mr. Mahundaza Justice, Mr. Bageni M. Augustin, Mr. Rudakubana Emmanuel, Mr. Rwabinene John, Mr. Nkurunziza Jerome, Mr. Intwaza Fred, Mr. Mugisha Atupenda, Mr. Sarambuye Meshack, Mr. Ntaganda Augustin and Mrs. Urutundi Annonciatha.

The statute was renewed in 2008, but this time was not sent in the state. For the third time, the statute was renewed in 2012 to comply with the new law of the state. Its certificate was obtained on 23 September, 2014.

39. THE PASTORS

The Lutheran Church of Rwanda has obtained pastors in different ways:

(i) those who have returned back from neighboring countries ordained pastors

(ii) those who came from churches of the same faith as Lutherans

(iii) those who were ordained in Rwanda

PASTORS OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF RWANDA AND THE TIME OF THEIR ORDINATION

Names	Date of ordination	of Bishop who ordained him	The place of ordination
Bishop Mugabo Evalister	27/05/2001	Bishop Dr. Samson Mushemba	Kigali
Bishop George Wilson Kaliisa	20/04/1970	Bishop Josia Kibira	Bukoba – Kashura.
(retired)			
Dean Rev. Sarambuye Celestin	1/01/1982	Bishop Paul Mukuta	Kaisho -Nyakajwenge
Rev. Mahirane Gerard	7/01/1985	Bishop Paul Mukuta	Nyamirembe
(retired)			
Rev. Rutsindintwarane John	.../.../....		
Rev. Ruhinda Theonest	1/01/1995	Bishop Paul Mukuta	Kaisho-Nyakajwenge
Rev. Dr. Ntidendereza David	27/05/2001	Bishop Dr Samson Mushemba.	Kigali
Rev. Muzigura Faustin	27/05/2001	Bishop Dr Samson Mushemba.	Kigali
Rev. Prince A. Kalisa	18/01/2009	Bishop Dr. Benson K. Bagonza	Kigali
Rev. Nyundo Nathanael	02/10/2011	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Nyarubuye
Rev. Mugabo Athanase	23/10/2011	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kirehe
Rev. Kagorora John	06/11/2011	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Karangazi
Rev. Twesige George	13/11/2011	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Ndego

Rev. Rwampamira Godwin	.../.../2011	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Rusizi.
Rev. Mukundane Robert	18/08/2013	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kirehe
Rev. Uwambaye Evangeline	18/08/2013	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kirehe
Rev. Mugambage Pascal	18/08/2013	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kirehe
Rev. Gabiro Donath	18/08/2013	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kirehe
Rev. Gashema Frednand	18/08/2013	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kirehe
Rev. Biyandurijiki Manase	18/08/2013	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kirehe
Rev. Mulisa Emmanuel	06/07/2014	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Rukira.
Rev. Makara Eduward	19/11/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kayonza
Rev. Hagumubuzima Seth	19/11/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kayonza
Rev. Rutakinikwa Thomas	19/11/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kayonza
Rev. Shema Vincent	19/11/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kayonza
Rev. Murekezi Daniel	19/11/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kayonza
Rev. Kabakama Cosma	19/11/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Kayonza.
Rev. Havugimana Caleb	03/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Gicumbi
Rev. Kabahungu Angelo	10/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Bugaragara
Rev. Muteteri Henarriet	10/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Bugaragara
Rev. Manirarora Emmanuel	10/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Bugaragara
Rev. Sekamana Jean Claude	10/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Bugaragara
Rev. Musafiri Jackson	10/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Bugaragara
Rev. Rutayisire Tharasis	10/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Bugaragara

Rev. Uwambajimana Jean	10/12/2017	Bishop Mugabo Evalister	Bugaragara
Rev. Janelle Neubauer	29 /04/ 2017	Bishop Richard Graham	Dienna Vienna Virginia Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Rev. Mwakasungura Veronica	.../.../	Bishop Dr. Mdegella	Iringa- Tanzania

THE RETIRED PASTORS

Rev. Mahirane Gerard	07/01/1985	Bishop Paul Mukuta	Nyamirembe
Rev. Nzajibwami Silas	27/05/2001	Bishop Dr. Samson Mushemba	Kigali
Rev. Rwangarinde Privat	27/05/2001	Bishop Dr. Samson Mushemba	Kigali
Rev. Ntawutaramiryundi Joas	19/12/2004	Bishop George W. Kaliisa	Mumeya.

THE DEACONS (READY TO BE ORDAINED AS PASTORS)

1. Dusabirema Chantal
2. Mukama Eddy Santos.

THE PASTORS WHO DECEASED

1. Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin
2. Rev. Ntagwabira Isaya
3. Rev. Kayitana John

THE PASTORS WHO HAVE LEFT THE CHURCH

1. Rev. Seburikoko Celestin
2. Rev. Mbarushimana Bernard
3. Rev. Twahirwa Elidard
4. Rev. Karangwa Innocent
5. Rev. Gatari Jean Paul.
6. Rev. Bashosho Pascal.

40. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

On the side of international relations, the Lutheran church of Rwanda has great relationship with other Lutheran churches on the World, but also it is a member of other international Christian organizations like Protestant council of Rwanda (CPR), Lutheran Communion Central and Eastern Africa (LUCCEA) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The LWF support the LCR in different ways like giving scholarships to its members, providing funds for the church projects and advices.

Before the LWF closing its activities in Rwanda, the LWF gave transport materials to LCR like 3 cars, 5 motorcycles for support pastors, bought a plot for the church that costed about 1,500,000 Rwandan francs: that is where we build the headquarter of the church. The LWF contributed to build small offices located at Kanombe, gave the office equipment and other materials. It lent the offices where the church operates and so on.

The Lutheran Church of Rwanda has great relations with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). It is the one that support the LCR in different categories such as giving scholarships, support the church projects for example: supporting orphan children, sustainable development projects, welding and sewing projects, and staff capacity building.

It contributes to send missionaries for supporting the church, they send also youth as volunteers at the age of 21-28 these are coming annually to support the church as the year ends they are changing. This program called YAGM (Young Adult Global Mission) This mission started on 2015 and it is still ongoing.

Abundantly the Lutheran church of Rwanda has strong relationship with Synod of Sierra Pacific. The Synod helps the Lutheran church of Rwanda in the services of pastors where the congregation of Sierra Pacific synod has great relationship with the congregation of Lutheran church of Rwanda. Their relationship is found in the following ways: The LCR Bugaragara Parish has strong friendship with St Paul's, Lodi in SPC. The LCR Gasarabwayi Parish has friendship with SPC that called Peace, San Bruno. New Hope, Foresthill. The LCR Kagitumba Parish has strong relationship with SPS Faith Chico, together with Trinity Alameda. The LCR Kibungo Parish has friendship with SPS Bethlehem, Auburn. The LCR Kigali Parish has friendship with SPS Resurrection, Oakland. The LCR Kirehe Parish has friendship with SPS – The Parish of Bethel, Roseville. The LCR – Matimba Parish has friendship with SPS – Parish of Advent, Citrus Heights. The LCR – Mumeya Parish has friendship with SPS- Mt Calvary, Sugar Pine. The LCR- Nyagatare Parish has friendship with SPS – Holy Redeemer, San Jose, and American Woodland. The LCR- Nyamata Parish has friendship with Community of Grace, Phoenix, AR. The LCR- Nyarubuye Parish has friendship with SPS – the parish of Good shepherd, Sacramento. The LCR- Rukira Parish has the friendship with SPS – Parish of St. John's Sacramento (They supported to build Rukira's dormitory). The LCR – Rwamagana Parish has the friendship with SPS – Bethlehem Santa Rosa. The LCR – Rwanteru Parish has the friendship with SPS – Parish of Good shepherd Salinas. The LCR- Rwasama Parish has the friendship with SPS – Parish of Hope, Santa Clara. The LCR- Ndego Parish has the friendship with SPS – congregation of Good shepherd, Reno.

The LCR has great relationship with the Lutheran church of Tanzania on the following Dioceses: Karagwe as the origin of Lutheran church of Rwanda, Bukoba, Mwanza, Shinyanga, Iringa, Dar es Salaam and International Lutheran Council (ILC).

41. THE OPPORTUNITIES STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH TO GROW

1. To have pastors and Evangelists educated in the Biblical colleges or Theology.
2. To build strong relationship with other churches or organizations in internal and abroad.

There are some people (from LCR and also non members of LCR); churches, Government institutions and organizations, should be appreciated for what they have contributed to support LCR activities. We can mention the following:

RPF liberated Rwanda and support the rwandans who were exiled for many years to return back to their motherland, they rebuilt the government of Unity, people are living in peace and reconciliation, working together, listening to each other, Justice, health, economic growth and development. The government allowed the Lutheran church to work in freedom and granted the legal personality.

The Lutheran church of Rwanda appreciate the government of Tanzania welcomed the Rwandan refugees and give them the place to live, secured them, treat them, support their children to be at schools. LCR thanks also the Lutheran church of Tanzania (ELCT) especially Karagwe Diocese because they came to help rwandans born there, to start the Lutheran church of Rwanda. Most of them (rwandans) grown there, studied there, worked there, ordained there as pastors and they returned back home with the ability and capacity to start their own Church.

Karagwe Diocese did a lot to the Lutheran church of Rwanda including to host the refugees from Tanzania, caring them with love in education, advise and give them jobs from their church. Once the church of Rwanda started, they didn't ignore to support it by giving alter materilas, like visiting, etc. In the letter of The Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin wrote to lorens Hedelund on 30/05/1996 argued on that. He said, "We thank Rt.Rev. Paul Mukuta the leader of Karagwe Diocese who contributed five hundred thousand shillings (500,000Tsh)".

3. Other opportunities that the church had: to have Christians who committed themselves.
4. Have basic land: parishes and other activities have been developed.
5. Vibrant projects in the church have been supported by internal and external organizations.
5. The government has put in place the infrastructures.
6. Facilitation of good governance of the Republic of Rwanda

42. CHALLENGES

During its beginning, the church faced many challenges:

1. It started after the 1994 genocide against Tutsis.

2. People are afraid of each other: for example, those who faced the genocide were afraid of those who came back from Uganda and called them "Abasaja", those of Tanzania called them "abatized" those from Congo, called "abanyamurenge", those from in Burundi called "abarundi", who showed that people were not yet familiar while they were rwandans.
3. The church also faced with challenges for other churches were called themselves "Lutherans".
4. The church was so small because it was not known in Rwanda (before and after the one started by the Germans), it was symbolized as new comer.
5. The migration of some Christians who have been doubted about where they will live.
6. Due to lack of self-support, the church has not yet achieved its goals to carry out its activities throughout the country.
7. Some parishes closed because they were not competent enough at the level of the churches in Rwanda.
8. Lack of support for some church staff who are still working on a voluntary basis.
9. Capacities and capabilities are still not enough.
10. Shortage of means of transport.
11. Lack of evangelistic equipments (musical instruments).
12. Sometimes the drought appears. (For example, the parishes of Ndego, Bukora and Kageyo).
13. Some projects lack clients (especially the guest house of Rukira).
14. Weakness of some Christians and employees.
15. The lack of capacity which leads the church to have an insufficient number of workers compared to the planned activities.
16. Low number of Christians in general

43. WHAT LCR HISTORY TEACHES

The history passed by the LCR should not remain only in words or in books, but should be the lesson for today and for the future. Here are the lessons learned from the history:

1. Retrieve without waiting for support from abroad, as the Rwandan proverb openly declared that the support of neighbors came after the rain. The Swahili speakers also said that the stick that lent further did not kill a snake. "
2. The church should be able to support vulnerable people.
3. Be courageous and maintain what has been accomplished.
4. Work in unity, harmony and accountability, and move in one direction.
5. To love and serve the church and to be strong.
6. Be wise in choosing the servants of the church.
7. To strengthen ourselves.
8. To keep everyone's call.
9. God has kept and protect the church will continue to be with us. That is why the word says that, "Indeed God did great things for us; how happy we were! (Psalm. 126:3). And he promised that he will be with us always, to the end of the age. (Matt. 28: 20b)

44. APPRECIATION

The Lutheran church of Rwanda thanks God for what he had done because he did great things for it; how happy it is! (Psalm. 126:3). These great things he had done we cannot able to mention all. Most of them he did them by using people, churches and organizations.

The church is thanking full of how the government of Rwanda give freedom the Christian organizations and how they solved the problems which were in between the Lutheran church of Rwanda and other churches which called themselves "Lutherans".

The church thanks first employees like Rt Rev. Habiya Kare J. Martin was the first legal representative of the Lutheran church of Rwanda during the hard time 1994- 2002.

The church thanks Emeritus Bishop George Wilson Kaliisa who was the first Bishop during 2001 – 15/5/2011.

The church thanks all pastors who are still working, those in retirements, and those who were dead. We thank everyone who contributed to the church, even those their names were not mentioned here, may God bless them.

The church thanks different commissions sat at Karagwe planning how the church will start t in Rwanda. The church thanks for those settled the churches in different places, the leadership since it started.

The church thanks who offered their wealth, like Rev.Kagorora contributed land, Munezero Habimana John contribute a land at Rukira, Musilikare Kamanzi Emmanuel contributed to the parish of Kagitumba to have a big land they use it now. Mr. Mukunzi A. Emmanuel contributed a plot at Nyagatare town, he supported also the church to have a plot by paying two million (2,000,000Rwf) to build the parish, he lent the church the car helped in the evangelism, he built two toilet rooms, two bathrooms, one door to fix in the office of Mutara province.

Caroline from Canada supported the church twenty thousand dollars (20,000USD) these helped to build different parishes. Epiphanie Kaliisa sponsored the Kigali Parish to have a big tent and she contributes every year on Bible calendar. She contributed also 35 roof tiles and nails to build the church of Mukiha in Gasarabwayi parish. We thank Karegeya James contributed land for Kibaya congregation.

The church thanks, Mr. Mutembe Gaitan (Dead) he was working Arusha in ELCT /ALICE. He supported the Lutheran church of Rwanda to translate the first church laws in English and French.

Teachers at KIST from Tanzania supported the church in development especially in advises, build the Kigali Kanombe parish. These are; Leonard Manga, Stephene Kiwia (dead), Mushuza Silas, Mfinanga, Peter, Andrea, Ndibarema...and others.

We thank Bishop. Rubwenjanga Ferederiko who built the relationship with Lutheran church and Catholic church.

The church thanks Jackie Boynton, Pastor Lucy Kolin, Cindy Tuisku, Patricia Baker, these contributed very much in building the relationship in between LCR and Sierra Pacific synod. The church thanks Dr. Andrea Walker for the spirit of loving the Lutheran church of Rwanda, he did advocacy in development. We thank Rev. Rutsindintwarane John because he was the key point in relationship with ELCA, Sierra Pacific Synod and Lutheran Church of Rwanda.

We thank the sacrifice of Rev. Rudolf Hinz the formal leader of LWF Geneva visited the LCR by the first period on 16/01/1997. He took all LCR news to the others who were not informed. We thank Dr. Ishmael Noko, he was General secretary of LWF and Bishop Dr. Musa Filibus was

in charge of Evangelism and developmente (DMD) they contributed in supporting LCR to have membership in LWF.

We thank CPR allowed us to be its member. We thank Archbishop Kolin Emmanuel who led the Anglican church of Rwanda and used to visit us.

The Lutheran church of Rwanda thanks Rev. Michael Hanestangl and Congregation of the north elbian centre for World mission of Federal Republic of Germany sent support for the church in the hard period of time equal to DM 35,000. The church also thanks Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany and Rev. Hannes Ganssbaver contributed DM 15,000. The appreciation letter wrote to the church in May 6th. 1996.

The Lutheran Church of Rwanda thanks Bukoba Diocese kept close relationship with the LCR and continued to visit and giving advises. At the letter Rev. Habiyakare J. Martin wrote on 30/5/1996 said that, “We thank full the Bukoba Diocese contributed a hundred thousand shillings (100,000Tsh). These sponsorships supported headquarter’s activities.

LCR thanks Father Rt. Rev. Bishop. Dr. Samsoni Mushemba was the vice president of LUCCEA, a leader of ELCT and also Bishop of Bukoba Diocese: contributed a lot to the LCR. We can say like advises he gave to strengthen the church in Rwanda, he was an advocator as it started he found the support that we bought three (3) motorcycles which contributed in transport facilities. As mentioned in above he visited the church during the conflicts with other churches called our names and he solved it. He opened the Kigali parish and he ordained 9 pastor by the first time in Rwanda. During that period, the LCR had not any Bishop. Great work and how he supported indeed the LCR will unforgettable even to God.

45. CONCLUSION.

The story mentioned all the achievements. We thank God for allowing us to write this story of the Lutheran Church of Rwanda since (1994 - 2019). The end of this story is not a last point, since Jesus does not come yet to take his church, the room of our history will be open. Everyone should be able to work well to create a better story: people and God will appreciate. The church has come a long way, it is a hard lesson especially for those who live today and succeeding generations.

It is not normal for a student to be sitting in the classroom for 25 years, but the lives of members of the Lutheran church have passed as if they were sitting in class 25 years. Anyone in this class of church life should behave as a 25-year-old relative. For those who will build the story, they will have a solid foundation for the history of the LCR.

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