



MAY 2026

## TRAGEDY, THEN ENCOURAGEMENT

### *Praises*

- Those from our church who died in the bridge collapse tragedy knew their Saviour.
- The encouragement of Christian unity fostered by the Pope's visit to Bamenda.

### *Prayer*

- For reconciliation between believers in the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC), including the withdrawing of lawsuits against one another.
- Pray Walter can finish work assignments well in preparation for the home assignment (furlough) period.

*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us,  
so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

ROMANS 15:4 (NIV)

In this restive region of Cameroon, plagued by sporadic violence, fear, and insecurity, two events occurred in these last three months that had significant impact on the church.

In my last newsletter, I shared how our little compound ring road was getting some much-needed rehabilitation. We are now awaiting the final coat of asphalt pavement.



Place in Bamenda where a temporary foot bridge collapsed after water surge, killing at least 4 people, more likely 16.

While that is going on, many of the main roads in Bamenda are also finally getting repaired and repaved. During this work, some bridges were demolished to make way for new ones. At one demolished bridge close to our compound, the road contractor put up a temporary pedestrian bridge. Tragically, when a heavy rainstorm fell, the surge of water that came down the stream from Upstation Hill collapsed the bridge with people on it. In the next couple of days, four bodies were recovered, and another 12 people were missing. Sadly, two of the bodies recovered were active members of our church, Nkwen Baptist Church. One was a woman who worked at Nkwen Baptist Hospital and was the mother of three children. The other was a young man whose wife is expecting their first child. This tragedy happened on the Thursday before Palm Sunday. Thus, our Easter celebration was more somber this year, as mourning and grieving were ongoing. Both victims were walking with the Lord, and for that the church is grateful.

After Easter, on April 16, 2026, Pope Leo XIV visited Bamenda, Cameroon, as a “messenger of peace” to our conflict-ridden North-West region, delivering messages of hope, justice, and reconciliation. The separatist fighter announced and carried out a three-day ceasefire to respect the Pope's visit. Now you may be wondering why a Baptist



missionary would be reporting on the Catholic Pontiff's visit! Well, the visit touched not just the Catholic Church but our entire Christian community. Pastors and church leaders from the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Full Gospel

denominations all came out to honour this visit. Read what one of our prominent Baptist pastors, Rev. Dr. Shadrach Vegah had to say: "There are instances where we maintain our doctrinal or theological positions and distinctions. There are also instances where we keep those differences aside to unite for the common good of a society or nation."

The Pope's visit was one of such instances. The much-talked-about prayer for justice and peace in this Anglophone Crisis was the central focus of the Papal visit. Justice and peace have no denominational boundaries. I was in the Cathedral as part of the CBC delegation to welcome the Pope. Listening to the bishops and others expressing the Anglophone Crisis

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challenges to the Pope, who has a very high political leverage, was so therapeutic. Like Archbishop Nkea said, "even if the Pope listens and does nothing, we will still be consoled that someone listened to us."

Sometimes it's just good to lower our denominational differences and unite for common causes that work for the good of the society or nation.

Overall, the Pope's visit was an encouragement for this area in general and specifically for the Church to unite in our recognition of common faith in Jesus Christ. Our problems have not gone away, but hope is renewed.

In a few months, I am scheduled to go on a home assignment (furlough) period. God-willing, that will include times of connecting and meeting with supporting churches and individuals. Pray that preparation for this goes well. And thank you for all prayers and support.

Sincerely,

