

# EGLISE METHODISTE UNIE THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



## Burundi Annual Conference UNITED METHODIST WOMEN DIVISION

### COVID-19 Emergency Response

From the time when Covid-19 was announced and the government took measures for prevention and response, The United Methodist Church in Burundi was among the first churches to approach the Ministry of Health for a partnership so that we do not invent the wheel in terms of key messages to be used in our different congregations.

This was an easy task to the church leadership as they had an ongoing conversation regarding the renovation of one of the church Hospitals. The leaders were received very well and were given necessary support to launch a campaign against the Coronavirus in Burundi. The Minister of Health appointed his Deputy, Dr Joselyne Nsanzerugeze, to always be at our disposal whenever we needed the Ministry support in this campaign.

First and foremost, our Church Health Department organized a one day workshop for all the 13 District Superintendents and their lay leaders, together with all members of the Burundi Health Board. At the end of the training, an action plan was developed to train all church leaders across the Burundi Annual Conference on Covid-19.

During the same training, decisions were made to arrest/or prevent the spread of the pandemic and have since been implemented:

1. Hand washing tools and sanitizers were placed at churches entry points.
2. Sanitizers were availed inside the church to be used on microphones and music instruments that are shared among users.
3. Social distancing is mandatory in all worship places
4. Multiple church services were implemented to decongest churches every time of worship
5. During the cerebation of the Holy Communion, pastors find worshipers in their seating places rather than moving towards the Alter as it has always been the practice.
6. Churches members were instructed to have tippy-taps installations at their houses and use them regularly
7. The church leadership has also instructed District Superintendents and pastors to explore possibilities of adopting open air services whenever rains are not expected

A part from that, women were at the forefront in training on Covid-19 prevention and behavior change on hand-washing. So hand-washing kits and soaps were distributed to local churches and surrounding communities in different church districts of the United Methodist Church.



Above: Rev. Jean, UMC Burundi leader, during practical on hand-washing  
Below: Church member hand-washing





Rev. Febronie, Cibitoke District Superintendent receiving hand-washing kits



Handwashing kits distribution in eastern part of Burundi





Hand-washing kits distribution in the Northern Province of Ngozi