

The Rt Rev Cleophas Lunga - Introduction

I am the Right Revered Cleophas Lunga. I have been married to my wonderful wife Soneni for over three decades. Soneni and I are overjoyed and indeed excited at the reality of joining you in participating in the mission of God in Catford.

As we step into a season of transition and change of scene, we do so with gratitude for the opportunity to serve. It gives us a sense of renewed purpose. The new season holds the promise of a positive relational culture that galvanises people of diverse backgrounds. This is a promise that ought to be shared as it is central on momentum building on the work which the St. Laurence community is undertaking.

Your preparedness to welcoming us from the continent of Africa to Catford is humbling. It reminds us how a parish/diocese such as yours, captured by the words “Christ centred and outward focused “ is a testament of how much of this is true.



We are an immediate family of six. Soneni and I, our two grown up children, Alison and Brian. We are also blessed to be grandparents of Amelianna, Brian and Annabelle’s daughter. Brian and his family live in Reading while Alison has been living with us in Zimbabwe.

Soneni has had an interesting evolving career with the Mothers Union in the diocese of Matabeleland. Having started as the Mothers Union Community Development Coordinator and worked for 9 years in that capacity and later becoming the President of the Union(2009 - 2026).

Soneni and I met at a Roman Catholic Church youth group where we were both members in the late eighties. Having worked briefly for a legal firm I was selected to study theology at the University of Zimbabwe by Bishop Theophilus Naledi. I did my ministerial formation at Bishop Gaul Anglican College in Harare. I was made deacon in 1993 and ordained priest the following year. During my time as a curate at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Bulawayo I obtained a degree in Theology from the University of South Africa.

After serving at the Cathedral for a period of 5 years I was appointed Rector of All Saints parish. I was the first locally trained person of colour to have been assigned to this position.

In 2003, my family and I relocated to the United Kingdom and I took up the position of Team Vicar in the Diocese of Coventry where I was to serve for five and a half years. I was able to enrol at the University of Coventry and obtained a Master's degree in Peace and Reconciliation. Just when I had been acting in the role of a Team Rector in the Caludon Team Ministry with five churches, I was elected bishop in my home diocese of Matabeleland in Zimbabwe.

In 2009 Soneni, Alison and I returned to Zimbabwe while Brian our son remained in England. As a bishop I became responsible for significant budgets, property portfolios, and oversight of clergy and lay staff across multiple parishes. I understand the complexities of balancing mission priorities with financial sustainability.

Soneni and I are delighted to have this privilege and honour given to us. We will endeavour to share our heritage in the African Church as we lead your diverse community of St. Laurence, Catford. We look forward also to learning from the faithful, a family, we believe is of many colours, cultures and backgrounds.

I personally enjoy reading, gardening and traveling. I will spend my spare time undertaking SafeChurch work in my capacity as a member of the SafeChurch Commission at the Communion level.

