

## **ELCT- DIOCESE IN MARA REGION ORDAINED ITS FIRST FEMALE PASTOR**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Diocese in Mara in Mara region (ELCT-DMA) since its establishment in 1991 had not ordained females as pastors. A ground breaking day happened on 30 May, 2021 when Rev. Anna Samwel Bochoke was ordained as its first female pastor along with other five male pastors.

It was a great worship service lead by the Diocesan Bishop Michael Adam and bishop Emeritus Elisa Buberwa of the ELCT-Northwestern diocese preached (Rtrd). The worship was also attended by the by ELCT-Deputy Secretary General for Social Services, women and children ministries Rev. Rachel Axwesso, accompanied by Ms. Faustina Nillan ELCT's Women's work Director. Many female pastors and theologians from other dioceses joined the diocesan pastors, and members of the congregations at the worship service and celebrations.

In the sermon Bishop Buberwa while congratulating the Diocese said that, "some rejoice now and some will come to rejoice later." Bishop Buberwa was alluding to those who are still skeptical about participation of women in the ordained ministry.

Bishop Michael Adam of that Diocese (ELCT-DMA) also said that to ordain a female theologian was the huge issue that made him sleepless but by now he is happy that it has been done.

Ms Faustina Nillan ELCT's Women and Children Director also added that it was a mile stone that took a long time to become a reality in ELCT-DMA and it has also increased the women dignity and changed the narrative towards women ordination in ELCT-Diocese in Mara.

The atmosphere indicated that most participants were very happy and grateful to see the Diocese is moving forward despite many challenges that it faces including social and economic ones. The Diocese continues to invite more women to study theology to be ordained as pastors and also it welcomes other Diocese to send female pastors to accompany them at this beginning.

Rev. Anna Samwel Bochoke was ordained in May 30, 2021 with other five Male Pastors. Rev. Anna was born in July 8, 1996 at Mugumu in Mara Region. She is the first born among six children to her Parents Rev. Samwel Bochoke Mchanake and Elizabeth Daudi Nyangachani.

She was baptized in September 8, 1996 in Burungu-Mugumu Parish and got her confirmation on December 13, 2009 in Tarime Parish.

Her School life began in 2002 at Keryoba Primary School from standard one to six and later completed her standard seven in Nyiboko-Serengeti Primary School in 2009. She later

joined Samaritan Technical Secondary School in 2010 owned by ELCT Mara Region Diocese and completed her Secondary education in November 2014.

Also she studied at Kiabakari Bible School in 2015-2017 and earned a certificate in Parish worker and evangelism course. And she began to study theology in August 2018 at Nyakato theological college and graduated in August 2020.

Rev. Anna Samweli Bochoke with other five Pastors ordained in May 2021 are waiting to be assigned to their new parishes.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania started to ordain female theologians from 1990 and by now they are about 300 female Pastors in the Church.