

JOURNEY TO CONGO

Jonathan and Donna Baker's Newsletter

April 2016

And so the Blind May See!



In 2014, the Congo Partnership sponsored a Cataract Surgery Mission in a tiny village called Diengenga, in the Kasai Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Although Bishop Yemba predicted that many patients would arrive due to the total non-access to ophthalmology care in this area, over 4000 patients arrived to be examined and treated by the many clinicians available to them. A surgeon and his technician, Dr. Kris Karlen and Charles Narh, from Kaiser Permanente in California

volunteered to be such servants to so many! And they were so blessed by the mission that they are returning in July 2016 to repeat the mission in the same village, along with Dr. Rebecca Yohadi from Kinshasa.

Because so many children appeared in the 2014 mission, the "focus" will be the pediatric population who have been infected by bacteria and parasites from the contaminated river water or even dealing with congenital cataracts which result in blindness. A pediatric ophthalmologist and an anesthesia provider from St. Joseph University in Kinshasa will be joining the team to care for these desperate children.



Dr. Roger Kapembu, his wife Nurse Sylvie and Jean Tshibinkufua, his technician will be returning from Kananga in the western side of Congo to join the Partnership for their fourth mission!

A powerful song we learned in worship in Congo:

I Give Myself Away

My life is not my own,

To you I belong.

I give myself, I give myself to You.

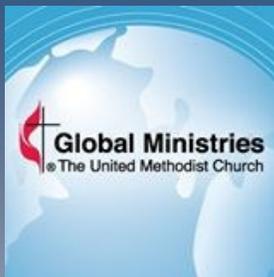
I give myself away

So You can use me.

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If you are able to read this, be sure and add it to your blessing list!



The Peter D Weaver Congo Partnership of the United Methodist Church

If you grow a healthy tree, you'll pick healthy fruit.

Matthew 12:33 MSG

...God made you grow.

1 Corinthians 3:5 MSG

One of our primary goals as missionaries is for projects to achieve self-sustainability. Now, this is not easy! But in many cases, can be achievable! Communities have assets—sometimes undiscovered! And so, we believe our role exists to assist communities in mobilizing their assets, their skills, their resources, which all lead to awakening the power of neighborhoods and villages. We see this happening in Diengenga where leaders have a vision for the future and just needs some support. For example, the committee of the Agriculture Project in Diengenga, requested the purchase of a truck for the farm. Why?

- To haul the plow to the savannah area for tilling—so the oxen won't be exhausted before they begin their work due to the distance they must walk
- To transport sellable products (veggies, meat, eggs) to the market 12 km away—to increase the marketing capability
- To eliminate delivery costs for fuel to the farm for the generator and seeds, etc.
- To provide an income! The farm will earn income by providing area businesses, schools and residents a way to transport materials, since it will be the only truck in the village.



The farm is thriving!

A Gift from the Lord!

Due to the generosity of so many gracious souls of the Body of Christ in the United Methodist Church of the Peninsula Delaware Conference, the purchase of a gently-used Toyota 4x4 became possible at the end of March. Praise God! The farm workers and committee and community are dancing with joy! Due to the absence of roads, transporting the truck to Diengenga from Kinshasa exists as the challenge. We'd appreciate your prayers as the logistics to minimize fees continue to be discerned and organized.

Another step toward sustainability!



WATER IS LIFE

NO WATER. NO LIFE.

Those of you who have been following the Congo Partnership Facebook page and website and previous newsletters, have witnessed the joy and excitement and life-changing lifestyles of the people of Diengenga since the drilling of the well in June 2015. Our recent time spent in the village certainly concretized that! The typical parade of women walking to the river each morning to retrieve the bacteria-infested water is a thing of the past. Now, children can walk to the well in the middle of the village to fill their bucket with fresh, clean water. This becomes a "rite of passage" for them! And probably relieves the mummies from one more responsibility!



One Down.....Many More to Go!!!

Due to the extreme necessity for access to fresh, clean water for health and safety, the Congo Partnership has a vision to drill at least one well per year. Due to the tremendous cost, we covet your prayers and support so that this goal may be achieved. For the well in Diengenga to be drilled in 2015, the largest challenge became transport for the rig. Because there are no roads, the transportation of the rig caused great difficulty, which led to exponential fees. Because the drilling rig now resides in the remote area, we are hopeful that additional wells can be drilled for a lower cost.

Earlier this year, the Partnership requested the support of UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), which shares our passion. UMCOR has agreed and, in August, engineers from UMCOR will travel with us among the various remote villages to assess the possibilities for new well drilling and we are so excited about the relationship that is being developed. UMCOR's program for access to fresh water also includes training for hygiene and sanitation to promote health and wellness. It's a very impressive program! Praise God!

And just yesterday, May 1, we received word from New Covenant UM Church in Florida that their congregation is going to fund the next well in central Congo!!! We cannot begin to describe the dramatic impact fresh water has upon these villages. Thanks be to God!



How can you help?

Be CREATIVE!

Here are a few examples from various congregations!

1. Place a 5 gallon water jug in the narthex for attendees to empty their pockets filled with coins to donate to a well or nutrition project.
2. Challenge the congregation to drink only water for a period of time. All money that would have usually been used to purchase coffee or coke or milkshakes could then be donated to a well project.
3. Provide small hand-decorated (by the children) coin boxes for kids to place on their kitchen tables at home to fill, but to stay mindful of the poverty of children to donate to the nutrition programs.
4. Use the occasional "Fifth Sunday" for a special offering.
5. Place an antique hand water pump in the narthex to remind parishioners of the need for fresh, clean water.
6. Dedicate a VBS program to the needs of children of the world.
7. Invite UMW groups to donate all of their "leftover" sewing notions such as thread, pins, needles, bias tape, etc. to support the sewing projects.
8. Request a local restaurant to donate a percentage of their profit to a project on a special evening of food, fellowship and fundraising!



Now let us help YOU!
Need a flyer or photos to
promote the projects?
We've got them!



The Peter D. Weaver Congo Partnership

Support of the various projects are essential to our work here. Visit the Partnership website at www.Congo-Mission.org to find descriptions of all initiatives underway or in the planning stages. We appreciate your prayers and any contributions made via the website or through your local UMC. Using the Global Ministries Advance Numbers is another option. #3022147 (Children's Ministry), #3022148 (Agriculture), #3022149 (Mpsa Medical & Nutrition) at www.umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/Search-for-Projects/Advance-Project-Search; Miriam's Table - <http://www.miriamstable.org/>

Advance Giving

For financial contributions, you may:

1. Use Global Ministries' website: www.umcmmission.org to send a donation for our salary support. At the bottom of the page, click on "Missionaries". Scroll to our names on the missionaries' page and our profile will appear. At the bottom of our profile is a link to make an online donation.

Through mailing a check to your local church or conference office. Write on the memo line of your check for....

*Donna Baker # 3022054,
and
Jonathan Baker # 3022050*

*Remember, your gift helps
Global Ministries send other
missionaries around the
world*

