

PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY | Fall 2017

mission CROSSROADS

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A woman with dark hair in a pink short-sleeved shirt is holding a baby in a white onesie. The baby is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. They are in a room with a cluttered background, including a table with various items and a wooden chair. The floor is dirt. The overall tone is warm and intimate.

**GOD'S MISSION
IN AFRICA**

The road to Chasesu | Pastoring in war | Community Health Evangelism | Belhar: Living it out

The faith of Maria Fearing, a slave freed to serve



In God's mission we show our faith by our obedient service. In other words, as Francis of Assisi is believed to have said, "Preach the gospel at all times; when necessary, use words." This is the task and mission of disciples of Jesus — to let our lives speak for themselves of the gospel, and if necessary to use words to help enhance and amplify our faith.

Presbyterian mission personnel face challenges around the world where actions are more needed than words.

In this issue of *Mission Crossroads*, you'll find stories and examples of the actions and work of our mission co-workers and partners in Africa. They are making an incredible difference for the future and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed on that continent.

Speaking about stories of faith and witness — where actions speak louder than words — I am reminded of the story of Maria Fearing, born into slavery near Gainesville, Alabama, in 1838. Her biography, *The Maria Fearing Story*, written by Darius L. and Vera Poe Swann, begins with Maria, a black slave girl, listening to her white owner tell of little African children who had never heard of Jesus. "I will go to Africa someday if I can," Maria said.

At 28 years old in 1865, Maria became a free woman. She learned to read and write at age 33, and went on to become a very successful teacher in Anniston, Alabama, after graduating from the Freedmen's Bureau school in Talladega. Despite her "old age of 56," she sold her home and traveled with the Rev. Dr. William Henry Sheppard to Africa in 1894 as a Presbyterian missionary. She worked in the Congo as a teacher and Bible translator for 20 years, and also bought many people out of slavery in the Congo. Her most famous achievement was the establishment of the Pantops Home for Girls in Luebo, Congo. She was known as mama wa Mputu, which means "Mother from far away." Despite the church's skepticism, Maria outlasted many of her colleagues in Africa and only retired from missionary service in 1915, due to age restrictions. She taught school in Selma, Alabama, until her death in 1937 at the age of 99. Her story was introduced in Alabama history textbooks during the turbulent days of the 1960s. She was inducted into the Alabama Women's Hall of Fame in 2000.

When we talk about the mission movement in Africa, we typically mention the name of the Rev. Dr. William Henry Sheppard first, and sometimes mention the name of Maria Fearing as another great African-American mission worker. Maybe it's time to correct the order and put her name in first place.



Maria Fearing at the first Congo mission station in the city of Luebo

Presbyterian Historical Society

Maria had to overcome the racism of a white society, the discriminatory treatment of the church for her age and society's bias against women. She had an "uphill" path to proclaim the gospel to the African children she felt called to serve when she was a little slave girl. But she finally did it, and did it well.

Reading her story I was deeply moved in my heart to sing, "We shall overcome."

Mission Crossroads is a Presbyterian Mission Agency publication about God's mission around the world through the PC(USA) and our church partners.

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On the cover:

A midwife at the Dzemeni maternity clinic in Ghana, supported by First Presbyterian Church of Fairfield, Connecticut, weighs an infant to check on healthy growth and development.

Photo by Josh Heikkila



Helping Africa's children

Mission co-workers and African partners strive to open doors of opportunity

Presbyterian mission co-workers Jeff and Christi Boyd developed a floor and board game several years ago to help U.S. Presbyterians appreciate the joint efforts of students, parents, communities and churches to improve education in Africa. The game also prompts players to ponder the plight of African children.

Players of "The Africa Game" roll the dice in hopes of advancing around the board from elementary school to high school graduation and post-secondary training opportunities. Players may land on squares that move them toward the finish line or squares that impede or end their progress. The object of the game is not to finish first, but simply to finish.

On the negative squares, players may learn that:

- "Your parents can't afford school fees."
- "Your teacher did not come to class today. He must work in the field to feed his family."
- "Classes are canceled because rain is pouring into your classroom through holes in the grass roof."
- "Despite your great effort, you've failed the entrance test for secondary school."

On the positive squares, players receive messages such as:

- "Your mother had a good day selling vegetables in the market. She can buy you some notebooks."
- "Good grades have earned you a place in a technical secondary school."

- "The church has been able to build new classrooms."
- "You have earned a place at the university."

The game not only depicts the common pitfalls that African children encounter, but the players also experience the unfair gender gap that is built into portrayed events. Through the Africa Game, we can get a glimpse of some struggles that African children confront. While a game is an interesting way to understand issues, life is not a game. That reality is front and center to the Boyds and other mission co-workers.

Jeff, a former math teacher, is the PC(USA)'s regional liaison for Central Africa and brings to his work a special devotion to education. He facilitates programs that increase access to quality education in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea. Through these initiatives, thousands of students are receiving a significantly improved quality of education.

Christi is the PC(USA)'s facilitator of women's and children's interests in five countries: Congo, Madagascar, Niger, Rwanda and South Sudan. In war-torn East Congo, Christi works with a trauma-healing ministry for children that is provided by the Women's Department of the Church of Christ in Congo. Children in the program begin the process of healing by dealing with issues such as grief, self-worth, the desire for revenge and

the forgiveness of perpetrators.

In a recent letter to U.S. supporters, Christi wrote: "It has been well-established that unhealed childhood trauma increases the risk of developing personal problems and a tendency toward violent behavior in later life. ... Healing children's wounds of trauma is therefore a way to break the cycle of violence, trauma and behavioral disorders, a first and necessary step for peacebuilding in conflict zones such as the volatile region of East Congo."

By supporting our mission co-workers, you can help them and our partners address the issues children face and make opportunities, like those portrayed in the Africa Game's positive squares, possible for more children.

To learn how to access a copy of the Africa Game, contact World Mission's Africa Office at 800-728-7228, ext. 5031. A copy may be available in your presbytery resource center. The game is suitable for ages 8 and up and takes about 45 minutes to play.

Rosemary Mitchell is senior director of Mission Engagement and Support at the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Contact her at rosemary.mitchell@pcusa.org.

MAKE A GIFT

Support Jeff and Christi Boyd's work in Africa.

pcusa.org/donate/E200314

Pastoring in war

A testimony of resilience and reconciliation in South Sudan

Shelvis Smith-Mather

Reconciliation is a sacred space where weary bodies are refreshed and troubled souls are soothed, where the roar of oppression is silenced and the calm of compassion resounds. The pathway to her gates is long and grueling with setbacks, detours and delays; stationed beyond the boundaries of fear, hurt and bitterness; and far past the edges of contempt, anger and hatred.

Along the journey to reconciliation lie ambushes of criticism and alienation, yet those on the journey press on like flocks of birds surging through cold winds for warmer homes. They press on like herds tracking through wilderness, thirsting for cool streams. They press on like young sprouts stretching upward through the cracks of concrete toward the sun. Their success is our inspiration and their failure is our loss; our lives are intertwined. Reconciliation is a distant place — far from the battlefields of South Sudan — yet not beyond reach.

Most citizens of the war-weary nation of South Sudan yearn for change, pray for it and plead for it. They were born and raised in war and know its horrors all too well. Among those working for change is the Rev. Jacob Karaba. He was a member of the first graduating class of the RECONCILE Peace Institute (RPI), launched in 2009 by PC(USA)'s longtime partner RECONCILE International. Through RPI, he studied with a select group of peacebuilders from other conflict zones.

At RPI, participants build meaningful relationships with leaders from other ethnic groups while being led through a three-month course on peer counseling and mediation. This training is facilitated



Nancy Smith-Mather

The Rev. Jacob Karaba (left), vice chair of RECONCILE Peace Institute's Alumni Chapter, with Shelvis Smith-Mather, RPI principal and PC(USA) mission co-worker, as they reunite after a year of unrest in South Sudan.

by leading peacebuilders from around the world who are on the forefront of social change in their countries. The classes are a dynamic blend of discussions, lectures, role-play activities, group activities, case studies, debates and practicums. Since graduating, Jacob has used his skills in varying seasons of conflict. He has mediated disagreements among local clans, ministered to survivors of violence and pastored communities vexed by war. He credits RPI with giving him training to deal with the complexity of conflict and trauma. Seasons of turmoil may demand different responses, so peacebuilders need a host of skills and approaches to reconciliation.

Conflict is overwhelming, messy and can be all-consuming — so is

peacebuilding. Consider Jacob's story. In December 2013, civil war erupted in the capital city. Many in his town sensed tragedy on the horizon and fled to the border of South Sudan and Uganda for safety. As convoys of vehicles packed with residents raced away, Jacob chose to stay, even though danger marched toward his community. Jacob witnessed soldiers clashing in its fields, spilling blood in its streams and darkening the sky from huts set ablaze. He cared for victims, prayed for soldiers and fed those seeking refuge behind church walls.

A peace agreement was signed after thousands of lives were lost across the nation. Life then became "stable" for a time in Jacob's town. Shops reopened and people returned from hiding,



South Sudanese families gather together to share their concerns with pastors about life in the refugee camps in Uganda.

but bitterness festered deep in the hearts of neighbors because trust was compromised and grievances were ignored. Violence, once again, erupted in the capital and streamed into Jacob's town in July 2016. The new outpouring of brutality exceeded previous episodes. His town became the epicenter of chaos. Militia soldiers captured adjacent towns and positioned themselves to do the same to his town. More than 70 percent of the population fled and many of the remaining residents feared the worst. Once again, Jacob chose to stay. Businesses were looted, citizens were harassed and various sections of town were considered "no-go zones" due to the presence of soldiers.

Violence escalated and became more inhumane. Mothers were gang-raped, families were burned in their homes and infants were thrown into the river. Eventually Jacob's home and the entire church compound were burned to the ground. His brother was gunned down,

his mother fell sick and died and his own health deteriorated. The growing insecurity forced him to reassess how to best care for his neighbors. Ultimately, Jacob left with his neighbors. They walked for five days with little food or water. Corpses littered the road at times, and along the way, two women went into labor. Fortunately, both babies survived. After walking, Jacob and his wife were able to get a ride on a motorcycle, which crashed, fracturing his wife's ribs and injuring his leg. They arrived at the refugee camp tired, injured and worn down; their lives testimonies to the terror of war.

They have now been in the refugee camp for a month, and life continues to be unimaginably difficult. Jacob, however, is working to create a new narrative. He has been engaged in peer counseling in his camp. He also hopes to serve as a mediator among refugees as tension escalates between ethnic groups. While much is uncertain

for South Sudan and its people, Jacob and peacebuilders like him are committed to ushering her to the gates of reconciliation. He inquires, "Are we going back [to our country] with our anger? Are we going back to loot? Are we going back to fight? We can go back and begin a new life ... and build our nation in a way that people see themselves as one brother and one sister of one Father and one nation."

The Revs. Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather are PC(USA) mission co-workers working with South Sudanese refugees living in refugee camps in Uganda in partnership with RECONCILE International.

GIVE TO EDUCATION AND PEACEBUILDING IN SOUTH SUDAN

Help South Sudan move toward a brighter future.

pcusa.org/donate/E052172

International peacemaker believes education is key to peace in South Sudan

Christi Boyd

Born to Dinka parents, Achol Majok Kur Kier, 54, is not inclined to conform to expectations that define her culture. Strong-willed, at a young age she refused the matrimonial candidate her parents had hand-picked from within their clan. Instead, she pursued university-level studies in Khartoum, Sudan, becoming a secondary school teacher in English, Arabic and history, and marrying, at age 29, the love of her life from another ethnic group. After God had blessed them with two children, they refused to give in to pressure from the in-laws to start a polygamous household and procreate a greater offspring. Beaming with fondness of her happy family life, Achol prides herself in serving as a model for younger generations of girls.

As the South Sudanese people voted to break away from the oppressive regime in Khartoum with hopes of establishing a nation with egalitarian governance, the church also rejoiced in the greater prospects for God's lifegiving mission. For Achol this particularly meant breaking with those customs and written rules that perpetuate harmful and inequitable patterns, thereby denying shalom-for-all in God's household.

Some traditions not only reinforce tribal identities but also feed ethnic tensions at the expense of peace. Reflecting grinding poverty, cultural practices allow destitute parents to give their young daughters in marriage in exchange for cattle, which perpetuates educational and economic disparities between genders. Still stifled by religious influences from the dominant Islamic culture in the north, legalistic conservatism in the church continues to



Christi Boyd

Achol Majok Kur Kier is an ordained deaconess in the South Sudan Evangelical Presbyterian Church (SSPEC). She serves as the elected chairperson for SSPEC's women's desk, and is an executive committee member in the South Sudan Council of Churches. Achol is one of 16 International Peacemakers touring the U.S. during the 2017 Season of Peace.

exclude capable women from ordained ministry.

While the political elite and their warlords have been feeding on

underlying sentiments to allow civil war in pursuit of their political agendas and personal interests, Achol maintains that education is the entry point for transformation in society: "If we want to give messages for peace and messages to fight corruption, we need to get the people educated." According to her, women play an important role in peacemaking and should already be encouraged to take up theological studies in preparation for the day when South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church's constitution will include a provision that allows women's ordination. And all girls should have the opportunity to get a basic education. "Schooling empowers girls. They have to be able to decide for themselves. Because we don't want our girls, our daughters, to be hostages of wealth."

Christi Boyd is a PC(USA) mission co-worker who serves as a facilitator for women and children's interests in Africa. Based in the Democratic Republic of Congo, she serves with her husband, Jeff, who is regional liaison for Central Africa.

RECOGNIZING THE INSANITY OF VIOLENCE

When asked about the need for trauma healing in children, Achol shared this young child's story:

One day, there was very heavy shooting. A small girl of 7 years who had a 2-year-old brother looked at her brother, and then to the people around her, asking: "This one is a boy?"

"Yes," they answered. "Why are you asking? He is your brother."

Then she said, "And those who are shooting their guns are men? Those who are killing people, they are men?"

They said, "Yes, they are men who are carrying guns."

Then the girl said, "So, if these are men who are killing, why don't we just kill this child before he grows up . . . and starts killing people?"

Rwandans remember the genocide but forgive

Peacebuilding, reconciliation and servant leadership form the heart of pastoral ministry

Kay Day

At the end of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, 16 Presbyterian pastors had been killed, many had been wounded and some had fled the country. The churches that remained were empty.

The president of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda called his colleague Elisee Musemakweli to return from Belgium, where he was finishing his PhD. Together, with the help of German and Dutch partners, they restarted a two-year theological training course, with emphasis on peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Musemakweli recalls a question one of the first students asked him: “You’re going to teach theology, but we know that before the genocide, theology was taught in this school. We know many ministers have been involved in the genocide. Now, what kind of theology are you going to teach us?”

Musemakweli used that question to train pastors in biblical principles of servant leadership, reconciliation and peacebuilding. That question helped shape the training now offered at the Protestant University of Rwanda (PUR).

That initial training equipped 36 pastors to face the challenges of restoring the church. Seven of those trained in that special program are now leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda, including the president, vice president and five presbytery presidents. The ecumenical program included Anglicans, Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists and Pentecostals. Many of their leaders have been trained in this theology, too.

Musemakweli left full-time teaching to lead the Presbyterian Church for



Kathy Melvin

12 years as president and is now back as chancellor of PUR, continuing to shape the future of the church for servant leadership and peacebuilding.

Mission co-worker Kay Day with Elisee Musemakweli

The Rev. Mary Catherine “Kay” Day, mission co-worker serving alongside the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda, helps prepare men and women for pastoral ministry by teaching English and practical theology at the Protestant University of Rwanda.

HELP EQUIP CHURCH LEADERS

Support the ministry of mission co-worker Kay Day in Rwanda.
pcusa.org/donate/E200502

Communities caught in the conflict in Congo

Working to provide access to health care and hope

Inge Sthresley

During the past year, over 1 million people have had to flee their homes in the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of Congo because of militia and/or army activities. As political unrest has spilled over into ethnic violence, many villages have been burned, and health centers and schools have been destroyed in the process. Since 1892, the Kasai region has been the main area in Congo where Presbyterian mission work has been carried out with what is now the Presbyterian Church of Congo (CPC).

The Access to Primary Health Care project (ASSP) has kept health services available in the region throughout the turmoil, ensuring that drugs, vaccinations, assisted births and nutrition activities continue. At times ASSP has had to expand its activity to provide food and water to some of the displaced people. IMA World Health, an organization founded by the PC(USA) and other churches, manages the ASSP program, which is funded by USAID. My husband, Larry Sthresley, a PC(USA) mission co-worker and health liaison, is the IMA World Health country director for this project.

ASSP gives support to 511 health centers and 28 hospitals in the Kasai and Kasai Central provinces, including many of those belonging to the CPC. SANRU, a local rural health organization, is IMA's implementing partner in the region. Through their mediation efforts with local



Inge Sthresley

Over 100 new health centers, like this Centre de Santé Kratos, have been built through the ASSP project to increase access to primary health care in Congo. Each health center serves approximately 15,000 people.

traditional leaders and government officials, they have been able to ensure the security of most ASSP-supported health facilities. So despite all of the problems, the project has had only a minor decrease in use of services.

IMA, SANRU and local medical staff have been working in tense situations. Personnel have had to be evacuated from various towns numerous times and have had to negotiate travel through areas held by either militia or government forces to get supplies to health facilities. ASSP vehicles have been carjacked four times in the past six months. (All have been recovered.)

Though the situation is calming down somewhat, the disruption to agricultural and commercial activities means poverty and hunger will continue to increase in the coming months. Families have had to abandon fields and goods. Many cannot afford the \$1.35 that health centers charge for a consultation. It will take time for

these families to get re-established and rebuild businesses. Those who have fled will need to clear land for new fields, and it will be November before the next harvest, if they are fortunate to have seeds to plant. Many families lost their seed stock. Their seeds were either pillaged or burned.

To assist Presbyterian Disaster Assistance in giving displaced families seeds in the coming season, donate online at presbyterianmission.org/GIVE-Congo, by phone at 800-873-3283 or by writing a check payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and mailing it to P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264. Be sure to designate your gift to disaster response fund DR000171.

MAKE A HEALTHY DIFFERENCE

Support Inge and Larry's ministry in Congo.

pcusa.org/donate/E200412

Mission co-workers Dr. Larry and Inge Sthresley develop and strengthen community-based health and nutrition programs in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Congo and Kinshasa.

Opening doors to abundant life through education

Partner churches help women and girls reach their full potential

Janet Guyer

When I ask women church leaders in Africa about important issues, the need for women to be able to support their families always comes up first. Closely tied to this concern is the need for education, as it is the surest way for people to be able to get ahead.

Education can take on many forms at different ages and stages.

Early childhood is a time of rapid brain growth and development, which affects how children will be able to learn and care for themselves as adults. Many churches are beginning to address the needs of children from birth through school age. Early childhood development centers work with children ages 3 to 6. Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in northern Malawi began focusing on these overlooked children of God in 2008.

Today, about 35,000 children attend 500 care centers in urban and rural areas. A young pastor in the church credits this program with giving him the start he needed to be able to get to where he is today.

Primary and secondary schools are operated by most of World Mission's partner churches in Africa. One area of concern of the women's leadership in many churches is the ratio of male to female high school graduates. Church partners see a fairly even number of boys and girls entering school, but only half as many girls graduating from high school. In the near future, partner churches will be working on some creative ways to keep girls in school.

Community schools were developed as an outreach ministry when congregations noticed orphaned or



Janet Guyer

This community school in Zambia outgrew its space in the sanctuary, so an extra classroom block was built.

vulnerable children of school age who were not in school in their communities. At present, there are 30 community schools of the CCAP's Zambia Synod.

Higher education is also considered critical for the future of the church and the country. Many partner churches have or are in the process of opening universities in response to the growing need for higher education. In the countries in which I work — Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia — only about 32–40 percent of the universities' students are women, and the gender difference is even greater in theological education.

The Women's Department of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus has started an initiative to support more women in theological training. Each woman in the church is asked to contribute 8 birr (34 cents) to support

the theological education of women. Currently, 32 young women are in school thanks to these contributions.

World Mission partner churches have found many creative ways to work toward making education attainable. They are seeking God's guidance in facilitating the way for more women and men to receive the education that is their right and their hope.

The Rev. Janet Guyer is a PC(USA) mission co-worker who serves as facilitator for women and children's interests in the African countries of Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia.

PROMOTE WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

Support Janet's work in South Africa.
pcusa.org/donate/E200351

What is Community Health Evangelism?

Luta Garbat-Welch

Community Health Evangelism (CHE) is a multifaceted approach to ministry that addresses the needs of the whole person (physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially) through training and mentorship in disease prevention, community development, evangelism and discipleship.

When CHE is presented to a community, its chiefs, district officers or church leaders are led through a visioning process that presents the program's foundational concepts. CHE trainers then engage in a "seed project" within the community. This phase is concrete and tangible, providing the community with a glimpse of the possibilities of change and fostering connection and rapport. After a community has accepted CHE, the CHE trainers assist the community in forming a CHE committee to guide and monitor program implementation. In turn, the CHE committee selects CHE home visitors to get to know their neighbors' needs by providing one-on-one education. CHE committee members and CHE home visitors are equipped to provide ongoing health training through home visits, community projects and discipleship groups.

There are two main CHE activities: individual or small group education and implementation of community projects.

SHARING WHOLENESS IN GOD

Support Luta and Jeremy's ministry of faith and health in Africa.

pcusa.org/donate/E200515

Support CHE in Africa.

pcusa.org/donate/E052180



Rachel Weller

Using symbols, participants identify which problems are biggest; using leaves they vote on which problem to tackle first.

The CHE trainers, in partnership with the CHE committee and CHE home visitors, facilitate conversations within the community to assist in recognizing and prioritizing needs, identifying the root causes of these needs and determining local resources that could meet these needs. As the community works together to complete a project, CHE home visitors provide practical and relevant education in their neighbors' homes. For example, if a community is addressing hunger, lessons would cover nutrition. The community then works together to address hunger from multiple angles.

CHE has all of the components of most community development programs: empowering people to do things for themselves, equipping leaders to see their community's assets, developing

community ownership, focusing on root causes and using local resources, along with a model of participatory-based education. What distinguishes CHE from other community-based programs is its focus on both physical and spiritual needs, and a stronger insistence on communities and individuals finding the answers themselves and owning the program. Together, as a community, people are empowered to discuss their problems, see the opportunities for change and take action.

Luta and the Rev. Jeremy Garbat-Welch are mission co-workers serving Christ together in Africa. Luta is the community health facilitator in Malawi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Zambia. Jeremy works with chaplaincy ministries with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian.

Growing Community Health Evangelism in Niger through engagement

Michael Ludwig

If you ask people, ‘What are your problems?’ they’ll immediately expect you’re going to come in and fix them,” Attahiru told me. Facing village expectations of handouts was his No. 1 concern in moving forward with Community Health Evangelism (CHE). Attahiru is from a village of 300 in Niger, where he is a lay pastor and youth leader. He just finished the church’s CHE training for his region, which introduced 25 pastors to how they can use the CHE strategy to help their communities increase overall health, development and exposure to the gospel.

As Attahiru noted, a difficult step in using CHE is telling stories that get village members discussing root problems. The long history of droughts and nongovernmental organizations coming into Niger with free supplies has often lulled people into a dependency

mentality, which masks the root causes of problems. The stories in this introductory stage of CHE move community members into real discussion and engagement. Specifically, the first stories need to help people identify the problems that come from relying on outside help and problems that need to be fixed from the inside.

The population of Niger is 95 percent Muslim and nearly all are involved in subsistence farming, so most communities are chronically uneducated and fatalistic. One of the biggest issues is getting people to mobilize their own resources and skills to do something about problems that seem to be “how they’ve always been” or “how God wills them to be right now.”

But there’s reason to thank God when we do see things change through the sharing of basic health knowledge

or best practices in farming. Himma is another village evangelist who attended our recent CHE training. Because of the simple things he learned about home disease prevention and clinic care, he insisted that a neighbor family go to a regional clinic immediately for their newborn’s extreme diarrhea. The nurse there affirmed the importance of this decision and so now more than just the neighbors have gone from being skeptical of Himma’s presence in the village to being thankful.

Our partner church, the Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger (EERN), is investing in the long-term development of this training program by building a motorized rickshaw taxi business, in partnership with the PC(USA) and U.S. congregations. The business not only employs youth in the church but also generates income locally for continued CHE training and support. The EERN sees the CHE strategy as a ministry that can help their nation, enhance relationships between Christians and Muslims, and provide a welcomed way of sharing the good news of Christ.

The Rev. Michael and Rachel Ludwig are mission co-workers serving to strengthen CHE and other leadership and evangelism training programs at the invitation of the Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger.



Andrew Bowers

Pastor Issa, EERN CHE trainer (center), and mission co-worker Michael Ludwig (second from right) work with pastors at the church’s first regional CHE training. CHE lessons include Bible stories that help people discuss a holistic definition of health and God’s desire for healthy relationships.

TRANSFORM LIVES

Support Michael and Rachel’s work in literacy training and Community Health Evangelism in Niger.

pcusa.org/donate/E200513

It's all about people and relationships

U.S. and Ghanaian Presbyterian congregations inspire one another through mission partnerships

Josh Heikkila

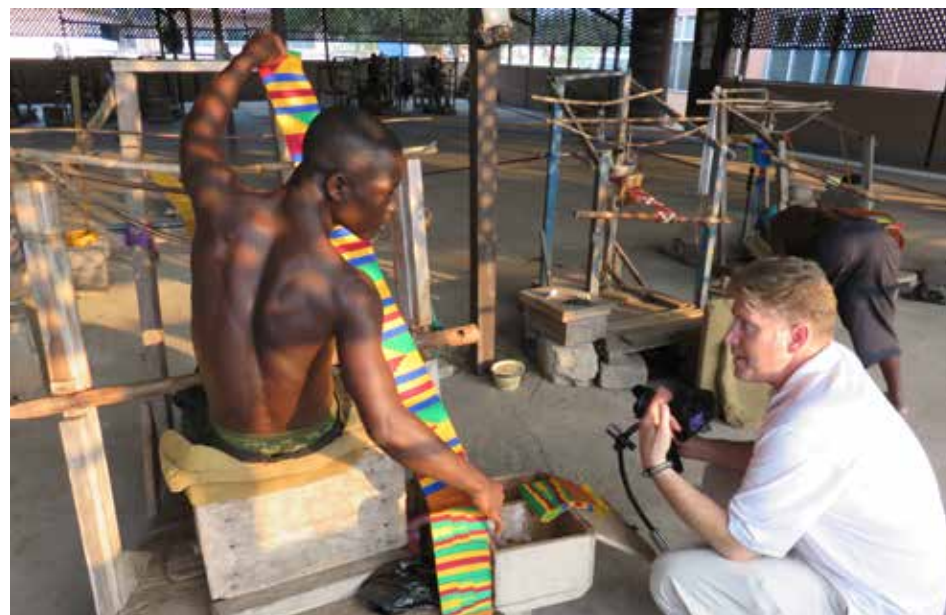
In an age of tightened budgets and more limited financial resources, congregations are understandably counting the cost to engage in mission. Supporting the work of African partner churches in areas like evangelism, poverty reduction and reconciliation does, after all, take money.

At the same time, it is crucial to look beyond simply what it costs to engage in mission. It is equally important to consider how mission gives Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations opportunities to grow in faith and be spiritually nurtured and enriched by our African partners.

Let me share with you two stories of U.S. churches that became involved with mission in Ghana, and the impact it has had on their congregations. These churches are proof that mission partnerships deepen the faith of those directly involved in international mission, while sparking revitalization stateside in new and unexpected ways.

Westminster Presbyterian Church in Albany, New York, first became interested in mission in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks on American soil. According to Elder Carolyn Smith, the congregation felt a need to “increase awareness of marginalized people in our own community, particularly communities of color and immigrant groups.”

Around this time, the Westminster congregation met a Ghanaian Presbyterian pastor who was visiting the U.S., the Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti, who convinced them to visit Ghana. Rev. Alice's connection to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) began in the early 1990s, when she worked



Sib Law, a member of First Presbyterian Church of Fairfield, Connecticut, learns how Ghanaian kente cloth is woven.

with World Mission in Malawi, assisting the Malawian Presbyterian partner on its journey to ordain female pastors.

Over time, Rev. Alice helped Westminster develop a partnership with Presbyterian Church of Ghana congregations in the port city of Tema, near Ghana's capital, Accra. Because issues like education, health and the environment were affecting the community in Albany, Westminster took a special interest in these areas in Ghana as well.

Elder Tom McPheeters, who has been involved with mission in West Africa and Albany, felt there was a special synergy between the two efforts, and that each has gone much further because of contributions from the other. “Community revitalization knows no boundaries,” he explained, “even if some of the issues are quite different.

In the end, it's all about people and relationships.”

According to Carolyn, before Westminster became involved in Ghana in 2001, they were a congregation whose membership was 99 percent white. But as mission inspired them to reach out to the local community, they have now become a congregation where 20 percent of the nearly 400 members are immigrants from West African countries like Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

As the West African membership grew, the congregation began to learn and sing traditional Ghanaian songs in worship. Westminster was particularly excited that one of these songs, “Da N'ase,” — a paraphrase of Psalm 117 — is hymn 328 and 605 in *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*.

Elder Lois Wilson, who has been especially active in reaching out to the



Youth of the Kantomanto congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana are introduced to the Rev. Dr. John Azumah, a Ghanaian professor at Columbia Theological Seminary, and Patti and Sib Law of First Presbyterian Church in Fairfield, Connecticut.

African immigrant community in Albany — welcoming them to worship and to church community programs — spoke about the transformation these new members have brought to Westminster. Friends from West Africa “have enriched our lives,” Lois said.

A second congregation that has

experienced transformation through African mission work is the First Presbyterian Church of Fairfield, Connecticut, whose involvement in Ghana began more recently. In 2016, after an exploratory visit, the congregation decided to support PC(USA) partner the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Ghana in its efforts to develop and expand a maternity clinic in the fishing and market town of Dzemeni.

First Fairfield knew they couldn’t take on this project alone, so they reached out to other congregations in Southern New England Presbytery to join together with them in supporting the maternity clinic. One of those congregations, Turn of the River Presbyterian Church in Stamford, Connecticut, was excited that mission in Ghana was helping bring these neighboring congregations closer together, heightening the sense that they were part of the one body of Christ.

Those from First Fairfield who have traveled to Ghana also knew that only a few from the congregation would ever have the opportunity to take part in a mission trip, so they began looking for ways to include a local component of mission. Several from the church joined

a Ghanaian Presbyterian congregation in the Bronx, New York, for worship and lunch last year, and in May, a contingent from that Bronx congregation worshipped with them in Fairfield.

Elder Patti Law, who has been leading First Fairfield’s effort to develop a partnership in Ghana, was especially touched by the joint worship on Mother’s Day, knowing that the money they raise for Ghana will support the development of a church-run maternity clinic. She called it “a fabulous convergence of the theme of new life.”

The Rev. Josh Heikkila is Presbyterian World Mission’s regional liaison for West Africa. Josh also served as a PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) in Ghana from 2002–03.



Leaders in the Development Office of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Ghana prepare to take Patti and Sib Law to visit a fish farming project run by the Ghanaian church.

STRENGTHEN MISSION PARTNERSHIPS IN WEST AFRICA

Support the work of Josh Heikkila
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Support the work of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Ghana
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Belhar: Living it out

Douglas Tilton

Having first visited South Africa in 1984, when the struggle against apartheid was reaching a crescendo, I was overjoyed to be present at the 222nd General Assembly when, after nearly a decade of study and debate, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) formally embraced the Confession of Belhar and acknowledged its profound capacity to illuminate our calling as followers of Christ.

But the hard part was just beginning. The real challenge is not simply to clear the constitutional hurdles necessary to add Belhar to our *Book of Confessions*; it is to live out Belhar's commitments to unity, reconciliation and justice in our personal and institutional life.

No one appreciates this more than our partners in the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). In 1994, two branches of the Dutch Reformed community — one of them the denomination out of which Belhar originally emerged — merged to form URCSA, overcoming more than a century of segregation.

The process of family reunification remains unfinished, however. The historically white Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) has stopped short of accepting Belhar, while URCSA views such acceptance as essential to a common future.

"So we've tried to build relationships at various levels," said the Rev. Pieter Grove, moderator of URCSA's Cape Synod. In the Cape, URCSA and the DRC have established joint offices for diaconal ministry and for public witness and mission work. "In very important ministries, we are working together," Pieter observed. "It's a slow process, but

I think people are growing together and getting to know each other's worlds."

It is also a difficult and uneven process. "We are constantly challenged, almost defeated, by our social situation, because apartheid segregated us physically and geographically. And, of course, we can't underestimate the differences of culture," Pieter noted. "In the [Western and Northern] Cape, people of color and white people essentially have one culture. We are Afrikaans-speaking [in URCSA and the DRC]. In the Eastern Cape, our church is mostly Xhosa-speaking."

However, URCSA's Cape Synod brings people together across these linguistic and cultural boundaries. Pieter feels this creates "possibilities to really find substance to our unity. In the other parts of South Africa, it's much more difficult [to find unity]. The cultures are quite far apart."

These gaps are even more apparent in the larger society. "Currently in South Africa, there's great tension between white and black, and racism is still prominent," Pieter said.

"When you step out of the church into the 'real' world, you are confronted by the walls of massive privilege on the white side, and real, deep poverty," he explained, citing South Africa's official unemployment rate of 27.7 percent. "The vast majority [of the jobless] are black people. So we have to accept that people will feel frustrated and resentful that some have seemingly everything and others have so little. ... We cannot live with this inequality anymore."

"I foresee the defeat of racism only under circumstances where we create a more egalitarian society ... where every



Michael Whitman

Allan Boesak, a co-author of Belhar who was moderator of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church when the confession was adopted in 1986, applauds the 222nd General Assembly (2016) for its overwhelming 540–33 vote to make the Confession of Belhar the denomination's 12th recognized confession. The historic vote came 30 years after the Confession of Belhar was adopted by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church during its battle against apartheid.

single individual in this country can have a life of decency and of dignity. Which means that we have to look at everyone's basic needs: the rights of children to be properly educated, and the rights of people to have good health care and a proper roof over their heads." Pieter feels that Belhar also requires URCSA to work ecumenically to expose corruption in government and to lift up the need for economic justice.

Last year, URCSA's leadership sent a pastoral letter to all congregations urging members to consider how racism and



Co-moderators of committee 7 — the Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations — count votes to propose the adoption of the Confession of Belhar.

prejudice affect the church's witness and ministry to a wounded society. Moreover, in light of Belhar, it called Christians to action to "engage constructively with the issue of racism on different levels."

Among other things, it proposed a "Season of Human Dignity" — a dialogue to "discern how we in South Africa are going to be obedient to Jesus." The conversation is not limited to racism. Church leaders identified other aspects of human dignity that also require attention, including gender, sexuality, poverty, disability, health and education.

Pieter's own congregation, Sarepta URC — established in 1843 through the work of a freed slave, Johanna van der Bergh — is working to put Belhar into practice through a range of ministries. These include intentional outreach to young people and people who are homeless or living on the street.

"As a church, we tend to have relief ministries rather than transformative ministries. So part of my hope [is] to introduce in this congregation the kind of work that will have long-term impact on society," Pieter explained. "That means that you equip people to make their own

choices. Ultimately, when they go out into the world, they're to transform the world. Because they're not here for the church, they're here for the world."

The adoption of Belhar by the PC(USA) and other churches validates Pastor Pieter's hope that this conversation can extend beyond South Africa. "I don't see Belhar as something that ... [is part of] our tradition alone," he said, "but as something that must transform us. I believe that we can use Belhar to create a very important conversation with the North. We can speak to Europe, to America, to the East, even to the Middle East.

"Let's ask how can we strengthen the theological voice of those that are at the margins, that have less, that are not in power," Pieter said, noting the pivotal role that North American and European churches played by investing in helping to train a generation of South African theologians during the apartheid era.

"We can also publish together. We can have conferences where we reflect together. ... I don't believe in one-directional traffic, so if the Presbyterians come to us we are ready to receive them

in our congregations to work with us and vice versa. You cannot get to know a person as a real person at a distance. You need to see him or her and, in that interaction, we can grow into a greater richness."

"I see Belhar is a very important gift that has been given to us. It is something that developed out of the soul of Africa, and in the context of Christians, black and white, struggling to try to find greater reconciliation and unity," Pieter concluded. "I think that through Belhar's lenses of reconciliation, of justice and of unity, we perceive the form in which God wants his community to witness to his world."

Dr. Douglas Tilton is Presbyterian World Mission's regional liaison for Southern Africa, helping to strengthen the mutual ministries of the PC(USA) and partners in five countries: Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

STRENGTHEN THE GLOBAL CHURCH

Support Doug's work in Southern Africa.

pcusa.org/donate/E200416

The road to Chasefu

Improving food security and holistic health in rural Zambia

Charles Johnson



Melissa Johnson

A Lundazi flamboyant tree in full bloom

In Zambia, most people are farmers, regardless of whether they have another profession — and this includes pastors. For the majority, the thought of *zinja*, or hunger season, is never far away. Many people in Zambia are smallholder, or subsistence, farmers who grow the staple crop, maize (corn), with which the mainstay of the Zambian diet, *nshima*, is prepared.

Zambia has one of the highest rates of undernourished people in the world — 48 percent, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Sixty percent of the population lives below the poverty line and 42 to 70 percent lives in extreme poverty.

Zambia has two seasons, *nyengo ya vula*, rainy season, and *chihanya*, dry

season. Since there is very little access to irrigation for Zambian farmers, planting coincides with the onset of rainy season, which typically begins in early December. Some old-timers say it once began in late October or early November, before the impact of climate change began to affect the region. A good maize crop requires a lot of rain, and has a lengthy growing season. The maize variety planted at Chasefu Theological College (CTC) and Model Farm, where I work, is Pannar 53, a medium maturity variety that requires 120 to 140 days from planting to reach maturity.

When harvest time arrives, farmers are hopeful they will have enough maize to get their family through the entire year until the next season's harvest, as well as

some to sell to pay school fees, provide access to medical care and meet other family needs. In many cases when there is too little or too much rain, the crop's yield isn't sufficient to last an entire year.

In Eastern Province, where my wife, Melissa, and I live, hunger season typically occurs in January and February, when maize stored from the previous crop is gone and the next harvest is still about four months away. There are also hungry families in the heart of the rainy season, when the incidence of malaria is more prevalent. The lack of proper nutrition during this time of the year makes malaria a more serious or life-threatening disease.

We arrived in Lundazi, Zambia, in April 2016 to work alongside the Church

of Central Africa Presbyterian Synod of Zambia (CCAP Zambia), a PC(USA) partner church. CCAP Zambia has a long history of holistic ministry in the areas of agriculture, health care and education. Using appropriate technology in a Zambian context, I serve as development specialist in support of the Chasefu Model Farm and teach courses in sustainable agriculture for students at CTC. There are 13 students from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi currently enrolled at CTC. Although they come from different countries, they all are from subsistence farming families.

A Zambian pastor's congregation may include several prayer houses, requiring significant travel to preach and conduct pastoral visitation. Many pastors serve in remote, rural areas, where the level of poverty is high, and the congregation struggles to pay their pastor's salary. In addition to their church-related duties, pastors must farm to meet the food needs of their families. With the addition of agricultural courses at CTC, it is hoped the pastors will be better equipped to be successful in their farming efforts and to share their knowledge with their congregations and villages.

My work at Chasefu isn't limited to teaching, however. I also serve in a support capacity to the Rev. Mapopa Nyirongo, acting coordinator of Chasefu Model Farm. The farm currently provides practical learning opportunities for seminary students. CCAP Zambia intends for the model farm to be developed into a training center where smallholders can learn new methods in sustainable agriculture, crop rotation, intercropping and the use of appropriate technology to facilitate their work and reduce labor. Another goal is to introduce alternative crops with high nutritional value, which can contribute to the smallholder family's food security.

I also work to facilitate the farming activities of the Chasefu Agricultural Income Generating Activity (AIGA).



Jackson Banda plowing with oxen at Chasefu Model Farm

The purpose of the AIGA is to generate revenue to supplement the financial needs of the seminary and Chasefu Model Farm. Because of this role, the AIGA's focus is on raising groundnuts (peanuts), soybeans and other cash crops. Because of government price controls in Zambia, maize isn't considered a cash crop.

Melissa facilitates health education programs offered by the CCAP Zambia Health Department. In this role, she has many areas of focus, including working with Richard Willima, coordinator of the health department, to increase the capacity of two existing CCAP Zambia Rural Health Centers, working toward the needed construction of a new Rural Health Center in Pharaza and creating educational opportunities that will improve the health of the Zambian people through prevention of diarrheal diseases, malaria and rubella. She's looking forward to completing training in Community Health Evangelism, a Christ-centered program that integrates evangelism and discipleship with community health and development.

Improved nutrition is an area where my work and Melissa's overlap. Good nutrition is essential to good overall health and the ability to recover from diseases such as malaria, which is prevalent in the Eastern Province. Nutrition is also vital to maternal and child health, a

priority for CCAP Zambia. Egichikeni Rural Health Center provides a variety of services to the more than 7,000 people in their catchment area. These services include basic health care, maternal and child health care, family planning, HIV/AIDS testing and counseling. Clinic officers assist in providing cooking demonstrations and establishment of community gardens in 53 villages. The goal of these activities is to improve nutrition at the village level by improving the availability of foods and to encourage the acceptance of protein and nutrient-dense foods that are not commonly grown or eaten. We are making progress in overcoming many challenges as we work with CCAP Zambia to improve the lives of those we serve.

Charles and Melissa Johnson are mission co-workers serving at the invitation of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Synod of Zambia (CCAP/Z). Charles is a development specialist and instructor at Chasefu Theological College and Model Farm and Melissa is a health education program facilitator with the CCAP/Z Health Department.

MAKE A GIFT

Support Charles and Melissa's ministry of improved health in Zambia.
pcusa.org/donate/E200534

'A year of service for a lifetime of change'

Zambia's YAVs grow during their international experience

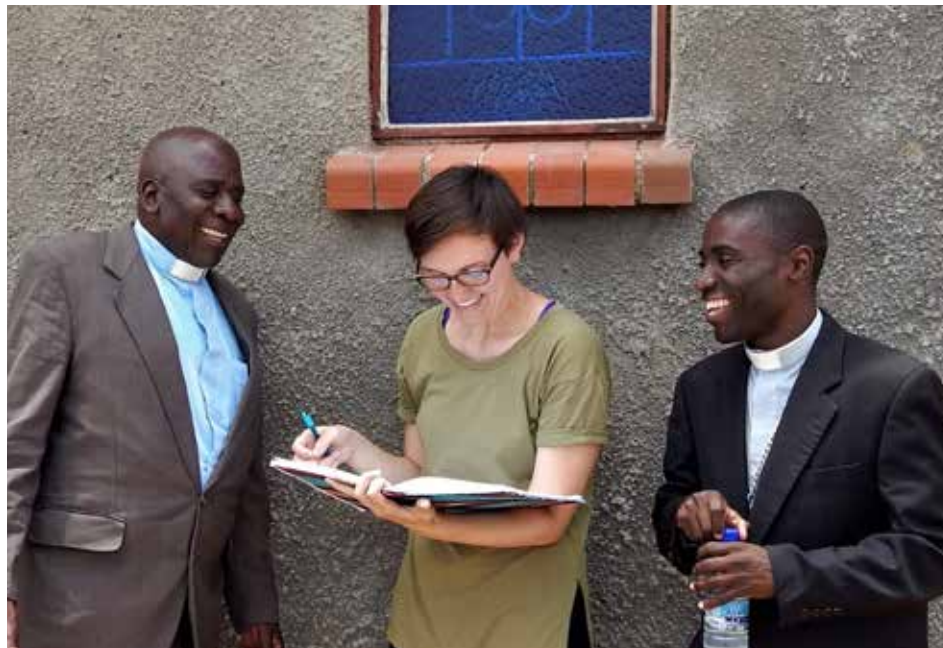
Kathy Melvin

The Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program promises "a year of service for a lifetime of change." If you ask the 2016–17 YAVs who served in Zambia, they will tell you there is nothing hollow about that promise.

Olivia Orth, 22, graduated from Westminster College in May 2016, where she studied elementary and special education. She agrees that all YAVs change and grow through their experience. "It pushes you to your limits," she said, "but more importantly it helps you find out who you are and how far you can go."

Kim Jurczyk, 22, graduated from Penn State University with degrees in English and communication arts and sciences. She said she has learned many important things living in Zambia. "I am so much more aware of the little things in my life that make me happy," she said. "Zambians are constantly thanking God for giving them another year to live, for protecting their loved ones, for blessing them with food, for providing them with shelter. When I leave, I am determined to bring these values with me when I return home and keep them as important parts of my identity."

Sherri Ellington, the YAV site coordinator for Zambia, has enjoyed walking alongside Zambia's YAVs. She has watched them struggle and has celebrated their triumphs. "In the end, they look back and realize that they have formed meaningful relationships, forged new levels of personal strength and have experienced Christian life in a setting completely different from how they were raised. Their worldviews have been



John Black

The Rev. Sevatt Kabaghe, general secretary of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian's (CCAP) Synod of Zambia (right), and the Rev. Rodwell P. Chipeta (left) worked with Kim Jurczyk, who served as a communications associate for the CCAP during her YAV year in Zambia.

forever deepened by experiencing on a visceral level what life is like in a poor but developing country."

Susannah Bryant, 22, a graduate of Wofford College with degrees in English and environmental studies, said she has grown tremendously through her church family.


"It's really great to be part of a worshiping body in another culture and to be fully integrated into it," she said. "We are partnering with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, and we are all in communities. What an amazing experience to see how other people worship the same God."

John Black, 23, found the worship services to be a source of inspiration.

"When I began to worship with my new congregation, even though I could not understand most of the worship because of language differences, I could feel the weight of every word spoken," he said.

"Zambia's YAVs have experienced God's hand holding them fast through many challenges this year," Sherri said, referring to Psalm 139. "I hope that this will give them a firm foundation of knowing throughout their lives not only that they can do anything but that with God's presence they can meet whatever challenges life may bring."

To learn more about the YAV program or to apply, visit youngadultvolunteers.org.



Download The **WORLD MISSION GUIDEBOOK!**

World Mission's latest guidebook, *Called to Mission: Finding Our Place in God's Mission*, provides tools and resources for U.S. Presbyterians interested in getting involved in God's work around the world. Whether your congregation is discerning or evaluating its mission work, seeking to learn more about long-term mission co-workers and how to connect with them, or looking for information about planning a short-term mission trip, the World Mission guidebook can help.

Here is a brief excerpt from the guidebook section titled "Discerning Your Mission Focus":

Discernment is best done in the context of community, like a congregation, mission committee or small group. In the process of discernment, we seek to sift, separate or distinguish among various possibilities that are before us, helping us to know the difference between a strong desire and a true sense of call. The discernment process requires that we think, learn, pray and pay attention to the ways that different paths resonate with who we are in light of God's mission.

Think: As you begin your discernment path, consider the following questions:

Where does your congregation already have connections, both near and far?

- Where are members in your congregation from?
- Where are people in your community from?

- Does your church have historic connections to mission in a particular place?
- Are members of your congregation now connected to mission in a particular place?
- What local mission efforts does your congregation engage in?
- Do they concern a certain topic, focus, people group or part of the world?

What does your congregation bring to mission involvement (gifts and needs)?

- What makes your congregation unique?
- What skills do members of your congregation have to share?
- What is missing in the life of your congregation?

What burdens are on the hearts of people in your congregation?

- Is there a concern for a particular place in the world?
- Are members of your congregation interested in the needs of particular groups, such as vulnerable children, abused women, those who are hungry or people living in fragile ecosystems?
- Does a particular focus spark interest in your congregation, such as poverty alleviation, evangelism, reconciliation, education, medical mission, water projects or eco-justice?

Download a free copy of the guidebook at pcusa.org/wmguidebook or purchase a printed copy at pcusastore.com.

Core values for mission involvement

World Mission celebrates a new energy for mission in the PC(USA) that claims the following values:

- **Dignity** — We are all called to treat each person with dignity and respect, following the model of Jesus.
- **Empowerment** — We focus on long-term relationships and building the capacity of each member of the body of Christ to engage in God's mission.
- **Holistic Ministry** — We seek to bring about the realization of God's vision for our fallen world.
- **Partnership** — Our work with partner churches and organizations around the world and with U.S. Presbyterians is based on mutual respect and trust leading to common prophetic witness and to mutual transparency and accountability.
- **Relevance to God's World** — We will maintain our centeredness on Christ as we follow the example of our spiritual ancestors: "The church reformed, always reforming" (*Book of Order* G-2.0200).
- **Stewardship** — We strive to restore God's creation and to use its resources respectfully and responsibly.

Extending an education tradition

Korean-American congregation's gift leads to new school building in Congo

Pat Cole

Aware that educational mission played a key role in their native land's development, members of the Korean Presbyterian Church in Fresno, California, want to strengthen Presbyterian education in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Last year, Korean Presbyterian gave \$80,000 to replace a deteriorating mud-and-thatch school building in Congo. Thanks to this generosity, students at Lusamba Primary School now enjoy a new building constructed with durable materials. The congregation worked with the Presbyterian Community in Congo, which operates the school, Presbyterian World Mission and the Congo Mission Network on the project.

Ground was broken on the school in March 2016 and construction was completed in July. People from the surrounding Kalonga Mpoyi village provided most of the labor.

Korean Presbyterian's interest in Congolese education began in 2014 when two of its members, Elder Man Jong Yoo and Deacon J.R. Lee, visited Congo. When they returned, they talked about the educational needs in Congo and pointed to the role education played in moving South Korea from poverty to prosperity in the 20th century.

"In my country, Korea, education was a part of building up the country and many missionaries helped with that," Man Jong



Gwenda Fletcher

Students and staff of Lusamba Primary School formed a receiving line in front of the new school to welcome Her Excellency Provincial Minister of Education Madame Gabrielle Kamuonyi as the chief guest at the school's inauguration ceremony on Sept. 10, 2016.

said. While in Congo, he and J.R. detected a great desire for learning, but they saw a dearth of resources.

"The children of the Democratic Republic of Congo really want to learn," Man Jong said. "It was the same way in Korea. Everyone in the family really wanted to study. People in Congo know education is the only way you can get out of poverty."

Yet Man Jong and J.R. also saw the poverty-related challenges that impede education in Congo.

"There were more than 150 students in one classroom," Man Jong said. "Many were sitting on the floor. There were not enough tables and chairs for all of them."

Fortunately, Lusamba has moved beyond conditions like these. Today students enjoy desks, chairs, blackboards and classrooms that remain dry on rainy days.

In fall 2015, Daniel Ha, a member of Korean Presbyterian, attended a Congo Mission Network meeting and learned about the network's efforts to promote

education in Congo, including school construction.

Daniel then told his congregation about the opportunity to participate in a school construction project. Between the end of November and Jan. 10, the congregation raised all of the funds necessary to build the school. Four schools have been built through the network's efforts, but Korean Presbyterian of Fresno is the first congregation to partner with the network to finance an entire school project.

Man Jong said it did not take a vigorous push to get the congregation to respond. "It all just came together," he observed. "Nobody did anything heroic."

In addition to the school construction project, the congregation provides financial support to mission co-workers John and Gwenda Fletcher, who serve in Congo, Bob and Kristi Rice, and Ruth Brown. Bob, Kristi and Ruth have recently moved from Congo and have been reassigned to new positions in South Sudan and Zimbabwe, respectively.

HELP CHILDREN

Support mission co-workers striving to alleviate poverty.

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An invitation

Sessions and congregations

For your convenience, we are providing a few simple options for you to use in submitting your gifts. Congregations can send contributions through regular receiving channels, usually presbyteries, or send Directed Mission Support (DMS) gifts directly to the address below. Those gifts designated to DMS accounts will be reported to the presbytery. We urge you to report DMS contributions directly to your presbytery in order to keep them informed of your denominational support.

Individuals

Individuals should use the numbers beginning with E to provide financial support to specific mission workers. If you desire, you can also give online at **presbyterianmission.org/supportwm**. You may also write the name of the mission co-worker on the memo line of the check; mail it to the address below, and we will confirm your designation and intent.

Give to the sending and support of your mission co-workers:

- Visit **pcusa.org/supportwm**.
- Call 800-728-7228, ext. 5611.

Please send gifts to:

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Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700
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For additional information, please contact:

Nicole Gerkins
Mission Engagement Associate
Mission Engagement and Support
nicole.gerkins@pcusa.org

Presbyterian World Mission brings God's global family together to address poverty, work toward reconciliation and proclaim God's saving love in Jesus Christ.

God's mission in Zimbabwe

Promoting public health

Mission co-worker **Ruth Brown** has recently been reassigned to work in partnership with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Harare Synod in Zimbabwe. Her work will help to strengthen the synod's public health promotion program throughout the church's communities.

Ruth has more than 30 years of public health experience, including serving with the Peace Corps and most recently as a PC(USA) food security/development specialist in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"I look forward to helping CCAP expand their current support program to people with AIDS in the communities they serve," Ruth said. "Members of the Harare Synod want their neighbors to have abundant life in Christ, and this means promoting good health. The church plans to prevent AIDS as well as tuberculosis, typhoid, cholera, malaria, heart disease, cancer and diabetes."

Ruth also hopes to assist the church with maintaining income-generating operations that will not only sustain their health programs but also support and empower vulnerable populations, including widows and orphans. In this work, she will collaborate with the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa Presbytery of Zimbabwe and the Zambia-Zimbabwe-Mozambique Mission Network.

Ruth plans to arrive at her base in the capital city, Harare, this fall. The Harare Synod, one of five synods of the CCAP, has 25 congregations and many prayer house around Zimbabwe, organized into four presbyteries.

.....
Support Ruth in Zimbabwe.

pcusa.org/donate/E200528

God's mission in South Korea

Raising awareness, cultivating reconciliation

Kurt Esslinger and **Hyeyoung Lee** each have dual roles as PC(USA) mission co-workers in South Korea.

First, they serve as site coordinators for the Young Adult Volunteers (YAV) program, housed on the campus of Presbyterian-founded Hannam University in Daejeon, South Korea. They mentor YAVs coming from the U.S. to South Korea and have also mentored several Korean YAVs serving in the U.S.

Kurt also works with the Reconciliation and Unification Department of the National Council of Churches in Korea, which maintains a relationship with the Korean Christian Federation of North Korea and advocates for the respectful and peaceful reconciliation of the ongoing Korean conflict.

Hyeyoung works with Hannam University's Global Multicultural Leadership Program, which connects Hannam students and YAVs with agencies working with immigrants in Daejeon.

Young adults ages 19 to 30 come to Korea for a year of service to understand the world outside the U.S. better and to see what life is like for Koreans who are struggling against poverty, for justice in the system and for reconciliation amid a persistent conflict. YAVs take that new understanding back with them to the U.S. to share with their communities, families and friends.

"Our relationship with God calls us to respond to God's grace by engaging the entirety of the world around us, helping God in the work of redemption within ourselves, within our community and within our society," Hyeyoung said.

.....
Support Kurt and Hyeyoung in South Korea.

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God's mission in Peru

Facilitating long-term partnerships

Since 2009, mission co-workers **Sara Armstrong** and **Rusty Edmondson** have worked with short-term mission teams for a long-term purpose in Peru. They serve alongside one partner, the Iglesia Evangélica Peruana Church, to organize, coordinate and translate common goals and mutual mission priorities for visiting U.S. delegations and Peruvian partners.



"We are also excited about our new partnership," Sara said. She and Rusty will collaborate with mission co-workers Jenny and Jed Koball to facilitate partnerships with Red Uniendo Manos Peru, the Presbyterian Hunger Program's Joining Hands Network partner, to address root causes of poverty and hunger. "Rusty and I will assist in facilitating advocacy work for Paz y Esperanza (PAZ), a mission partner providing humanitarian aid and advocating for victims of domestic violence, as well as the 15,000 Quechua-speaking people whose loved ones were massacred during the time of terror (1985–2003)." Sara and Rusty also are



linking three U.S. church partners with years of service in the Peruvian jungle (Moyobamba) and the sierra (Ayacucho) with new member organizations working in these areas. They are both looking forward to fruitful new work in Lima and outlying provinces. Based in

Lima, Sara and Rusty work with Peruvian partners in coastal areas, in the Andes mountains and in the rainforest of the Amazon basin. Together they enjoy building cultural bridges in this nation of incredible diversity.

Support Sara and Rusty in Peru.

pcusa.org/donate/E200530

God's mission in Europe

Teaching children to love their neighbors

The **Rev. Nadia Ayoub** is a PC(USA) mission co-worker and early childhood education trainer in western Ukraine. Nadia has worked alongside the Hungarian Reformed Church in Carpath-Ukraine to share God's love and joy with Roma children and their families since 2010.

Sharing the gospel with the Roma people and addressing discrimination, poverty and social separation are passions for Nadia and the PC(USA) partner churches. Nadia has encouraged national and international volunteers, as well as local believers, in developing relationships with neighbors in their community, which she said will help in teaching the children to read and write.

"I believe teaching the very little ones about God's love for them is very essential and important in building Christ-like character," Nadia said. For many preschoolers, it is their first time to hear Bible stories, sing songs about Jesus and pray.

Older children come to the Roma Mission Center in the city of Tiszabökény for after-school Bible study and social activities, to learn to read and write, and for the annual vacation Bible school.

"When I came to meet with the Roma people, I could not believe the way one group of people is so segregated from the rest of the community," Nadia said. "God is faithfully showing me signs of respect between the two groups — signs of acceptance and more signs of trusting Christ and bringing glory to God."



Support Nadia in Ukraine.

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The YAV experience is a year of faith in action, intentional living and transformation. Share with young adults you know (ages 19–30) and encourage them to apply.

We invite you to invest in the future of our church by making a gift to the YAV program. You may mail your check, payable to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), using the donation envelope included in this magazine. Please write E049075 in the memo line of your check, or donate online at pcusa.org/supportyav.



To learn more, visit youngadultvolunteers.org and follow [@yavprogram](https://twitter.com/yavprogram) on social media.



**Young Adult
Volunteers**

IMPORTANT DATES

Oct. 1, 2017 — Applications open | **Jan. 1, 2018** — Round 1, all sites available (early placement) | **March 1, 2018** — Round 2, most sites available (final date to apply for international sites) | **June 1, 2018** — Round 3, national sites only (limited spots available)