



Global Health Ministries

Sharing news with our partners

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From the Executive Director

Rev. Tim Iverson

O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You stay close to me, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make the grave my bed, you are there also. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. Psalm 139: 1, 7-12

It has been said that those who have had near-death experiences, such as I had last September, often catch a glimpse of heaven, if only what must have been heavenly light shining. I too beheld heavenly light and the presence of God, but it was not other-worldly. There was light when I first opened my eyes after five days in a coma and saw love and happiness and worry in the eyes of my wife and children standing by my bed. The light became all the brighter as I experienced the gentle, excellent care from the nurses and physicians who attended me, as I read all the many get-well cards and heard reports of those who were praying for my recovery, as I was visited by the best of friends and relatives cheering for my recovery, and when my pastor came to welcome me back to a life of gratitude, praise and thanksgiving for all that has been and will be. Heaven can wait, while much that is heavenly is already here. God is always with us in spirit and works for our comfort and healing through angels sent to our side in times of need. At Global Health Ministries, I normally pray and work for the healing of others, and in support of the "hands that heal." Now, like the patients of our partner hospitals and health programs overseas, I can say that I have been the beneficiary of such angels. I know something more about the blessed importance of the healing hands we support around the world. Thanks especially to the staff of GHM and Unity Hospital for their part in saving my life. And thanks to all of you for your faithful support through 2014, and now into an exciting new year that will see advances in our healing ministry, including a new Executive Director. Praise God from whom all mission and blessings flow!

With New Leadership ...

In early 2014, GHM began a special appeal to help renew Manambaro Lutheran Hospital in Southern Madagascar. The hospital has been the mission site of numerous medical missionaries before the founding of Global Health Ministries, including GHM's first president, Dr. Len Akland and his family. Manambaro has a proud history of excellence for a large region that has depended on it for surgical services and patient care. In recent years, however, the facilities, leadership and services have deteriorated, and there were serious questions about its future. GHM initiated the appeal to renew equipment and furnishings, and the response enabled us to prepare a shipment that could respond to many of Manambaro's priority needs. But the shipment was delayed until strong new leadership could be found able to address administrative challenges as well as revitalize the hospital's mission and quality of care.

After much prayer and discussion, Dr. Heuric Rakotomalala and his physician wife Mireille have agreed to the request from Dr. Gustave Andrianandraina, Director General of SALFA, to serve a minimum five-year term leading Manambaro. Readers of *Global Health* may remember that the couple hoped to serve as missionaries in CAR, but the continuing insecurity there led to the suspension of these plans. They will come from Antanimandy Lutheran Hospital in Northwest Madagascar where Dr. Heuric is a well-regarded surgeon and effective manager of



hospital operations. The welcome news enables GHM to release the shipment configured to match the hospital's assessed needs, including a new \$30,000 fixed x-ray machine, along with surgical tables, lights, sterilizers, vital signs monitors, hospice and newborn kits, and other basic medical supplies. We give thanks to God that Drs. Heuric and Mireille have answered this call to strengthen and renew the healing ministries at Manambaro Hospital. Aware of their impending arrival, an international mining company operating in the region is seeking to contract now with Manambaro for surgical services for their employees.

"What has convinced us," Dr. Heuric wrote, "is the verse where God reminded us recently: 'From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded,' Luke 12:48b. God has given us forgiveness of our sins through His Only Son Jesus who gave Himself to overcome death for us. He has given us countless blessings. We have received much. It is asked for us to give more in Manambaro. We know He is The One calling us. He will provide." Heuric and Mireille ask for prayers for the coming shipment, for God's blessing upon their efforts at Manambaro, and for our brothers and sisters in beautiful Madagascar in need of their healing service. Continued support for the renewal is requested for **Madagascar Shipping and Equipment: 48-S0000**.

Shipping News

In addition to the shipment to Cameroon, several containers have been received by GHM partners in the last several months, or are on their way.

Liberia. Shipments continue to Liberia, including a 40' container sent by Bethlehem Lutheran in St. Cloud, Minnesota. The container was full of food donated by Food for Kidz. This container was sent in partnership with ELCA Global Mission, which provided funding for customs clearance and in-country shipping.

Tanzania, Pare Diocese. When GHM's Mission Developer, Kim Dickey, visited Gonja Hospital in August, she saw first-hand the state of the beds and mattresses available to patients there. She is delighted to report that new mattresses and beds are on the way, along with newborn and hospice kits, laboratory equipment for Shighatini Health Center and basic supplies for rural dispensaries in the Pare Diocese. We are grateful to friends in Iowa whose constancy and compassion have made certain Gonja and Shighatini receive these needed items.

Tanzania, Iringa Diocese. A 20' container sponsored by the South Carolina Synod and Easter Lutheran in Eagan, Minnesota, has left for Iringa Diocese. Iringa's radio station shares the gospel and also provides health education to surrounding communities. Generators on this shipment will help them continue their broadcasts. South Carolina Synod is providing dental extraction instruments and basic medical supplies to enhance the healthcare programs of the South Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, their companion synod.

Tanzania, ALMC/Selian. A 53' trailer loaded with wonderful equipment from SCL Health, formerly Exempla Healthcare, arrived in GHM's warehouse from Denver, Colorado in January. Infant warmers and incubators, portable x-ray machines, surgical tables, electrosurgical generators, infant and vital signs monitors, an anaesthesia gas machine, all are traveling to Arusha Lutheran Medical Center by way of Mombasa. Senior leadership from Exempla along with a number of biomedical technicians are expected to travel to Arusha in May to help install, configure and calibrate the equipment, ensuring it is ready to be put to good use.

GHM sent a dozen sea container shipments to partners in these countries and Zimbabwe in 2014 (plus two air freight shipments to Liberia and many suitcases full of supplies). We anticipate the same level of activity in 2015, if not more. The average cost of shipping each time is approximately \$20,000, not including the value of donated and purchased medical equipment and supplies.

The B-line

by Bea Haagenon



One of the things I love and admire about GHM is that we are an organization that listens to our partners and responds to specific requests for assistance. GHM is not "one size fits all," because our partners are not all one size. Some of the newborn kits, for example, are still used by midwives who are helping young women give birth in their villages. Most of these kits, however, are sent to mission hospitals or clinics where they are given as gifts to encourage women to seek prenatal care. These partners have let us know that they would like the kits to include cloth diapers. They are happy to receive them in many forms, including simple flat rectangles that can be folded as needed, diapers made from recycled t-shirts or flannel and more "finished" diapers that don't require diaper pins. Patterns for each of these options are available on the GHM website and as hard copies from our office. Purchased cloth diapers are wonderful too, of course. We would like each newborn kit from GHM to now include two cloth diapers and two diaper pins.

As always, we are flexible and thankful for your gifts that continue to "Help the Hands that Heal."

The B-line wishes our supporters and partners a blessed and joyful new year.



Maternity ward beds at Gonja Hospital soon to be replaced with new beds sent by GHM

GHM Welcomes New Board Members

GHM is blessed with a talented and dedicated Board of Directors. In 2015 we welcome five new members to our Board. **Amanda Casselton** is currently serving as the Student Representative on the Lutheran Campus Ministry Board, and has a Marketing degree from the Carlson School of Management at The University of Minnesota. **Rev. Doug Cox** has served as an ELCA missionary, consulting with the Malagasy Lutheran Church on Christian/Muslim relations. Doug is currently serving as Pastor of Worship, Mission and Outreach at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in Excelsior, MN. **Barbara Daiker, PhD, RN**, is a talented health care leader with extensive experience in health care operations, managed care and quality measurement. **Mark Eggen, MD**, practices as an anesthesiologist with University of Minnesota Physicians. He is a diplomat of the American Board of Anesthesiologists and is a licensed physician in Minnesota and California. Dr. Eggen currently serves as President of the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice. **Charles Hays, MD, MPH**, has more than 40 years of experience as a public health physician, epidemiologist, malariologist, and as a teacher at the graduate school level in medicine and public health.



Gusties at GHM

Global Health Ministries welcomed 18 students from Gustavus Adolphus College in early January as they prepared for their J-Term program in Tanzania. Each student packed an extra suitcase to bring to Tanzania, full of medical supplies and textbooks collected in the GHM warehouse.

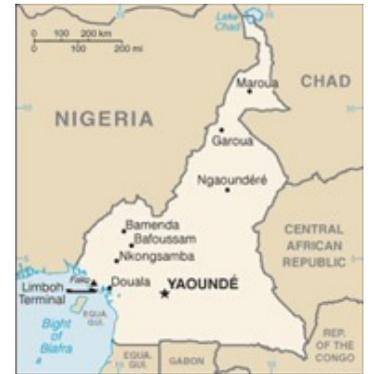
Their experience included visits to Arusha Lutheran Medical Center, (ALMC) and Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center. After dropping medical textbooks off at ALMC School of Nursing, they visited The Plaster House. The Plaster House and Rehabilitation Programme, an ALMC project, is a home in Arusha that enables children from all over Tanzania to recover after they have had corrective surgery. GHM ships containers of medical equipment and supplies to ALMC several times a year, provides scholarships for continuing education training for physicians and medical officers at these hospitals, and manages financial contributions to ALMC and The Plaster House.

The J-Term course, led by Gustavus Professor of Nursing Barbara Zust, is designed for students who are interested in exploring health in Tanzania from a holistic perspective that regards physical, emotional and spiritual well-being as intricately enmeshed. By the time you read this, the travelers will have traveled on to Iringa and returned home to frigid Minnesota. We're delighted GHM's Suitcase Ministry was part of their experience.



Where in the World is GHAP ...

In January, GHAP returned to Cameroon. Volunteer Steve Laible and GHAP director Cindy Wilke are carrying on consultancy work begun with the health system of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon (EELC) several years ago. The primary objective is to assist Ngaoundéré Protestant Hospital in reaching financial sustainability to support the healing ministry of the EELC. Ngaoundéré is the Church's flagship hospital, and serves a diverse population in northern Cameroon. Christian, tribal or Muslim, all are served with grace and compassion at Ngaoundéré. The GHAP consultation is focused on financial management, human resources, pharmacy and performance metrics.



GHM's GHAP program works with our partners overseas to enhance their governance, leadership and management practices, building their capacity and viability. Learn more at www.ghapartners.org

More News from Cameroon



The OR at Ngaoundéré Protestant Hospital is expanding, and we look forward to hearing of more surgeries performed, more people healed, more revenue for the hospital and for OSEELC, the healthcare system of the Cameroon Lutheran Church. The expansion is thanks to the efforts of Cameroon Healthcare Development Program (CHDP), whose mission is to improve healthcare in Cameroon through education, program development, infrastructure improvement, and financial and administration development. The ultimate goal is self-sufficiency for OSEELC.

Retired ELCA missionary to Cameroon Jim Noss was there when two 40' containers arrived from GHM. With the help of OSEELC's leadership, the shipment cleared customs and was delivered to Ngaoundéré in record time. Contents included equipment and supplies for 3 hospitals, 14 health centers, an eye clinic and dental clinic and other mission-related items. It also included items specifically designated for the expanded OR at Ngaoundéré. Surgical tables, lights, vital signs monitors, stainless steel cabinets, a surgical scrub sink, surgical generators and suction pumps will help make the expanded facility operational. More is needed and another shipment is being prepared. We hear the new OR will be ready to move in any day. We ask for your prayers for our partners in Cameroon and the people they serve, and God's blessings on their work.



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A heartfelt thank you to all of you who contributed to our Kairos Mission Appeal in 2014. As of this writing we have raised more than \$200,000 – we are grateful! The Kairos appeal is an invitation to support GHM with financial gifts that build our capacity to enhance the healthcare programs of our overseas partners. Because of your support, more consultations and trainings have begun to help our partners develop effective management and demonstrable improvements in community health. With your help, we have more than doubled the number of congregations newly involved in our ministry this year, helping us broaden our base of support. You'll be hearing from us again in 2015 about this two-year campaign!

Update from Liberia

We have begun to receive encouraging news from partners in Liberia regarding the Ebola crisis in that country. There is still much to be done, but we are grateful to God for this good news. This letter was received from the Bishop in mid-January.

Happy New Year!

It is truly a HAPPY New Year as we continue to see improvements in the Ebola situation! The reports have been very encouraging as hospitals resume work, non-essential government employees return to work and schools reopen (teachers and staff return to work this month and students return to school in February)! It is a new day in Liberia! Nine of the 15 counties have not reported any new Ebola cases for over 21 days; some have been Ebola free for over 40 days!

.... It is based on these developments that we believe it is now safer to work in Liberia. We are therefore lifting the ban on our partners' direct involvement in the mission effective immediately. Your presence with us will make a greater impact on us and the work we do.

Let me close by thanking you for your prayers and for the various ways in which you have stood with us! Thank you; you have been true partners! We will be discussing the aftermath of Ebola another day but this is just to thank you for how far you have helped us come! We are ready to receive you.

Blessings in the Lord,

*Rev. D. Jensen Seyenkulo, Ph.D.
Bishop, Lutheran Church in Liberia*