

Winter 2023

C O N G O T E A M N E W S L E T T E R

BONJOUR



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For more information about the Congo Ministry at Myers Park Presbyterian Church, visit myersparkpres.org/congo

We threw a party...



It would be difficult to imagine a more joyous occasion than we experienced on January 19th in Oxford Hall. With well over one-hundred guests, we honored “those who went before us.” Those of us in attendance were especially moved by Bill Bradford, seen here with Fay Grasty after making brief remarks at the podium.

As most of us know, it was Bill, or “Dr. Bill,” as Fay and some of the other early travelers called him, who really got this ministry going in the early 1950s. It was Bill who showed others how to love our neighbors, no matter how distant they may be. And it was he, who demonstrated the commitment necessary to be away from family, to make not just one but several trips and to carry this ministry in his heart for an entire lifetime. Finally, it was Bill who spoke with that same heart about how pleased he is that the ministry has continued all these years despite the many challenges we and our partners face.

To the left, a photo of one of several tables of Congolese friends who joined us from the local community. Yes, that is a twelve foot wide Congo flag on the wall.

On behalf of all of us involved, thank you for showing how it's done, Dr. Bradford.

Thank You.

It's hard to go wrong when you have a team like this. Special thanks to the communications team who rose to the occasion (to say the least) to make the 75th Anniversary Celebration truly celebratory.

Katherine Nelson, Bill Gallagher, Barbary Walker, William Culp, Susie Culp, Pamela May. Also, a special "shout-out" to our staff folks who went the extra mile. Josh Richard, Katherine Turk, Chrissy Carlto, Yolanda Bragg and Chad Boyles. You guys are the best!

Also, special thanks to Steve Mezardjian who without pause, dropped everything to be present with his trusty camera.



Here are Susie Culp and Pamela May showing off their "Congo Cookies" and donut holes.

To the right, our new Congo display. You can see it again beginning in January outside of Oxford Hall. It features a timeline and an overview of our work in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



Up Close and Personal

This is Ybomba Umba. She is 11 years old and is in 2nd grade at DdN. She hopes to be a doctor one day. She is doing well in school but struggles with a difficult family situation. She lost her father last May and reports to us that "life in her family is difficult" with the passing of her father. Like most of the children we met, she loves the school and looks forward to her time there every day.

Heck Yea!

It isn't always good to be the Guinea Pig but in this case...it was awesome. In a matter of a few hours, "The Wall" came together thanks to the combined talents of Josh Richard and Katherine Turk. It's amazing what one can do with frames from Ikea, a good printer, a paper cutter, some foamcore, a bit of imagination and a few Congolese do-dads. Our display was up in time for the anniversary event and will be up again in January, following an Advent and Christmas display.



TEAM MEMBER FEATURE

If you ask Fletcher or Anne Wright if they have children, they would answer “no.” But that isn’t entirely correct. A more realistic answer might be “yes, thousands.” Here they are pictured with just a few of them, boys in this case. The truth is, the Wrights have impacted the lives of thousands of boys and girls in Congo over the past twenty years. As pointed out by Dr. Bradford, it is gratifying to know that the ministry started 75 years ago not just continues, but thrives. We currently have about two thousand students between DdN and Les Mages and also provide ancillary support to other schools in the Kananga area as well.

And no one has worked more tirelessly--currently on the Finance Committee—among other leadership responsibilities, to insure that The Congo Ministry remains viable.

It is because of people like you that we have the occasion to celebrate. Thank you for all you do, *and have done*, all these years!



Here are the Wrights in one of their favorite places...surrounded by children.

HIGHLIGHTS



75th Anniversary

After months of careful planning and anticipation, the event has come and gone. But the spirit associated with it remains. Remember, 75 years and counting. We need to keep the energy level and commitment alive.



Congo Mission Network

This year's conference will be in Charleston, South Carolina on March 14th through 16th. The conference will be held at Charleston Atlantic Presbytery Conference Center, 4701 Park Place West. Mark your calendar!

The theme will be education strategies and programs for youth. Our friend Mboyamba will be one of the speakers.

For more information, contact Katherine Nelson at 414-379-6675.

National Election

Felix Tshisekedi wins a landslide victory to secure a second term in election the opposition has labelled a 'farce'. With over 70% of the votes from a roughly 40% turn-out. The current administration prevailed and will govern the country for the next five years.

The preliminary results of the December 20 election were announced in the capital, Kinshasa, on Sunday amid demands from the opposition and some civil society groups for the vote to be rerun due to massive logistical problems that put the validity of the outcome into question.

Businessman Moise Katumbi finished behind Tshisekedi with 18 percent of the vote. Martin Fayulu, a former



oil company executive, received 5 percent, while Nobel Peace Prize winner Denis Mukwege, a physician renowned for treating women brutalised by sexual violence in eastern DR Congo, got less than 1 percent.

The election had over 40 percent turnout, with 18 million people voting. The results will be sent to the constitutional court for confirmation.

The final results are expected on January 10, and the president is scheduled to be sworn in at the end of the month.

CONGO MISSION NETWORK CONFERENCE



Pastor Mboyamba with Bob Davies

The keynote speaker at the CMN Conference is our good friend, Pastor Mboyamba, a leader in the CPC church. It was Mboyamba and his entourage who took care of us during our time last Congo trip when we went to Kananga.

The theme of the 2024 conference is "Education for Transformation: Equipping Congolese Youth for the Future." The event will unite partners in both the US and Congo to strengthen Congo's sparsely funded education programs.

All conference sessions will be held at Charleston Atlantic Presbytery Conference Center, 4701 Park Place West, N Charleston, SC 29405. This location is within reasonable driving distance from MPPC (3 hours, 16 minutes).

For information, contact Katherine Nelson at 414-379-6675.

REGISTER TODAY for this year's Congo Mission Network Conference from March 14th to 16th.

<https://congopartners.org/register2024/>

CONTACT THE CONGO TEAM

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