



Global Health Ministries

Newsletter

Because all people should have access to a healthy life.

Photo, Village Health Workers in Waka, Nigeria

Healing and Reconciliation



Dr. Mark Jacobson, ALMC's Chapel, TZ

In late February we gathered to grieve the loss and celebrate the life of Dr. Mark Jacobson, a servant leader who inspired so many of us. A Lutheran medical missionary

in Tanzania for more than 35 years, Mark was an instrumental partner with Global Health Ministries (GHM) from our earliest days. The impact he had on healthcare in Tanzania is immeasurable, growing a one-room clinic into two nationally recognized hospitals (Selian and Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre, or ALMC) with more than 500 staff and 150,000 patients per year. More than a business, healthcare under Mark's leadership was a ministry. From refugee camps in Somalia to his work in Tanzania and South Sudan and countless other projects around the globe, Mark used medicine to restore people to wholeness and well-being, as a tool to help serve others.

~ continued page 2

שלום
Shalom

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

~ 2 Corinthians 5:18

~ continued from page 1



Mr. Andaus, traditional faith healer, Nigeria

GHM's purpose is also more than healing bodies. We have a focus on physical health, but our purpose in healing is to participate in God's ministry of reconciliation.

The biblical concept of wholeness and well-being (shalom) includes healing or mending all forms of brokenness: brokenness in our spiritual relationships with God (serving more than one master); brokenness in our relationships with each other (injustice); and brokenness in our relationships with creation (failing to be good stewards of what God has created).

Recently, a team from GHM visited a remote village in northern Nigeria, where Village Health Workers (VHWs) have been mobilized in partnership with us for over a decade. Thousands of lives have improved, especially those of mothers and children ... but the reconciliation is deeper. During our visit in February, 2022, VHWs in one community put on a drama. The drama began with a boy bitten by a snake, and rushed to a traditional healer. No matter what the traditional healer tried, it didn't work, and ultimately, the boy died. In the next scene, a woman was bitten but taken to the clinic and healed with medication by a knowledgeable doctor. Cheers echoed across the village, not just for the performance, but for the realities it pointed to. Mr. Andaus, who played the part of the traditional healer in the drama, had actually been one in real life. But he himself had renounced this tradition when he saw how much more success came through the VHWs and clinic.



Christian and Muslim leaders gathered in support of the VHW program, Waka, Nigeria

In this part of Nigeria, tensions run quite high between Christians and Muslims. But through this VHW program in villages across northern Nigeria, Christians, Muslims, and traditional believers are united in a collaboration to make health available for all. We routinely attended gatherings that began in prayer by a Christian leader and closed in prayer by a Muslim leader, or vice versa. The reconciling of people from differing tribes and religions was palpable.

Increasingly we are also called to accompany our partners as they struggle with the consequences of climate change. Funds from GHM recently helped purchase medications and rebuilt Lutheran clinics impacted by devastating cyclones in Madagascar.

Healing and reconciliation are two sides of the same coin. Our mission is to "help the hands that heal" in ways that bring healing and reconciliation around the globe. This is our goal because this is God's goal.

Rev. Doug Cox, Executive Director



Treating patients at Ambaladara Clinic, Madagascar, despite cyclone damage

Healthful Healing 4 Nigeria

Last month, a 4x4, i.e., four planes and four hours in a van, some on a road, brought a 4-person GHAP team to north-east Nigeria (“the bush” according to some Nigerians). Dry, dusty and hot conditions are de rigueur except during the rainy season. As part of our partnership with the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), our purpose was to assess the progress of, and facilitate planning with, the local team’s Village Health Worker “pilot” that was initiated with Dr. David Thompson’s accompaniment over a decade ago.

Straight north of this region, Lake Chad is a “4-corners” intersection of Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. If you draw an oval around the area from southern Lake Chad (reduced to 10% of its size from 40 years ago due to climate change) to northern Adamawa State, you will likely delineate some people referred to as “Boko Haram” which means “Western education is forbidden.” It is a terrorist organization that seeks to overthrow the Nigerian government.

Amid these challenges, over 250 Village Health Workers trained and supported by a dedicated team of 3 coordinators and 4 Mobile Leadership Teammates (MLTs) continue to make a vast difference in the health and lives of over 50,000 people in the Dingai and Waka areas. With specialized community health training that includes malaria prevention and WASH (water, sanitation & hygiene) implementation and in collaboration with local Village Health Councils, progress has transcended religious beliefs: people in Muslim and Christian communities have embraced the work of VHWs.

These communities have begun to protect themselves from both disease and terrorist threats because they cannot depend on services typically provided by government: Nigeria is rated 98 on the 2021 Fragile State Index. 100 is effectively a failed state. They said “Yes” to local empowerment, because you say “Yes” to supporting their work. Na gode x hudu.*

**Na gode = “thank you” and hudu = “4” in the Hausa language, spoken by 90 MM people in Africa* Rob Thames, FACHE, FHFMA, Dir. of GHAP



MLT Besty (center) with LCCN Coordinators Nuwayina and Antibas

Timely Shipping



Grateful to our shipping partners for GHM’s most recent container to reach Liberia, the Lutheran Church in Liberia (LCL) and Friends of Liberia (FOL)! An awesome shipment, it included medical supplies and equipment for 18 hospitals and clinics, 2 rehab programs, and 23 schools of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Sciences. United Methodist University, Montserrado (pictured), shared that “The donation is timely, particularly when we are fighting the COVID-19 pandemic ... No students enter health facilities without personal protective equipment. Currently we are short of the items received. What a timely donation!”

Reflections from Nigeria



Prosperity, far left, in Nigeria With all that is happening in the world – pandemics, wars, climate change - it is easy to feel overwhelmed and wonder if what we have chosen to do makes an impact. During GHM’s recent visit to Nigeria, we travelled over 5 hours each way on unpaved roads to reach one of the villages, and this created a lot of time for conversations with our LCCN partners, Nuwayina and Antibas (aka “Malaria” as he is fondly called). They pointed out that even though we have travelled so far, there are more villages beyond where they have been able to reach. They said something that stuck with me - pioneers go the difficult road. 12 people (apostles) thousands of years ago took the difficult trail, and we still define time by what they did to spread the word of Jesus. With the community based primary healthcare program in these remote villages, we plant a seed and hope that the community takes it even farther than we can go. We cannot reach every village ourselves, but the seed that we plant bears fruit and the wind carries it to other communities that are further impacted. Through our investment in community health workers and in partnership with other stakeholders, we ARE making an impact.

Prosperity Eneh, PharmD, GHM Board Member



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Gala!

Thursday, May 12

We're glad to be together again! Please join us either in person or online for this year's Gala. Doors open 6 pm at:

Midland Hills Country Club
2001 Fulham Street
Roseville, Minnesota

Silent auction opens May 9th online!

Register at www.ghm.org

Contact us at:

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Join us for a special Gala to celebrate the work of GHM and support the change we imagine in southern Madagascar! The worst drought in 40 years has created famine conditions in south Madagascar. GHM's 2022 Gala will help us respond to this crisis. Together, we can bring sustainable water to communities that thirst for lasting change - water for families, water for crops, water for health.