



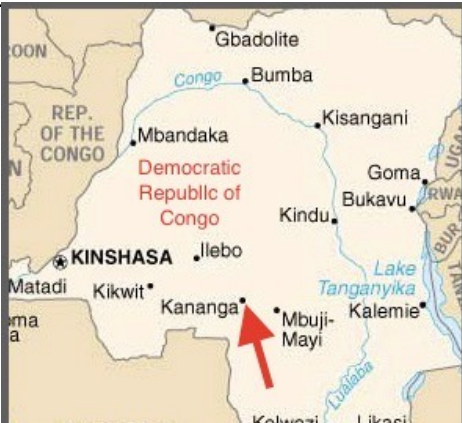
INSTITUT MEDICAL CHRETIEN DU KASAI

Christian Medical Institute of the Kasai - Serving in Central Congo

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A Periodic Newsletter

Issue No. 42 April - December 2017



IMCK has two campuses: one in Kananga and the other ten miles away at the town of Tshikaji.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

May the grace, mercy, and peace of the Lord be with you. It is a joy for me to send you this message when all of humanity is about to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Today, this message is addressed to the entire population throughout the world, as well as to the people of the DRC, and particularly to the people of Central Kasai.

I would like to fulfill a pleasant duty, that of thanking you for having made the problems of the IMCK your daily concern through your assistance both spiritually, materially and financially. Our thanks also go to all those who, from near or far, have contributed in one way or another to the implementation of the IMCK action plan for 2017, which is coming to completion.

Far from being exhaustive, I am thinking of the IMCK partner churches in the DRC or outside the country, non-governmental organizations, IMCK's member-partners and friends, the Congolese State, my colleagues and employees, and the user population of our services.

Thanks to you, the IMCK has benefited from many donations, in kind as well as in cash during the year 2017, including:

Funds:

- o For indigent patients,
- o For scholarships (specialization for a staff doctor in Gynecology-Obstetrics, training in anesthesia for a Good Shepherd Hospital nurse, grants for high school (ITM) and undergraduate (ISTM) nursing students),
- o For the rehabilitation of hospital buildings and the renovation of the PAX maternity clinic,
- o Assigned to the maintenance and repair of the hydroelectric dam,
- o Reserved for the retirement benefits of some IMCK retirees, and
- o Relating to the activities of the spiritual ministry, to name just a few examples.

Materials, equipment, medicines.



Nursing students singing at church

I also write this message especially to show my affection and my understanding not only to all those who have been victims of the events that caused the insecurity in the Kasai Central region and whose suffering from violent and non-violent trauma remains palpable, genuine and visible (Acts 7:26); but also to my colleagues and employees who showed their dedication and competence during this year 2017, which was not easy, but did not prevent them from contributing to the fulfillment of the triple mission of the IMCK (those of Evangelization, Training and Healing).

May Christmas bring you love, joy and serenity, and give you hope in these difficult moments of existence (Psalms 75:5, Luke 1:14.)

It is more urgent than ever that assistance and comfort be guaranteed to this population. With Christmas, it is time for peace to come back definitely as Christ exhorts us (Luke 10:5, John 20:21).

It is with these words of hope that I wish you a Merry Christmas full of anticipation.

May God fill you with His blessings.

Dr. Serge MAKOLO
Director of IMCK



Congolese Children Singing
[Click here](#) for a short video of more singing and dancing

IMCK ENDOWMENT: It has been a long time since you got an update on the IMCK Endowment. From January 1 through November 30 of 2017, the endowment has received **\$35,278** in new donations and **\$68,212** in dividends and capital gains. As of November 30, the total value stood at **\$462,607**. Thanks to many of you reading this newsletter, we are approaching half a million dollars! Will holiday and end-of-year donations put us over that milestone?

Friends of IMCK has been doing the following to bring that about:

- 1) We have been running two paid ads on Facebook, aimed at trying to broaden our exposure beyond the church congregations and members who have traditionally made up our donor community. [Click here](#) to see where the ad takes you.
- 2) We have sent out Christmas/ New Years' letters to everyone on our contact list (some by email and some by snail mail), reminding everyone to keep the IMCK endowment in mind along with all the other holiday season appeals that you ordinarily see. If you missed it, [click here](#) to see it.
- 3) Some churches have run "Alternative Christmas Giving" campaigns, and even African art shows ([click here](#) for one), raising thousands for the endowment.
- 4) We are considering accepting some donations in the form of "crypto-coins" in hopes of realizing the appreciation that this form of virtual currency is offering.
- 5) We are urging people to consider including the IMCK endowment in their wills, bequests and trust funds for possible long-term growth.
- 6) Several contributors have joined the ranks of those making repeat donations or setting up family-and-friends honorary and memorial sub-funds within the endowment.



But all this activity is taking a toll on the aging Board members of Friends of IMCK! **Please read this appeal carefully.** We are earnestly looking for new, younger people, to serve with us on the Board and eventually help take over the fundraising operations when the current Board members are no longer able to continue. Many of us are well into our 70s and 80s and we have a goal of at least \$2 million yet to be reached. We need your help, either to volunteer or to put us in touch with possible volunteers. We also need people to help maintain our web site and data base of contacts. You can contact us at FriendsofIMC@gmail.com. We hope to see more participation and growth in 2018! Submitted by Bill Rule

Renovation of Women's Center at PAX: For almost four years, Antonio Martinez has been living in Congo, supervising the renovation of IMCK PAX Clinic in Kananga and also working for IMA World Health. The renovation final stage, the Women's Center, was under construction, when intense conflict broke out in the Kasai province during the past year. Renovation stopped for some months, but the construction staff kept the area guarded and swept clean. Work resumed recently. Here is Antonio's latest report:

1. **FUNDS:** By early 2016, Myers Park Presbyterian Church in NC provided the \$90,000 they pledged. Catonsville Presbyterian Church in MD has provided \$25,000. Medical Benevolence Foundation (MBF) provided consultation regarding the Women's Center and sent equipment and supplies. Friends of IMCK (FIMCK) sent \$33,239 this year for the Women's Center renovation. (Many donated to FIMCK.)

2. **ON SITE WORK:** Kananga has become more stable since the

end of June, Antonio reports. But he reports that during the greatest period of conflict, the construction workers at PAX were robbed of all they had. On



Women's Center with fresh paint!

site work stopped for six months. Still, the construction crew protected the area, kept it clean, and at times took in refugees from the conflict. This past week after funds from FIMCK arrived, Antonio purchased building materials and work has resumed.

3. **GOALS:** Before conflict escalated March - June & disrupted Kananga life, work was to be focused on completing the conversion of an old theater at PAX into a 15 bed maternity ward and an operating room. This required the following activities: Install floor & wall tiling. Fabricate/ install windows/doors. Install glass bricks to provide light without sacrificing privacy. Transform the old generator shack into a maternity kitchen and dining area. Antonio will send an update on this project in the next month. Submitted by Antonio Martinez/edited by Charlotte White

Displacement and Hunger in Central Congo:

Recent Reports: Articles from the BBC on Dec. 6, 2017* & from World Food Program (WFP) on Dec. 7, 2007** focused on Congo's population displacement & hunger, brought on by the instability of rival militias, failure to hold elections, & conflict minerals. While war has long been waged in eastern Congo, new crises in central Congo erupted in the past 15 months, after a government response to a traditional chief. The people displaced amidst chaos & killing is now generating an epic crisis of hunger, according to Claude Jibidar, the WFP representative in the DRC (Congo.) Estimating that 3.2 million people are desperately short of food, WFP recently fanned out thru the Kasais to help provide food programs; but WFP is short of supplies. WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger. Both articles say the world is not paying enough attention to this crisis. Many say this is currently the worst conflict displacement area in the world - exceeding displacements in Arab countries.



Infant brought to the nutrition center at IMCK

Helping Programs: These are reports of work of other groups: IMCK, Project: Hope-Congo, Medical Benevolence Foundation (MBF), Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), and InterChurch Medical Assistance (IMA.)



The nutrition center at IMCK

*Government and NGO programs have long screened Congolese children to identify & intervene for those nutritionally at risk. But with the explosion of hunger in the area now, the IMCK nutrition center is inundated. [Click here](#) for a video that includes displaced persons taking refuge in the hospital but also shows several other normal activities that are ongoing. [Click here](#) for a short video about children being brought into the nutrition center. First you will see the IMCK Board meeting in November 2017. To assist with this nutrition program, see on the last page how to donate to Mission: Hope-Congo, MBF, PDA or find out how to support IMA. Designate for IMCK-Nutrition.

*PCUSA mission co-worker Larry Sthresley assists with the development of church health ministries and their role in the health system of Congo. His designs and manages comprehensive health programs that work from the community level up through the ministry of health. When asked this week about programs to help with hunger, Larry responded: "There are several programs going on in the Kasais now to address the hunger issue. When I was there [in November] for the IMCK board meeting, I saw caravans of trucks on the road with World Food Program supplies going out to affected areas. UNICEF is meeting with organizations to expand their feeding programs. Interchurch Medical Assistance (IMA) <https://imaworldhealth.org/democratic-republic-of-congo/> has a meeting with them this afternoon to talk about which sites we will be managing." Larry helps to administer many IMA programs in Congo.



Food prepared at IMCK

*Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) <https://pda.pcusa.org/page/frb/> has provided food programs in the Kasais. At the September 2016 PCUSA Congo Mission Network meeting, Larry reported on a completed PDA program in Congo which provided families with seeds & gardening supplies. The implementing partner in the Kasai was PRODEK (Project for Development in the Kasai), a credible agency that has existed for over 30 years. Dr. Larry Sthresley said, "PDA and the local programs decided the money would do the most good if they organized the families into groups of 5 to work together and share the one hoe that is part of the package. So the \$10,000 was able to help 1,000 families. PRODEK bought seeds from Nganjika research center so they are good quality & open pollinated. This will get more yields for the families & they will be able to use what is produced as seeds for the next growing season." Larry wrote this week that IMA submitted a proposal to OFDA to expand this program to 9,000 families. He said, "Hopefully it will be accepted & started in February." Donate to PDA and designate "for Kasai Congo relief" or send donations to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) P.O. Box 643700 Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Write "DR000088 Kasai Congo relief" on the memo. Submitted by Charlotte White

* <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42250230>

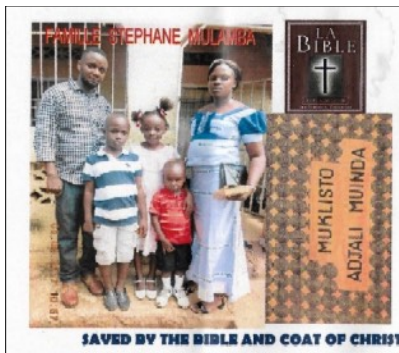
** <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/kasai-drc-millions-risk-funding-dries>

Congo Mission Network:

IMCK was well represented at the Congo Mission Network annual conference, held at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church in California, September 21-23. Two things significant to IMCK were presented:

1. The Health Advocacy Committee of CMN continued work on a project to put into a searchable online database all of the health project needs of CPC (Congo Presbyterian Church) and CPK (Kinshasa Presbyterian Church.) While this is still a work in progress, [click here](#) to see and experiment with the DRAFT grant application form in progress, so CPC and CPK health entities, such as IMCK, can submit uniform/comprehensive requests for help into one central repository. Because this is all still being refined with Congolese participation, you will not find an online database yet. Type into the final text box (#28) on the form comments or suggestions you have for improvement. We appreciate your input.

2. Elder Simon Ntumba, Director of the Presbyterian IMPROKA printing press in Kananga and a member of the IMCK Board, was a keynote speaker at CMN. He described how the CPC and its constituent organizations, like IMCK, are respected by opposing sides in conflict. He told the story of a young man who had to go to Tshikapa for a job and was stopped at roadblocks along the way. The first was a government military post, where he was able to pay a bribe and move on. The second was a militant barricade which concluded he must be in league with the military, whom they hate, because he had just passed through their checkpoint. So they prepared to chop off his head. However, as they rifled through his suitcase on his motorcycle, they discovered a Bible and a T-shirt with a Christian inscription. (Cont'd on next page.)



Board Meeting Nov. 15-16, 2017:

Larry Sthresley wrote the following about the November IMCK Board Meeting: I was able to attend a day and a half of the board meeting. The board meeting went very well this year. There were serious and frank discussions about the problems IMCK is facing and hopefully the decisions made will help to resolve them. IMCK is operating in the most difficult climate it has had to face since the early 90s. But this time, the funding from the church is the lowest it has ever been. This limits greatly the options the board has to resolve IMCK's issues. Click here for a video of various activity at IMCK:

**How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring
good news, who proclaim
peace, who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation, who
say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"
Isaiah 52:7**

Mission Coworkers in Congo - Learn about their service. Support them. Hold them up.

Marcia Murray just retired. Marcia served as a volunteer mission coworker from February 2013 until October 2017. She was faithful & caring in teaching at IMCK ISTM College. Fluent in English, French & Tshiluba, Marcia facilitated intercultural communication. IMCK visitors were graced by her thoughtful welcome. She was deeply respected & loved. People valued her desire to be fair & respectful & her deliberate manner in problem solving. God bless Marcia in her retirement in Texas!

John and Gwenda Fletcher live at Tshikaji, near Kananga. John is a surgeon caring for patients and consulting at hospitals of the Congo Presbyterian Church (CPC.) John's surgical skills have been critically needed by victims of the recent clashes in the Kasai. Gwenda serves as an education consultant to the CPC and has facilitated major education projects. Here is their prayer card. Hold them up in service: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/prayer-card-fletcher/>

Jeff and Cristi Boyd live in Kinshasa in Congo. Jeff is regional liaison for PCUSA in central Africa, facilitating support for relationships, programs and activities between churches in the USA and in the DRC, Cameroon and Guinea. Fluent in various languages, Christi works in four African countries in programs supporting women and children. Here is their prayer card to use in holding them up in service: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/prayer-card-boyd/>

Larry and Inge Sthresley live in Kinshasa. Larry works with churches & organizations to build health ministry in Congo (DRC.) His work with Interchurch Medical Assistance (IMA) helps partners run health programs. Inge works with IMA & the Presbyterian Church of Kinshasa in programs to alleviate hunger & malnutrition. She also helps with a mission guest house. Hold them up in service: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/prayer-card-larry-and-ingesthresley/>



Marcia

Congo Mission Network cont'd:

Because they recognized him as a Christian, they waived him on without harm! A picture of him, his family, the Bible and the shirt are shown above. Elder Ntumba believes the CPC has a great opportunity and obligation to reach out to all factions with Christian messages of love and reconciliation, if only funds are donated to print the materials in the Luba language. You can contact Elder Ntumba directly (in English) at cpc_improka@yahoo.fr if you are interested in finding out more about this project. Submitted by Bill Rule

Have You Noticed Anything New?

We have included many more links to videos and recent pictures in this newsletter, thanks in part to a new arrangement that Friends of IMCK has set up with the IMCK Chaplain, Rev. Elie Nkongo and Administrator Kastin Katawa. For a small remuneration, they are now acting as our on-site photographers and videographers and uploading their material to FIMCK's web address for use in this newsletter and other publicity going out on behalf of the IMCK endowment fundraising effort. Thanks to Jimmy Shafe and Mission: Hope, Chaplain Nkongo's situation has been secured at IMCK since the relocation of his family from Ilebo to Tshikaji. Therefore, we look forward to a long and fruitful collaboration for improved news and media from IMCK. A picture is shown here of Chaplain Nkongo. Submitted by Bill Rule



Chaplain Nkongo giving donated clothing to a hospital patient.

Keep up with USA/Congo Partnerships & News:

IMCK info is at www.imck.org & MBF info is at www.mbfoundation.org. PCUSA sites have Congo & IMCK info at <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/global/democratic-republic-congo/> Read about Congo Mission Network at <http://www.congopartners.org/> & <https://www.facebook.com/CongoMissionNetwork>. Helping Hands www.congohelpinghands.org/ & Mission: Hope - Congo <https://www.missionhope.org> work in Congo. Join IMCK face book at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Christian-Medical-Institute-of-the-Kasai-IMCK/110759025647158>. To join Congo Connections, write Annette anbwash@centurylink.net. Go to <http://www.enoughproject.org/> to learn about conflict minerals in Congo. **Learn; read; act! Be involved.**

Board Members of IMCK at November 2017 meeting:

Rev. Tshidinda Mamba Jean - CPC/Chairman of the Board
Rev. Tshihamba Mulamba - CPC Representative
Elder Ilunga Munyoka Puni - CPC Representative
Elder Albert Mputu Kabasele - CPC Representative
Rev. Medard Shamuimbe Mbombo - CMCO Rep/Mennonite
Rev. Jeremie Kanku - CMCO Rep/Mennonite
Rev. Birakara Ilowa Joly - CMCO Rep/Mennonite
Elder Kamizelo Kianza Laurent - CMCO Rep/Mennonite
Dr. Larry Sthreshley - PCUSA Rep
Dr. Eugenie Misenga Kangoji- State Representative
Rev. Zacharie Mboyamba Kabala - IMCK Representative

Current IMCK Administration:

IMCK Director - Dr. Serege Makolo
IMCK Administrator - Kastin Katawa Ntumba

IMCK is a Christian primary health care facility and medical education center. Its services are centered at the Good Shepherd Hospital, a 120 bed facility, & at PAX Clinic, with 20 beds. General medicine, surgery, ophthalmology, pediatrics, gyn/obstetrics, dental services, radiology and lab services are provided. This faith based organization has been in operation for over 60 yrs.

FIVE WAYS to make a donation to IMCK:

To give to **IMCK ENDOWMENT**, go to <https://mbfoundation.org/friends-imck-endowment-fund/> & follow directions. Or write a check to Friends of IMCK & write "For Endowment" on the memo line. Donations can be made in honor of or in memory of someone. Send to Medical Benevolence Foundation, PO Box 96877, Washington, DC 20090. Friends of IMCK is part of MBF.

To give through the **MEDICAL BENEVOLENCE FOUNDATION**, a validated mission support group of many Presbyterian Organizations, go to <https://mbfoundation.org/donate-now/>. Designate at the web site at the special instruction section "For IMCK Congo." Or send a check to Medical Benevolence Foundation, PO Box 96877, Washington, DC 2009. Write IMCK, Congo on the memo line. Give in honor or memory of someone, if desired.

To give through **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA** (PCUSA), go to <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/E320202/>. Or write a check to Presbyterian Church USA; send to PCUSA, Individual Remittance Processing, PO Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Put "ECO#320202 - IMCK" on the check. Give in honor or memory of someone, if desired.

To give through **MISSION: HOPE-CONGO**, make checks payable to Mission: Hope-Congo & write FOR IMCK. Send to 3640 Hewatt Court, Snellville, GA 30039. Or go to <https://www.missionhope.org> & donate. Follow instructions to designate the gift to Congo-Kasai / IMCK. Give in honor or memory of someone, if desired.

To give **DIRECTLY TO IMCK**, consult Jimmy Shafe of Mission: Hope or consult the CEO of Medical Benevolence Foundation about how to do this.

Newsletter Matters: Contributors this month: Kastin Katawa, Dr. Serge Makolo, Antonio Martinez, Bill Rule, Larry Sthreshley and Charlotte White. To add/remove a name from the mailing list, write CRuleWhite@gmail.com. We welcome your contributions!