

Living Hope



HORIZON INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL MISSION, INC.

2013 Edition

THIRD HOME MISSION VISIT TO MCRAE, GA

This is the 3rd mission to McRae, Georgia. The need to help people in the rural area of United States cannot be overemphasized. It is true that 40 million do not have the much needed health insurance thereby limiting their access to health care. Many hope that 2014 will be the end of the suffering when Obama health care program will come into effect. Unfortunately it may not be true for those who are unemployed. Majority of the 40 million uninsured are also unemployed. Many rural Americans do not understand what health insurance is all about. HIMM spent time educating the people on health insurance.

At McRae we observed that many people who are diabetic and hypertensive do not know that the silent chronic diseases are affecting them. 'Some blood pressure which is very high is no different from what I have seen in the developing world where I have spent 12 yrs attending to patients' said Dr Okere. This blood pressure is more like time bomb waiting to explode with stroke, heart attack or kidney failure.



Treating a child in McRae



Chidumam Okere and Dr. Mikailu Sesay

Dr. Mikailu Sesay (Veteran Family physician with HIMM) has this to say "the same medical issues of uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension we have seen 2 yrs ago is still a problem today, we definitely need to improve our strategy and develop a primary care center in McRae where people can see a physician on regular basis'. Dr Sesay's idea is the vision of HIMM for the people. It is the next step forward. This involves finance and time commitment.

HIMM providers attended to other cases as wound care, ear cleaning and minor surgical procedures. We do hope to include dental care in subsequent missions.

HIMM deeply appreciate our partners -First Baptist church, McRae that was involved in the local logistics and member volunteers, Rev. Alvin, Sycamore church, Savannah under the leadership of Dr Michael Reynolds, pharmacist Dr. Chris Weeks and his assistant Marilyn and our volunteers from J.C Lewis health center, Savannah, Georgia. Special thanks to Regina Smith -Our mission coordinator

Special points of interest:

Third mission to McRae, GA

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Living Hope

Teaching them to fish rather than giving them fish is the solution- Pilot program in Micro business in Ihiagwa –Imo State ,Nigeria

For the past 13yrs HIMM has been in medical mission around the world .We have noticed a segment of the population in Nigeria who are rarely sick to the point of needing our medical service. This is the youth who appear healthy. Unfortunately many are not employed. Many of them are skilled as electricians, mechanics, brick layers, welders etc..We have given some employment in our short missions and have given assorted types of gifts such as food, money etc .The gifts are not the permanent solution to the problem of unemployment. The poor is far from meeting the criteria for the bank to lend money to them in Nigeria and many developing country of the world 'Dr. Okere we must look for a better way to reach the youth who are unemployed 'We must teach them how to fish i.e. provide avenue for them to be employed and use their skill to make living 'said Dr Michael Reynolds. Dr Michael Reynolds is the head of evangelism of HIMM and the local pastor of Sycamore church in Savannah where HIMM president and founder Dr K.Okere is a member. Dr Reynolds has been to Nigeria on mission with HIMM.



Dr Michael Reynolds, Mr. Cyril Ugwuegbulam and Mr. Gary Clark

“DR. OKERE WE MUST LOOK FOR A BETTER WAY TO REACH THE YOUTH WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED ”

Last year Dr Reynolds visited my adopted home in Savannah, Georgia with Mr. Gary Clark to introduce micro business proposal for the youth of Ihiagwa in Owerri West Local Government. Mr. Clark is a successful business tycoon and a missionary. He introduced micro business proposal in Ghana working with the rural population. The people developed a common fund where people borrowed and paid back .They used the money to start their own business. In a period of one year Mr. Clark witnessed a farmer prosper by increasing her produce from the loan, a driver was able to purchase his own taxi cab and even employed a second driver. It was a success for faithful and committed people.

We felt if we could train somebody from Ihiagwa on this business and give them the initial capital for some to borrow from we may achieve success. In the month of march 2013 Mr. Cyril Ugwuegbulam was prayerfully considered for this position. Mr. Ugwuegbulam is the HIMM Imo state coordinator and Umuchima -Ihiagwa youth leader. He was flown to Savannah, Georgia USA to receive the one month training (thanks to Sycamore church, Savannah and host Dr Kennedy Okere). Sycamore church contributed to the initial capital.

'I have learned what will help my people and I have started the program, I trust God that those who borrow from this fund will be faithful to pay back so that we can achieve the purpose the program is determined to achieve' said Evangelist Cyril Ugwuegbulam . Cyril also has been to Akwa Abom State to introduce the program .

Career Development in our local community- 'say NO to illicit street drugs'



Dr Kennedy Okere and the youth at Frank Callen Boys and girls center

Part of HIMM objective is to enable young ones learn what we do, encourage them in development of a career and help them make wise decision. Dr Okere has been involved in speaking in primary schools, high schools and churches. In February 2013 Dr Okere was fortunate to speak at the Frank Callen boys and girls club in savannah and also at the Effingham Baptist –Children and youth camp.

Frank Callen Boys and girls club was founded in 1917 by Late Frank Callen .The club has grown remarkably over 80yrs in helping youth of all background develop qualities that enable them to become leaders in the society by instilling a sense of competency, usefulness, belonging and influence. 'I encourage them to engage in education and say NO to illicit street drug which is now a world problem , for you are the leaders

of tomorrow' said Dr Okere. Dr Okere expanded on different career pathways. Interactive questions and answers were addressed during the session. HIMM has promised free physical exam for the boys and girls as they engage in different sporting activities at the center.

Preliminary survey of the Northern Mission

There is great challenge for medical mission to Northern Nigeria. Security is the major issue. In the early 1980 the incidence of religious riot geometrically continued to rise. Churches are burnt down and, Christians killed and minister of churches killed and traders lost their properties. Today it is more than religious turbulence, it is pure terrorism as Boko Haram has taken over. Suicide bombing and complete massacre of an entire village is seen.

Dr. Okere who spent his undergraduate at University of Jos and served as youth corper with Nigerian Baptist convention in 1989 was in Jos – plateau state to see for himself the devastation of properties and destruction of life inflicted on the poor rural and urban people of plateau state. Dr Okere was also in Jos in 2012 to honor the invitation for the 25th anniversary ceremony of the of Calvary Baptist church ,Jos .For Dr Okere was one of the early founding members who helped to plant the church. The church has sent several missionaries around the world.

'I have seen the enormous destruction of properties in the rural Baki Ladi and churches in Jos that were destroyed by the terrorist. It is sad to see the sick and injuries incurred by survivors. Some were suffering from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) similar to what I witnessed in Haiti after the earth quake that claimed thousands of Haitians in 2010. There is multiple check points with armored vehicles. To walk into the church there is a security screening similar to the one experienced at the airports. Everyone is in fear. For suicide bombers bomb the church often.



Mother and Baby

Here is a partial list of church bombings:

- On [December 24](#), 2010, bombs exploded around Jos (Plateau State) as groups of fighters attacked two churches in Maiduguri (Borno State).
- On [July 10](#), 2011, a bomb exploded at All Christian Church in Suleja (Niger State).
- On [December 25](#), 2011, bombs exploded at churches in, respectively, Madalla (Niger State), Jos (Plateau State), Damaturu (Yobe State), and Gadaka (Yobe State).
- On [February 26](#), 2012, Boko Haram carried out a suicide car bombing at the Church of Christ in Jos.
- On [March 11](#), 2012, a bomb struck St. Finbar's Catholic Church in Jos.

- On [April 8](#), 2012 (Easter), a suicide bomber detonated a car bomb near the All Nations Christian Assembly Church and the ECWA Good News Church in Kaduna.
- On [April 29](#), 2012, three bombs exploded at the old campus church of Bayero University Kano (Kano State), and gunmen shot at worshippers fleeing the building.
- On [June 4](#), 2012, a suicide car bombing occurred at Living Faith Church in Bauchi (Bauchi State).
- On [June 10](#), 2012, a car bomb exploded at Christ Chosen Church of God in Jos.
- On [June 17](#), 2012, suicide bombers from Boko Haram attacked ECWA Goodnews Church and Christ the King Catholic Church in Zaria and Kaduna. I wrote about the aftermath of those bombings [here](#).
- On [September 23](#), 2012, a suicide bomber attacked St. John's Church in Bauchi.

In year 2000 the northern city of Kaduna was attacked by Muslims, many Christians were killed including Dr. Okere's cousin. 'When I saw many injured people in Kaduna hospital I donated a lot medications and medical supplies to different hospitals, the gesture which was deeply appreciated by the Kaduna state government' said Dr Okere HIMM is planning on how to help the homeless, the sick and widows and orphans displaced by the terrorist.

Nigeria Mission 2014

HIMM is scheduled to be in the Eastern Nigeria in March 2014. Our mission involve people of all walks of life including medical personnel, social workers and counselors and church ministers. Contact us if you are interested

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Kennedy Okere, MDFAAFP
President & Founder HIMM



Dr. Okere in the mission field

HORIZON INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL MISSION, INC.



Horizon International Medical Mission (HIMM) was founded Dr. Kennedy Kelechi Okere who also serves as the president of the organization. The main purpose of the organization is to reach the medically and spiritually unreached people of Africa and the Caribbean. Dr. Okere grew up in Africa and lived in the Caribbean. While growing up he witnessed people in rural areas of these parts live in poor medical and living conditions without much hope for assistance. As Dr. Okere grew up, he continued to pray that one day God would raise a vessel after His heart that will lift the people out of their predicament. He had no idea that he was praying for himself.

Dr. Okere organized his first medical mission trip to Nigeria, West Africa in March 2000. At that time, he was a second year medical resident in Family Medicine at Memorial Health University Medical Center. He was able to recruit a local Physician, Dr. Emeka Anyamele, and local Nigerian Nurses. With the cooperation of the local Pastor of Ihiagwa Baptist Church, the community visited in Imo State, Nigeria, Dr Okere converted the community church into a make shift clinic. Drs. Okere and Anyamele saw 600 patients during the 5-day clinic.

HIMM has gone on six mission trips since 2006. During each trip, HIMM has had the opportunity to recruit nurses, church ministers, a dentist, a medical student, a pharmacist and doctors.

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