

# Congolese Devotional

A Devotional from Pastor Joseph Tombole, Superintendent of the Gbado region

1 Cor 4:1-2 teaches us about faithfulness through the eyes of a servant and a steward. A servant is someone who depends on someone else, his superior or employer. A steward someone who manages the resources of others. We are to be both servants and stewards. We serve Christ and steward God's truth, his mysteries. As Christ's servant, we are dependent on him, but we also bear responsibility for the stewardship of his resources. But what does it take to do this? This passage tells us the being a servant-steward requires faithfulness. Faithfulness has six important elements:

- 1. Truth.** Truth doesn't change, and it stands up to every type of test. It is the opposite of a lie, which eventually crumbles and can never be confirmed. We know something is true when we can freely give it away.
- 2. Integrity.** Integrity is wholeness, it is being a whole entity with no spoiled parts, true to form through and through.
- 3. Justice.** Justice constantly seeks to bring peace, without which we are left with gossip and quarreling.
- 4. Honesty.** Being honest is being committed to a principle, or what we say, consistently in every part of our lives.
- 5. Loyalty.** This is the opposite of hypocrisy, it is being committed to a pursuit in all of its substance, unconcerned with projections and image. There is a saying that goes, "One can't hide behind what one respects." When we believe in something or someone, and respect them, we advance them and their cause. We are always out in front.
- 6. Sincerity.** To be frank and open is to be beautiful. When we are being faithful, there is no need to be evasive and indirect. We can say everything to everyone just how it is.

May these attributes apply to each of us, and all of us together, as we serve Christ and steward God's truth.

This then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

PAUL CARLSON  
PARTNERSHIP

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## CCI Resources Now Available Online:

[paulcarlson.org/cci-updates](http://paulcarlson.org/cci-updates)

- CCI Church Bulletin Inserts
- CCI Slideshow
- Congo Clinic Experience Kit
- CCI Poster

## How to Give

There are two easy ways to send in your clinic support!

1. Donate online at [paulcarlson.org/donate](http://paulcarlson.org/donate). Click on the Clinic Initiative.

2. Mail in a check made payable to Paul Carlson Partnership, noted for Congo Clinic Initiative. Mail to: Paul Carlson Partnership 8303 W. Higgins Rd. Chicago, IL 60631

# The Congo Clinic Initiative Quarterly Update

CCI Quarterly Newsletter

[www.paulcarlson.org/cci-updates](http://www.paulcarlson.org/cci-updates)

Issue 5

Dear Friends,

We want to take this occasion to express our deep gratitude.

First, we are grateful to God for having united us by his love despite the geographic distance that separates us. Next, we are grateful for you, partners and donors, for having accepted to support this project with your financial gifts.

We assure you that the solar kits that PCP is installing are having a positive impact. The absence of light in these health centers didn't allow them to provide quality patient care. The laboratory equipment, surgical wards, maternities, and especially pediatric wards couldn't function well. Men, women, and children died because the health center staff were limited in their capacities, lacking the electricity and light needed to administer good health care. The solar kits that PCP has installed at many clinics, thanks to your contributions, have resolved this problem and, since the installation of these kits, the impact has been very positive for the population. We have received very good reports from the leaders of these clinics.

Here are a few indicators that testify to this program's positivity:

1. The number of patients using the health centers has increased.
2. The risks taken by nurses who work at night have decreased significantly.
3. The high costs of kerosene for lamps and batteries for flashlights have been eliminated.
4. The risks and uncertainties that come from delivering babies at night have been eliminated.
5. Children that have been hospitalized due to severe malaria now receive better care in well-lit facilities.

I hope you understand that your support has positively changed our work in these health centers, especially as it has decreased the risk of death for many of our people.

Our prayer every day is that God would bless you abundantly and return upon you a blessing one hundred times greater than what you have given for His work. May the love of our all-powerful God, the grace of our Savior, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!



On behalf of the CEUM,

Rev. Jules Mboka Ngate  
President of The Communauté Évangélique de l'Ubangi-Mongala  
(CEUM - Covenant Church of Congo)



Solar lighting in hospitals and clinics

## Kids Corner



Sometimes we have to stay home from school because we get sick. But what if your doctor didn't have the medicine you needed to get better? You would have to miss a lot of school! In Congo, preventable diseases, like malaria and diarrhea, cause children to miss school and fall behind. Through CCI funding, we are working towards preventing these diseases with vaccinations, nutrition education, and clean water so children can attend school.

Here in the U.S., kids also need to be aware of what to do when they or someone else is hurt or sick, and how to help. One way to do this is to teach kids the importance of first aid through creating their own First Aid Kit to keep at home.

## First Aid Kit Activity

### Materials

- Waterproof container with lid
- Adhesive bandages
- Adhesive tape
- Antiseptic wipes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Cotton balls
- Latex gloves
- Ice pack
- Scissors
- Thermometer
- List of emergency phone numbers (9-1-1, mom, dad, aunt, grandma, sister, etc.)
- Paper and markers



### Instructions

1. Teach about the importance of notifying an adult when they or someone gets hurt, and when to call 9-1-1.
2. Color and decorate the boxes using the paper and markers, writing "First Aid Kit" on the top.
3. Let the kids place the items in their kit, teaching them what each item is and when to use it.
4. Role-play a few scenarios with the kids to demonstrate their understanding of how each item in the kit should be used.



## Go a Step Further!

Kids can create First Aid Kits for families in your church, and sell the kits to raise support for the Congo Clinic Initiative!



## Refrigerators are Running!



A technician repairs a solar refrigerator in Congo.

Refrigeration is an important element of rural healthcare in Congo for three main reasons. First, common vaccinations require refrigeration, and when strategically placed, it is possible for more children to receive vaccinations. Second, some important medicines need to be refrigerated. Without refrigeration, a care-provider is limited in what they can offer sick patients. Third, refrigerators are needed for blood

blanks. Since some of the most common causes of death in northwestern Congo are anemia (caused by malaria) and blood loss, blood transfusions are often needed.

With the funding provided by CCI partners, we have been able to order a large shipment of solar powered refrigerators that are designed for places like Congo. Additionally, our

local solar technician, Gasp, has assessed the condition of existing refrigerators. Some he determined unfit for use, while others could be repaired once he received the replacement parts we ordered. His technician team are repairing the broken refrigerators and will be installing new units once they arrive. The technicians are capable to provide ongoing service to keep these refrigerators running.

We are so grateful for the good work being done to rehabilitate these refrigerators, and we can't wait for many more new refrigerators to be installed. Thank you for your support of the Congo Clinic Initiative!



Proof that children from all over the world do not like vaccinations!

## The Way to Clean Water

In almost every meeting we have with community leaders, doctors, and nurses in Congo, water issues take preeminence. Sadly, access to clean water remains a major problem. Most of Congo's common childhood sicknesses could be avoided if children were drinking clean water.

This is a problem that has no simple fix. Though it is possible to improve existing water sources and create new ones so that people have access to clean water, doing this rarely has sustainable outcomes. Pumps break and go unrepaired. Clean water gets contaminated. And, sometimes, people simply prefer their old water sources. This tends to be the case when projects are done **for communities, rather than by communities**. Our focus is on communities.



As we move into the "water phase" of the Congo Clinic Initiative, we are using an approach that we believe will have a long term impact. Working with local church and community leaders, including medical staff, community groups will be mobilized to discuss their

health issues. As action points surface, local leaders will be able to connect communities to technical guidance and, perhaps, supplemental resources.

The Congo Clinic Initiative will seek to:

- equip key clinic communities with water through a holistic, asset-based process that depends primarily on the will of the community;
- funding will be used to supplement communities' efforts to improve the quality of their water;
- in bigger communities, this may mean drilling for water and installing pumps;
- elsewhere, existing water sources will be improved.

Our prayer and desire is for meaningful, long lasting impact, and we are excited about the course that has been chartered towards clean water with our partners in Congo.

Please continue to pray for our partners as ideas turn into plans!



Community groups will be able to discuss and plan solutions for clean water.

## "Brothers Biking for Congo" Team Raises Over \$10,000

BROTHERS BIKING FOR CONGO



Dennis (left) and Rod Carlson (right).

Dennis Carlson, associate pastor of Faith Covenant Church in Farmington, MI, and his brother, Rod Carlson, participated in the 420-mile RAGBRAI XLIV, The (Des Moines) Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa, to raise support for the Congo Clinic Initiative. Some 10,000 cyclists participated in the race, and in keeping with tradition, the race begins with bikers having their rear wheel in the Missouri river at Glenwood, Iowa, and ends with riders dipping their front tires in the Mississippi River at Muscatine.

"My brother, Rod, from my hometown of San Jose, CA traded in his \$25 garage sale mountain bike for a more up-to-date model at the beginning of this year when he jumped at my invitation to join me in riding RAGBRAI XLIV," says Dennis. "I had only done the entire ride one other time in 1987—the summer before I met my wife, Mary Lynn, while a single, solo pastor in Kansas City, MO. We decided to put the FUN back into FUNdraising by doing the ride for a cause! Though neither of us are medical professionals, we both know something about health care. For me, both of our kids were born at our mission hospital at Karawa, Congo, so we are well aware of both the great needs and opportunities for assisting with health care in the heart of Africa. Rod is diabetic, so along the ride—as every day of his life—he had to stop periodically to check his blood sugar, eat something, or take an insulin shot as needed. Our four 'Brothers Biking for Congo' shirts of varying styles and colors, also read, 'The Congo Clinic Initiative – Developing Clinics, Empowering Change, Saving Lives,' and became conversation starters for folks out on the road and in-town."



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Rod (left) and Dennis Carlson (right) do the official dipping of their front tires in the Mississippi River at Muscatine, Iowa.

The duo slept one night on patio cushions on the basement floor of the Evangelical Church of Centerville, Iowa, and also met up with members from First Covenant Church of Red Oak, Iowa on the first day and Faith Covenant Church in Essex, Iowa on the second day, when the congregation was serving cyclists in various ways. "We rode an average of 60 miles/day, anywhere from 49.7 to 75.2 official miles each day, probably a bit farther once we found our way around the overnight towns to where we were sleeping. One of the great myths is that Iowa is flat! In fact, over the course of seven days, we climbed 18,488 feet in elevation—3,994 of them in a single day," said Dennis.

Dennis and Rod finished the ride and raised over \$10,000 for the Congo Clinic Initiative! But Dennis emphasized that much still needs to be done. "Since I only get to see Rod about once a year now, it was particularly gratifying to do it together. It was an amazing experience and indeed put the FUN back into FUNdraising! And best of all, people that God loves dearly will be able to access health care nearby, rather than walking 20 or 30 miles to the nearest hospital.

There are still three more years to go on the project to provide solar panels, clean water, medical supplies, and a small refrigerator—like what most college students have in their dorm rooms—to provide for basic medicines. Merci mingi mpenza! Bisso tolongi! In Lingala, the language of the people of NW Congo, 'Thanks so very much! We did it!'"

Thank you, Dennis and Rod, and all of your generous family, friends, and supporters who prayed, donated, encouraged, and followed you on your RAGBRAI journey! From all of us at Paul Carlson Partnership, and our partners in Congo, merci mingi! Thank you!

**Share your fundraising ideas with us!**

Send your stories to [pcpinfo@paulcarlson.org](mailto:pcpinfo@paulcarlson.org) and we will share your ideas with other CCI sponsors. Thank you!