

American Baptist Churches of Maine  
Zoom Meeting  
December 7, 2021

The attendance at this meeting was the highest ever, with 20+ women participating. In one home, six women gathered around to be part of the meeting.

Doris opened the meeting with pray.

Missionary to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ann Clemmer was the guest speaker. Ann and her husband Dr. Bill have been with American Baptist International Ministries for 29 years. Recently they signed on for five more years. Their first two years were in Haiti. Since then they have ministered in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Bill is currently on a short term assignment to Yemen, which is not a particularly safe country.

Currently they are in Goma, a large city in Eastern Congo and on a lake shore and bordered by Rwanda. Temperatures average 50 – 70 degrees. Goma is a mile above sea level, in the Great Rift Valley, near by snow-capped mountains, and a volcano that recently erupted. It is also an area rich in valuable minerals including gold, diamonds and coltan, which is used in the manufacture of all electronics, especially smart phones and laptop computers.

The Clemmers work together with two other established ministries. HEAL Africa and IMA World Health. HEAL Africa operates a hospital and the Tungau School and IMA World Health works to improve health care across the Congo with emphasis on nutrition for pregnant women and children thru age five.

Life expectancy in the Congo is 45 years.

Civil wars, rebel violence, witchcraft, diseases and volcano eruptions have taken the lives of many people. Many orphans live on the streets. They steal to eat. Kidnapped kids are taken to earn a \$200 release fee. Banks are not safe and there is no mail.

In May 2021, the volcano erupted. The flowing lava destroyed lives, homes, schools, roads, clean water and everything else in its path.

Homeless families are given mattresses, blankets, tarps, pots & pans.

Many women are mistreated. Infant mortality rates are very high. Malnutrition, hunger, and lack of medical care takes the lives of many pregnant women and their babies. Prenatal and parenting classes aid women and infants who are at risk.

Micro credit is given to women.

Fifty women have been given a nanny goat. They are required to give back the first newborn goat. So far twenty-five goats have given birth. Three of them had twins. Milk adds much to her families nutrition and extra amounts can be sold for cash. Male goats are breeders and also meat for the family and sale. It has taken a year to get this program working.

One woman, who received micro credit, bought a piece of land. She planted amaranth. She sold her produce, in the market, and was paid in Congo franks.

Schools in the Congo are neither free nor compulsory. HEAL Africa operates the Tungau School They hire teachers, books are purchased by students. Thirty students who wear uniforms are ages 5-14.

Ann's work centers around the school and aid for orphans and vulnerable children.

1200 pairs of shoes have been purchased. Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 850 Sunday School children will be given a pair of shoes. 150 non Sunday School children will be given shoes in January.

They have 50 Sunday School teachers. Many of these teachers are former students.

During Sunday School, every student gets a cup of milk and a piece of bread.

Juice has been purchased for every Sunday School student on Christmas Sunday.

An excerpt from their International Ministries website says, "Oct 4 - Just a few weeks ago I wrote about a new initiative by our Sunday School teachers to reach out with Christ's love to the hundreds of street children in Goma who have been cast aside and largely ignored.

We started up three weeks ago on a Saturday and had just over 30 children who arrived early in the morning. They showered, were given a meal, heard Bible stories and then sang, danced, and had time on our new playground... the swings, and slides... for most a new experience. The next Saturday there were 50."

Ann told us these children receive new clothes and shoes if needed. Now 600 children are coming. They meet from 6 am to noon. Also if necessary they receive one on one counseling.

In its planning stages, is a day program especially for traumatized kids. This would include Bible study, reading, computer use, life skills, counseling and playground time.

Ann also expressed their thanks for the large amount of money given for shoes and food for the children and the many dresses for the girls.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Martha L. Walker

FYI not part of Zoom Meeting

If you have access to a computer, you will find the Clemmer's letters very interesting. These steps will get you there easily.

1. Enter [www.internationalministries.org](http://www.internationalministries.org)
2. Click on Global Missions (near top right)
3. Click on Global Servants
4. Click on Ann and Bill Clemmer
5. Add to favorites, then you can go direct to the site.

Another FYI from this curious home economist.

I asked myself, why would this lady plant Amaranth, a beautiful red flower grown in my grandparents flower garden?

This is what I learned. Amaranth is an ancient grain much like quinoa. The leaves are a dark leafy green vegetable, much like spinach. The seeds, a small, light tan color with a nutty flavor, are milled for cereal, flour, oil and animal feeds. The milled seed is cooked similarly to rice or oats and eaten as a breakfast cereal, pilaf or in soups.

Nutritionally, it is gluten free, a complete protein, low in cholesterol, high in fiber, an antioxidant, and an excellent source of calcium, manganese, magnesium, phosphorus, iron, selenium, copper and vitamin B6.

In Eastern Congo, it is the most consumed vegetable. During the wet season the leaves are dried for use in the dry season.

If your heart desires, the milled grain and flour are available on line.  
Martha