

Report from Jim Walker on his Congo trip: September 17 - 27, 2017

My daughter Julie and I traveled to Congo for ten days to teach. We definitely needed and felt the prayers of Cedarbrook. I personally struggled with safety concerns more on this trip than previous trips.

Congo is politically unstable and for the first time we flew Congo Airlines - not recommended by the U.S. State Department. And to be honest, travelling with your daughter who is also the mother of three of your grandchildren only heightens the concern. But your prayers decreased my level of concern. Thank you!

Julie and Ann Hagenson, a nurse from Seattle, taught nursing instructors from the two nursing schools in Karawa. Then they watched their students teach others head-to-toe nursing assessment. They also encouraged Congolese nurses who are starting the *Christian Nurses Association* of Congo.

Julie had brought 100 pins (crosses for the nurses to wear) along as an encouragement. Julie and Ann were "pinned" and welcomed as first members of the association - an emotional honor.

Jhpiego, an affiliate of Johns Hopkins University, has developed a curriculum for the developing world called "Saving Lives at Birth." Four years ago, Dr. Eric Gunnoe had taught "Helping Babies Breathe" (HBB), a class on how to resuscitate a non-breathing newborns. On my two previous trips, I taught two classes relating to maternal postpartum hemorrhage.

My primary goal this time was to teach a newly released curriculum on high blood pressure in pregnancy. I also retaught bleeding after birth. In the midst of that curriculum I received a question that made it clear that only 7 of the 20 nurses in the class had been taught how to resuscitate a newborn so I taught that as well.

The Paul Carlson Partnership (the Covenant Church's medical ministry in Congo) endorses a "train-the-trainer" approach so that the 20 nurses and 3 doctors I taught would train the other health professionals in the system. The last day, our trainees taught the 3 courses to the nursing students. This allowed us to evaluate their comprehension of the material and prepared them to teach other doctors and nurses.

Incomprehensible is the word that best describes the medical situation in Congo. It is one of the most dangerous places in the world to deliver a baby and one in five children die by the age of five. The main hospital does not have running water and only has electricity when the generator is on. They often do not have the most basic medications.

Pray for the people of Congo and for the Paul Carlson Partnership as we seek to make a difference. I will share more in the upcoming newsletters about the Covenant Congo Kids and the Congo Clinic Initiative. God is at work!