

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING TRIP TO ANGOLA - AUGUST, 2023

FOR THE PEOPLE OF UNION CHURCH

Believing that our involvement with the Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola has the ability to give us new perspectives on our own faith, as well as a new understanding of “mission” today, Union Church is planning a trip to Angola for members and friends of Union Church. We aim for this trip to be a transformative experience, and an opportunity to build long-term relationships with our partners in the Peregrinos (“Pilgrim”) congregation in Huambo, Angola.

The trip will be in August of 2023 (August 8 – 22), and is open to all members and friends of Union Church. The trip will highlight the vibrant faith and real challenges of our partners in Angola. We will worship with the Peregrinos congregation, see the social mission of the church in action, visit the seminary and the hospital Union Church supports, visit the Mike Solberg School in Waku Kungo, talk openly with church members, learn what the



Angolans see as the value and limits of this international partnership, and hear how they interpret the complicated history of American missionary work in their country. We will also join thousands of people from IECA (the national church) for a 100 year celebration of the Mbunjei Mission Station, the first Mission Station in Africa entirely founded and led by African Americans.

The trip will also be a “spiritual retreat,” an opportunity to get away from everyday work, involving worship, journaling, and joint reflection (amongst ourselves and with the Angolans) about our common Christian faith and our partnership.

Who: Members and friends of Union Church - 14 person limit.

What: 14 day trip to Angola, 12 days on the ground. Trip will include worship with the Peregrinos congregation, relationship building, education, reflection, and joint “hands-on” work with our partner church.

When: August 8-22, 2023.

Costs: The trip will cost approximately \$2500 - \$2800 per person (with Economy airfare of \$1500 – upgrades are fine), all things included. We will be able to narrow that estimate when we know the number of people on the trip and can lock-in airfare. Partial scholarships will be available (talk with Mike).

Deadline: The earlier we purchase air travel, the lower the cost. **We will have a “first deadline” of**

March 28, and then after that additional people may join the trip, but airfare is likely to be higher.



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Conditions: The trip will require reasonably good health for an active, sometimes taxing schedule. The accommodations will be basic (e.g. running water, but not always hot water). Openness to an Angolan diet will be needed (“funje,” potatoes, sweet potatoes, fish, rice, beans, vegetables, limited meats). Transportation may involve long days on bumpy roads. Vaccinations should be up-to-date (with current Yellow Fever vaccine absolutely mandatory), and malaria preventative necessary.

Weather: August is part of the cooler, dry season in Huambo (see map below) and the central highlands. Average high temps are in the upper 70s, and average lows in the 50s. There will be no rain.

Trip preparation: All those going on the trip will be expected to participate in two preparatory meetings, along with completing some background reading for practical, geo-political and historical information, and to engage in initial reflection about the trip.



Dr. Abel Ulundo, at the Dondi Mission Station Hospital, supported by Union Church.

Optional mini-safari: Although the wildlife of Angola was almost entirely wiped-out during the Civil War, there is now a burgeoning tourist/safari opportunity in the country. If at least four people commit, we can offer a two-day extension of the trip for a two day/one night safari for \$500. Beautiful scenery, birds and many varieties of antelope are assured, giraffes are likely, and elephants are possible. Angola is certainly not yet the greatest safari destination, but the cost will support the local economy and the burgeoning tourist/safari industry.

Contact: Mike Solberg, Sr. Minister of Union Church and experienced visitor to Angola, will be the coordinator of the trip. To indicate interest in the trip, or for more information, contact Mike directly at msolberg@uchinsdale.org, or at 630.590.6695.

