

# Cameroon Soundings

The Ndjungus Mission Newsletter of April 2016

## Peace with Justice Training in Cameroon

Training on "Peace with Justice" has been conducted at La Falaise Hotel in Yaoundé, March 19-22, 2016. The United Methodist Church in Cameroon has been able to organize this important training to heal the wounds and transform our communities that suffer many spiritual and social ills thanks to the financial and technical help of the General Board of Church Society. The training was also an opportunity to demonstrate our traditional ecumenical spirit that the United Methodist Church has always been known for. The 59 participants to the seminar came from Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches, local universities and seminaries. Imams from several Muslim communities were also present at this gathering.



*Group picture of participants at the seminar*

Lecturers for this training came both from abroad and within Cameroon. We were fortunate to receive the visit of the Reverends Neal Christie and Clayton Childers who have come to initiate a partnership with the UMC in Cameroon and that we hope will continue in the future. The Reverend Neal Christie is the GBCS Assistant General Secretary in charge of Education and Leadership Formation. He brought his contribution on Conflict Resolution, Trauma Resiliency, Power and Vulnerability in the Social Principles; and Circles of Scripture. The Rev Dr

Clayton Childers is the Director for Conference Relations of the GBCS. He facilitated workshops on the Theology of Healing, the Church's Mission, the Bible Character Studies and Tikkun Olan, the Social Principles and Prayerful Dialogue; and Living Faith, Seeking Justice and Pursuing Peace.



*From Left to right: Nkemba, Neal, Clayton and Mbwizu*

Local lecturers came from the universities of Yaoundé I and Yaoundé II. First, Professor Clarnette Sodon, lecturer at the University of Yaoundé I, entertained the audience on the topic of "Domestic Violence". Then, Professor Owona Nguini, lecturer at the University of Yaoundé II, addressed the issue of "Healing our wounded community". Finally, Professor Appolin Koagne Zouapet, lecturer at the International Relations Institute of Cameroon of the University of Yaoundé II, decorticated the theme of "Good Governance".

### **Topic 1: Domestic violence**

Gender based violence is a grave violation of human rights. In most parts of Cameroon, women and girls are most vulnerable to this form of violence and its impact ranges from immediate to long-term multiple physical, sexual and mental consequences, including death.

According to the Ministry of Women and Family Promotion in Cameroon, **64%** of women are victim of sexual abuse, **55%** are victim of domestic violence, **43%** have been injured because of domestic violence, **30%** of girls have been forced to have sex before the age of thirteen, **20%** of women have been forced to have their first sexual intercourse, **14%** of pregnant women are victim of physical violence. In the light of these data, we have set the following goals and expectations for this topic:

- Promote domestic violence awareness among our church leaders
- Suggest useful and practical advices in regards to domestic violence
- Witness to God's grace and love
- Propose tips of solution to the problem of domestic violence
- Enable behavior modification
- Help to restore peace and reconciliation in families, church and society.



*The Rev. Dr. Clayton Childers preaching at Jordan UMC in Yaoundé, Cameroon, on Sunday morning, March 21, 2016*

### **Topic 2: Healing our wounded community**

Many regions of Africa are caught up in unending armed conflicts, most of which are due to tribalism, ethnic or religious motives. There is a need to learn how to live together and share resources. Obviously, the continent is big enough for all and resources sufficient for everyone. Thus we have set the following goals and expectations for this topic:

- Awaken the conscience of church and community leaders concerning their role during the time of conflict, especially during war, as it happens to be frequent in Africa
- Learn how to carry out mediation between opposing parties

- Learn how to be part of the solution, and not of the problem when our community is torn between people who fight for their selfish interests
- Develop the mechanism of tolerance and cohabitation between different ethnic and religious groups.

### **Topic 3: Good governance**

Africa is full of natural resources, but the continent is poor because of poor governance. To change people's lifestyle, there is need to improve our style of governance. Therefore we have set the following goals and expectations for this topic:

- Understand the meaning and the practice of good governance
- Understand how good governance is related to democracy
- Learn how to hold everyone accountable to the community
- Learn how to use what we have in Africa to improve life in our communities.



*The Reverends Neal Christie and Clayton Childers co-leading the workshop*

Our hope is that because leaders of our different communities have been trained, they will, at their turn, train others and spread the news in our society.

*All your gifts for the Cameroon UMC to be sent to:*

**Advance # 00344A**

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