

## ***Planting the Seeds***

The past few months (November 2015 to February 2016) have been busy for us – at the hospital, the church and with family. We hope this newsletter will give some idea of these activities.



In November 2015, we organized three workshops for staff at the hospital. The workshops were under the theme ‘CHRISTIAN WITNESS, THROUGH HEALING AND SERVICE’, and were designed to allow staff to critically review the present hospital activities with the intent to find solutions to improve the quality of service to patients and staff. The format of the workshop involved the identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats,

followed by creating an action plan for short- term, mid- term and long-term activities. The final solutions were shared with all the staff and these solutions are to be included in the 2016 Action Plan for the hospital.

One of the key issues identified at the workshop was the need for a qualified human resource person to assist with organizing our Personnel Department. This could be an opportunity for a short term assignment in Benin.

**Group photo of hospital workers together with Presiding President – Bishop Alagbada (in dark suit)**





**Maternity OPD under construction**



Work on a new structure for the Maternity Out Patient Department (OPD) started in December but things are not progressing as speedily as we had expected as its completion is slow due to lack of funds. This structure was designed to increase the space for the women who are presently cared for in very cramped rooms and corridors. Our prayers are that this structure would be completed very soon ideally providing a proper work area with examination rooms for the gynecologist and the midwives to facilitate ante-natal and post-natal care.

**Women waiting in hospital corridor**

For the family, December came with activities celebrating Christmas. The girls participated in a number of Christmas presentations at school and then we drove to Ghana to celebrate with family – giving opportunity especially to the girls to catch up with their cousins.

January 2016 saw us jumping straight back into the life of school run and travelling to Port Novo for work – a hectic task as driving in Benin feels more like negotiating an obstacle course due to the sheer number of motorcycles on the roads and the desire for most road users to drive in a straight line even at roundabouts!!!!



**Picture speaks for itself**

Also in January the church held its Annual Synod and under the REPAG health education programme coordinated by Joanna, the attending Ministers had the opportunity to be medically assessed by a team of doctors, medical students and nurses from various health institutions (including Polyclinique Bon Samaritan).



**Ministers (in blue) undergoing medical checks at last Synod**

The REPAG team delivered a presentation on Hypertension and facilitated a clinic for ministers to have their blood pressures checked. Ministers identified with abnormal blood pressure readings have been advised to go to nearest hospital/clinics for further checks. The programme has proved to be so successful that the President of Conference has requested the REPAG team to do a presentation on Diabetes in May to a gathering of Ministers of the church.



**EPMB team at Methodist Hospital Ankaase, Kumasi**

Finally, in February Michael coordinated a team from EPMB to visit Methodist Church Ghana (MCG), with the aim to foster partnership between the two churches. It has always been a desire of EPMB to foster a partnership with Methodist Church Ghana, but language differences had made this difficult. The Benin team's (EPMB's) visit was sponsored by World Church Relations (WCR) of Methodist Church GB and enabled the EPMB team to visit a number of projects run by the MCG in Accra, Cape Coast, Fosu and Kumasi. The EPMB team was impressed by the MCG's activities of social intervention and preaching as followed in the principles outlined in John 10:10b and manifested in MCG's organizing of daily morning devotions for both staff and patients at the MCG hospital in Ankaase which offered the opportunity for the gospel to be preached without imposing on others of different faith.

Already there are plans for a reciprocal visit by a team from MCG to Benin with the work beginning on creating of a memorandum of understanding to govern the work of the partnership between the two churches.



## **Prayer Points**

1. Funds for the completion of the Maternity OPD
2. A Human resource specialist for short term assignment at the hospital to help us organize the Personnel Department. Please pray that the Lord will help us identify someone (preferably with Bilingual skills – but not necessary) to help with this problem.
3. Please pray that God will strengthen the new partnership between Methodist Church Ghana & EPMB to help EPMB establish bilingual churches in Benin.
4. Safety on the roads for the family as we travel to work, school and during our daily activities.
5. For God's will to be done in our activities and at the hospital.