

A Message to Magi Girls Pilot School from Myers Park Presbyterian Church September 3, 2019

On this historic occasion, Myers Park Presbyterian Church extends congratulations and best wishes to parents, students, teachers, the director, staff and board of directors of Magi Girls Pilot School. We are very pleased to be part of this celebration and dedication of this school for girls, but regret we are not with you in person. We are grateful that God has enabled us to work together as partners to achieve the successful construction and opening of this girls' school. To God is the glory.

The vision for Magi Girls Pilot School originated with the now deceased Rev. Dr. Mulumba Musumba Mukundi who previously served as General Secretary for CPC. He believed that educating girls would provide leadership for the church, the community and the nation. We all are indebted to him for his vision which has now resulted in the construction of two girls' schools. The first was in Kananga. Myers Park is honored to have partnered with the CPC in constructing and supporting these two schools.

Over five years ago, Rev. Mulumba's vision began to come to fruition. A delegation of representatives from Myers Park Presbyterian Church visited Mbuji-Mayi, along with Dr. Mulumba and Gwenda Fletcher, mission co-worker for PC(USA) - the national Presbyterian organization in the United States. Relationships with Rev. Tshibemba, CPC Legal Representative for East Kasai and Elder Kalambayi Babanya, CPC East Kasai Education Coordinator, and other church leaders began.

Two years ago, Gwenda Fletcher provided the inspiration and guidance to proceed with the project. In the early stages, she had a critical role in making the process possible. After health issues forced her return to the United States, Jeff Boyd, another PC(USA) mission co-worker, assumed the coordinating role. Without the support of Gwenda and Jeff, this project would not have been possible. We thank them both.

Due to civil unrest in DRC in recent years, Myers Park representatives have not been able to travel to Congo. However, we believe God had a plan to make this school a reality. CPC leaders have encouraged and made it possible to develop deep relationships based on trust and mutual respect. We have worked together effectively to build a model girls' school we can all be proud of. Often in recent years we have communicated by email and Skype. We are especially appreciative for the support provided by:

- **Church leaders from Mbuji-Mayi:**
 - **Rev. Tshibemba, CPC Legal Representative for East Kasai**
 - **Elder Kalambayi, CPC East Kasai Education Coordinator**
- **Church leaders from Kananga:**
 - **Rev. Jean Tshidinda, CPC General Secretary**
 - **Rev. Kabala Mboyamba, CPC Legal Representative for West Kasai**

Additionally, we want to thank the general contractor on this project, Mr. Isaac Tshibangu, and Mr. Jean Gilbert Kabangu, an engineer from Kinshasa who served as an advisor. These gentlemen, along with the construction workers and church volunteers who assisted, were responsible for building these beautiful and well-constructed buildings. The teamwork has been impressive and we are very appreciative for the excellent quality of the construction work.

Looking to the future, CPC leaders and Myers Park are committed to continuing the partnership and making Magi Girls Pilot School a unique learning experience for girls in a Christian environment. We anticipate that students, teachers and staff will grow in their faith while providing an exceptional education for girls. In Matthew's gospel the Magi follow God's guiding star, coming from afar to bring gifts to the newborn king. After their encounter with Christ, they go home by another way, forever changed by that experience. Over the years, many disciples from Myers Park have followed God's call to come to Congo. In ministry with the CPC we have met Christ in you in powerful ways. Like the Magi of old, we return by another way, changed by our relationship with you. May God's star shine brightly on the girls who will be called to learn here. May the Magi Girls Pilot School be a place where God's love incarnate touches the lives of all the community that they may return to their homes by another way, to bless the Kasai region, the Congo, Africa and the world.

Myers Park leaders and its members look forward to working with the board of directors, director, parents and government officials in future years to create a special culture of innovation and creative learning where Christian values and beliefs will be the foundation for learning.

We pray that God will guide us all in the days ahead.

Blessings,

**Rev. Dr. Joseph J. Clifford, Senior Pastor
Court Young, Director of Outreach**