

"Go into all the world and preach the good news..."
(Mark 16:15)

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An update of the various
mission endeavours supported by
Hillview Baptist Church

December 2020

The Ministry of the White Cross

During the last number of months I have been highlighting some of the mission ministries we as a church support. This month I want to feature the White Cross ministry.

Like the Red Cross, so also the White Cross work began during World War I in response to the tremendous need for medical supplies. Women in a number of churches began what is now an honoured tradition: making bandages and sewing supplies for those in need. Over the years, thousands and thousands of gently used bed sheets have been lovingly cut and rolled in church basements by thousands of volunteers across our Conference and sent to where they were desperately needed and, in turn, where they were very much appreciated by the recipients.

Today, this ministry chiefly serves the hospitals and medical clinics in the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services. By the way, this Health Service is but one of the many amazing ministries that have resulted from the missionary work that has been carried out in Cameroon over many, many years by missionaries and medical doctors of the North American Baptist of the North American Baptist Conference, the church denomination with which Hillview Baptist Church is affiliated. In recent years the White Cross ministry has gone far beyond sending bandages, and now includes baby items, medical equipment and other critical supplies. For instance, some of the



Edmonton hospitals and other institutions have donated to the White Cross their used, but perfectly functioning hospital beds, various medical equipment and supplies, as well as large quantities of new bed linens. The campus of Taylor Seminary serves as the collection and distribution centre for the White Cross work in Canada. Here churches and individuals send or bring their bandages, children's clothing, etc., which are then packed into sturdy and uniformly-sized cardboard boxes. When a

sufficient amount of material has been assembled, a sea container is brought to the campus, carefully loaded, and then shipped to either Cameroon or Nigeria. As of

January 1, 2021, the Alberta Baptist Association (ABA) will administer this work, including issuing income tax receipts for donations.

While most of the materials sent to Cameroon/Nigeria is freely donated by Canadian NAB churches and individuals or by various medical institutions, the cost of shipping the materials via sea containers is borne by the White Cross. And as you can imagine, these shipping costs are extremely high. For instance, the cost of sending a 40-foot sea container to Nigeria recently with mainly medical supplies for the new medical clinic being established among the F*Ibe people (as I reported in my October 2020 *A Missions Moment*), was over \$12,000. The money for these expenses comes from donations given by churches, such as Hillview, and by individuals who have a heart for this vital ministry.

The NAB Field Director in Cameroon, missionary Calvin Hohn, is keenly aware of the importance of the White Cross ministry. He recently stated, "The White Cross ministry has helped save thousands of lives in Cameroon since its inception almost a hundred years ago. The medical ministries NAB partners with in Cameroon continue to expand, so the work of the White Cross is needed now more than ever before. Donations and medical supplies and equipment sent through White Cross continue to help make health care more affordable to the people of Cameroon."

How Can I Help?

By now I hope some of you are asking, "How can I help to support this wonderful ministry?" Well, let me suggest a few ways:

1. **Pray** that these containers will arrive safely and that there will be no bureaucratic hitches at the port of entry.
2. **Volunteer some of your time** to help with packing and loading the materials.
3. **Make a donation** to help with the high cost of shipping these materials.

I'll be happy to provide you with further details about any of these matters.

Kurt Redschlag
Chair, HBC Missions Committee