

Prospectus for Those Looking at Service with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Guinea Bissau, West Africa

Eastern Mennonite Missions has had a mission base in Catel, Guinea-Bissau since 2005. We maintain a holistic approach to evangelism; therefore, our mission efforts reflect a variety of ways of addressing human needs all with the goal of establishing Christian communities. We unapologetically preach and live the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ. Just as we ourselves are disciples of Jesus we freely invite others to join us in the community of Christ. We believe and practice the transforming gospel in both word and deed, following Christ as our example of the way life should be lived in the Kingdom of God.

In Guinea-Bissau, in addition to establishing village fellowships, EMM is engaged in increasing food production through agricultural initiatives, job creation and educational opportunities. However, the most direct route to meeting human needs has been through medical intervention.

From our beginnings, we have offered informal medical services knowing that as time progressed we would need to offer medical services on a professional and increasingly sophisticated level.

Most people in rural Guinea-Bissau, for a variety of reasons, are outside the scope of even the most elementary medical services. The primary way of dealing with ill health is through traditional medicine. However, as a result of their traditional beliefs, people are often reluctant to seek medical help.

In January 2011, the arrival of a RN in Catel greatly enhanced our medical ministry. We began to operate a daily clinic at our mission headquarters in the village of Catel. At the same time we began a training program through LifeWind International, an organization that coordinates Community Health Evangelism (CHE) which offers medical training to others who become trainers and can share their experience and knowledge.

Our current goal is to intervene with community-based well-being programs offered through CHE. In addition, we want to have basic medical services available through our Catel mission center. This will be in collaboration with medical services offered through the Guinea-Bissau Ministry of Health.

During the months of March and April 2011 two medical teams from Tucson, Arizona visited the Catel mission center. These teams helped create an awareness of the current medical needs of the population. They also conducted village health surveys in the communities where we already have a well-established ministry. The events of the past two months have significantly moved us forward into a broad-based ministry of health and well-being.

At this point we are urgently in need of a medical professional to give leadership to the medical ministry until we are able to have an adequately trained person from the local Mennonite

community prepared to fill the position. We would be willing to consider either long or short-term individuals though long-term is preferred.

The local lingua franca is a Portuguese-based Creole. Because it is a Latin-based language, most English-speaking missionaries can become conversant in the language within three months.

Candidates for the position are not required to be Mennonite but are expected to be supportive of Mennonite theology, particularly in terms of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as Savior, mission, and commitment to Christ like peace, justice and Christian community. A copy of the Mennonite Confession of Faith (1995) can be found online at: <http://www.mcusa-archives.org/library/resolutions/1995/index.html>.

Mennonite missiology involves both doing and being. Through our words and actions we seek to embody Jesus' way of life. Just as Jesus, the Son of God, left the glory and holiness of his home in heaven for the sake of humanity (Philippians 2:5-11), we, as his disciples, are asked to leave our comfort zones to take God's love, hope, and salvation to others.

In Guinea-Bissau that means we live in a small, rural village. The lifestyle of the missionaries is much less materialistic than the average North American lifestyle. We seek to live in solidarity with those in material poverty, sharing in the joys and challenges of their lives.

Interested persons should apply through Eastern Mennonite Missions (emm.org). Any questions can be directed to Jimm Derksen at jimmd@emm.org.