

EMAS SARY

A PUBLICATION OF EMAS CANADA

ARISE AND SHINE THE LIGHT

NOVEMBER 2015

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.”

(Isaiah 60:1-3)

The Bible story begins in Genesis 1:1 with darkness over the earth, an uninhabitable lifeless landscape of utter desolation. The creation account brings light, life and order to this world, only to succumb to more darkness as humans fall into sin in Genesis 3. That darkness has waxed and waned throughout history—moments of deep darkness such as in the World Wars and moments of light such as revival in the Great Awakening.

The Syrian refugee crisis this fall is one of those dark moments in history in a land of war and pain. The image of that little boy, Alan Kurdi, washed up on Golden Beach in Turkey, shook the world into recognizing just how dark this catastrophe had become.

Isaiah speaks of this perpetual darkness covering the earth and its peoples. But then he foretells of the coming Christ, *“the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you.”* That light is the hope of the nations and Isaiah predicts a new dawn which we see fulfilled in Revelation

21 where John referring to the New Jerusalem says, *“The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.”* (Revelation 21:23-24)

Our mission is to spread that light of Christ to nations where darkness prevails in desperate spiritual and physical needs. We serve the poor, the marginalized in medically underserved areas of the world. We bring Christ-centred healthcare and we teach biblical principles of forgiveness and reconciliation.

We invite you to participate with us this Christmas by supporting our mission to bring light and healing through your financial gifts. Read about our teams and the harvest of their work. Please pray for us and

ask for our monthly prayer calendar. And consider joining a team yourself, whether you are a healthcare professional, in Christian ministry, or layperson, our teams require committed followers of Christ to assist us in spreading the light.

*by Hendrik Visser, M.D.
Chairman of EMAS Canada Board*

PLEASE GIVE

Giving to the **Overseas Ministry Support** fund enables EMAS to continue serving

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To sign up for our
prayer calendar please email:
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photo by Zane Mulligan
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THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

By Christopher Wang.



Looking out from the window of the tour bus, there's desert land as far as the eye can see. It's the end of the harvest season and most of the fields are empty. Suddenly, the bus turns the corner and a deep emerald green fills the landscape. Emerging from out of the sand and rock below comes forth a symbol of resilience and prosperity, the watermelon.

This remains my fondest memory of my very first mission trip to Ningxia, China almost seven years ago. For the past 25 years, Education, Medical Aid and Service (EMAS) has been sending teams of medical and dental practitioners to this underserved area in north-west China. I joined the team straight out of high school along with my family in 2009. I count it a true blessing that I have been able to return every summer since. Year after year I am blown away by new sights and new stories, but I will never forget that very first visit to the watermelon fields.

It is still a mystery to me how a land that receives no more than 500 millimeters of rain per year can produce some of the largest and

sweetest watermelon I have ever tasted. Farmers use only minimal amounts of irrigation because of the cost of water. Yet in spite of all these agricultural factors working against them, every summer the watermelon swell and thrive. Over the years, I have come to simply accept it as a God-given blessing to the people of Ningxia. Whenever I think of the watermelon, I am reminded of that well known verse from 1 Corinthians 13:13, *"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."* To me, the watermelon is a symbol of all three virtues and it has unexpectedly shaped the way I view medical missions as a student. Here are some of the lessons I've learnt over the years:

Faith. When I first asked a local farmer how it is that watermelon can grow in such harsh conditions, his reply seemed to suggest that there was a fair bit of faith involved. They did not use fertilizers or chemicals, yet somehow, no matter how hot and dry the season was, it seemed to me that faith was what assured the farmers of a good yield. Similarly, our medical and dental work relies on a similar faith. We recruit physicians,

collect drug donations and prepare programs for the kids. But we are completely reliant on the Holy Spirit to direct our steps. I have learned that God's promises are sure and He provides abundantly for our everyday needs.

Hope. Farmers construct domes over their fields to trap in the heat and moisture. This "watermelon sauna" was supposedly what contributed to their incredible sweetness and juiciness. The story of the watermelon again bears much resemblance to the land itself, which has undergone many hardships yet prevailed. The province of Ningxia has one of the lowest GDPs in the entire nation, and from a spiritual perspective, the prospects appear equally bleak. Over 95% of the population are Muslims and there are very few Christian churches in the region. Yet, there is still hope. For three years, we have been partnering with young, local, Christian healthcare students, empowering them to be the leaders of the next generation. My prayer is that the hope we place in these students will translate into great deeds for the Kingdom.

Love. Upon entering any house in Ningxia, we are always offered some freshly cut watermelon. I am always humbled by this act of generosity. These people often have very little to eat themselves, yet through their actions, I have come to appreciate that love really is the currency of missions. It is not about how many patients we are able to see or how many medications we are able to dispense. It is about whether we are able to reflect the love of Christ through healing hands, listening ears, or simply a welcoming smile. Every year, on top of the medications, we also make sure to hand each patient a poster with the Chinese character

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“ai” meaning “love.” Upon closer inspection, each stroke of the Chinese character is actually made up of a verse from 1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.”

We often get patients to read these verses out loud while they are

waiting to see the doctor. We use these posters to tell them about our love and, more importantly, God’s greater love for them. We tell them that year after year, we return to see them because they are precious in God’s eyes. We explain to them that Jesus was God’s ultimate gift of love to us and that by accepting Him into our hearts, our sins are no longer counted against us and we are free to love God and love those around us. From the story of the watermelon, I am constantly reminded of this great exchange of love and my prayer is that one day, the people of Ningxia will come to know this story as well.

Christopher Wang’s story was featured in the CMDS FOCUS MAGAZINE July, 2015



2015 AWESOME TWOSOME RUN FOR HAITI

by Krista Waring

Participants as ‘old’ as 9 and as ‘young’ as 81 enjoyed fresh baked cinnamon buns and live music after completing a 5K course. Individual times ranged from 17:09 (Rob Beinke) to 48:55 (Harry Menec) which showed how vast the range of ability and experience among our participants.

was. The results were posted on the Manitoba Runners’ Association website Everyone received a certified time for their individual effort but **RUN...The Awesome Twosome with Haiti** uses the combined times of the team members for the competition.

This year 74 medals (all made in Haiti using scrap metal) were awarded in

the 18 different combined age and gender categories

Thanks to everyone who made a donation, the ‘Twosomes’ that completed the 5K course and our team of volunteers who made sure that everyone was safe and had a great time. You’re all amazing!

Your donation, along with the other proceeds from the run, will support the school and supplemental nutrition programs delivered by the El Shaddai community for children in this Port-au-Prince neighbourhood.



To donate online visit our website: www.emascanada.org

**THANK
YOU!**



OPERATION ESPERANZA

In January, 2016, a large team of healthcare professionals, including orthopaedic surgeons, anaesthetists, dentists, nurses, physiotherapists, and general helpers, will travel to Cuenca, Ecuador, as part of a medical-dental mission.

This will be the 19th consecutive year that Edmonton orthopaedic

surgeon, Thomas Greidanus, will lead **Operation Esperanza**, as the mission is called. The team hopes to provide free hip and knee replacement surgery to approximately 40 poor and suffering patients, surgery for children with club feet and dislocated hips, and dental care to hundreds of children in rural schools.

Hip and knee prostheses are expensive at \$2,000 each, and constitute a

large part of the budget for Operation Esperanza since it costs \$80,000 to buy 40 prostheses. All prostheses are purchased in Canada and with the other medical supplies, are carried by team members in hockey bags and taken on the flight with them.

A fundraiser for Operation Esperanza, hosted by Edmonton’s Riverview Rotary Club, took place in Edmonton

TOUCHING HEARTS IN VIETNAM

By Pete Greidanus

My wife Bette and I served on a medical mission trip to Vietnam in Feb 2015. Dr. David Neima and Father Tien Tran of Vancouver organized the first trips in 1995, and have been returning regularly ever since.

Our team was based in South central Vietnam, and consisted of our Team Leaders, Tran, 4 Medical Doctors' 1 Nurse Practitioner, 1 Ophthalmologist (a local Vietnamese MD), 2 Dentists, 1 Pharmacist, 3 Registered Nurses, plus 7 translators and assistants. We travelled by bus to clinics set up in schools or community health clinic facilities in rural villages within an 80 km radius of Hue. Two days were spent in each village, with the team seeing more than 500 patients a day. On the days between clinics, the setup of the next clinic was accomplished by the Sisters of Visitation, a convent of more than 140 Sisters. They did an amazing job of moving all of our medication and equipment to the new location, while we had some down time.

This "down time" sometimes involved seeing some of the local attractions, but more importantly, visiting the cardiovascular surgery area in the Hue Central Hospital Pediatric Center. We saw many children there, some pre-op, some just post-op in recovery in the ICU, and on a step down ward awaiting discharge. In

this hospital 100 children from all over Vietnam receive cardiovascular surgery for free every year, sponsored by the "Medical Aid for Vietnam" mission. The Sisters in Hue attend to the children who would not have otherwise afforded this surgery without sponsorship. They can be from anywhere in Vietnam where the mission has been before and or where the local Vietnamese MDs have identified a child with a cardiac defect requiring surgery. The Sisters also provide continuity of care between mission trips. One of them told us that she is energized every time a mission trip comes!

Another highlight was when we were invited to meet some of the post-op heart surgery children and their parents. These children had been home for six months or more. Most now had a healthy skin colour, and no murmur, or a mild residual murmur. The parents were very grateful! We met with some developmentally delayed children and their parents. The Sisters minister to these children also, and in Christian love, teach them songs and life skills, as well as train them in skills that may help them make some money. Watching them sing and dance joyfully and without inhibitions, was beautiful, and brought tears to my eyes. Our work in the clinics was valuable and very good. However, facilitating and supporting the work of the Sisters, especially their work with the congenital heart defect and Down

Syndrome children, was for me, the greater good of this mission. This song says it well: "It was there, there among the weakest, I saw Jesus."

** I Saw Jesus - Words and Music by Ali Matthews © 2010*



photo: Doctors talking to new mom about her newborn

PLEASE GIVE

The next mission trip to Vietnam is planned for July 16 – 31, 2016. Donations to EMAS Medical Aid for Vietnam would help provide this urgently needed heart surgery (\$2,500/child). Adults needing cataract surgery are also helped (\$300).

Donor card enclosed
or donate Online:

<http://www.emascanada.org/donate/>

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on October 16, 2015. It's common to auction hockey jerseys, paintings, or vacation homes, but at this particular fundraiser, guests were also able to buy a prosthesis.

The event, attended by just over 200 people, was a great success, and we are very thankful. 20 full hips were purchased. A few partial hips were also purchased by attendees as some made smaller contributions towards a

total prosthesis, buying a half a hip or a quarter of a hip. It is estimated that around \$60,000 was raised although expenses for the auctioneer, the venue and the meal still need to be paid.

Operation Esperanza continues to need to raise more funds, especially for its joint replacement component. All donations will be gratefully received for either full or partial prostheses.

photo: Tom and Peter Kool at the fundraiser. Tom is holding some prostheses.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM EMAS CANADA



**short term medical missions
with a long-term perspective.**



*Heri ya Krismasi kutoka EMAS Canada:
Ni huduma za afya za muda mfupi zenye
mtazamo endelevu*

*Joyeux Noël de l'Équipe de EMAS Canada:
Missions médicales à court-terme avec une per-
spective à long-terme*

Saludos Navideños de EMAS Canada

Misiones Medicas de corta duracion con
perspectivas de larga duracion

**EMAS Canada ki ore see Christmas ki badhahi, chote urse
ka chikitsa mission, lumbi avadhi ke nazariye se**

*CHUC MUNG GIANG SINH TU TO CHUC TU
THIEN EMAS CANADA
NHUNG CHUONG TRINH Y TE NGAN HAN VOI
PHUONG HUONG DAI HAN*

*EMAS Canada swete nou Jwaye Nowël
Mison medikal kout avèk yon pèspektiv pou lontan*

医療短宣事工の長瞻

WE ARE GROWING

PLEASE GIVE

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Ministry Support** fund enables
EMAS to continue serving

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Gambade:

In collaboration with Compass Point Bible Church/Gambade Medical Clinic Project, we are recruiting doctors and nurses for a team to visit northern Haiti in the fall of 2016. **Information session** at Compass Point tentatively booked for Dec 6th, 2015

Gambade, Haiti

Working with a Canadian church to develop a clinic in northern Haiti.
Fall of 2016

South Sudan

Institute of Health Sciences training medics for a new country.
Summer of 2016.

Nigeria

Training midwives and birth attendants skills of neo-natal resuscitation,
Feb 12 – 19th
Exploratory trip to Abuja is set for Apr 30 – May 08, 2016

Malawi

Working with the local church to upgrade staff skills and equipment at clinic in Kaseye.
Summer of 2016.

Philippines

Medical/Dental Partnering with RD Foundation in General Santos City Feb 12 – 20, 2016.

For more information,
contact: Dr. Peter Agwa:
peter@emascanada.org

EMAS India Team To Return in 2016

By Stephanie Milone

We are excited to embark on the second mission trip to India North (Herbertpur, Uttarakhand) in March, 2016!

Our inaugural trip last March was a success with us establishing relationships with the administration, medical staff, and local villagers. It set the stage for future trips that will involve various aspects of medical and paramedical education.

Of interest to the Herbertpur group is to have visitors from family medicine, surgery, radiology, nursing, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy.

The goal of the team is to offer our Canadian experience in the form of didactic and case based teaching both in the classroom and on the wards. We found that we learnt so much, and saw the importance of sound clinical skills in a remote location and having a first hand look at endemic tropical diseases. This all in the context of a spiritually enriching environment which has bolstered our passion for service.

We look forward to returning in March and leading the team towards future missions.

photo: Dr. Peter Agwa, Dr. Stephanie Milone and Dr. Stephen Milone.



UPCOMING MISSION TRIPS

ECUADOR

Jan. 28 – Feb 7, 2016

NORTHERN INDIA

March 6 – 12, 2016

VIETNAM

July 16 – 31st, 2016

HAITI

Feb. 9 – 23, 2016

CHINA SOUTH SURGICAL

May 8 – 19, 2016 (Surgery)
May 16 – 26, 2016 (Post-Op)

Thank you for Praying

For more dates go to:

<http://www.emascanada.org/join-us/upcoming/>

GIVE THE GIFT OF SERVICE

If you would like to volunteer to go on an EMAS missions trip there are several opportunities available to serve with our teams to heal and teach in a Christ-like manner.

To volunteer, please contact Peter Agwa: peter@emascanada.org



Find out more at giveconfidently.ca

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YOU ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Your donations and prayers make all the difference. Many receive the healthcare they need because of you. Young and old benefit from your generous support and we want to say,

THANK YOU!

To donate Online go to:

<http://www.emascanada.org/donate/>

EMAS Canada is hoping to raise an estimated amount of \$1,500,000 this year on Fund-raising campaigns. It will cost our organization an estimate of \$25,000 to raise this. The money raised will be going to heal, teach and serve those in need in a Christ-like manner. For further information, please contact Ellen at the EMAS Office

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EMASSARY is the official newsletter of EMAS Canada. Learn more or download previous issues at www.emascanada.org

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