



*Julie Stone*

MISSIONARY – SERVING CAMEROON



FEBRUARY 2025

## A CONCLUSION AND A GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST

### *Praises*

- For the opportunity to attend the CIMS graduation, which took place at the end of last year.
- For the posting of one of our six Internal Medicine graduates to Bango Baptist Hospital, where he is now teaching house officers and clinical staff.

### *Prayer*

- For the missionaries remaining in Mbingo – namely NAB missionaries Dr. Rick and Debbie Bardin and Drs. Kay and Keith Streatfeild (from Australia).
- For the Mbingo doctors and administration, who continue to navigate the effects of the regional conflict.
- For Dr. David Sunday, the new CIMS director, along with his faculty.

*And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that you may approve things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.*

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-10 (KJV)

It was a special privilege to travel back to Mbingo at the end of last year to participate in the graduation of Internal Medicine and Surgical residents. There, we celebrated the achievement of six graduates from the Internal Medicine program. Each graduate did very well - distinguishing



*The six Internal Medicine graduates representing the Class of 2024.*

themselves in a unique way. These internists are now posted to several hospitals administered under the auspices of the Cameroon Baptist Convention.

It was also my privilege to return to Cameroon with my sister, Barbara. Having worked in social work in an academic setting, Barbara spent her time interfacing with our social workers in Mbingo. A major part of their role is to help patients who have difficulty paying their hospital bills. Given the socioeconomic crisis, that would now encompass a majority of our patients.

One individual missing from the graduation festivities was Dr. Alfred Njamnshi – a distinguished neurologist and former vice dean of the University of Yaoundé I – which represents the certifying body for medical education in Cameroon. Dr. Njamnshi is uniquely placed to help us with the residency training program. He routinely participates in the Mbingo graduation when in



Cameroon. However, he is often out of the country on speaking engagements – as was the case most recently. Over the years, Dr. Njamnshi has mentored and encouraged many Internal Medicine and Surgical residents. In 2017, he served as the convocation speaker. Internationally known in the field of neurology, Dr. Njamnshi also has quite an interesting history.



*Dr. Alfred K. Njamnshi, neurologist and faculty member of University of Yaoundé I, shown here at an earlier Mbingo graduation.*

Born in 1963 to a couple in the Donga-Mantung Division of NW Cameroon, Alfred's parents avoided the government hospital, instead traveling the longer distance to Bango Baptist Hospital (BBH) for the birth of their son – a testimony to the trust they had in the services of the mission hospital. As Alfred grew, it was evident that he was academically gifted. He eventually gained acceptance to medical school in Yaoundé – Cameroon's capital. During these years, Alfred became an ardent follower of The Lord Jesus Christ. At the age of 25, as he was about to conclude his medical studies, Alfred returned to BBH for an internship year. There, he met and was influenced

by three former missionaries: Dr. Helen Marie Schmidt and Drs. Dennis and Nancy Palmer. All recognized and admired Alfred's abilities, as well as his unwavering commitment to The Lord. Alfred states that, during this time, Dr. Schmidt – then surgeon and Chief Medical Officer of BBH – became an adoptive mother to him.

When the time came to make a final decision as to his career trajectory, Dr. Schmidt asked Alfred to consider working with the mission following his graduation from medical school. Both Alfred and Helen agreed to pray about this decision – to seek The Lord's leading. Ultimately, it became clear to both that the intern should instead work as a missionary doctor in the public domain – serving in government hospitals where conditions are more challenging and the work ethic is often lax – endeavoring, in so doing, to set an example.

After graduating from medical school in 1989, Dr. Njamnshi departed for a residency in Neurology and Clinical Neurophysiology at the University of Geneva. He returned from Switzerland in 1995 following completion of his residency. Once back in Cameroon, he joined the faculty of Medicine of his alma mater, the University of Yaoundé I. Rising through the ranks, he served in various positions in clinical and academic medicine within Cameroon and globally. During this time, Dr. Njamnshi's Christian witness was very public, as he declined participation in certain affiliations that would have dishonored The Lord. Since its inception a decade ago, Dr. Njamnshi has served as the Board Chair of the Baptist Institute of Health Sciences (BIHS) – the governing body for the Internal Medicine and Surgical residencies in Mbingo. Given his strategic role within the faculty of the University of Yaoundé I, he has been a liaison between BIHS and the certifying government body. In fact, he characterizes himself as “the neurotransmitter, building bridges between the Yaoundé School of Medicine and the Baptist Institute of Health Sciences.”

One can imagine our surprise and delight when, in 2023, we learned that Dr. Njamnshi was appointed to the post of General Coordinator of the Residency Programs in Cameroon. This role gives him oversight of some 940 doctors in the country involved in residency training programs. Dr. Njamnshi shared that this was a posting he neither sought nor expected – yet he sees this as a God-given opportunity to interface





with doctors in training, pointing them to The Lord. It also places him in an ideal position to help our residency programs progress further on the path towards government recognition and accreditation.



*Dr. Njamshi (holding a microphone at the top left) fielding questions from Internal Medicine and Surgical residents studying under the Baptist Institute of Health Sciences in Mbingo Baptist Hospital.*

It is encouraging to see the unique way in which The Lord has used this special man following his matriculation as a young intern in Banzo almost forty years ago. Equally compelling is to recognize the fruit born of his decision to work within the government domain.

Personally, it has been a great privilege to work alongside Dr. Njamshi and so many others who have been instrumental in medical education in Cameroon. It has been truly astounding to see the medical advancements made in this country over the last thirty-two years – and this in the wake of the HIV epidemic that proved a significant set-back at the turn of the millennium.

My greatest joy, however, has been to open the Word of God with doctors and nurses as we strive to meet the day-

to-day needs of patients and deal with the logistical challenges of a resource-limited setting. It has been very interesting over the years to talk with patients about their spiritual needs – whether they be Christian, Muslim, or adherents of African Traditional Religion – seeking to point them to the Truth found in Christ Jesus alone. The Cameroonian people are ever gracious and resilient – as evidenced by those in the Anglophone regions who continue to deal with the effects of a conflict that has entered its ninth year.

Finally, I would like to thank each of you for partnering in these efforts by providing “seed to the sower” (1 Corinthians 9:10). Your love, prayers, and generosity made this work possible. As I conclude visits to some of our NAB churches in March, it is with profound gratitude for each of you.

With Love & Appreciation,



*Standing alongside our current missionaries in Mbingo. From left: Dr. Keith Streatfeild (Dean of BIHS), Dr. Kaye Streatfeild (CIMS Faculty), Mrs. Debbie Bardin (Nurse HIV Treatment Center), Dr. Rick Bardin (Head of Pathology and CIMS Faculty).*

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