

The United Methodist Flyer



United Methodist Aviation Ministries

The Aviation Branch of the
General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church

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A Letter From Thomas G. Kemper General Secretary General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church

Photo Credits: Paul Jeffrey

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a vast rugged country with few passable roads, an airplane can make the difference between life and death. United Methodist pilots provide a link to people living in remote villages; in fact they provide *hope*-hope with wings.

With the help of individuals like you, this ministry provides the poor with transportation to hospitals, clinics, and other lifesaving medical care. It brings medicine, Bibles, evangelism teams, and pastors to some of the world's most vulnerable people. The aviation ministries follow Christ's calling to love your neighbor as yourself by restoring dignity, safety, and hope.

Our pilots are busy. Demand is high. And so are costs. I invite you to be part of the miracle that is unfolding throughout The United Methodist Church. Because of the generous outpouring of support, United Methodist Aviation Ministries (UMAM) is developing a sustainable foundation to continue this vital and transformational program.

Please help us continue a 50-year tradition that has allowed The United Methodist Church to make a difference far beyond the end of the road.



West Ohio Conference Rides the Crest of the Missional Wave

By Melissa Hinnen

"God has got to be super happy," Bishop Bruce Ough emotionally declared after a miracle offering at the West Ohio Annual Conference. The goal was to raise \$500,000 "following the lead of our missional partner in Africa, the North Katanga Conference, to purchase a Cessna Caravan plane," Bishop Ough wrote in a pre-conference letter. By the close of the meeting, the West Ohio Conference had raised more than \$1 million for the Wings of the Morning aviation ministry.

"To raise over \$1 million through an annual conference miracle offering is astounding. No one in their right mind would have predicted that. We thought our \$500,000 goal was au-

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*La Bonne Nouvelle Dans L'Air
(The Good News in the Air)*

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dacious," said The Reverend Dee Stickley-Miner, who leads the Conference's connection mission and justice office. She continued: "What we experienced, however, was the Biblical truth that nothing is impossible with God. We participated in a current-day miracle--one of extravagant love and generosity that is not possible except through the power of God's Spirit."

Responding to the miracle offering, Thomas Kemper, the top executive at the General Board of Global Ministries, said: "The West Ohio Conference goes beyond financial giving. They develop sustainable and personal partnerships in the four corners of the world--creatively connecting with Global Ministries as a resource to facilitate mission." Kemper spoke at the gathering and thanked the Conference for their missional spirit. He presented them with an award from The Advance for the highest financial contribution in The United Methodist Church. For five of the last six years, the Conference has led the denomination in designated giving, supporting ministries around the world.



In his episcopal address, Ough commented on the Conference's "recession-proof mission," describing them as "riding the crest of the missional wave." He continued, "The Cessna Caravan [made] possible through your extravagant generosity will literally allow medicine, doctors, nurses, malaria nets, Bibles, and evangelists to go to villages in the Congo where the roads do not go."

With the density of rainforests, scarcity of resources, and lack of infrastructure, aviation is the only means of accessing hundreds of remote villages. Gaston Ntambo, one of three missionary pilots in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), expressed the importance of aviation ministry. "Every medical flight has a life-saving moment. But at the same time, it also has a spiritual saving moment. You are never the same once you have flown on Wings of the Morning."



Campaign of Hope

Following the Conference, Gaston wrote a letter of thanks: "You have just opened the biggest door for mission work and for a country, maybe even countries, to come to know and seek the face of our Lord Jesus, and *thank-you* is not the word I am looking for. It is not enough!"

In addition to the cost of purchasing a new plane, the maintenance and fuel require additional funding. The United Methodist Church has come together to raise support for Wings of the Morning, laying a sustainable foundation for the North Katanga Conference to continue this vital and transformational ministry.

Photo Credits: Paul Jeffrey

There are plenty of ways to get involved with the United Methodist Aviation Ministries. To see how, visit UMAviationMinistries.org or contact Steve Quigg at SQuigg@umcmmission.org. To sign up to receive the UM Flyer on a regular basis, contact Peggy Elliott at umamnews@gmail.com