

Hallelujah Moment from the Congo

"Pour Another Bucket of Water on the Altar!"

By Michelle Scott

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Symbolic bottles of clean water for the people of Kamina. Photo supplied by Union UMC.

"The bad news kept coming—every time we turned on the TV, we heard about the economy," said Pastor Scott Johnson as he described the climate in which Union United Methodist Church of Conway, South Carolina, embarked on a campaign to raise funds for their church's desperately needed repairs. "With every news report, we felt like Elijah saying, 'Pour another bucket of water on the altar!'"

Still, faced with critical building needs of their own, the people of Union UMC felt God challenging them to do something different; something that looked beyond themselves to the needs of others. This was the seed for what would become "Union with the Congo."

Union with the Congo was this small church's initiative to raise not only capital funds for their building repairs but also an equal amount to construct wells and latrines in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in partnership with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

Learning that illnesses caused by lack of clean water and sanitation kill more people in the Congo than malaria or HIV/AIDS, the people of Union responded. As a tangible symbol, a well in front of the altar of the church was filled with bottles of clean drinking water for each church member to receive. Each bottle was labeled, "Union with the Congo—Thanks to you, people in Kamina have clean drinking water."

In the midst of hard financial times, they knew it would take a miracle, and a miracle is just what they got. This small town church of approximately 150 raised \$14,200 for Union with the Congo—sufficient funds for building repairs and to dig one well and latrine in the Kamina area of Congo where people lack access to both. In 2009, they are doubling their goal.

Access to clean water is just one of the ways that UMCOR, with the help of partnerships like Union UMC, is meeting dire needs of poverty-stricken areas of the world. You, too, can support the work of UMCOR by contributing to the "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering. Times are tough but if we dare think beyond ourselves, we will be surprised at what God can do!

Ways to Support this Ministry

You can support the ministry of UMCOR by sharing your gifts through the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering.



Hallelujah Moments

Celebrations of United Methodist mission from the Mission Education program area of the General Board of Global Ministries.

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