



The Heart of Mission
September 8, 2020

I receive emails from Presbyterians all over the world. One I received this past week was from the Presbyterian Women in Africa. Yes, the Presbyterian Women are very active in Africa. Tumekutana is Swahili for “Come together.” That is what the Presbyterian Women in Africa have done for the past 13 years in Tumekutana. Women have been at the heart of mission for Presbyterians all over the world for many, many years. Our own Presbyterian Women begin their monthly bible studies this month so we are pleased to join with our sisters from Africa in prayer. This is a beautiful prayer and quite long. I have included the translation in French so please share it with our French speaking friends. Following the prayer in English and French are some mission announcements if you are interested.

Peace,

Rachel Matthews, Temporary Mission Coordinator



Dear Sisters, Friends and Partners of Tumekutana,

Greetings in the name of our Almighty God, Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Halleluiah, the LORD is good all the times.

The God of the mountain, Is still God in the valley.

When things go wrong, He'll make them right.

And the God of the good times, Is still God in the bad times.
The God of the day, is still God in the night.

As Christian women, we turn to God in times of fear and uncertainty as we do in times of joy and celebration. Please join us as we pray for God's heart of love, mercy, and truth to dwell in us and show us how to face the challenges posed by the Corona virus that has attacked our homes, our lives, our economies worldwide. We want to declare that *'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea;'* (Psalm 46:1-2).

Let us join hands in prayer for the success of the world medical experts in their endeavour to find the cure or vaccine for this worldwide pandemic, COVID-19. Our communities, especially the elderly are in lockdown fatigue, most churches and congregations in some areas are still deprived of assembling for public worship by the demand for caution from Corona virus.

Please join us as we pray for all who are longing for public worship and stressed to be sitting in one place for safety of their wellbeing; the elderly, over the age of 60 (these are the active church attenders especially in deep rural areas) who due to age are more likely to have compromised immunity and those with underlying health conditions. Will we ever be in the position to worship freely and publicly with them as we were used to before COVID 19 pandemic? Dear Lord, we put all our trust to you in prayer, as the Psalm of David (Psalm 122.1 NLT) says *' I was glad when they said to me, Let us go in to the house of the Lord'*.

The truth is that the pandemic's spread is triggering the world's worst financial slowdown experienced in decades. If it rages on unabated, many businesses and services will shut down. As Tumekutana women, we should not cease praying for our livelihood, even for our own conference gatherings that are financially assisted by those good Samaritans who always give generously to ensure that Presbyterians and Reformed African Women leaders gather as per constitution. We pray God to bless and enrich all the donors towards all the work we do as Tumekutana, especially the Executive members led by our President Rev Dr Bridget Ben-Naimah and our lovely and loving partners from USA, Canada and Scotland. We pray for special wisdom upon all plans they put in place during conference recess and May the good LORD give them strength and keep them safe. In one of our previous Prayer letters, it was said that, *"At Tumekutana, our help has always been from God and we acknowledge that ours has always been a journey of faith and of God's provision for every need"*, that remains our prayer dear God.

Our prayer cannot end without touching very disturbing issues and challenges confronting women on daily basis and is always on headlines of TVs and social media. Femicide, rape, domestic violence and missing women and general safety still plague the world, all regions and seem to be worse in African countries. We pray for the safety of all women - young and old and for the strength to raise our voices for justice to all perpetrators and end to all these social ills by God's grace. Let us not forget that we as women have been created in the image of God and pray for our full dignity and respect to be honour, in Jesus name.

Pray always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God (1Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Thank you and be blessed.

Dr Matlhodi Christina Teu
Tumekutana Southern Region Coordinator

LETTRE DE PRIERE DU MOIS D'AOÛT 2020

Chères sœurs, amies et partenaires du TUMEKUTANA,

Recevez les salutations au nom de Dieu tout puissant et de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ.

Alléluia, Dieu est bon en tout temps. Le Dieu de la montagne est encore le Dieu de la vallée. Quand les choses vont mal, il les rend meilleures, et le Dieu dans les bons moments est toujours le Dieu des mauvais moments. Le Dieu du jour reste Dieu durant la nuit.

Comme femmes chrétiennes, nous nous tournons vers Dieu dans nos moments de peur et d'incertitude, comme en temps de joie et de célébration. Joignons nos prières pour

que le cœur d'amour de Dieu, son pardon, sa vérité nous conduisent et nous montre comment faire face aux défis lancés par le Coronavirus, qui a attaqué nos maisons, nos vies, nos économies, dans le monde entier. Nous voulons déclarer que : « Dieu est pour nous un refuge et un appui, un secours qui ne manque jamais dans la détresse », PS 46 : 1-2.

Union de prières pendant que nous prions pour tous ceux qui ne peuvent adorer en public, et qui sont stressés d'être confiné à un seul endroit pour leur bien-être. Nous pensons ici au 3^{ème} âge, ceux qui ont plus de 60 ans (Ces derniers sont des fidèles actifs au culte particulièrement dans les zones rurales enclavées) et qui, en raison de leur âge sont les plus susceptibles de compromettre leur immunité. Idem pour ceux qui ont un état de santé déjà précaire.

Pourrions-nous encore adorer librement et publiquement avec eux, comme nous le faisons avant la pandémie de covid 19 ?

Seigneur nous mettons entièrement notre confiance en toi, comme il est dit dans le psaume de David (Psaume 122) : « Je suis dans la joie quand on me dit allons à la maison de l'Eternel ».

La vérité est que l'expansion de cette pandémie entraîne la pire décadence financière mondiale jamais vue depuis des décennies.

Si la pandémie de covid continue de sévir, plusieurs entreprises et services vont faire faillite. En tant que femme de TUMEKUTANA, nous ne devons pas interrompre les prières pour nos communautés, y compris pour nos rassemblements, lesquels bénéficient de soutien financier de ses bons samaritains qui, de façon consistante donnent généreusement afin de s'assurer que les femmes leaders africaines presbytériennes et réformées se réunissent conformément à leur constitution. Nous prions Dieu afin qu'il continue de bénir et de pourvoir aux besoins de tous nos donateurs par le travail que nous faisons en tant que TUMEKUTANA.

Dans cette optique, cela va sans dire que nous pensons spécifiquement aux membres du comité exécutif, sous la houlette de notre Présidente Rev. Dr. Bridget BEH NAIMA, et nos partenaires aimables et aimants des Etats-Unis, du Canada et de l'Ecosse.

Nous prions pour qu'une sagesse spéciale soit leur partage, à l'aube de la planification qu'ils mettront en place durant cette pause en vue de la conférence, et que le Seigneur, dans sa majesté, leur donne la force et les protège.

Dans une de nos anciennes lettres de prière, il était dit que : « A TUMEKUTANA, notre soutien est toujours venu de Dieu, et nous reconnaissons que le nôtre a toujours été une odyssee de foi et de provisions divine pour chacun de nos besoins. Que cela reste notre prière, ô Dieu ».

Nous ne saurions conclure cette prière sans mentionner les enjeux et défis troublants auxquels les femmes font face sur une base journalière, et lesquelles font régulièrement les gros titres sur les chaînes de télévision, ainsi que les réseaux sociaux. Il s'agit des féminicides, des viols, de la violence domestique, des disparitions de femmes et de manière générale des problèmes de sécurité qui accablent le monde, toutes les régions et semblent être encore pire dans les pays africains.

Nous prions que la justice soit servie à tous les commanditaires de ces actes, et que ces fléaux prennent fin par la grâce de Dieu. N'oublions pas que en tant que femmes, nous avons été créées à l'image de Dieu et nous prions afin que notre absolue dignité, et le respect auquel nous avons droit soient honorés, par tous au nom de Jésus.

Nous citons 1 Thessalonicien Chapitre 5 : 16-18, il est écrit « soyez toujours joyeux, priez sans cesse, rendez grâce en toute chose, car c'est à votre égard la volonté de Dieu en Jésus Christ ».

Merci et soyez bénies.

Dr. Matlhodi Christina TEU

Coordinatrice TUMEKUTANA pour la région de l'Afrique australe.

Our Mission Agencies Announcements:

Mission Team – Meeting at September 8, 4:30pm zoom.

World Mission Committee – September 15, 4:30pm, zoom.

Community Mission Deacons – September 22, 4:30pm, zoom.

Courage Connection: If you or someone you love need help, please call Courage Connection's Domestic HOTLINE (217)384-4390 OR (877)384-4390

Cuba Partner Network Virtual Gathering 2020 - The PC(USA) Cuba Partners Network Virtual Gathering: *Celebrating our Connections in the Time of COVID*, will be held via Zoom webinar, September 25 -26, 2020. Registration is \$20 for all three days. If you are interested in attending, please contact Rachel@firstpres.church for the registration link.

Frontera de Cristo – Coffee & Conversation Continues/Café y Conversacion Continua

Sept 10 de Septiembre: Conversation with a Recent Deportee who Grew up in Douglas and is Starting a New Life in Puerto Penasco (pending)

Sept. 17 de Septiembre: Clase de Cocina: Come Los Tamales Casi Dividio la Iglesia Cooking Class: How Tamales Almost Divided the Church

Sept 24 de Septiembre: Loteira de Frontera de Cristo: Play Virtual Mexican Bingo with us: Have Fun and Learn About the Life and Ministry of Frontera de Cristo

Email “conversation” to office@fronteradecristo.org to get the Zoom link

CU at Home: Save the NEW Date!!! Upcoming Event Highlighting Men's and Women's Emergency Shelter, Sept. 30, 12pm.

Other Mission Opportunities around town –

**Twice is Nice Thrift Store is
Open for Porch Sales
607 W. Elm St.,
Urbana**

**Saturdays August 22, 29, Sept.12, 19, 26
From 10am-2pm**

Featured Items:

Sept 12 Electronics, Decorative (wall and other)
Sept 19 Puzzles, Games, Toys, Books Stationery
Sept 26 Winter apparel, Holiday

We are not closed for good, just exercising extreme caution in these difficult times. We will not be opening the shop itself until we are safe. Your patience is greatly appreciated.

We have missed you and hope to see many old and new friends at one or all of our porch sales. Cash and checks only.

We will be requiring masks, limited numbers on the porch and providing hand sanitizer for use before and after shopping.

Let us keep all our mission partners in our prayers, those who are waiting to go back to their place of ministry and those who are able to work where they are. Listen for God’s call to you in their ministry.

Our PC(USA) Mission CoWorkers:

Mark Adams and Miriam Maidonado Escobar (Mexico)
Farsijanna Adeney-Risakotta (Indonesia)
Jeff and Christi Boyd (Central Africa)
Jo Ella Holman (Caribbean and Cuba)
Bob and Kristi Rice (South Sudan)

Our regional and global mission partners:

Kemmerer Village (and Camp Carew)
Lifeline Pilots
Marion Medical Mission
Mission Aviation Fellowship
Opportunity International
Friends of Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan Presbyterian Cuba Partnership
Special Offerings of the PC(USA)
Theological Education Fund
Young Adult Volunteers

Here in Champaign – Urbana:

CU Better Together
CU at Home
CANAAN S.A.F.E. HOUSE
CANTEEN RUN
COURAGE CONNECTION
DREAAM
eEMPTY TOMB, INC
FAITH IN ACTION
JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY
THE REFUGEE CENTER
RESTORATION URBAN MINISTRY
SALT & LIGHT

Here at First Presbyterian Church

FPCC Amateur Preachers
FPCC Environmental Committee working with Faith in Place
FPCC Presbyterian Women
FPCC ESL
FPCC Children, Youth and Families
FPCC Mission Possible/Go and Serve



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