

Christmas Offering Recipient 2011

Science and Technology at Beacon of Hope



Dear Friends in Christ;

This past summer, the Redeemer-Pilgrim Africa Mission Team visited Uganda and saw first-hand the wonderful work being done for and by the students of Pilgrim's boarding school in Soroti, Beacon of Hope College. Our own Lloyd Dahmen took the lead in facilitating the design of a Science Fair for the school: with experiments designed by the faculty and carried out by the students, the Fair was a huge success, and showed how much capacity and eagerness for science education there is at the school. In addition we brought a good deal of lab equipment with us, including a wonderful Zeiss microscope, largely donated by members of the parish. The result of all this effort was an excited and renewed commitment to take science education to a new level at Beacon of Hope.

It should not surprise us that Beacon of Hope consistently scores among the three top schools in the Soroti District on national exams, even though our children there are drawn from some of the poorest and most traumatized villages in East Africa. These are highly motivated kids, who see education as the way out of poverty. While they receive a good deal of science training as part of the British-designed educational system, it is often by rote; the great challenge is to teach science in ways that will help students learn not just the right answer, but the critical thinking skills and habits of thought that are the basis for genuine scientific inquiry, in the context of a lively and intelligent Christian faith.

In the US the recent development of initiatives to create STEM schools, focusing on science, technology, engineering and math, has already produced significant growth in scientific competence in American schools, including some in our poorest neighborhoods. Our mission partner, Pilgrim Africa, would love to see the STEM model adapted for an African context, and to see that work begin at Beacon of Hope. This will obviously require significant investment to allow more highly trained teachers, smaller classes, and better equipment.

On the recommendation of the Outreach Committee, the Vestry has therefore designated the 2011 Christmas Offering to help build the best possible science and math programs at Beacon of Hope College in Soroti, Uganda.

Your generous contribution will help the young people of today build Africa's future. The goal of Pilgrim's board and staff is that Beacon of Hope will one day provide, not only the best science and math education among high schools in their district, but rank first in Uganda. This Christmas, let us join these fine young leaders in their hope!

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dorsey W.M. McConnell".

(The Reverend) Dorsey W.M. McConnell

Advent & Christmas Schedule

Sunday, December 4th

9:45 am **Caroling Field Trip during Sunday School**
Led by Children's Choir Director Mary Reynolds



Wednesdays, December 7th, 14th, and 21st

7:00 pm **Advent Series**
Hymns and Songs of Advent, featuring discussion
by the Reverend Beth Maynard
Preceded by a light supper at 6:30 pm

Sunday, December 11th

4:00 pm **All-Parish Neighborhood Caroling and Fellowship Dinner**
Led by Mary Crown (Fellowship) and Sarah Allen (Sunday School)

Sunday, December 18th

10:00 am **Morning Prayer and Christmas Pageant**
Led by Maisie Pollard and Laura Hindermann. No Sunday School. Child care will be provided.

Thursday, December 22nd

7:30 pm **Carols by Candlelight: A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols**

Saturday, December 24th

4:00 pm **Family Eucharist** (Children's Sermon,
Children's Choir and Parish Choir)
10:00 pm **Choral Prelude**
10:30 pm **Festal Eucharist** (Parish Choir
and adult sermon)

Sunday, December 25th

10:00 am Holy Eucharist

The Sunday School area
will be available for children
and parents who need a
break from Christmas Eve
and Christmas services.

Please note that that on December 25th and January 1st there will be no 8:00 am service, nor Bible Studies, nor Sunday School/Childcare at the 10:00 am services.