

**Committee on Ghana  
Westminster Presbyterian Church**

85 Chestnut Street  
Albany, NY 12210  
U.S.A.

**August 2011**

**In this Issue:**

- 2011 Mission Team Looks at How Mama Alice Eliminates Extreme Poverty Pg 2
- Mama Alice Focuses Upon UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) Pg 6
- Faith Journey of Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti (written to mark her retirement) Pg 7
- Mama Alice Proposal to End Hand Washing of Linens at Ghana Hospital Pg 8
- Picture of Ghana Mission Team with Friends from Donkorkrom Pg 9
- Action in Ghana by Mama Alice and Others to Reduce Maternal Deaths Pg 10
- Dates for Mission Team Presentations Pg 12

**Fall 2011 Dates for 2011 Ghana Mission Team Presentations**

- **August 13**, 5 to 8:30 p.m., Westminster PC, free fund-raiser and report, "What did the five youngest members learn in Ghana?" Chair: Nicholas Scaptura.
- **September 19 - 20**, Meeting of Albany Presbytery at Lake George. Time for team report to be announced
- **October 9**, Westminster, 11:15 a.m. Second Hour Report by 2011 Ghana Mission Team
- **November 5**, Westminster, 5 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., African Family Night



**Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti**  
**Pastor, Presbyterian Church of Ghana**  
**"Mama Alice"**

**Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti** led Westminster's 2011 Mission Trip in Ghana, showing the 14-member team how she has worked to eliminate extreme poverty. She is the only woman ever elected to serve as a chairperson for one of the 15 presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG). Mama Alice, who has represented her Church in 19 countries outside of Ghana, was in residence at Westminster in 2006, 2007, and 2010. She has led or helped to lead three of our four mission trips to Ghana. Mama Alice retires in September 2011 after 42 years of working full time for both the Lay and Ordained Ministry of her Church and five years as a teacher. This bulletin pays tribute to Mama Alice and highlights what the 2011 mission team learned from her in Ghana.

## Thought to Ponder After 2011 Trip to Ghana Conducted by Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti: How Many Strong Female Leaders Does a Country Need to Eliminate Extreme Poverty?

By: Lois Wilson

**Two of the goals** for Westminster's 2011 trip were to better understand how leaders in Ghana are working to eliminate extreme poverty (as outlined in the UN's Millennium Development Goals listed below) and to visit places in Ghana where Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti (widely known as Mama Alice) has lived and worked during 42 years of paid service to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (both in the lay and ordained ministry) and as a teacher for five years. In January 1982 she was one of the first women ordained by the PCG. Mama Alice has served the PCG as a pastor, missionary, chaplain, mid-wife, nurse, and General Secretary of the Women's Work Central Committee at the PCG Head Office. While serving in every position she was an outspoken and unwavering advocate for change.

When we walked unannounced on July 3 into the Ramseyer Presbyterian Church in Kumasi, the pastor stopped the service to salute Mama Alice and call attention to her leadership in the PCG. She is the only woman to ever serve as a PCG Presbytery Chairperson (moderator). These comments were echoed in different words the next morning by the Asante Presbytery Chairperson, who specifically noted that no other female PCG pastor is yet playing a similar leadership role.

Our visits to Tema (where Mama Alice has been a pastor since 2007), to the Donkorkrom Hospital near the Volta Lake (where she served from 1987 – 1992), and to the West Akyem Presbytery in Ghana's Central Region (where she was the elected chairperson from 2001 – 2006) were particularly meaningful to me. In each area I heard the same tone of admiration and deep affection for Mama Alice I had heard in conversations with Mama Alice's missionary colleagues from Malawi (1993 – 1999) at a 2007 PC (USA) World Mission conference.

The 2011 team saw repeated examples of how eliminating extreme poverty can be a step-by-step process.

**Special Thanks:** On July 8, I returned from Ghana with a deep sense of gratitude to other members of our 14-member team, to all who helped to fund our trip (including Albany Presbytery, Westminster PC, Christ, Our Light Catholic Church, and Loudonville PC), and especially to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) planning committee, which included Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti. Mama Alice organized our four-day visit to Tema with Barbara Asempa, Elder from the Redemption Church, Tema Community 9 [Executive Director, HOME OF CARE AND PROTECTION (HOCAP), a Christian NGO] and Rev. Enoch Pobe, District Minister, Greenwich Meridian Church, Tema



New Treated Mosquito Nets

**UN Millennium  
Development Goals:  
Reduce Child Mortality;  
Combat HIV/AIDS, Ma-  
laria and other Diseases**



Mama Alice with an Officer

Community 1. The PCG committees were assisted by Rev. Joshua Heikkila, PC (USA) Field Representative in West Africa. Planning for the trip began in fall 2010 while Mama Alice was making her third pastoral visit to Westminster.

**Donkorkrom Hospital, Afram Plains** (described by Mama Alice as one of her favorite assignments): Mama Alice was returning with us to the hospital for the first time since 1992 when the PCG had transferred her from Donkorkrom to Malawi. Conditions had been bleak when Mama Alice arrived at the 19-bed Donkorkrom Hospital in 1987 – no electricity and no running water. At that time roads to the hospital were so rough that our two-hour trip was a two-day journey. While Mama Alice was working at Donkorkrom, solar power was first used to provide electricity for a simple operating room.

### At Donkorkrom Hospital:

- Gladys Opuni, a nurse with whom Mama Alice had worked 20 years ago, handed her a gift (perhaps recalling an earlier gift to her from Mama Alice) and stayed by her side.
- We visited an orphanage near the hospital – home to 18 children. While working at Donkorkrom, Mama Alice and a colleague from New Jersey cared for twins whose mother died during child birth. The two women cared for the babies until they were six months old and well enough to place in an Accra orphanage. Mama Alice monitored the care of the twins in Ghanaian orphanages and that of several of their siblings. (See below for a group picture taken near the Donkorkrom orphanage.)
- Malaria continues to be a cause of maternal death for pregnant women and children under age 5 in this region. Using \$630 (donated by the Westminster Committee on Ghana and friends of Diane Scaptura), Mama Alice purchased nets which we presented to hospital administrators. When she returns to Donkorkrom in November, Mama Alice said that she personally plans to sleep in a mosquito net.

### At Ferry Entrance in Donkorkrom:

Several people recognized Mama Alice near the ferry entrance on the Donkorkrom side of the Volta Lake. A policeman remembered the health care training of the first female pastor at Donkorkrom when he needed medical help on July 1 for a semi-conscious young woman. He reported to Mama Alice that the clinic had confirmed her diagnosis: the young woman was drunk and had just been raped.



Ayirebi, West Aykem in Courtyard of Family Home

After the visit to the Donkorkrom Hospital, Mama Alice made a strong appeal to the Clerk of the PCG General Assembly to allow her to raise money to have an industrial grade washing machine and dryer at the hospital by the time of a 25th anniversary celebration at Donkorkrom in November. (See separate article.)

**West Aykem Presbytery:** In the West Aykem Presbytery, health care workers, older seniors, and pastors all reached out to Mama Alice. Seniors in their late 80's and 90's hugged Mama Alice and danced with her. It is a large presbytery with about 85 Churches. Ayirebi (Mama Alice's home village) is in West Aykem, and we were greeted by the District Minister who is responsible for 14 congregations. Mama Alice is helping to fund a new school feeding station for children at the Ayirebi elementary school. It is a typical Ghanaian school building -- a row of crowded, unlit classrooms. We saw the initial construction work for the feeding station; it will be a separate building in which food may be safely cooked, stored, and served.

We drove along the road where Alice and her siblings had walked for 50 minutes each way to farm the family coconut plantation. Mama Alice told us that because of their organic farming methods, this 30-acre plantation has avoided the blight found on a number of other coconut plantations in Ghana.

**Tema:** Wherever we went, Mama Alice, as usual, was reaching out to children. At the Tema Redemption Church she introduced a boy about eight who was coming to Church events and asking to take uneaten food home with him. Through an investigation she started, Church officials learned that the boy was an orphan living with a foster family which was not meeting his basic needs. We expect the boy will receive a portion of the \$500 scholarship sent by Westminster to Tema Redemption Church.

Outside of Tema we visited the Okushibri School run by HOME OF CARE AND PROTECTION (HOCAP), a Christian NGO. Mama Alice is one of the five Board members. The school was started when Executive Director Barbara Asempra (an Elder in Mama Alice's congregation) found 70 children who had no school within walking distance. Mama Alice has helped the Executive Director raise money in the US and Tema for the school, including extra money for children whose families are too poor to pay for school uniforms or the school lunch program. A number of children are living with their grandparents.

**First two UN Millennium Development Goals:**

- *Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger;*
- *Achieve Universal Primary Education*



Tema with Future WPC Scholarship Student



Tema SOS Village

**UN Millennium Development Goals:  
Ensure Environmental Sustainability**



Mama Alice and Leslie Plant a Tree

**UN Millennium Development Goals:  
Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

Other examples of her ministry about which we heard for the first time on the 2011 trip are described below.

- Tree-planting and examination of areas devastated by floods were goals of the 2011 trip to learn more about the need to plant trees to reduce deforestation and to prevent flooding. Mama Alice asked Rev. Joshua Heikkila (PC USA Field Representative to West Africa) to conduct tours in two sections of the country (Ashaiman and Swedru) where there was very substantial damage during floods in 2010.

West Aykem was once part of the Ghanaian Rain Forest, but many trees were cut for farming. We learned that Mama Alice had arranged for the planting of trees throughout the West Akyem Presbytery as she traveled during her term as Chairperson from 2001-2006. Outside of the elementary school in her home village of Ayirebi she called attention to a group of large shade trees that she had arranged to plant a decade earlier. The team planted the same type of teak trees near two schools in Tema and at the Donkorkrom orphanage to provide future shade and to act as windbreakers.

- Mama Alice was the trip's behind-the-scenes Sanitation Officer (one of her roles while stationed at Donkorkrom Hospital.).

- At the 2011 Ghana Mission Network Mama Alice and Elder Barbara Asempra organized a domestic violence seminar. WPC Associate Pastor Rev. Frances W. Rosenau represented US women on the panel. Mama Alice's comments demonstrated that due to her counseling of many domestic violence victims she clearly understood the culture of silence in her country. Ghana's law banning domestic violence was enacted in 2007, but enforcement has never been adequately funded. Just before our trip Mama Alice met a woman who had been savagely attacked. The attacker's father got the charges dropped after agreeing to pay the victim's medical bills. However, the treatment recommended by the hospital cost more than the woman was given. Mama Alice gave the woman (whom she was meeting for the first time at the hospital) enough additional money to pay for the recommended care. Without Mama Alice's intervention and help, the victim would not have received appropriate medical treatment.



Close to the river-bank where the slaves were washed before reaching Cape Coast. Mama Alice showed us the simple life and house of a local woman.

**Mama Alice Often Discusses UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) (adopted in 1990 to guide 189 countries, including the US, in ending poverty)**

- Mama Alice daily greets people in Ghana who she believes might need positive affirmation – kitchen workers, maids at a hotel, and people who seem to be alone.

This spring NY Times columnist Nicholas D. Kristof cited Ghana as a country in which Ghanaian women have taken the lead in getting measures adopted to improve the lives of women. I immediately thought about Mama Alice.

Countless people in Ghana are alive today and are no longer living in extreme poverty because of steps taken by Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti. She has shown members of the laity and clergy how to bring about change. A question on which to ponder: How many strong female leaders does a country with a population of 24 million need to have in order to eliminate extreme poverty and to implement the UN's Millennium Development Goals?

#### Summary of UN's Millennium Goals for 2015

1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
2. Achieve Universal Primary Education
3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
4. Reduce Child Mortality
5. Improve Maternal Health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases
7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability
8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development

## Faith Journey Statement: Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti Spring 2011



*I often reflect upon the words of Isaiah 6:8b "Here am I. Send me." Also, verse 9a: "And, he said, 'go'." I continue to follow His directive to go where I am needed.*

-- Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti, Sermon at Loudonville Presbyterian Church, October 24, 2010

#### Educational Background

- 1949-1959: Akim Ayirebi Presbyterian Primary and Methodist Middle School (MSLC)
- 1960-61: Agogo Presbyterian Women's Training College (Teachers' Certificate "B")
- 1966-68: Abetifi Seminary – Consecrated Evangelist
- 1968-69: Deaconess Training in Health Services, Social Welfare and Community Development / Pastoral Care, Bolgatanga, Sandema – Presbyterian Mobile Clinics, Volta Resettlement and Adum District of PCG
- 1969: Nsaba Teacher Training College (Modular Certificate "A")
- 1969: Commissioned as Deaconess at Osu Synod
- 1971-73: St. Monica's Midwifery Training School – Asante Mampong
- 1979: Commissioned as a Ministerial Probationer at Koforidua
- 1982: Ordination – Akim Oda

#### Working Experience in Ghana, Malawi, and Scotland

- 1961 – 66: Certificate Teacher, Oda Presby Education Unit
- 1969: Deaconess, Begoro Women's Training Center – Math and English Teacher
- 1973-75: Deaconess / Midwife / Associate Chaplain, Agogo Presbyterian Hospital
- 1976-86: General Secretary, Women's Work Central Committee, PCG Head Office
- 1987-92: Hospital Chaplain, Midwife on Night Call, Community / Public Health Service, Rural Water & Sanitation Officer, Training of Traditional Birth Attendants & Pastor in charge of 10 Congregations at Donkorkrom, Afram Plains
- 1993-99: Fraternal Worker, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Blantyre Synod, Malawi
- 1999: Faith Share Mission, Dunoon Presbytery, Church of Scotland (six months)
- 1999-2001: Minister in Charge, Christ Congregation, Darkuman (Kaneshie District)
- 2001-2006: Presbytery Chairperson – West Akyem Presbytery
- 2007 – 2011: Redemption Congregation, Community 9, Tema – Tema North District

*“I take this opportunity to thank you all for your physical, moral, and spiritual support all these 42 years of working full time for the Church for both the Lay and Ordained Ministry and five years as a teacher. To God be the glory.”*

-- Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti, Appreciation Statement at end of Faith Journey Report Spring 2011

## Donkorkrom's Former Sanitation Officer Proposes Laundry Center to Prevent Spread of Infection & Disease at Rural Hospital

UN Millennium Development Goals: *Develop a Global Partnership for Development*

### Other Activities, Including Advocacy and Interpretation / Deputation Work

- Contributed to radio programs in Ghana, Switzerland, Scotland, and Malawi
- Served on many national, continental & international boards and committees, including Agogo Hospital Management Committee (3 yrs.), Donkorkrom Hospital Management Committee (6 yrs.), Ramseyer Training Center Board (3 yrs.), World Day of Prayer African and Ghana Committees (10 yrs.), First Board Chairman of Ayem Mansa Rural Bank, Treasurer of PCG Pastors Conference (6 yrs.); General Assembly Council (5 yrs.) plus 20 others in Ghana and Malawi listed on her 2011 Faith Journey report.
- Did interpretation work with the PCG Partners Overseas, leading to the expansion of Donkorkrom Hospital, building of Ekye Amanfrom Clinic & establishment of Tease Agricultural Station
- Advocacy: Presented many papers at national and international gatherings.
- Interpretation /Deputation Work Outside of Ghana: Represented the PCG or the CCAP, Malawi in 19 countries, including 11 countries in Africa, five in Europe (sent 5 times to Germany), two in North America (USA and Canada), and Israel. In USA served in 3 Synods, 5 Presbyteries, and many congregations.

**A 2011** Ghana Mission Team sponsored by Westminster Presbyterian Church in Albany, NY learned on July 1, 2011 that Donkorkrom Hospital in Afram Plains (in Ghana's Kwaku region near the Volta Lake) assigns four staff members to daily wash sheets and hospital linens by hand, to dry them in the sun (and we took pictures of bed coverings laid over what looked like cement walls), and to iron them.

Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti played many roles from 1987 – 1992 at Donkorkrom, including serving as “Sanitation Officer.” She has described her duties as: “Hospital Chaplain, Midwife on Night Call, Community / Public Health Service, Rural Water & Sanitation Officer, Training of Traditional Birth Attendants & Pastor in charge of 10 Congregations.” In the past she has told US friends how to “properly” wash bedding by hand. When she was at Donkorkrom, it was a 19-bed hospital; a relatively small washing machine was purchased in 1991. It is now a 105-bed hospital serving a large rural area with more than 100,000 people.



Hospital Laundry Drying

Her current proposal for Donkorkrom Hospital, developed with support of Rev. Herbert Anim Opong, Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church of Ghana follows:

- Construct an inexpensive building to house the laundry center, including space for safe folding of bedding and other hospital linens.
- Purchase industrial strength washing machines and dryers in Europe and ship them to Ghana for transportation to Donkorkrom Hospital to prevent the spread of infection & disease at the 105-bed hospital and end the hand washing of hospital linens.

Rev. Opong and Rev. Kyei-Anti are developing a budget which friends of Donkorkrom Hospital may use to raise money in Ghana, Europe, and the United States. Rev. Kyei-Anti is collecting donations and sending the money to Rev. Opong with a list of donors and the amount contributed.



Opposite Donkorkrom Hospital Orphanage, built after the tragic death 20 years ago of a 49-year mother under the care of Mama Alice, 2011 Mission team members (listed in bold type) and current Donkorkrom staff gathered (left to right):

- **Front row on grass:** **Laura**, age 11; Gladys Opuni, Donkorkrom RN, Mama Alice
- **First row standing:** **Rev. Kathryn Shaffer**, Mr. Fianko, Acting Manager of Donkorkrom Hospital; a PCG Minister, **Lois Wilson**, **Nancy Ost**, Rev. Bossman, District Minister from PCG at Ebenezer Congregation in Donkorkrom; **Chester Burch**, Donkorkrom staff member, **Leslie** (new HS graduate), Donkorkrom staff member.
- **Second row standing:** Three Donkorkrom staff, **Nicholas Scaptura**, **Regina Race**, **Peter Gregg**, Rev. Joshua Heikkila, two Donkorkrom staff members, Rev. A. S. Alado, Donkorkrom Chaplain
- **5 team members missing from picture:** **Martina Ahadzi**, **Connie Frisbee Houde**, **Rev. Alexandra Lusak**, **Diane Van Dusen**, and **Rev. Frances W. Rosenau**

## Mama Alice has Helped Reduce Maternal Deaths in Ghana

**About 170,000** Women Die in Africa each year from pregnancy-related deaths; Mama Alice has helped reduce maternal deaths in Ghana.

In a front-page article in the NY Times, July 30, 2011, "Maternal Deaths Focus Harsh Light on Uganda", reporter Celia Dugger wrote, "Half of the 340,000 deaths of women from pregnancy-related causes each year occur in Africa"

Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti worked as the mid-wife on night call at Donkorkrom Hospital for six years from 1987 - 92; she had received her training at a three-year course from 1971-73 in St. Monica's Midwifery Training School in Asante Mampong.

In an October 17, 2010 speech given at Westminster, Mama Alice said that UN Millennium Development Goal 5: Improving Maternal Health is "the goal which is near and dear to my heart. Most maternal deaths could be avoided if women have access to adequate reproductive health services, equipment, supplies, and trained health care workers." She also said, "In Ghana, the Government now provides free pre- and post-natal care for mothers. A nationwide needs assessment of the midwifery schools will help strengthen training for birth attendants. Maternal deaths have declined in Ghana as the Churches with hospitals have received government support to train traditional birth attendants in villages. Both the Churches and the government are providing sterile birthing kits for remote areas."

Ghana outlawed female genital mutilation in 2007, with strong support from female leaders like Mama Alice. In her October 2010 speech, she said, "In two regions of Ghana in which female genital mutilation had occurred, there has been a strong educational campaign, and the national media is highlighting the arrest of some women who had been engaging in this practice." She added, "Ghana now has a good clinic which treats women with fistula without charge. Female genital mutilation increases the rate of women who need to have a fistula repaired. As a midwife, I saw the extreme pain which women with female genital mutilation had during childbirth."



Presbyterian Hospital

**UN Millennium Development Goals: Improve Maternal Health**

## Excerpt from Mama Alice's Zonta International Speech



Mama Alice with Lois Wilson



Mama Alice

The following excerpt from a speech Mama Alice gave on October 27, 2007 in Albany at an area Zonta International conference shows how she took action after a woman for whom she was caring died following child birth: "A pregnant woman attended a pre-natal clinic at the Donkorkrom Health Center. She was 49 years old. It was her 12th pregnancy and she was expecting twins. Since she was getting close to the time of her delivery, I advised the woman to stay at the Health Center. However, she asked permission to return to her village to say good-bye to her other children and to leave some money for food for her family. The following day I was on night call. She was brought to the Health Center after delivering at home. She had been attended by an untrained tribal birth attendant. She was bleeding profusely due to a retained placenta. Doctors and nurses tried to save her life, but she finally died. As a result of the high rate of maternal death, the Minister of Health in Ghana organized training for traditional birth attendants. In the area in which I worked we trained more than 50 men and women to assist in the delivery of babies at their homes and how to provide prenatal and post-natal care. We supplied them with kits containing sterilized instruments."

### Westminster Presbyterian Church

**Pastor:** James L. Reisner

**Associate Pastor:** Frances Wattman Rosenau

**Parish Associate:** Paul Randall

**Parish Associate:** James R. Thompson

**Minister of Music and Arts:** Alfred V. Fedak, FAGO, ChM

**Associate Minister of Music and Arts:** Susan Hermance Fedak

**E-Mail:** info@wpcalbany.org

**Web:** www.wpcalbany.org

**Phone:** 518.436.8544

**Ghana Committee Co-chairs:** Carolyn Smith and Lois Wilson

**Editorial Committee for Special Bulletin:**

Rev. Alexandra Lusak, Nancy Ost, Ann Treadway,

Rev. Frances W. Rosenau, Lois Wilson

**Graphic Design:** Jeanne Bianchine

**Photographs:** Connie Frisbee Houde, Rev. Frances W. Rosenau

After September 5, the Rev. Mrs. Alice Kyei-Anti will receive her mail at a post office box in Adenta-Accra; the address will be available at team reports given at Westminster.