



West Ohio Conference
of The United Methodist Church

January 15, 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The West Ohio Conference has joined 45 other Annual Conferences who from across our denomination have come together to save lives by preventing needless deaths from malaria.

Our Conference goal is to save 350,000 lives over the next several years by raising 3.5 million dollars. Many churches have already made a commitment to saving lives through the Imagine No Malaria initiative. Thank you for those commitments; it's why we're almost half way to our goal today!

Districts

Capitol Area North
Capitol Area South
Foothills
Maumee Watershed
Miami Valley
Northwest Plains
Ohio River Valley
Shawnee Valley

We invite you and your church to join the West Ohio effort in saving lives!

This initiative is about more than just raising money; it's a unique break-through time for every local congregation to reach out with the healing message of Jesus Christ and love of neighbor. Valarie Willis of Gaines UMC in Madisonville travelled with a West Ohio mission group to North Katanga Africa earlier this year; here is some of what she saw:

When we are annoyed by mosquitoes, we dash to our local store and grab up repellent, candles and wipes. We can usually get there and be back within 15 minutes or so. Then we go back to relaxing in our lounge chairs. That is not the way the world turns deep in North Katanga. There are no stores within walking or driving distance that gives them the luxury of vaccinations or repellents.

Babies, mothers, fathers, and children fight for their lives when infected with Malaria, a mosquito carrying disease. In the clinic, we saw little babies connected to IVs, strung on a makeshift wooden stand. They rested on soiled lumpy thin mattresses, while parents anxiously awaited. They were the lucky ones. So many more, never see the inside of a clinic, or receive treatment. They don't get the \$2.00 vaccine that could save their lives.

I don't know the outcome for these children, but I do know that through Imagine No Malaria, we can make a difference for many babies, children, mothers and fathers. In the time that it takes us to spray on our repellent and settle in, someone has died from Malaria. We can give hope and save lives.

Give hope and save lives! – Reach out to your community!

Across our denomination churches are building hope using Imagine No Malaria as an opportunity to host spaghetti dinners, 5k runs, basketball games, wellness fairs, golf tournaments and more. In doing so they've raised millions of dollars in simple ways to

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save lives in sub-Saharan Africa where someone dies every 60 seconds from malaria. And, they've used these times of outreach to tell the story of who we are as United Methodists, of our passion for the Gospel and of our love of neighbor, those nearby and those thousands of miles away.

We stand on the threshold of eradicating deaths from malaria and Imagine No Malaria will help make that happen through a sustainable, accountable program of Education, Prevention, Treatment and Communication.

Will you save 50, 100, 200 or more lives from death from malaria?

Commit to saving lives. One easy way to do so is to commit to saving lives by raising \$100 per worship attender over the next three years. That's only \$2.78 per worshipper, per month over the next three years. And for each \$100 you'll save 10 lives. Churches committing at this level we call 'Barnabus churches' as they are encouragers of us all. Churches that are able to commit to \$25,000 or more are recognized as Luke 9:6 Churches as 'those who go through the towns preaching the Gospel and healing the sick.'

Malaria does not discriminate between rich and poor, rural and big cities; it strikes those without the means to protect themselves. This is a ministry with room for all of us, regardless of economics. **Every commitment, every gift, makes a difference and goes 100% to help end deaths from malaria.**

How can we give hope and save lives?

1. Pray! Enter into a time of intentional prayer. Jesus told us to heal the sick, to love our neighbor as ourselves. Here is the prayer I've been using: *'Use us O God, let it be your will, and show us how to imagine, to imagine no malaria right where we are planted.'*
2. Educate yourself about malaria and the impact it has on human lives. Visit www.westohioumc.org/imagine for local church resources, stories and more.
3. Next, look at what you do well, how do you make the Gospel of Jesus Christ come alive to your neighbors, how do you serve? How can you include them in your commitment?
4. Dream a God-sized dream! Commit to an annual season of mission focus for Imagine No Malaria over each of the next 3 years. Many churches focus around World Malaria Day which is April 25.
5. How many lives will your church save?



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6. Find at least one person (or more) in your church who will lead this initiative and send me their name. Through our District Coordinators or through the Council on Development we'll be in contact and be able to support.
7. Complete the attached form and send it to me or to Darlene Krick, Council On Development, West Ohio Conference Center, 32 Wesley Blvd Worthington, Ohio 43085 on or before March 31, 2014.
8. Pray again, a prayer of thanks to God.
9. Go forth and save lives!
10. Questions? Need help in creating your goal? – Check out the website at www.westohioumc.org/imagine for more information or contact me, Dave Boling, Conference Field Coordinator, Council on Development, dboling@wocumc.org; 614-844-6200, ext. 247.

Thank you for engaging in the healing presence of Jesus Christ through Imagine No Malaria. Thank you to the churches who have already committed! Thank you to those who are praying about it, Thank you all!

Each day, 1,440 people, mostly children and women who are pregnant die in sub-Saharan Africa from malaria. Through your commitment and ministry, everyone can save a life.

Thank you and may 2014 truly be a year of giving hope and saving lives!

In Christ,

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www.westohioumc.org/imagine

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