Christian Dental Society News-Brief
May 2022



Lord, you know the world is full of troubles often affecting us personally. As David writes in the Psalms, he always turned to the Lord because He is our Rock and Foundation from Whom our strength comes.

It is enlightening and encouraging to share stories of CDS members who are out there on the front lines impacting others towards God's kingdom. The CDS supports two organizations that train local nationals to provide basic dental care and extract teeth. They work where there are great dental needs in conjunction with local churches for sustainable practices. See ITEC at www.itecusa.org and mPower at www.mpowerapproach.org. Dr. Jon and Amy Spenn met on a mPower mission trip with Dr. Denny Scharine (a Past-President of the CDS) and they have been working with these two organizations for years. Currently, they are employed part-time by ITEC to support

this ministry. Dr. Jon is on the CDS Board, they reside in Florida, and here are a few highlights and photos from their recent mission trip to Monrovia, Liberia.



Dr. Jon and Amy Spenn meeting with the Liberia Medical and Dental Council

ITEC recently conducted a dental extraction training in Monrovia, Liberia. The training team consisted of Dr. Jon & Amy Spenn (dentist and dental assistant, respectively), as well as a dentist from South Carolina, Dr. Ernie Myrick. This was the third dental training ITEC has conducted in Liberia (2017, 2019, and now 2022). Each training has focused on teaching extraction skills to Liberian Christians who want to be able to reach more of their people with the Gospel.

Stanley Wright, from Grand Gedeh County in southern Liberia, received his initial training from ITEC in January of 2017. Stanley and his Wordsower Africa team have seen over 1,300 dental patients in the last five and a half years.



Stanley Wright supervises new trainee performing an extraction

ITEC conducted a second dental training in Liberia in the summer of 2019. They traveled further south to conduct the training at the Wordsower compound in Grand Gedeh County. During that time, Stanley served as an assistant instructor. Prince was one of the new trainees that year. He has continued to perform extractions along with Stanley at the Wordsower compound. Stanley and Prince both helped encourage and teach the new students in Monrovia this year. Dr. Jon Spenn said it was exciting to see three generations of trainees working together.

The training week started with one and a half days of classroom training. At the end of the first day, the students gave and received mandibular blocks. "It is more blessed to give than receive!" By the afternoon of the second day, the students observed the American dentists doing extractions. With each patient that comes in the clinic, the students become more involved and proficient until the American dentists are completely hands-off by the end of the week.

Throughout the week, the students took turns giving a dental hygiene/Gospel presentation to the patients. The Spenns use the analogy of James 1:14-15 as a parallel to

the progression of caries—from the enamel to the dentin to the pulp and eventual pulpal necrosis.



Dental trainees giving hygiene/Gospel presentations to patients awaiting treatment.

Sterilization was conducted using the "legendary" Presto #1341 pressure pots. Amy Spenn taught sterilization. Each student spends half a day at the sterilization table learning how to properly sterilize instruments, clean trays, fill anesthetic syringes, and deliver sterile instruments to those who are seeing patients.

Midway through the week, Dr. Jon and Amy were able to meet with the Liberia Medical & Dental Council (LMDC). The path leading up to the training week had been a challenging one. Thankfully, the in-country partner was able to procure the necessary approval to conduct the training. It is made clear that ITEC's goal is not to compete with professional dentistry but to provide adequately trained workers for the rural areas where there is no access to dental care. With eight professionally trained dentists for five million people in Liberia, there is still much more work to do in that country!

Graduation was conducted on Sunday at the end of the Easter service. Dr. Jon said that the Palm Sunday and Easter services in Liberia are livelier than in his Lutheran upbringing! Of the nine new trainees, six were certified and capable to conduct extractions. Those that were not permitted to do extractions can assist with sterilization, etc. All of them must continue to work in pairs as they have one set of extraction instruments, a pressure pot sterilizer, and a portable dental chair, to be shared between two trainees.



Students at the graduation ceremony on Easter Sunday

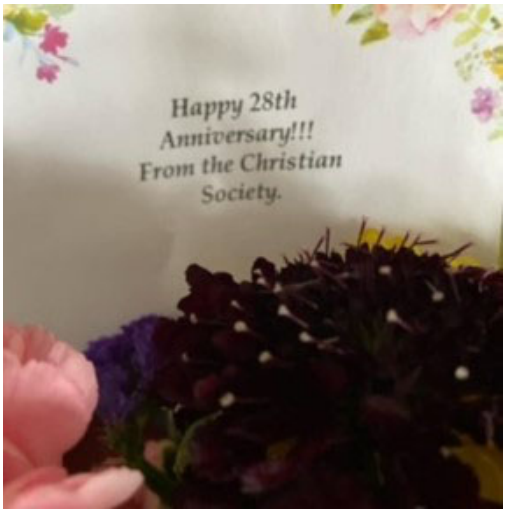
During the week, the team was interviewed by Liberia Public Radio. Stanley shared about the work they are doing in Grand Gedeh County. The interviewer said to Stanley, "I hear that you are the big man down in Grand Gedeh County." Stanley responded, "The goal is not to be big. The goal is to glorify God." And with that, the interviewer suddenly had no more questions to ask. May that be our goal, not to be big in the world's eyes but pleasing in God's sight (John 3:30/John 17:4).

If interested in training indigenous Christians to help their own with dentistry, please contact ITEC or mPower by Googling the websites listed above.

Video of the Liberia Public Radio Interview:
https://www.facebook.com/liberiapublicradio/videos/947694736078329

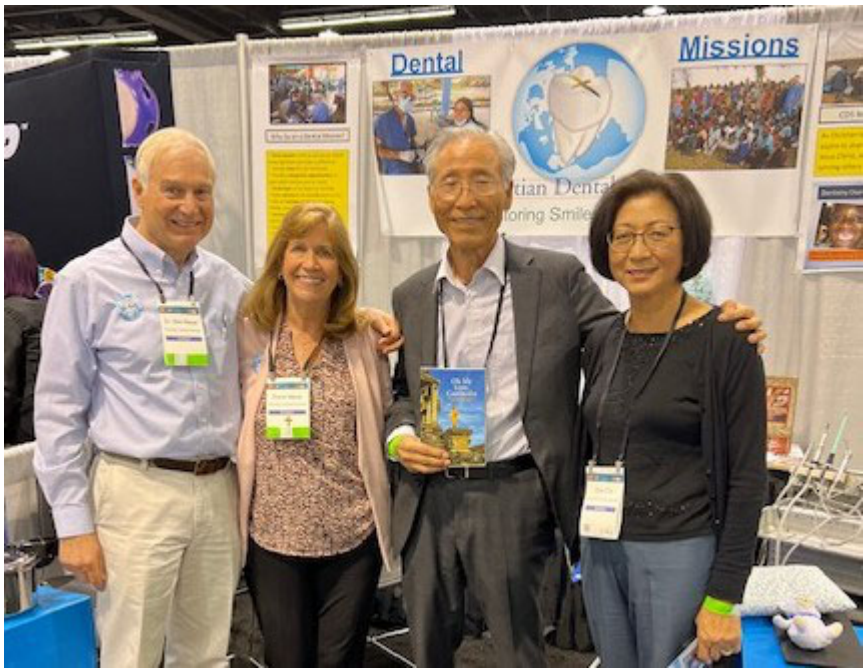
Mrs. Tina Wendel has been the CDS' Executive Secretary for the past 28 years. As the CDS' only employee, Tina's consistency and contributions to the CDS have been invaluable in enabling our unique, volunteer organization to encourage, assist, and equip dental missions for 59 years! A heartfelt thanks to our dear Tina.





Tina received thanks and flowers from the CDS

The CDS enjoyed a very successful dental convention at the recent Anaheim, California meeting. Although masks were "recommended" in the literature, it was rare to not enjoy a smiling face. These meetings offer great opportunities for the CDS to connect with, encourage, and assist dental missions. Once again, numerous CDS pressure pot weights and CDS manuals were sold. The CDS' next conferences will be on June 23-25 in Kissimmee, Florida on June 23-25.



Dr. Frank and Tina Cho helping Drs. Bob and Diane Meyer at the CDS Booth in Anaheim

Please consider coming to Houston, Texas with the ADA on October 13-15 where the CDS and CMDA will hold Board and Leadership meetings and together host a Dental Mission Banquet on Friday evening, October 14, 2022. Come share your experiences at the CDS booth in the exhibit hall.

The CDS will also exhibit at the largest dental meeting in the United States with the Greater New York Dental Meeting at the Javits Convention center in Manhattan on November 27-30. Please consider joining CDS members for a few hours at a booth or just dropping by to say hello.

There are many opportunities to mentor dental students in Jamaica or you may assist in expanding the existing clinic from 8 chairs to 18 chairs by adding a new building so the

church does not have to be used as a 10-chair mobile clinic. Please contact Dr. Jim Carney at jamescarney1@sbcglobal.net. The CDS praises God for Dr. Jim's cancer recovery and his amazing vision for mentoring students and serving to further God's kingdom.

