

Hope Lutheran members to help needy in Zambia

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Members of Hope Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills have been putting their efforts together in helping poverty-stricken Zambia in Africa.

And next month, several members will travel there to give medical treatment to more than 2,600 people who are in desperate need.

Members Dr. Stephen ReMine, his wife, Karen, a nurse, and their son, Mark, 20, will be going along with Hope Lutheran Pastor Brad Gee and his wife, Becky, also a nurse.

"My wife and I have been going to various countries for 14 years," Stephen ReMine said of the couple's volunteer efforts with the nonprofit Orphan Medical Network International.

He and his wife have been to Zambia.

"I couldn't believe how bad things are there," he said. "It's not real to us... Life expectancy is less than 37 years and 10 percent of the 10 million population is made up of orphans."

"They are literally getting wiped out by AIDS and other diseases. Sixty-five percent of the population is under 16," he

said.

Besides the church, the group is teaming up the effort to build two permanent clinics and orphanages with funding through Providence Hospital, Hope Lutheran and the Orphan Medical Network International Zambia mission fund. Also joining in the trip are Hope Lutheran member Dr. Henry Maicki, and non-members Tim Brac, Ph.D., and Robert Roman, pediatrician.

Gee said Stephen and Karen

initially got the church inspired to get involved in the program to help Zambia.

"The congregation raised \$10,000 to support the trip - it's been pretty exciting," Gee said. "I'm just really anxious to see what kind of learning will take place."

"For our congregation, this is going to broaden our horizons, this leads us to a larger stage and an opportunity to minister globally."

The group leaves for Africa on

July 5 and will be in Zambia for 10 days.

ReMine, a general surgeon at Providence Hospital in Southfield and a Novi resident, said he's proud to be a member of Hope Lutheran.

"They have the most incredible group of people there," he said. "They don't just talk about helping others, they live it."

ReMine said the group will be setting up a day clinic while in Zambia and expect to give medical treatment to more than 2,500

people while there.

"That's some of the benefit," he said. "The hope that it brings."

The doctor said he volunteers his skills for the program because "I get an incredible view of the world. I come back in awe of how much we have and how much we waste and how little these other people have and what they do with it. Plus, I really like helping people."

ReMine said his son will be capturing the experience on video and film.

He said Orphan Medical Network International is a good non-profit that puts all its donations into helping people.

"We carry every thing over there we can," he said. "All the donations are given to the kids."

Anyone who would like to help the efforts in Zambia may send a check made out to the Providence Hospital Zambia Mission Fund, to Zambia Mission Fund, at 16001 W. Nine Mile, Southfield, 48075.

Church welcomes African choir

Covenant Baptist Church in West Bloomfield is welcoming The African Children's Choir for a free-admission performance at 7 p.m. July 17.

The choir composes of children between 7-12 years of age who come from five different countries in Africa - Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Nigeria and Ghana. Many of them are from very poor backgrounds or are orphans. The choir raises funds to build staff schools in large cities and in villages in the bush in an effort to provide education to children even in the remotest, most conflict-ridden areas of the country. These schools provide shelter, education, and love.

They do so in a Christian environment and seek to train leaders who can help African people resolve problems of hunger, economic development, medical care, and other challenges.

For more information about the choir, see its Web site at www.africanchildrenschoir.com

Covenant Baptist is located at 5800 Maple Road, a quarter mile west of Orchard Lake in West Bloomfield. For more information call (248) 855-9191 or visit Covenant's Web site at www.covenantbaptistchurch.org

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