

# IHDN News

DECEMBER 2004

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## President's Message

Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of another year, we seize this opportunity to thank the Lord for another successful year. We were able to make our annual mission trip to Ghana this year. We continued with our medical outreach clinics to five villages in Ghana, taking care of poor villagers and sharing the love of Christ. Our sexual abstinence program is becoming popular in the high schools in the Agbozume/Klikor area. We are pleased to share some of the pictures with you in this newsletter. Detailed reports and additional pictures are on our Website ([www.ihdn.org](http://www.ihdn.org)).

This issue features articles on our "worth" and the value of the U.S. dollar; and financial updates on IHDN. We would like to thank all of you for praying for and supporting us financially. We wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a fruitful New Year.

In His Service,

Edem Agamah, M.D.

IHDN President

## What Is Your Net Worth?

By Rhonda Miller

As we come to the close of another year, some people will pause to assess their net worth. How well did my investments do this year? Will we have enough money to

send Bobby and Tiffany to college? How many more years must I work before I can afford to retire? Did I pay enough in taxes this year? What many people do not



Dr. Agamah with his wife, June, during a recent IHDN mission trip.

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *The Gross National Income per capita in Ghana was \$321 (U.S.) in 2003.*
- *The average annual rate of inflation in Ghana is 26%.*
- *In 2003, the average life expectancy was 58 years in Ghana.*

*(Statistics from [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org))*

Continued on page 2

## Net Worth (continued)

Mother Teresa's monetary net worth was nothing. Her friends were the starving, ill, and dying. She probably saw more poverty than anyone you will ever meet. But in an interview with Dan Wooding, founder of ASSIST Ministries, she expressed great sympathy for the "poverty-stricken West". Here is part of what she said:

*"The spiritual poverty of the Western World is much greater than the physical poverty of our people. You in the West have millions of people who suffer such terrible loneliness and emptiness. They feel unloved and unwanted. These people are not hungry in a physical sense, but they are in another way. They know they need something more than money, yet they don't know what it is. What they are missing, really, is a living relationship with God."*

Tony Campolo, a well-known Christian speaker, tells a story about a prostitute's birthday cake. Campolo had provided a birthday party for a prostitute. The young woman wanted to save the

cake because she had never had one before. After hearing the story, I noticed that several people nearby, like me, were in tears. I had to ask myself—how far would I be willing to go to be part of a church that (as Tony said to the woman's friends) "throws birthday parties for prostitutes"? But isn't that exactly what God calls us to do?

There isn't a specific scriptural reference for a prostitute's birthday party. But consider the following verse: "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'" (Matthew 25:40, TNIV)

It is difficult for many of us to decide how much of our time, talent, and treasure to use to help others. Unfortunately, I don't have an easy answer for you. This is an area where we have to ask for God's guidance and obey His answer. Some people will question what impact their small contributions can have on the world. Remember the loaves and the fishes. With faith and God's help, all things are possible.

One of my favorite Christian songs is "Seize the Day" by Carolyn Arends. Its chorus is:

*Seize the day, Seize whatever you can*

*Cause life slips away just like hourglass sand.*

*Seize the day pray for Grace from God's hand*

*That nothing will stand in your way, Seize the day.*

***"Millions of people suffer such loneliness and emptiness"***



## Should We Pray for a Stronger U.S. Dollar?

By Edem S. Agamah, M.D.

Growing up in Ghana, we learned to pray for almost everything in life. We prayed and trusted the Lord for the rains and a good harvest. We also prayed for the economic well-being of the country, and good health and wisdom for our leaders. As the Lord answered our prayers, our faith in Him was strengthened.

In the U.S. today, it is very rare for us to pray for the rain, let alone ask God to bless the efforts of the farmers with bumper crops. Technological advancements, which have helped us solve most of our problems, have reduced our dependence on God. Yet God is still God and in control of everything on earth. He gives the wisdom and knowledge for new discoveries to help us deal with daily problems. (continued on page 3)



## Dollar (continued)

One major economic occurrence this year has been the rapid depreciation of the U.S. dollar against most major world currencies. The rates per U.S. dollar on Dec 6, 2004 are shown below:

	<i>1 year ago</i>	<i>Dec. 2004</i>
British Pound	\$1.729	\$1.9413
Euro	1.216	1.3417
Canada dollar	0.7664	0.83

This means that it will cost us more to pay for goods and services originating from overseas.

When the U.S. dollar was very strong, we could buy cheap tickets for our mission trips to Ghana. Those days are over. Air fares to Ghana next summer are now priced around \$2,600 versus \$1,700 we used to pay.

As I reflect on this situation, I have been asking several questions. Should I pray for a much stronger U.S. dollar or an improvement in the global economic scene? Does God care for the U.S. and the global economy? How should we approach Him in this matter? What about Christians in Europe, who need weaker euros so they can sell more goods to the U.S. and keep their factories going? Which currency should God rescue? I cannot find any simple answer to these questions.

I know that He wants me to trust Him with all my needs. I am also reminded that He is more interested in “us”——our hearts——than a stronger U.S. dollar. He wants us first to seek His kingdom and its righteousness; and all these things will be added unto it. I have been reminded and humbled by this truth.

What then should we do? We should continue to pray for our leaders, both here and in the global community. We should pray for guidance and protection for them. Above all, we should pray that the policies being made will not increase human suffering in the world. We should pray for improvement in the living standards of the poor and those living in poor countries. We should ask for global peace and the triumph of righteousness over evil and falsehood. As we celebrate Christmas, may His birth be real to us in a special way. Let us seek to draw closer to Him and know the power of His resurrection.

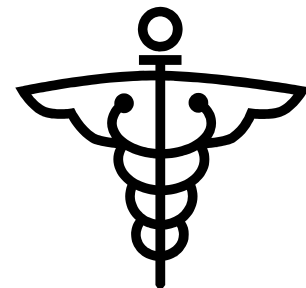
*“We should continue to pray  
for our leaders, both here and  
in the global community.”*

## IHDN Donates Five Hemodialysis Machines to Military Hospital in Ghana

This year we shipped five hemodialysis machines to Ghana. We had originally designated them for the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra. When the machines got to Ghana, the leadership at Korle Bu was no longer interested in them; we were told that the hospital was phasing out similar machines. We had acted on a request for help made by the chief nephrologists in 2001. Our machines, even though used, were refurbished to make to work like new.

We were obviously disappointed. But God had a different plan for these machines, one we did not know at the time. A nephrology group, led by Dr. Charity Kankam of Cleveland, Ohio, was raising money to set up a new hemodialysis unit at the 37 Military Hospital in Ghana. One of their greatest needs was funds to buy hemodialysis machines. When we heard about their efforts, we were led to donate the hemodialysis machines to help establish this unit to benefit the people of Ghana. The administration of the Military Hospital and all the people involved were very appreciative of our donation.

We all rejoice and thank God for helping us direct these resources to where they were most needed. We also thank all who contributed toward this project. We pray that all goes on well with the new Hemodialysis Unit at the 37 Military Hospital.



## IHDN Hosts Tutorial for Medical and Nursing Students at Agbozume



We hosted nine final-year medical and nursing students at Agbozume during our summer mission trip. They came to help at our village outreach clinics, and at the same time refresh their knowledge for their upcoming final-year examinations. The revision covered most topics in internal medicine. These students found this exercise a very valuable experience as they prepared for their exams. We thank all who participated in this program.

## Update on Sanitation and Roads Project

Work on constructing the road has been temporarily suspended due to lack of resources for the next stage. Despite our previous educational efforts, we found the villagers are still disposing of household waste indiscriminately—this time adjacent to the road. We recruited the students from our

abstinence club and the boys and girls scouts to help clean up the garbage. We are reminded once again that it is difficult to change human behavior. We will continue with our education on sanitation and lead by example. Hopefully, the villagers will change their attitude and behavior.

*“We are reminded once again that it is difficult to change human behavior.”*

## Sliding U.S. Dollar Raises Cost of Mission Trips

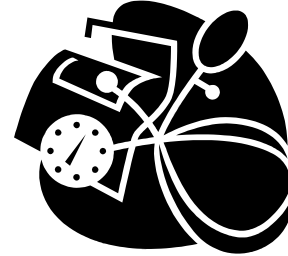
The rapid decline in the value of the U.S. dollar to a 12-year low has increased the cost of going overseas. The cost per ticket to Ghana for next summer has risen from the former \$1,700 to \$2,600. IHDN and other overseas mission groups are closely watching this development. Stay tuned for more updates on this issue in the future. We are considering traveling in the fall in future years to save money on airfare (about \$500-1,000 per person) if the value of the dollar remains low. Please join us in praying for us to make the right decision.



(Editor's Note: A self-addressed envelope is included in this newsletter. You may use it to submit your tax-deductible contributions to IHDN.)

## Agbozume Stroke and Hypertension (ASH) Control Project Resumes

We began this project a few years ago to help reduce the morbidity and mortality from hypertension and stroke in the Agbozume area. This program was suspended temporarily due to staffing problems. I am pleased to report that the project has been revived. Patients come for monthly blood pressure checks at the IHDN Clinic and refill their medications. We thank the Lord for this program, which has made a major difference in the lives of the hypertensive patients in the area.



## IHDN Buys Land for Future Clinic Site

IHDN recently bought land in the Agbozume area at a cost of \$12,000. This land will be used to build a new clinic there. It will allow us to return the present clinic building to Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Agamah. We will keep you updated on this project.



## Financial Report for FY 2004, submitted to IHDN Board on October 30, 2004

Total contributions	\$ 10,466.28
Total expenditures*	\$ 30,636.22
<b>Net change</b>	<b>- \$ 20,110.44</b>

\* Includes \$10,000 payment for land in Ghana

International Health and Development Network

P.O. Box 7488  
Springfield, IL 62791

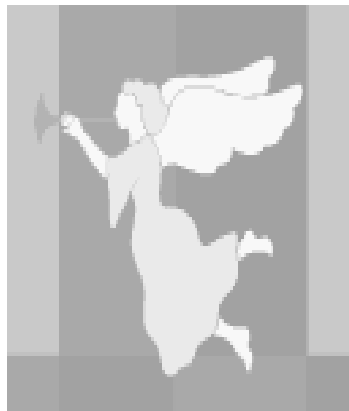
*A medical missions group  
using the earthly healthcare  
ministry of Jesus Christ as  
an example.*

**[www.ihdn.org](http://www.ihdn.org)**

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## **Please Pray With Us**

- Thank God for another successful year
- That people in poor villages where African religion and the voodoo worship is very prevalent to come to know Christ
- Recruitment of volunteers in the .US. and Ghana
- Plans to build a clinic



Happy Holidays!  
May God bless you!