



**Missionary Letter of Leo Garcia. September–October 2022.
United Methodist Church in Eastern Angola Quéssua Mission**

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, friends and churches connected with the mission of God. Greetings in the name of Lord. Below we update you on our missionary activity in the East of Angola / Africa.

There is always respite and release coming from somewhere.

Between September 18 and October 3 of this year 2022, the Methodist people of the mission of Quéssua in the province of Malanje, located in Eastern Angola, awaited with great anticipation the arrival of the second missionary group from the Florida Annual Conference.



Photography by Jorge Mucuta. 10/21/2022

It was a blessing to be able to collaborate in the reception, transportation and lodging of the missionary group.

They designed program of activities to serve the church and Angolan society. Among the main tasks of this group were:

- The construction of a well to provide clean water to the rural community of "Sona".
- The rehabilitation of two houses of shepherds who live in the mission.
- Projects to strengthen agriculture.
- Support in the theological education and the preaching of the Gospel in the villages.
- Distribution of clothes for girls and boys from communities living in extreme poverty.
- **Missionary work in the sphere of Health was also relevant.**

**Surgery project for patients with cataracts and other ophthalmological ailments
at the Quéssua Hospital**

"Them he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you"; and their sight was restored. Mt 9: 29-30^a (NVI).

After several months of organizing and presenting the ophthalmological surgery project to the Angolan health authorities, the day came where 43 patients diagnosed with cataracts and other eye diseases, who had been left blind, would see the light of the sun again.

The operations were carried out between September 26th and 30th. It was an intense activity, as a team worked up to 18 hours a day.

In the preoperative consultation, each patient was screened for the diagnosis, control, and treatment of chronic non-communicable diseases such as: diabetes and arterial hypertension.

It was necessary to carry out other tests to investigate malaria and HIV AIDS because they are endemic diseases of the geographical area where we live.



Dr. Russ removes the blindfold in patients the day after surgery
09/27/2022. Photography by Leo Garcia.





Dr. Domingas Sebastião, Director of the Quéssua Mission Health Center offers important guidelines to patients in the preoperative moment. 09/29/2022



Dr. Leo takes vital signs during surgery on a patient diagnosed with hypertensive heart disease. 09/29/2022. Photograph of Russ Montgomery

The most frequent cause of cataract is due to aging of the lens due to advanced age in patients. The natural lens of the eyes loses its transparency and vision becomes cloudy and can be lost.



Patient receiving anesthesia in the right eye for cataract surgery. 09/29/2022. Photography by Russ Montgomery

The Ophthalmological Surgeon, Dr. Kevin, the day after the surgery, carried out an exhaustive evaluation in all the operated patients. Thank God, no post-surgical complication was detected early.

The volunteer nurse Ruth Shaad, with great dedication, guided patients and relatives on the care to be followed in the recovery period after the surgical act. 09/30/2022.

09/30/2022. Photography by Leo Garcia





Ismael shows a satisfactory evolution in the control and follow-up consultation, 15 days after surgery
Photo by Dominga Sebastião. 10/13/2022.



Photography by Domingas Sebastião. 09/30/2022



Thank you for your prayers and financial contributions. We thank the Lord for his physical presence through visits by missionary groups to eastern Angola. Thank you for making our stay in Eastern Angola possible.

Ismael's eyes went blind. His medical diagnosis was bilateral cataract. In addition, he is a patient with uncontrolled Diabetes Mellitus. One day before the ophthalmological operation, Ismael had very high blood glucose levels. Medically, everything seemed impossible for the surgery to be performed successfully on him.

Because of so many years suffering from both illnesses, the ophthalmological operation for Ismael's cataract might not restore his sight. Clinically, it was expected that once the cataract was operated, there would be Diabetic retinopathy that would maintain him with bilateral blindness.

An act of faith made Ismael, along with his mother Francisca, beg me several times: **"Doctor, please leave a space for the Lord Jesus to be the one to perform the miracle through the operation."**

The request of a desperate mother and the faith of her blind son inspired me, as a doctor and pastor, to give Jesus that opportunity so that we all could see his glory. A faith like this made me reflect on the possibility that the young Ismael was operated believing that God would do it.

Because of faith in Jesus, we decided to hospitalize Ismael. During the night before his operation, we accompanied him and subjected him to a rigorous treatment to control diabetes.

The next day, miraculously, Ismael had his underlying illness under control. The diabetes in him had allowed glucose levels considerably acceptable for the operation. Finally, Ismael underwent surgery and when the bandages were removed from his eye, his vision was recovered. Ismael's mother, crying, cried out, "A space was given for Jesus and my son Ismael can now see."

All the people present in the medical room, along with Ismael's family, joined in a prayer of thanksgiving to God that came from my heart. Together, we all gave the Glory to the Lord.

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- Send me an email to receive my Newsletter: Email: lgarcia@umcmmission.org
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