

**Application for Ministries seeking Cooperation Ministry Recognition by the FGBC Inc.  
Three Strands**

Please review the Constitution and Manual of Procedure for the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches. Note carefully ARTICLE II, ARTICLE III and ARTICLE X of the Constitution and ARTICLE IIII of the Manual of Procedure, which deal with the cooperation ministry requirements.

**How does your ministry seek to serve the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches?**

Three Strands currently works exclusively in the Central African Republic providing compassionate, competent, Christ focused health care to the least of these. While we treat any patient regardless of their sex, race, tribe, social strata, or religion, many of our patients are Grace Brethren. We pay special attention to Bible/Seminary students and their families as well as Grace Brethren orphans. All of our decision-making in CAR has been done in strong collaboration with the national church leaders.

**How did your ministry take official action to subscribe to the Covenant and Statement of Faith as found in Article III of the Constitution of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc.?**

Myra and I along with two board members would agree with and practice all elements of Article III. I know that the remaining board members would not be in opposition to the ordinances nor would they likely practice them. I also cannot speak to each individual's personal position on end times as it relates to the rapture, tribulation, and great millennium. Each member of our board are believers in Jesus Christ and faithful in their local church attendance. They are all very committed to see Three Strands partner with Encompass and the National Grace Brethren Church in the Central African Republic.

**Explain how the ministry is sponsored and controlled by members of FGBC churches?**

Mike and Myra Taylor are cofounders of this ministry. They attend a local GBC and are full time employed by Encompass World Partners. Mike Taylor is the Director of Operations and the primary decision maker on the Central African side. Ginger Hock is a board member and is also a full time Encompass employee. Encompass World Partners recognizes us as the African medical branch of their ministry. Currently all funds related to Three Strands' trips or medical supply purchases are run through Encompass.

**Is the ministry a subsidiary of only one local church? (Y/N)**

No - we are primarily a cooperation among many churches (those that support Mike and Myra Taylor) as well as Encompass World Partners and the Central African Fellowship of GBCs.

**How does the ministry have a scope of ministry broader than the immediate local church ministries and exist to serve other Grace Brethren Churches?**

Our dream is to one day see our brand throughout the Central African region. We have a global vision. For now, we are content to provide health care to a population of 5,000,000 people in the CAR. We are currently (and will continue) working with local Central African churches, national church leaders,

as well as the orphan care centers in Bangui. Basically we serve all of the Grace Brethren Churches in the CAR if they need our services.

**How does this ministry meet a recognized need related to the fulfilling of the Great Commission?**

Our strands stand for compassionate, competent, and Christ focused health care. We at Three Strands believe that helping people physically grants us the opportunity to meet people's spiritual needs. Sharing our faith and getting people engaged with a local GBC is part of our strategy. We also dream of the day when our trained village health care workers are partnering with our evangelists to share the gospel of Jesus through medicine throughout the country.

**To the best of your knowledge, does your ministry or any leadership of your ministry have unresolved problems with another Grace Brethren church, leader, district or cooperating ministry? If so, who can we contact for clarification?**

I am sure that we have no conflict with members of Grace Brethren Churches or cooperating organizations.

**In seeking to be a cooperating ministry of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, does the ministry recognize the obligation of mutual encouragement and cooperation with Grace Brethren churches, districts, national ministries and/or other cooperating ministries?**

Yes we do. Much of what Myra and I do is to spread the good news of this ministry in churches and at our annual conference.

**If accepted by the procedures outlined in ARTICLE X, Section 2 of the Manual of Procedure and the ministry becomes recognized as cooperating ministry of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc., does the ministry understand that :**

It is not a creation of the FGBC ? (Y/N) - yes

It is not an integral part of the FGBC? (Y/N) - yes

It is not in any way controlled by the FGBC or Fellowship Conference? (Y/N) - yes

The Fellowship Conference asks for an annual report only as a courtesy? (Y/N) - yes

**Please attach a brief history and description of the ministry to this application.**

General Instructions: Fill out this application form and send it with to the FELLOWSHIP OF GRACE BRETHREN CHURCHES, P. O. Box 384, WINONA LAKE, IN 46590. The deadline for application is January 1st in order to be considered in the following annual conference.

Respectfully submitted —  
Michael C Taylor

11-13-12 ✓

## Mission Statement

To provide compassionate, affordable, and Christ-centered medical care focused on both the physical and spiritual needs of the people of the Central African Republic. We will accomplish this by establishing and maintaining a healthcare and surgical facility in the Central African Republic that is committed to health education, and the treatment and prevention of disease. The Three Strands brand will be known throughout Africa as a standard of quality and compassion.



# Mike and Myra Taylor Russ and Melinda Woda “Our Story”

In the late 1970's, Mike Taylor and Russ Woda became friends at a small liberal arts college in northern Indiana. After college, Mike went to PA school at the Medical University of South Carolina where he met Myra in her third year of nursing school. Russ married Melinda (also a nurse) shortly after college and went off to Ohio University where he became a doctor. After completing our respective training programs, Russ and Melinda ended up at Ohio State while Mike and Myra ended up in the South Carolina.

In 1989, Mike and Myra felt a call in their lives to say goodbye to US medicine and move to where the needs are so great, (The Central African Republic - CAR). Mike quit his family practice job, the family packed up, and the four of them arrived in CAR on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 1989. Mike, Myra, and daughters Rachel & Rebekah fell in love with the people of the CAR while they lived in two remote villages practicing medicine.



Mike, Myra, Rachel, Rebekah - circa 1989

Although an ocean separated them, Russ and Melinda soon fell in love with the people of CAR vicariously through Mike and Myra. Mike and Myra's work was "faith based" and they were "self supported" through the gracious gifts of friends and family like Russ and Melinda. Kristen, their third was born in 1991. Russ and Melinda agreed to come to CAR and help deliver their fourth daughter, Joanna. In 1995, while Russ and Melinda were en-route to CAR, Joanna decided to make an early appearance. Over the next weeks Russ and Melinda no longer loved Africa through Mike and Myra but they too fell in love with the people. Russ and Melinda's interventions in so many ways made impacts those weeks that are still being felt in CAR today.

Fast-forward to 1998 and Mike and Myra moved back to the USA to work in mission administration and raise their daughters through their high school and college years. From 1998 to the present, Mike and Myra have continued to faithfully support and encourage the Central African Medical Work through financial assistance, training, and short-term medical/surgical teams.

In 2009, Russ and Mike returned to the CAR, this time with an armada of competent health care providers including doctors, midlevels, nurses, and support staff. During that time a dream was born to return and provide medical/surgical care on an annual basis. Our teams returned once in 2010 and again in 2011.

One fact has remained constant throughout Mike/Myra and Russ/Melinda's 22 years of service to the people of the CAR. The needs are far too great for a ten-day foray into CAR even though our teams work hard and are fully staffed when they arrive. Every single trip the teams have had to leave people behind who are in desperate need of medical and surgical care.



Artist rendering of Bangui Surgical Complex  
2011

The dream to build a Medical/Surgical Complex was born in 2010 and continues to grow. Mike and Myra, Russ and Melinda's dream is to build a world-class surgical center that will be known for competent, compassionate, and God-focused practitioners who love to take care of the under-served of this region. Their dream is that one day you will see their surgical complex brand, "**Three Strands**" throughout the continent of Africa!



# Short Term Teams

## What we do.....



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PO Box 588 Winona Lake, IN 46590 • 574-268-1888 Ext 33 • • [mtaylor@three-strands.org](mailto:mtaylor@three-strands.org)

### MEDICAL CARE.....

Mike and Myra Taylor have been working as medical missionaries in the Central African Republic (CAR) since 1989. For 6+ years the Taylors lived in CAR providing much needed medical and nutritional care through the Boguila and Yaloke bush hospitals.

Since 2009, Mike and Myra have been facilitating short-term medical and surgical teams to the CAR with a focus on primary care, surgical care, dental care, and nutritional support. We do not discriminate, treating all who come to us without regard for race, religion, or gender. These trips typically last for one full week in the CAR with several travel days for a total of 11-12 days out of the USA.

### TEAM BUILDING.....

Mike and Myra have had the privilege of leading dozens of teams to the CAR and place a very high value on team-building time. Each day begins with a cup of strong African coffee and a good time around the table reflecting upon life and lessons learned from the African context. All meals are eaten together in a family style setting at the Encompass Bangui Guest House and most evenings are spent relaxing with lively discussion about the day's activities.

We strongly encourage a "digital holiday" which simply means we invest less time attending to laptops, Facebook, LinkedIn, email, texts, iPads, iPhones, Droids, etc. It does not mean we have no digital activity; we simply refocus most of that time demand on a more interpersonal approach. Most if not all people find this to be one of the more enjoyable elements of our time in Bangui.

### WE ENJOY CULTURE

We work very long and very hard days in the African heat but the rewards are many. The best way to enjoy the culture is to enjoy the people. We try to focus each and every day looking at people holistically. We treat body, mind, and soul. We ask each patient for an opportunity to pray with them about their personal life struggles. While in Bangui, we will attend one church service with many of those whom we have befriended.

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### **TRAINING CENTRAL AFRICAN NATIONALS**

We at Three Strands believe strongly in partnering with Central African nationals to provide competent and compassionate health care. There is much we can learn from our African colleagues and we also believe strongly in sharing our knowledge and skills with them.

### **WHO IS NEEDED**

We need the following professionals:

- ✓ Physicians
- ✓ Physician Assistants
- ✓ Nurse Practitioners
- ✓ Nurses
- ✓ EMTs, CMAs, CNAs
- ✓ Pastors
- ✓ Counselors
- ✓ Dentists
- ✓ Dentals Assistants, Dental Hygienists
- ✓ Students studying medicine
- ✓ Support staff with big hearts and teachable spirits