

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, March 24th

- ❖ **5:45pm** – No need to cook dinner at home. Instead, come out as a family and enjoy a great meal.
- ❖ **7:00pm** – Enjoy an evening of hearing what God is doing in the country of Gabon.
- ❖ Kids Conference (ages 4-8; **7:00pm**) – bring your children out to hear a real live missionary.

Nursery care will be provided for the 7:00pm service.

Saturday, March 25th

- ❖ **8:00-9:30am** – Breakfast with Dave for men and boys of all ages. (Family Life Center)
- ❖ **10:30am-12:00pm** – Coffee brunch with Becki for ladies and girls of all ages. (Chapel-room 104)

- ❖ **6:00pm** – The Thompson's will meet with the "Crossroads" College and Career group for dinner and sharing at the home of Chad and Melissa Boyers.

Sunday, March 26th

- ❖ **9:00am** – S.S and Adult Education – Becki Thompson will speak to adults in the Family Life Center. Our Missionaries-in-Residence, Larry and Mary Faye Carey will speak to the Sr. and Jr. High.
- ❖ **9:00 and 10:30am** – David Thompson will speak in both morning services.
- ❖ **6:00pm** – The Thompson's will be speaking to the Sr. and Jr. High.

Westgate Chapel
2500 Wilford Drive
Toledo, OH 43615
(419) 841-8077

CELEBRATE AFRICA



Dave & Becki
Thompson

GABON

Friday – Sunday
March 24-26, 2000

Becki was born in Dalat, Vietnam on August 1, 1948 to Archie and Betty Mitchell, C&MA missionaries to Vietnam. She gave her heart to Christ at age 5 or 6 and attended the Dalat School until her graduation in 1966. Her parents were reassigned to the Banmethuot Leprosy Hospital in 1962.

Dave was born in Pittsburgh, Pa. on June 21, 1948. Four months later his parents left the U.S. to serve as C&MA missionaries in Cambodia. His first five years were in Cambodia where he learned more Cambodian than English. At the age of 6 he began school at the Dalat School for missionary children in Vietnam, and it was during that first year at school that he committed his life to Jesus Christ. It was there that he first met Becki and his future in-laws. Becki was an athletic tomboy, which did not endear her to Dave at the time! The capture of her father (Rev. Archie Mitchell) by the Vietcong in 1962 brought a maturity and seriousness to her life that impressed Dave, but the two had no romantic interest in each other until much later.

In 1966 Dave's parents were re-appointed to Vietnam, since Cambodia had closed its doors to all Americans in 1965. In 1968 while Dave was attending Geneva College in Beaver Falls, PA and Becki's mother was on furlough in Oregon, North Vietnam unleashed the "Tet Offensive" in South Vietnam. North Vietnamese soldiers killed both Dave's parents in Banmethuot. This event severely tested his faith and forced him to choose between a life of

bitterness and separation from God or a life of trust and obedience. By God's grace, he chose the latter. It was the defining spiritual event of his life, after his initial conversion experience.

Dave first began thinking seriously about medical missions when he was 14, after helplessly watching an injured man die alongside a road in Cambodia. God confirmed that medicine was in His plan for him through college and the unusual circumstances surrounding his admission to medical school.

Becki felt called to missions at age 14, the year her father was taken prisoner by the Viet Cong. Although Becki and her family hoped and prayed for his soon release, Mr. Mitchell has never been heard from again. There is no firm evidence that he is either dead or alive.

They started dating in 1969 while she was in nursing school at Pacific Lutheran University. Dave was starting the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. They were married in 1971. They were appointed by the C&MA to serve in Phnom Penh, Cambodia as medical missionaries after two years of surgical residency in San Diego, California. The fall of Cambodia put an end to this plan. The Alliance asked them to head up a medical team that would establish a new medical work in the interior of Gabon. After praying about it for a month, they agreed.

In July 1975 Becki's mother (Mrs. Betty Mitchell) was captured by North Vietnamese soldiers and held as a prisoner. Eight months after her capture, Becki's mom was released.

In 1976 Dave & Becki went to Antwerp, Belgium where they both studied Tropical Medicine. They arrived in Gabon in May 1977 where with several other missionary nurses they established the Bongolo Evangelical Hospital. Since then this medical work has grown to a 100-bed, full-service hospital with 3 full-time missionary doctors and an African staff of 55; three outlying dispensaries; a nursing school that has trained over 160 nurses and 24 midwives; and a four-year surgical residency program that is currently training three African resident doctors in general surgery.

Along the way, Becki and Dave had three children, two of them born in Gabon. Their daughter Rachael, now 25, is a missionary candidate with the C&MA and is serving as a mission's intern at the Neighborhood Church (C&MA) in Redding, Ca. Their son Joshua is 22 and is a senior at Simpson College. He has applied to ATS in the Fall and plans to become a missionary to Muslims. Jeremy is 18, a Freshman at Simpson College, and not yet sure what he plans to do.

Dave and Becki have served 22 years in Gabon, and plan to return for another four-year term of missionary service in August 2000. They consider themselves to be career missionaries and are dedicated to caring for the sick and leading them to Christ as long as there are places for them to serve God.