



## Recognizing our Oneness and Celebrating our Differences

### A DIFFERENT CULTURE - A DIFFERENT TIME

My name is Emmanuel Musinga, I'm married to one wife Clementine Musinga and we are blessed with four beautiful children who are truly a joy and a blessing to our lives. I'm also a founder and a senior Pastor at Grace Tabernacle Ministries housed at Crooked Creek Baptist Church at 5540 N. Michigan Rd. I was born and raised in South Kivu, DRC formerly known as Zaire.

I want to about the experiences of my family after coming to Indianapolis.

The problem of a new culture, with new rules of living and trying to fit into our new life and help other refugees as well.

I moved to American in 2010 as a refugee but now my wife and I are proud American Citizens.

Growing up in Congo wasn't anything close to fun! My parents were illiterate and peasant farmers but with grace and humility, they were able to raise nine kids! Out of nine siblings, seven managed to graduate with high school diplomas and I happened to be among those lucky seven. Going to school and grazing livestock wasn't an easy task to accomplish. We had to literally be commuting to school on bare feet 20 kilometers away.

Though our parents were illiterate, they knew the importance of education and they encouraged us to work and study hard so that our future could be a little better than theirs.

Many were the days when we went to bed hungry without any food! Many were the days where we got sick and the only way to get healed was through herbal medicines. We didn't have the luxury of conventional medicines or trained doctors or even nurses.

At the advent of great civil wars in Congo of 1996 until now, we become homeless and refugees. I was wounded and in dire need of medical help. We had to sojourn so many places in search of peace, medication food and water. We were rescued by UN and moved to the refugee camps spread across Congo and Uganda. Since these camps were no better, we had to seek other camps where we thought it was safer and with adequate food. We opted to endure the traveling and we finally

managed to secure ourselves in Kenya.

Moving to America, in Rock Island, IL was a wonderful experience altogether! I had heard so many sweet things about American and I was told that America was a place of great dreams. It was a place whereby if you worked hard and played by the rules, one could realize great life. After my six months of stay in Rock Island, I decided to look for another place for myself and my family...a place where I could get jobs and other opportunities to support my family.

My dream was to get a secure job, and establish a place of worship for my fellow refugees who did not know English or any formal education. Life in Indianapolis wasn't easy for a start but with time, it has been much better than Rock Island where I started.

For a start in Indianapolis, I secured a job at Wal-Mart and I had to resign after I got sick. I was sick for close to one year without working due to cancer. My wife, Clementine, worked so that we could live. Lucky enough and with many thanks and praises to God, I was able to get healed.

I started working as an UBER driver once I got better. In 2013, I secured a job at Exodus as program associate mainly working with refugees. I worked at Exodus for three years before moving to Homecare. During this job movement, I was able to establish a church where I Pastor fellow refugees whose arrival had surged in 2015. The greatest challenge was to get a place to worship and we had to approach so many established churches in the area for the help. At the beginning, we started holding meetings in member's apartments but as many people arrived and joined, we had to work hard to secure a place to them. By God's grace, we were able to get a place to worship at Crooked Creek Baptist Church and this is the place we have been since then.

In addition to being an un-paid pastor of Grace Tabernacle Church, I work with newly arriving refugees and also hold a full time job at Homecare and work for UBER. My wife Clementine works as an aide and has just passed her CNA test. She plans take English as a Second Language classes and in January enroll at IUPUI in the nursing program.

Currently, as we continue meeting and worshipping at the Baptist church we are praying that we get our own permanent place. I have passion and calling to help those on the edge especially the widows, the refugees, the orphans, the sick and the hungry and we could achieve this if we had our own permanent place.

Brothers and sisters, thank you so much for your audience. I do appreciate your time & blessings. Thank you all and God bless each and every one of you in Jesus Mighty Name, Amen! Shalom.