

Kingdom of Hope



One of the projects I wanted to become involved with while I was in West Africa was to help children learn more about Jesus by teaching them English. The thought was to begin a local reading program, using the Bible, to teach children how to read and write English, a much desired skill in the villages and towns of Northern Ghana. If things worked out well with this initial learning center we would then begin adding classes in order to form a church of Christ elementary school. It sounded like a good plan to start small and grow, but God had different plans!

While looking for the right way to get started I kept running into road blocks in Tamale. In order to build a structure for the learning center to meet in I needed to get building permits, which required finding a draftsman to draw up building plans to submit. The man we had used to draw up the plans for the Bible Institute had left the area and it became a major task to find another qualified draftsman that would provide the drawings for a reasonable price. At the same time the project was getting a lukewarm response from some of the local church leaders I was counting on to help with the program. I was beginning to wonder about the wisdom of moving forward when the Kingdom of Hope was brought to my attention.

The Kingdom of Hope is a church of Christ Self-help Group (similar to an American non-profit organization) that was operating in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The group was set up in order to help take care of orphans from a recent tribal war. Generally in Ghana when a child loses their parents

(continued on page 2)

Kingdom of Hope (cont. from pg. 1)

they are taken care of by extended family, generally older siblings or uncles and aunts. Unfortunately that was not happening in the villages around Bawku. The war had left many of the children without extended family in the area. It also left the Basari tribe in such depressed financial condition that many would not take on the additional responsibility of these children. So the Kuka church of Christ stepped in to help. On August 1, 2011 the church formed the Kingdom of Hope Orphan's School for the purpose of taking care of as many of these children as possible.

After taking a trip to visit with the church leaders who are operating Kingdom of Hope I decided that this would be a great place to move forward with the plans for building the learning center. What really impressed me was how much the church in Kuka had done on their own. They saw a problem and reached out to help, even though they did not have the resources. They reached out trusting in God to provide for them. In order to qualify as a Self-help Group and take charge of these children the church had to have a plan to provide an education for the children. Since Kuka has no school that presented a problem, and rather than just opening an orphan's home it was decided to open it as an orphan's home and school. This was a pretty big decision since they had no school building, no teachers, and no housing for the children! But they did it, building a mud brick building for the school to meet in, keeping the children in their own homes, and feeding them as part of their own families. They found a man who was willing to teach for a very small amount, and the Kingdom of Hope Orphan's School was opened. It offered on grade, P1 (similar to America's 1st Grade) and a pre-school class for the younger children. The school had no desks, a single textbook for each of the 5 subjects taught that the teacher uses, and none of the learning aides we generally associate with elementary school education. But they did it as best they could with what they had.

I found out about the school because they were outgrowing their ability to take care of the children and run the school. When school began in September of this year the school had 42

(continued on page 3)

Thank You Supporters!

Overseeing Congregation

Greenbrier church of Christ

Supporters (includes recent one time contributions)

Greenbrier church of Christ

Colony church of Christ

Bobby and Jackie Sims

Sue Shumate

Aubrey and Donna Allensworth

Mildred Priest

Virginia Hielen

Wilkie Family

Chris and Shirley Brill

Linda Ray

I am very thankful to all those who are part of the work here in West Africa. Last month's contributions were almost double the normal monthly contribution! This extra amount will be used to continue working on the living quarters at the new building as well as provide more textbooks for the Enoch Elliott Learning Center.

If you are interested in helping the Kingdom of Hope Orphan's School, here is a list of ongoing needs. Please make sure you specify what you would like your gift to be used for if you have a particular area you want to assist with.

Teacher's salaries - \$150 per month (3 @ \$50)

Desks and Chairs - \$20 each set

Text books - \$4 each

Mattresses - \$25 each

School lunches - \$150 per month

Repairs for existing building - \$1000

Please send all contributions to:

Greenbrier church of Christ

Attn: African Missions

12 Wilson Farm Rd.

Greenbrier, AR 72058

Contact Information

Mailing Address:

Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies

P.O. Box TL 925

Tamale, Northern Region

Ghana

Ghana Phone - 011-233-0248216622

E-Mail - anthonyjohnson2010@gmail.com

Kingdom of Hope (cont. from pg. 2)

children living with members of the church! In addition, there were a number of other children living in the village whose parents wanted to be able to attend the school as well since it was the only one in the area. They needed to expand to offering P2 classes along with the P1 class, meaning a need for another teacher and another set of text books. The problem was they hadn't been able to pay the first teacher for the past couple of months, let alone hire another one. They were looking for a little help with paying for their teachers when they approached me, just about the same time I was looking for a place to build a children's learning center. It is amazing how things sometimes work out.

Over the past couple of months I have become more and more involved with the Kingdom of Hope. In addition to getting their teacher paid, and hiring two more, one for P2 and one for the pre-school children, we have started building a new learning center for the school on ground provided to the school by the village chief. This new building, to be called the Enoch Elliot Learning Center, is much bigger than I had originally intended to build, but after seeing the Kuka church's faith that God will provide, I decided to take the same leap of faith and build what is needed rather than what I had planned. It is exciting to see what God is doing as we work together in Kuka!

I will be heading back to Kuka next weekend to visit with the children and check on the building progress. It is a long trip, taking almost five hours each way over rough roads, but it is always worth it to see the children's faces when the "white man" shows up. The church in Kuka is making a difference in these children's life, and I have been blessed to be able to have a small part in their work. I am thankful to be seeing James 1:27 in action! If you would like to help there is a list of some of Kingdom of Hope's needs in the thank you section on page 2 of this newsletter.

Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies News

The eighth term has begun at the Bible Institute with 11 returning students. Two students are missing this term due to sickness, an ever present problem here in Ghana. This quarter I will be teaching two classes, Hebrews and Galatians. Other staff members will be teaching classes covering the Godhead, the Preacher and His Work, Old Testament 6, and Christian Morals. It should be a great term for all involved.

Work on the new building continues to move forward. The last major hurdle to overcome in order to move in is getting the electricity turned on. There has been a freeze on new service since September, but it appears that they are now allowing a few new connections to be hooked up. If we can get the electricity on this month we plan to move into the building during the month of December.

The schools evangelism campaign to Bimbila was very wet, but still a success. In total there were 12 baptisms and the worship service on the final day of the campaign had 35 in attendance. For a full report on the campaign, and other work being done by those associated with the school, check out my Bear Valley Extension School reports at <http://www.wetrainpreachers.com/extension-news/tag/tamale>.

More Information

Want to know more about what's going on in my life? Check out my blog site about what it is like to live and work in Africa at <http://thinkingsouls.wordpress.com/>.

Did you know I also write for a new Christian blog site called Alive with Christ? You can find my articles, along with articles by many others at <http://alivewithchrist.com/givemethebible/>.

Thank you for your interest and support of the work in West Africa! Please share this newsletter with others who may be interested.



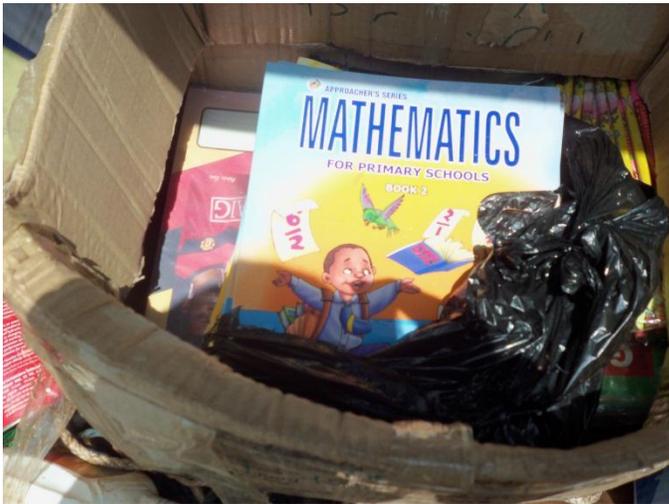
The older children help with the younger ones at Kingdom of Hope.



The preschool children either meet outside or in this small addition added to the main building.



The mud-brick building built by the church for the school. We are building a concrete block building to replace this one since the mud-brick is already breaking down.



Some of the new textbooks we bought for the school. Classes include Math, English, Science, Social Studies and Bible/Religion.



There are now 82 students at the school, 27 pre-school, 35 in P1, and 20 in P2 as we work with the orphans and other children in the village (pictured with members of the Kuka church.)



Children's sleeping quarters. -up to 20 children currently sleep in one room of a church member's house without beds or mattresses. Once the new school is built we hope to repair the existing building and turn it into a hostel for the older children.