

## A Trip to the U.S. and Back

It has been a while since my last report as I have spent much of the past 2 months traveling from place to place in the U.S. My trip home included stops in Chicago, IL, Green Bay, WI, Greenbrier, AR, Fort Worth, TX, Denver, CO, Shiprock, NM, and Phoenix, AZ. I was really blessed to be taken care of by so many wonderful people during my travels, the Hansens, McCulloms, Wilsons, Wilkies, Keeles, and of course my mom, Virginia Hielen. While it is somewhat disconcerting to no longer have a place of my own to call home in the U.S. I have been blessed to have so many wonderful people in my life who not only make sure I have a place to lay my head, but do so much more. I am living Matthew 19:29. On this trip one person in particular went well out of his way to help me along, so I want to say a special thank you to Jack Wilkie for everything. Words cannot express how much I love you all!

This trip was one of two trips back to the U.S. this year. Besides visiting supporting congregations, this trip was scheduled to allow me to attend the first Masters in Missions classes conducted by the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver. This course is designed for both those who are contemplating entering the mission field as well as for those who have already ventured out. The course allows the students to complete nearly all the requirements while working in the mission field, with the exception of the two classes I just attended. I am not sure how long it will take me to complete the course as I have found it extremely difficult to fit the necessary studying in since I have returned to Africa, but I am grateful that the Bear Valley Bible Institute has seen the importance of offering this type of course.

My final trip back to the US this year will be in June. During this trip I will be working as a counselor at the Bear Valley Future Preachers Training Camp. This will be my fourth year working with this camp and I always enjoy spending time with the 40 young men who take a week out of their summer vacations to increase their knowledge of God's Word and learn how to deliver it more effectively. I will also be speaking to the adult class at Leiper's Fork church of Christ's Vacation Bible School during this trip, as well as visiting as many congregations as possible before spending a few days with my home congregation at Greenbrier. I am looking forward to greeting many of you who have been such an encouragement to me!

One of the most difficult things to do when I come home is figuring out what to bring back to Ghana with me. The airlines allow me to check two suitcases of 50lbs each and take one carry-on bag, and it doesn't take me long to fill them up with items that I cannot easily find here (one thing I made sure I had room for this time was lots and lots of junk food.) Special thanks to my aunt Fran Hansen for loading up one suitcase with books for the school's library and toys for the children at Kingdom of Hope, and to Rod Wilson for providing work gloves that the school greatly needed. I believe I already have my suitcases filled for when I return on July 4<sup>th</sup> with items that are being put together for the children's school as well as those items needed for our graduation ceremony (but I assure you I'll find a little room for my junk food!)

Finally, I want to give special thanks to the Greenbrier church of Christ, my home congregation, for the love and support they continually show for me. Every time I visit I am overwhelmed by your kindness and how much you go out of your way to bless me. Even though there was a previously scheduled gospel meeting during the time I was visiting, you went out of your way to make me feel both welcomed and appreciated. I cannot tell you how much the reception that you put together on Tuesday night meant to me. I take each of you with me every place I go, and treasure you in my heart always. I look forward to seeing you all again soon!

Please share African Missions Report with your church family. If you know anyone who would be interested in receiving a copy please send their e-mail address to [anthonyjohnson2010@gmail.com](mailto:anthonyjohnson2010@gmail.com).

## Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies

April marks the end of the final term for the class of 2013. In this term the class will be getting lots of practical experience as well as classroom instruction. In addition to three local weekend campaigns (Thursday thru Sunday), the students has classes covering the books of 1, 2, and 3 John, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Old Testament 8, and the Revelation of John. Once completed this class will return in July for their graduation ceremony. Currently there are 11 students that are scheduled to receive either a certificate of Biblical Studies or a certificate of leadership, and 2 students who will receive a certificate of attendance at the July 13<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony. If any of you are in the area we would certainly like to invite you to the lectureship on July 12<sup>th</sup> and the graduation the following day ☺.

With this class completing their course, the staff has begun to focus on recruitment for the next class which will begin on July 9<sup>th</sup>. Bear Valley's West Africa Coordinator, Steven Ashcraft, and Tamale Director, Baah Joseph, recently made a trip through the Northern and Upper West Regions meeting with church leaders to discuss the school and the opportunities being offered to train men here in Northern Ghana. During the second week of May I will be traveling with brother Baah to the Upper East Region to meet with their leaders about the school. Currently we have 14 student applications for the next class, and hope to add to that number during the next month.

The school is also working through all the small problems associated with having moved into their new building. Corrections to the plumbing system in the student bath facilities required tearing up the floor and redoing the drainage pipes. We are also still trying to get the second phase of electricity hooked up (the third phase is still probably a year or more away) to fix the problem of lights dimming every time someone plugs in an iron or coffee pot. Despite these minor issues we are really enjoying the new building and the extra space it provides. Even while work continues, the new building is already providing additional opportunities to edify the church. At the end of April the Institute will host its first Northern Ghana Leader's Workshop. More next month on this event.

## Thank You Supporters!

There are so many who make this work possible through their financial support, provision of materials, and encouragement and prayers. So many have done so much that I am always worried about forgetting someone! Please be assured that if I have overlooked anyone that it is purely unintentional, and only caused by my small brain not being able to keep up with everything! Every single gift and prayer is greatly appreciated.

### Overseeing Congregation

Greenbrier church of Christ

### Supporters

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, Ron and Joann Boatwright, Jim and Martha Bell, Herb and Dorothy Tatum family, Edie Singleton, Connie Barden, Carla Farr, Judy Moody, Mary Mix, Stephen and Jerri McCullom.

Special thanks to the wonderful members of the Greenbrier and the Colony congregations. There are too many to name as so many members from both of these congregations gave personal gifts for the work during my visits in March.

Please send all contributions to:

Greenbrier church of Christ  
Attn: African Missions  
12 Wilson Farm Rd.  
Greenbrier, AR 72058

Please be sure to send me a note if you want your gift to be used for a specific purpose.

## Contact Information

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If you want more information about what is happening in Ghana check out my blog at <http://thinkingsouls.wordpress.com/>.

## Kingdom of Hope Update

Work continues at Kingdom of Hope Orphan's School with finishing touches on the new building, such as plastering the outside of the building, installing blackboards (done by mixing charcoal into concrete and then applying to the wall), and building steps. The building is already in use, and has been a great help to the school.

We have also arranged to have the first 10 desks built, which will be complete by the time I arrive in Kuka during the middle of May. By only paying for a small number to be built at a time, with the incentive of us ordering more, we are able to control the quality much better as well as insure a quicker delivery. If these desks look okay we will arrange for the next two sets of 10 to be built while I am at the school.

We will also finally be able to put up the school's signs on this coming trip. We have been trying to get a sign made for the Enoch Elliott Learning Center, as well as a road sign pointing the way to Kingdom of Hope Orphan's School, for some time without any luck. God willing, I should be able to pick up the signs before I make this next trip and will be able to get them installed.

With the completion of the Enoch Elliott Learning Center we have begun to make plans for the next steps. I met with the school's headmaster this past week and we outlined the school's schedule and needs for the next 2 years. As soon as enough money can be raised we will begin on the next classroom, and hopefully be able to add one classroom per year until we can house preschool through sixth grade. We will also be looking for the necessary classroom materials for P3 (third grade) classes which will begin this summer, more desks, etc.

On this upcoming trip I will also have the pleasure of delivering footballs (soccer) and uniforms to the children, thanks to gifts by Anna Wilkie and David and Beverly Woody. For almost a year the children at the school have not asked me for anything, just gratefully received the things that we have been able to help with. During my last trip to the school in February one of the (continued on next page)

## Evangelism Update

In the first two weeks that I have been back in Tamale we have had three baptisms at the school. Two of the baptisms were men who had heard about the school and came to see what it was about. The third was from a contact made during one of the school's local evangelism campaigns. All three came to the school and spent time studying with the students and staff and eventually came to the conclusion that they needed to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins in order to be added by God to His church.

We have also started a new congregation that is meeting at the new School location, Kpalsi South church of Christ. At our initial service we had 15 in attendance, mostly from the local schools. We will continue to reach out to the local community in order to share the gospel in our own neighborhood as well as throughout northern Ghana.

Out of their recent Missions Day contribution the Greenbrier church of Christ set aside enough money for me to do four campaigns this year. During the month of May we will use half of that money to do two full campaigns and one short campaign. I will be travelling north to Garu to do a four day campaign with the Kuka church to reestablish the church there (it stopped meeting when the building collapsed). If we are successful in reestablishing the church, or starting a new one if necessary, the Kuka church has committed to sending preachers and teachers to Garu for the next year to help them mature. After Garu, I will make a short visit to Kuka to show two films, one on Jesus and one on Abraham. The church will do the follow up work there as they seek to encourage lax members and open the door for evangelism within the mostly Muslim town. Then I will head to the Burkina Faso border for a 4 day campaign in the village of Mognori, working with the Bawku congregation. Mognori currently has no church, so depending on the number of people we are able to teach the Bawku congregation has committed to either sending teachers each week or bringing them into Bawku for worship and Bible study. May is going to be a busy month, good thing I got all rested up!

## Kingdom of Hope Update (continued)

younger boys (probably at the instigation of the older boys) finally came up to ask if it would be possible to get a football. I asked him if there was anything else they would like, and he said shirts, so they could tell what team they were on, would be good. On my trip home Anna provided half of the necessary money for both the balls and shirts. What made this really special to me is the fact that Anna was getting married in less than a month, and I am sure she could have found all kinds of other things to do with that money. The previous week the Woody family had given me a personal gift to, as David put it, "get something for yourself." I couldn't think of anything better to give myself than the smiles of a bunch of children, and their gift more than covered the remaining cost. Because the shirts are for small children it has taken some effort to get them (I had to have them made) but I should be able to deliver them in May.

Thanks again to all of you who are helping the Kingdom of Hope Orphan's School take care of so many children!



Our new classroom. Lots more room and lots more light makes for a lot nicer learning environment



The Bible Institute's, and my, new home in Tamale.



Two of our graduating students, Timothy teaching and Joseph translating, during the Kulungungu campaign. During February four students and I worked with the Poyamire congregation to establish a new congregation in this border town. While the town is only 11 km from Bawku, the people are from a different tribe and speak a different language, so they needed a congregation that worshipped in the language they understood.



I did not even get unpacked after arriving in Tamale before we loaded up the car and went looking for water to baptize Nasem, who was taught by one of our students.