



West Africa Mission Happenings



“... Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature – Mark 16:15”

A work of the church of Christ

January – February 2012

Greetings once again from West Africa to all of our brethren who are taking the opportunity to read this newsletter. The beginning of the year 2012 has been very busy as our brethren in West Africa and I continue to labor in the fruitful fields of this part of the world. We are continuing to train preachers and leaders, and to edify those who have graduated and are working in their various ministries. We continually thank God for your prayers and support as we labor together to fulfill the Great Commission. In this newsletter, we will attempt to update you on some of the happenings over the past couple of months.

A Long Trip through Africa

The weather was very hot during the day and cool at night. The air was filled with dirt, dust, smoke, and other particles as the wind blew constantly. We were surrounded by natives who had bandanas and other pieces of cloth covering their mouths and noses as they motored, bicycled and walked throughout northern Ghana and Togo. This is where I found myself as we labored in West Africa during 2012. The journey began in Accra, the capital of Ghana, not long after the beginning of the year. It continued by traveling along the coast to the West Coast School of Preaching in the city of Takoradi. From there, the trip moved north to the Islamic city of Tamale and then even farther north to the cities of Kara and Dapaong in the country of Togo. My steps then returned me to Tamale and then to southern Ghana, and onward to the Center for Biblical Studies in the city of Kpalime in the neighboring country of Togo. Time was spent meeting with congregations, students, school staff and instructors, and our brethren all along the journey. Plans were made, the church was edified, the gospel was preached, and new Christians were added to our Lord's church. In this newsletter, we would like to

share some of these happenings in West Africa in early 2012. Without you it would not be possible! Your love for our Lord and the Great Commission, your prayers, and your support empowers the indigenous Christians with what they need to effectively build up the church in this part of the world. We are all working together, joined together by the blood of Christ, to glorify our Lord and help prepare HIS kingdom for HIS return.

French Speaking West Africa

Since I began the work in West Africa many years ago, the French speaking countries that surround Ghana have drawn me. There are vast areas of West Africa where the true gospel has not been preached. Some of these areas are almost completely Islamic, but others have been greatly influenced by false teachings related to Christianity. With your help, the church of the New Testament has been planted and is continuing to grow in some of these areas, including northern Togo. I visited the city of Kara Togo in early 2012, and met with four preachers from the northern part of this country. We discussed the work, and formulated ideas for the future, including plans to plant new congregations in the upcoming months. We journeyed to the extreme north of the country where we had recently planted a congregation in Dapaong, and stopped in the city of Mango along the way to survey the possibility of a new church plant there. When we returned to Kara, the Lord added another member to HIS body when the truth was preached and a man was baptized into Christ. The Togolese brethren have a zeal for God and a hunger for God's word. The church is weak and new, but the brethren are strong and motivated to see our Lord's kingdom expand in this part of the world. Thank you for helping to empower these brethren! May our Lord bless each of you as we continue our labors together!

The Schools of Preaching

The schools of preaching throughout West Africa are continuing to build up leaders, edify churches, and assist the local congregations in evangelistic efforts as we move forward during 2012. In the last couple of months, we held planning sessions at each of the schools in Ghana and Togo, and I was given the opportunity to teach at both the Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies and the West Coast School of Preaching. We would like to discuss some of the happenings at each of these schools.

Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies

The Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies in northern Ghana resumed classes with fifteen students in the month of January. I taught the book of James and Biblical Geography during the quarter, and was greatly encouraged by the diligence of our students as they delve deeper into God's word. We are continuing with the building project, and it is our prayer that we will be ready to move from the rented building by the end of the year. We are taking every opportunity to work in the surrounding villages and to utilize the existing students and previous graduates in the evangelization of northern Ghana.

West Coast School of Preaching

The West Coast School of Preaching in Takoradi in southern Ghana continued classes with six first and second year students for a total of twelve students in 2012. We have students from Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria taking advantage of the two year training program. During the month of February, we gathered together all of the Bachelor's students for the final class to complete the requirements for their degree. We are taking the opportunity to help all the students increase their written communication skills so they can more effectively battle for the faith throughout West Africa. We plan to increase the student body to over twenty by the fall of 2012 by actively recruiting new students.

Center for Biblical Studies

The Center for Biblical Studies in Kpalime Togo began classes with twenty students at the beginning of the year. Unfortunately, five of these students could not continue the program for various reasons. Classes are being held in the new rental building which has proven to be very suitable for their program. We took the opportunity to meet with the staff, instructors and

alumni of the school to formulate plans to help direct the school as it moves forward. This school is doing an excellent job of training men to preach and teach in the country of Togo.

*"Go therefore and make disciples
of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name
of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all things
that I have commanded you;
and lo, I am with you always,
even to the end of the age." Amen.
(Matthew 28:19-20)*

Financial Support

We want to thank all of the supporters for their contributions to this exciting work in West Africa. Without you, this effort would not be possible.

Contributions by check need to be **made payable to:**

Mountain Home church of Christ
For: West Africa Mission

Mailed to:

Mountain Home church of Christ
380 North College Street
Mountain Home, AR 72653

Any questions can be directed to the church office at **870-425-4330**.

Or you can contact Steven at:

Email: **samtnthome@yahoo.com**
USA Phone: **971-270-8535**

Please email Steven if you would like to receive this newsletter by email.

*Thanks So Much,
With Christian Love*

Steven Ashcraft

French Speaking West Africa



A new brother is baptized into Christ in the city of Kara in northern Togo. We thank God for his willingness to obey the gospel, and that there is a local congregation where he can worship!



We had the opportunity during the month of February to gather all of the preachers in northern Togo together for a meeting. Here there is a little relaxation during a lull in the meeting.

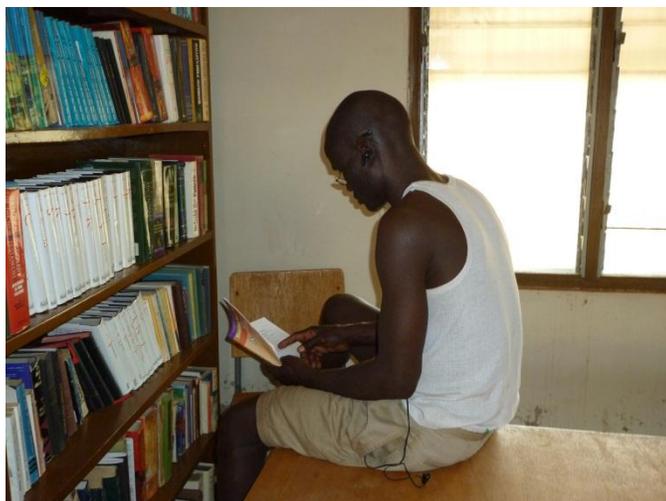


Fidele, who is the preacher in Dapaong Togo, is helping to support his family by raising rabbits. They seem to be multiplying like rabbits!



The mosques in northern Togo are the continual outward sign of the prominence of the Islamic faith in this part of the world. Let us pray that we can reach more, and more with the gospel of Christ.

**Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies
Tamale, Ghana**



The library at the Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies is a place of refuge for our students as they attempt to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Here are our students at TIBS taking one of their many examinations. It is a significant challenge to move from the farm to the classroom. However, our students are up to the challenge!



Brother Jaminja at TIBS in Tamale has been teaching at the school since it began a few years ago. He spends most of his time teaching the textual books of the Old Testament.

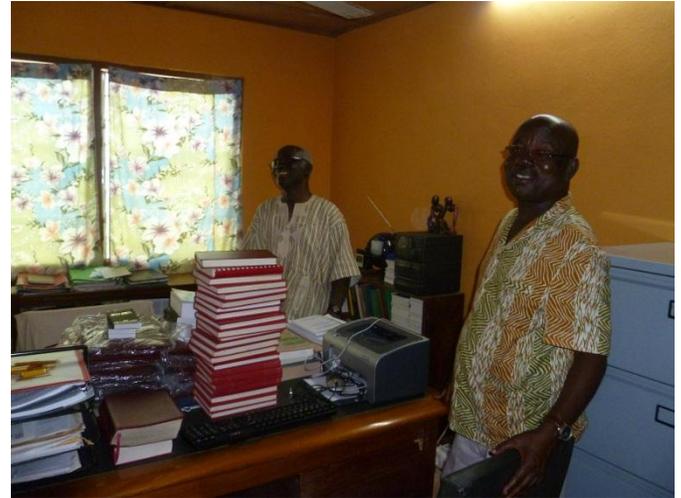


The students have morning devotion every day. Here, one of the students takes the opportunity to preach to their fellow classmates. They encourage and edify one another.

**West Coast School of Preaching
Takoradi, Ghana**



These are the Bachelor's students at the West Coast School of Preaching. They are in the process of completing their last class on the long journey towards obtaining a college degree.



Many of our supporters have been donating books which are delivered to the schools on an ongoing basis. You can tell by the smiles on their faces how much they appreciate this gift from you!



The administration building at the WCSOP is in dire need of repairs. We need to raise the funds to replace the entire roof, and also to make some structural improvements.



The Bachelor's students at the WCSOP are being challenged in their writing skills as they complete the degree program. Here, they are seen in the classroom in Takoradi.

**Center for Biblical Studies
Kpalime, Togo**



Here are the students in the classroom at the Center for Biblical Studies in Kpalime Togo. The new rental building is well suited for the school.



Here I am seen with the present students at CBS. There are currently fifteen students studying God's word as they prepare themselves to bring the gospel to the surrounding towns and villages.



Here is Cephas, the principal at CBS, in his office at the school in Kpalime Togo. He does a wonderful job of taking care of the day to day operations, while he also spends time evangelizing the area.



We had the opportunity to meet with the staff and instructors at the school of preaching in Kpalime Togo. We have many of these planning sessions at all of our schools in an attempt to increase the effectiveness of the program.

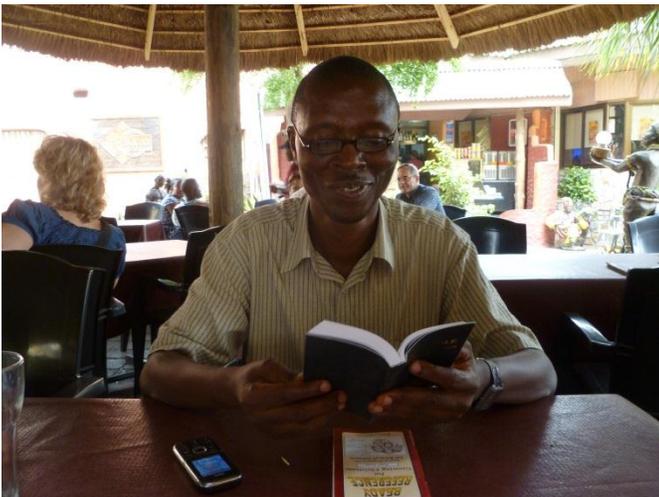
A Few Other Pictures



Many of you know brother Kojo Aquah Beenyi from Cape Coast. Here he is seen at his home in Swedru where he is now living. He has hopes of starting a grasscutter farm to help support himself as he grows older.



This is brother Joseph Mensah seen at his home in Shama. He is the preacher for the congregation there and is in the process of preparing for his upcoming marriage.



Here is a picture of brother Davies Derchies who lives near Nsawam in southern Ghana. We had the opportunity to meet in the capital city of Accra to discuss his needs and accomplishments.



This is something that you do not see very often in the country of Ghana. There are many businesses in the country that are operated by citizens from India where Hinduism is prevalent.

**A Look at the Church
In the Fishing Town of Apam**



Here is the new congregation in the city of Apam. It is amazing how many young people there are in the church throughout the country of Ghana. Young people are the key to vibrant growth in the future.



The brethren here are working on their church building in the fishing village of Apam. It usually takes many, many years to complete any building project in West Africa



I get the opportunity to teach and preach at numerous congregations throughout the country as I work with the different schools of preaching in West Africa. Here I am preaching at a congregation in Apam.



It is wonderful to see the congregations working together throughout Ghana. Here the leaders of the two congregations in Apam discuss how they can cooperate in the evangelization of the town, among other topics.

The Children of West Africa



The children in West Africa can turn almost anything into a toy. Here the boy has an old bicycle rim. They keep the wheel moving with a stick as they run. It is not as easy as it sounds!



All of these children were present at a recent worship service in a village in northern Ghana. Many of their families practice a different religion. It is a wonderful way to plant seeds in their young hearts.



The girls learn very young in the village how to carry water on their heads. While they are children it is fun! By the time they reach adulthood, it will be a reoccurring chore.



One of the most prevalent methods of transportation in the villages is the bicycle. It comes in second only to walking!

The Children of West Africa



This small girl in a city in southern Ghana is carrying her lunch on her head. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could use our heads as well as these young people in West Africa?



This child was following me around as I was working in a city in northern Togo. The children of West Africa will listen to anyone who will spend time with them.



Here are two children who are now living in the city of Dapaong. Here they are wearing their school uniforms. They have had to move numerous times as the children of a preacher, Fidele!



It is not uncommon for sisters to dress in matching clothes. Here are two sisters seen in a worship service in southern Ghana.