

UPDATE ON AFRICA 2013 MISSION

CHURCH VISITS



Each year, CWM staff arrives a week prior to the team's arrival in order to visit previously planted churches. Lee Ann and Susan had the great pleasure of visiting with bishops and others in leadership to continue to build on the long standing relationship between CWM and the Methodist Church Ghana and the Methodist Church Nigeria. However, the exciting aspects of the visits were the opportunities to see how the churches have grown, hear about the challenges they have faced, celebrate the miracles they have experienced and more. It is wonderful to see how the pastors have grown in their faith and in their leadership abilities and to see

once again those beautiful people that came to know the Lord through a CWM crusade in years past.

In Ghana, we visited 8 churches that were planted eight years ago in the Effiduasi area. All were doing well and several were expanding their buildings in order to meet the needs of their growing church families.

In Nigeria, we visited 10 churches that were planted in 2012. After that crucial first year, the churches were already averaging over 30 members each and in addition to worship services and Sunday school, they also have midweek services, mornings of fasting and prayer, Bible Studies, hymn practice and evangelism visits throughout their villages. God is doing great things!

For instance, the Akpet Church in Nigeria had experienced many challenges including a small congregation and a church meeting place that is not ideal. Their membership dwindled to only three or four people. One young man suffered with a severe mental disorder. They described him as being "mad." Through the prayers of those few members and the faithfulness of God, this young man was healed and now his entire family are members, and the church is beginning to grow. Please pray for this and all of the churches that have been planted in years past. By the grace and power of God, over 95% of the churches CWM has planted are still active and making a difference in their villages.



CHURCH PLANTING

As we do each year, CWM planted 10 churches in Ghana and 10 churches in Nigeria. The villages where the churches are planted are selected by our CWM-Africa staff in coordination with the Prelate/Presiding Bishop and other clergy and laity. Our desire is to plant churches where there is little to no Christian presence. Quite often, the areas may have signs of Christianity, but it is often mixed with witchcraft and other pagan practices. This year, we worked in villages in the Jamasi area of Ghana and the Ngbo area of Nigeria.



In Ghana, we did children's ministry in schools as well as in villages where churches were being planted. The two children of our ministry staff, Ramzy Smith (11) and Christian Williamson (10), were joined on this mission by two other young men, David (11) and Mark (10) Coblentz. To prepare the boys, we developed a 6-week program called Knights of the Lord's Table, and they all memorized Scripture and prepared brief testimonies to share. They also learned two puppet shows which told the story of the Gospel. In Ghana, these boys were joined by our Ghanaian evangelist's son, Daniel Otsin (12).





Also, in each village, CWM provided free medical clinics. It is a rare occasion that the people in these areas receive professional medical treatment. Indigenous doctors and nurses saw hundreds of men, women, and children every day.

In Nigeria, we started a new agricultural program to teach people how to improve their crop production and overall health using plants and materials that are easily accessible. However, the highlight and primary purpose of the mission is the evangelistic services each night where the Gospel is proclaimed through song and Word. Thousands came to know the Lord during these services.

One woman in the Kokotiesua village turned from her ways as a fetish priestess (witch doctor) and gave her life to Christ. New Christians, like this woman, along with others who know the Lord but have no place to worship, make up the new church. We also prayed for healing and deliverance during the services. Lives were transformed, and we are so grateful that God has provided a church for continued evangelism, discipleship and fellowship.

A great example of God bringing light to the darkness was near the tiny village of Obodo Ajim, Nigeria. There was a forest which served as a center for black magic. People came from all over the country to have the fetish priest put curses on their enemies or seek wisdom from the god. *(The photo in the upper left shows a stump from the forest with nails that represented curses on almost 300 individuals.)* The women wouldn't go near the area to gather the wood they so desperately needed for cooking. Others said they had, "lost children to the forest." Just before we arrived, the people of the village asked the church to cleanse the forest, and they did. Through prayer, fire, and worship the forest was cleansed of the evil spirits and our worship services were set up at that very place. They were well-attended, many came to Christ and a new church was born on that once dark place!

Many of the villages are very remote, with electricity for sound and lights coming from a generator rented for these events. Robbie and Bonnie Coblentz experienced first-hand just how remote those places are. In one of the villages where Bonnie preached, she stood on one side of the only road through town while the crowd listened from behind and the other side. When traffic passed, they simply put a pause on activity, but even with the distractions, a new church was born and God was glorified.



MISSION TEAMS



Ghana team: Front: Ramzy Smith, Daniel Otsin, Mark Coblentz, Christian Williamson, David Coblentz 2nd Row: Bonnie Coblentz, Stella Otsin, Lori Smith, Anna Keeney, Joseph Otsin, Anita Johnson, Timothy Otsin 3rd Row: Lee Ann Williamson, Francis Obour, Robbie Coblentz, Susan Seal, Parker Wayland

Our U. S. and African teams are so important to the mission. And what wonderful teams we had...men, women and even children who are strong in their faith with a great passion for the lost. God began to knit our hearts together very quickly for His purposes, Americans and Africans coming together to see lost souls saved, the sick healed, and the hurting cared for. Our teams consisted of both those who are in the workforce and those retired, veterans in the mission field and first-timers, preachers, teachers, prayer warriors and more. We are grateful for their obedience to God's call. We hope you'll pray about joining in the future.



Nigeria team: Front: J.K. Udeze, Lori Smith, Ramzy Smith, Christian Williamson, Delicia Henderson, Monica Okorie, 2nd Row: Parker Wayland, William Sansing, Bishop John Okorie, Lee Ann Williamson, Susan Seal, Alyssa Barrett, Akin Akinbode