

The Glories of God in Ghana

Psalm 87

News from the Kastars, Serving the Lord in Ghana

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Witnesses to the Resurrection

Most of the Christians I know can't wait to say it. It is more than a greeting. It is, rather, the reality upon which all of our life is based. "Christ has risen!" These words cannot be contained in your mouth. It would pain us to keep them in; in fact, we might even pull a muscle in the trying. Just like a gift on Christmas morning, we can't wait to throw off the sackcloth wrappings of Lent and let the words burst from our joy-filled lips. "He has risen, indeed! Alleluia!" And we know, then, that everything will be fine.

Here in Ghana, they are not used to that practice of greeting and response. But they are just as ready to let the words ring out in their Easter songs of praise. "Ufira! Issa ufira!" (He has risen! Jesus, he has risen!). So filled with joy are the people here, that they often break out in the African tradition of dancing their praises. It is always a humbling thing to see them dancing their praises as they present their offerings unto the Lord. They are filled with joy, a joy that cannot be contained. It would kill them if they tried.

On the Second Sunday of Easter, we always hear the story of the Lord's appearance on that first Easter to the disciples, sans Thomas (John 20:19-29). We have all heard the story about Thomas, ashamed by the Lord's appearance a week later, exclaiming about Jesus what is the heart of the Christian faith: My Lord and my God! Afterwards, Jesus says some important words, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." I think there is a temptation to see this only as a rebuke of Thomas and not as a blessing on us. Thomas heard the message and, yes, he should have believed on the testimony of those who had been declared apostles (cf. vv. 21-23). Thomas's flesh was fighting against all that he had heard. His mind would not be conquered by the Word.

But there is also the glorious truth that we are all blessed because we have heard the witness of those who had beheld the risen Lord, watched Him eat a fish, and who had heard His words of peace. And, having heard the Word, we have believed. We have not seen with our eyes. But we have heard the message passed down from the apostles whose very purpose was to see the risen Lord and to make His resurrection known (Acts 1:21-22). Thomas should have believed on the witness of the other apostles; so it is with us. And hearing, we confess that faith. We don't know when the Lord will return and our eyes will no longer be denied their visual feast of the risen Lord. But until that day, we are to join in Thomas's life-changing confession: Jesus is our God and Lord! Even now we bow in adoration of Him whom we have heard with our ears but our eyes have not yet seen. But one day we will see Him. And we will again repeat in even more joyous tones: Christ has risen! He has risen, indeed! Alleluia!

Praying for our witness – us here and you there – of the same risen Lord!



Ghanaian Easter Dresses



Prayer Requests, Praises, and Thanks

- Praise God for our area director and his wife, Rev. Gary and Stephanie Schulte.
- Pray for our team here in West Africa. In Ghana: Rev/Mrs. David Erber, Rev/Mrs. Steven Schumacher
In Togo: Rev/Mrs. Micah Wildauer, Valerie Stonebreaker, and Rev. Jacob Gaugert.
Sierra Leone: Rev/Mrs. Mark Moss; Rev/Mrs. Doug Thompson.
In Burkina Faso: Rev/Mrs. Gary Schulte; Rev. Fred Reinhardt and Rev/Mrs. Ryan McDermott; Molly Christianson
- Pray for Bishop Fynn, head of the ELCG.
- Praise God for the Small Catechism work,
- Ask God to give Dale the ability to communicate Christ.
- Pray for Dennis, Dale's brother, still battling kidney stones.

Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster
TL 375
Tamale, Ghana
West Africa

There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at www.lcms.org/service. Click on "Service Opportunities."

The Gifts of God in Northern Ghana

Getting back last month threw us into the busyness of Holy Week. On top of that, we are beginning the preparations for training in the months of August through October. Curriculum needs to be produced and preparations for halting any future infections are being worked

on. But one more thing is happening that brings us much joy. Upon our return, Lazarus, a convert from Islam, asked for training to be a witness to the Dagomba tribe, of which he is a member. It was determined to begin that work by translating Luther's Small Catechism into Dagbani, as it was intended to be a primer in the Christian faith. There is already a Dagbani Bible; this will be a perfect tract for the Dagombas. The project will take some time, but Commandments 1 and 2 with their meanings have had an initial translation. There is a lot of review and study ahead, but it excites us to prepare this wonderful Christian tract for the many Muslims among the Dagombas.



Dale and Lazarus translating The Small Catechism

West African Retreat

Every other year we meet with our area's missionaries, those serving in West or Central Africa. This year, because of a weak Rand (the South African currency), it was decided to travel to South Africa. We had four days of Bible Study and worship as well as time to enjoy South Africa, which is a stunningly beautiful country. One of the highlights was to see a colony of penguins on Boulder Beach. These little guys let you get very close! When it was over, we stayed on



with the Schumachers (Accra) to see more of this beautiful country.

Finding Any Way to Proclaim Christ

On the Saturday before Easter, we did a traditional Ghanaian thing; we visited in a "funeral house," that is, in a home where there has been a death. Our connection was that the person had at one time been a Lutheran. So we greeted the bereaved and sat for some time. The group was no doubt mixed with Muslims as well as Christians. As we left, we asked to pray, which was warmly received. It was there that we proclaimed the resurrection of the Crucified One and for all who believe. Sometimes you can't preach but you can pray! Look for places in your life to share the Lord of life!

We commend you to the risen Lord,

Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster

Your Missionaries in Ghana, West Africa

To support the LCMS through the work of the Kasters, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod **OR** Mission Central
P.O. Box 66861 40718 Hwy E16
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861 Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod or LCMS. Include "Kaster – Ghana," in the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website at www.lcms.org/kaster.

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