



Let's Go To Togo!

News from the Wildauer Family, serving the Lord in Togo and West Africa

From the Past...

Though the newsletter title invites you to "Go To Togo," we will begin with a visit to the region of Toulepleu, Côte d'Ivoire. LCMS mission work began here decades ago, though the presence of missionaries have been absent for some time. This was due to the civil war which broke out in 2002. The mission work focused on the far west region in the forest region, bordering Liberia and Guinea. The national language of Côte d'Ivoire is French, though this particular region has a mix of French and English speakers due to many Liberian nationals who settled there after a civil war (1989) in Liberia. One must keep in mind that although there is a national language, the main language will be the local or regional language of the people group. Here in Toulepleu, Guéré is the language and the name of the larger people group.

There was a variety of mission work in Toulepleu which included theological education, medical missions, social, and agricultural assistance (purchase of seeds, resources for fields, etc.). Due to the war, much of the progress was lost as people fled for their lives to places of safety. Yet the church continued on by the grace of God. When it was safe to return home, the young Lutheran congregations reassembled with around 11 parishes, a handful of preaching stations, and hopes for mission starts. For over a decade, there were only three ordained pastors. But this all changed this past summer.

What might a pastor do on the 10th anniversary of his ordination? For me, I took a 10 hour bus ride across Côte d'Ivoire with fellow missionary, [Rev. Fred Reinhardt](#), to participate in the ordination of four candidates and former students of the CLET in Togo.





Pray For:

- ✠ The newly ordained in Côte d'Ivoire, their families, and their parishes
- ✠ Health and well-being for my family, especially Robin who is with child
- ✠ Health of the students' and professors' families during the dry season
- ✠ Our preparations for Home Service this Spring
- ✠ Fellow missionaries throughout the region, Francophone and Anglophone, especially our Director, Rev. Gary Schulte, and his wife as they visit each country and church body

Give Thanks For:

- ✠ The ordinations in Côte d'Ivoire and the upcoming ordination in Benin
- ✠ A blessed celebration of Christmas and the New Year
- ✠ A Healthy pregnancy thus far
- ✠ The freedom of the Gospel as it is proclaimed in many languages



What a day of joy! On foot for miles and with numerous necessities placed in bowls balanced on the head, members of parishes from the entire region came together to celebrate in a 5 hour service filled with the preaching of the Word, the Rite of Ordination, song and dance, personal congratulations, and plentiful gifts presented to the newly ordained. Following a local custom, baby powder was sprinkled upon the pastors as well as many participants to signify the joy of the day (the equivalent of confetti, I suppose).

It is not often that one is able to witness the more-than-doubling of a pastorate. But what a joy it is to see the work of the Spirit in this young church body. Through the ongoing work of the CLET, under-shepherds of Christ are being formed to serve throughout the country. After this academic year, three students will return to begin their vicarage and three more will continue their studies at the school. The expectation is that one will serve as a mission planter in an eastern region where one small congregation has been formed but does not yet have a pastor. Another will serve in a sizable town near Abidjan, the main port city of the country. With the work of the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the Gospel and the Sacraments, this church body will grow throughout the entire country. As of today, the church body now has 23 parishes, but only 7 ordained pastors. Thus our work of forming pastors to shepherd and to proclaim the Gospel throughout Africa continues.

To support our work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

[OR]

Mission Central
40718 Highway E-16
Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (or "LCMS"). Please include **"Wildauer—Togo"** in the memo line.

Gifts can also be given securely through the LCMS website using my online giving page at www.lcms.org/wildauer. To give a gift over the phone, please call 1-888-930-4438.

To be added to or removed from this mailing list, or if you prefer to receive by posted mail, or if you think someone else might enjoy receiving this newsletter, send an email message to

micah.wildauer@lcmsintl.org

with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

...to the Present...



The days of the academic year roll onward. I continue to teach an introductory class on the Liturgy—History and Practice to our new students, 14 in number, as well as an overview of various other liturgies with the Pastoral 2 (final year) students. This latter class touches the various rites which a pastor will encounter in the parish. Occasionally, marriages are still arranged. How might the pastor approach the parish to encourage marriage between the faithful while not letting the women be forced into a marriage with a pagan, to which the women must adopt the man's religion? What about funerals when the larger family is part Christian, part animist? How might a pastor prepare his members and their families for faithful funeral services and burials? Many cultural questions arise here which are parallel (or possibly don't exist) to situations in the United States. My joy is to work through these questions with the

students using the words of Scripture while remaining faithful to our Confessions. For these final year students, many times they are able to draw their own conclusions and provide valuable insight to one another.

...and into the Future

If more than doubling the number of pastors for a church body brings much joy, then we can also consider the joy of ordaining the first pastor for a church body. In April of this year (2017), the African Lutheran Church—Synod of Benin will do just that. Though this young church body has often been attacked by the devil, the Lord is working to preserve the faithful and will be providing them with a well-trained candidate. This church body also hopes to send up to five new students to the CLET in the fall.

And what of our family? Unfortunately, we will not be able to rejoice first-hand with them, but for good reasons. We are scheduled for our Home Service in the United States and are slated to arrive sometime before Holy Week. This is necessary, as **we are expecting our next little child** sometime in mid-May. Therefore, rejoice with us that our pregnancy has been healthy and well to date. We will keep you posted on family news and congregational visits as the time approaches.



For further updates of our family and life in West Africa, check out Robin's blog at www.wildauersgototogo.blogspot.com





Missionary Pastor Micah Wildauer
Theological Educator in Togo on behalf of the LCMS
% Mount Olive Lutheran Church
5327 W. Washington Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53208

Where in the World: Toulepleu, Côte d'Ivoire

With the map to the right, one can see Côte d'Ivoire. Toulepleu is just south of where you see the "d" in the country name. This is located in the forest region. While here, we saw the effects of the past war in abandoned and burnt houses. We also saw many banana trees and ate of their fresh produce. This is also a region which produces the cocoa grain/nut from which one can make cocoa powder. One gracious parish gave a gift of cocoa nuts to take to my family in Togo which in turn was a project for the kids to turn into chocolate. Yum!



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Witness Always