



# *The Ministry of Jesus Togo*

Gregg and Jayne Yarian  
2017 W. Old Liberty Rd.  
Westminster, MD 21157  
US:443-605-4731 Togo: 011 228 9099 5132  
Facebook: The Ministry of Jesus-Togo

[theyarians@yahoo.com](mailto:theyarians@yahoo.com)

**December 2016**

The Ministry of Jesus  
c/o Oakbrook Church  
1700 Reston Pkwy.  
Reston, VA 20194  
703-437-4900

*In your life together, think the way Christ Jesus thought. He was like God in every way, but he did not think that his being equal with God was something to use for his own benefit. Instead, he gave up everything, even his place with God. He accepted the role of a servant, appearing in human form. During his life as a man, he humbled himself by being fully obedient to God, even when that caused his death—death on a cross.*

**Philippians 2:5-8 Easy Read Version**

Dear friends and supporters,

**The greatest wonder of Christmas is that the God of the Universe would give up his place in glory to come to earth, and save those who were in rebellion against him. We are so thankful for those who have followed the sacrificial example of Jesus by generously giving to make all that is done for His Kingdom here in Togo possible.**

## **Following a Sacrificial Savior**

We have the privilege of traveling back and forth between Togo and the US every year. We have noted that **getting church members to believe in and live out a life of sacrifice is incredibly difficult on both sides of the ocean.** We have seen leaders committed to creating communities of sacrificial service on both sides of the ocean. **Those who have had some success talk about sacrificial service and teach about it on a regular basis. They also offer opportunities for service and lead by personal example.** When I taught in Togo for the first time in 1992, the

Nagbandjoa found an incredible speaker to help our students understand that **jobs are available to those who have the right attitude and know how to prepare for them and find them.**

If you knew Togolese culture, you would know how counter cultural this photo is. **The sacrificial example of Jesus breaks down cultural taboos.**



subject was *Humble, Servant Leadership*. One of the texts was in Matthew 20 where Jesus says, “*You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them.*” At that time, I had no idea how strong **the practice of the strong lording it over the weak** was in this culture. All of our family observed it. At one seminar we did a skit where Dad hit Mom, Mom hit the oldest, the oldest hit... and down the line until the youngest kicked the dog. It is sad, but not surprising that **this pattern also exhibits itself strongly in many churches where pastors expect to be treated like kings.**

**We teach sacrificial leadership, we try to live it, and we try to train up leaders who exhibit it.**

So, when the president and vice president of the national church jump up from a meal with the national committee to do the dishes, **something that men here just don't do**, we notice. Obviously the students in the photo on page one got the message too. When Pastor Nagbanjoa pushed a handicapped member to the hospital in his wheel chair, people in the neighborhood noticed and commented. When the same handicapped man tipped over his wheel chair in a drunken stupor, it was natural for one of Nagbandjoa's disciples **to go out, find him, pick him up, push him home, clean him up, and bandage him.**

We recently had some of our first year students over for dinner and one of the questions we asked them was, “What has influenced your spiritual life the most since you arrived here?” Two of them said that it was their “older brothers” doing morning devotions with them each morning. One noted that his expectation was that the older students would look down on them and treat them as servants. He was shocked at how the older students loved them and served them. **We are thankful that we get to see Jesus, the Sacrificial Savior, changing lives.**

### **Integrated Gospel Ministry**

If you have followed our work, you may have noticed that our approach to how to carry out the vision of “**ministry to the whole person**” has evolved over the years. Once we talked about the various departments such as Primary Health, Schools, Agriculture, and Small Business Development. Now, on any given day, it would be normal to find one of our church leaders or members **teaching or counseling** others on health issues. It would not be unusual to find a pastor or church member at the hospital **guiding** others through the process of getting necessary health care. Every day members of our churches who have become Physicians Assistants, Nurses, Midwives, etc. are **being salt and light** in the medical community. Every year more and more of our students are getting jobs as teachers. One of our university graduates now **leads** the agronomy department of one of the largest non-governmental organizations in Togo. Pastors and leaders regularly **counsel** members on how to improve their crops and how to try new crops. The Kara church just had a guest speaker for a seminar on how to develop an entrepreneurial spirit and how to find a job and advance in your career. Next month we will be examining some biblical teachings on work and finances. **We are still involved in every aspect of ministry that we ever were, but we are doing it through gospel transformed leaders and church communities.**

### **Girls Program**

One of the first programs we added to those started by our founders, **Tom and Joan Beak**, was our girls program. It was **a response to the problem** of girls disappearing from our churches because of forced marriages. When the government instituted tuition free primary school education several years ago, the number of girls going to school increased greatly. In recent years even village girls have begun to insist that they need to at least complete an apprenticeship before getting married. **This is a sign of success for all of those who have fought to improve the lives of the girls here, but it requires that we adapt our approach.** We are now examining **expanding our program** to include all the years a girl would be in an apprenticeship. Instead of watching girls enter fields that are already over-saturated, we will help girls choose **careers that will actually enable them to help provide for their families.** We will help them find “**patrons**” **who are competent and who will not molest them** during their apprenticeships. We will teach them small business skills that will allow

them to succeed no matter what their career. And, most importantly, we will **help them come to know Jesus and live for him.**

### **Finances and Vision**

As we write this on **Thanksgiving Day**, we thank God for the generous donors who have made it possible for us to have enough to cover our budget every month. We are especially grateful for those who gave to provide us with a reliable truck and those who have committed to increasing their giving on a regular basis so that we can begin to take a small salary. Every year we are moving steadily towards our goal that our partner church, Ministère International de Jésus, be able to meet all expenses it would need to continue to exist without funds from the outside.

But, **there is so much more we could be doing** to build a church that not just continues, but which thrives as it advances the Kingdom of God!

- We have asked the leaders of MIJ to develop a plan to use loans and business training to help young leaders who want to be bi-vocational pastors to create businesses that will support their ministry.
- We are expecting that our leaders will soon give us their plan for a farm to train leaders for village churches.
- We have a dream of a program that challenges all of our students to give two years of full-time Christian service before starting their careers. This would require small stipends and travel expenses.
- We dream of building an apartment on the second floor of the Lome Student Center so that a pastoral couple can live on-site and disciple the students.

So, **we thank God for what we have and can do now, we dream of what God will do in the future, and we are grateful to you for the part you play in all that God is doing.**

### **Prayer**

- Praise God for leaders who are modeling the sacrificial love of Jesus.
- Pray that God will raise up communities of gospel transformed members and leaders who are ready to follow the sacrificial example of Jesus.
- Pray for our students to be able to find and create jobs that will support them as they help bring gospel transformation to their communities and to their nation.
- Pray for unity and wisdom as we work with the leaders of the Togolese church.

We are pleased with the leadership potential of the new students in our center who have already served as leaders in their village churches, and in Intersivity clubs.

*"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

Mark 10:45

**We thank you for following the sacrificial example of Jesus in your many expressions of love for us and for the Togolese people.**

***Merry Christmas,***

Gregg and Jayne

