

themessenger

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*Merry Christmas
Happy New Year!*



OUR MISSIONARIES SERVING WEST VIRGINIA AND AROUND THE WORLD

Please forgive me for not writing sooner. Saying that I've been "really busy" is quite an understatement. You'll be glad to know that I arrived back in Côte d'Ivoire on October 17th.! As usual, the flights were long and tiring, but I arrived safely, on time, and with my checked baggage. Because of car repairs, renewal of identification papers and driver's license, plus meetings and shopping, the Andersons and I spent a week in Abidjan. Though not finished with our "to-do" lists, we returned to Bondoukou on October 26th.

Bondoukou said "Welcome Home" with a refreshing rain and a night without electricity. And, with no electricity, we soon had no water. With morning came the early morning Muslim call to prayer (at 5 a.m.!) which caused me to nearly jump out of bed. The mosque right behind my house now has an electric loudspeaker. I'm tempted to pray that it will break down or get misplaced. With the electricity back on came the realization that my refrigerator wasn't getting cold enough to make ice. Hold on - there's more! The roof leaks, the microwave doesn't work, and mice somehow managed to get into my washer where they built nests, chewed wires, caused a big stink, then died from the poison put out by my worker. In addition to the mice, millions (it seems) of ants took up residence in my home and made their presence known as soon as I started cooking!

Are you ready for some good news? A week later, I'm seeing fewer ants and no signs of mice; though still a little stinky, the washer is repaired and functioning properly; the fridge still is not quite up to par, but we're working on it. I'm glad my kitchen stove, small television, radio, and fans are all in good order.

When I left West Virginia, I told everyone that I'd be returning to the beginning of West Africa's dry season. However, it is hot and humid with daily rains - probably because the rainy season didn't start on time (usually in April or May).

While Stateside, I was informed that my 9 year old Belgian Shepherd (Titan) had died. The yard seems so empty without him. I now have the cutest little puppy (an African mutt) and he spends his days eating, napping, and chewing on or hiding everyone's shoes. He is brown and black with white feet. So, he's been named "Boots". With patient training, I'm sure he'll become a good watchdog. I attended the Angré Free Will Baptist Church in Abidjan. Almost every seat was taken and I really enjoyed worshipping with the Ivorian Christians. Pastor Samuel brought a powerful message, causing me to offer a prayer of thanksgiving that our pastors, like the Apostle Paul, are faithfully "feeding the church of God" and "do not shun to declare

all the counsel of God". (See Acts 20: 27 and 28). On November 1st. I was back in church again, this time at the First Bondoukou FWB Church. We had a good service, with good preaching and a large congregation. The long service (3 hours) closed with the dedication of two beautiful newborns, a boy for Pastor and Mrs. Adou and a girl for Mr. and Mrs. Yéo. These babies were born on the same day, in August. Pastor Adou says he's still trying to figure out how the pastor and church clerk managed to do that!

Next week, I will return to Abidjan. The Andersons and I must go to Spain for a meeting with our missionaries who are working in Spain and Central Asia. This meeting was called by our Regional Director, Clint Morgan. We leave on November 16th. and will return on the 23rd. Please pray for safety in travel and for the meetings to go well.

She misses me. I miss her. But, she's doing fine and I'm doing fine. Alice F. Smith

We want to thank every one of you who are so faithful to pray and those who are so gracious to give sacrificially to help us reach new souls for Christ. This past month was our second-year anniversary for our church. In which we had three days of celebration and about eighty people attending each service. We had special speakers and music groups playing each service. It's hard to believe we have had a church here for two years. Thank God for his faithfulness and presence in this church. We are seeing souls come to know him, and we are also reaching people who have never been to church. God is putting those in our congregation who have been out of church for a time and bringing them back to a close relationship with God.



Josue and Christina Rivera

We are seeing some growth here at Glenville New Life Free Will Baptist Church. The visitation is paying off, as we keep inviting, we hope the attendance will grow even more. Our regulars are faithful and dedicated to the Lord and we praise God for them. We have Bible Study on Thursday night.

We've been visiting and talking to this older gentleman since we moved to Glenville, he's up in years. He accepted Christ into his heart last month, please pray for this man he's a babe in Christ and in poor health, he needs prayer. We stopped to check on him today to let him know we are still praying for him, he smiled and said I know someone is praying because I am doing so much better. We thank God for the power of prayer. Isn't it great that God won't give-up on us when we turn him down time and time again he keeps knocking at our hearts door,

We shouldn't give up on people either, Though we sometimes want to stop visiting, or talking to them asking them to church or to accept Christ into their heart, we need to preserve.

May 31st, Rev. Richard and wife Sis. Sandy Atwood from the National FWB Home Missions joined us for Sunday Services and we had lunch before they left for their home in Tennessee. We were encouraged by their visit.

In August we went to Glenville State College for their Convocation for their new students, we gave out Goody bags, pens with the church name on it, lanyards with the FWB home missions logo on them, church business cards, with information on them, cards with scripture verses on them and of course, a home-made cookie in each bag. We made up one hundred and fifty bags and had to give out several items with no bag.

We had our First Annual Homecoming in September with "Dinner on the Ground". All that attended said they had a great time.

We have outings like Wiener-Roast-Hayride, Covered Dish, and picnics. This helps to get to know the people and let them know how we believe, and what Free Will Baptist is all about.

One of our ladies, a retired cook from the county schools, is giving lessons on baking and cooking. We've made pepperoni rolls, loaves of bread, cinnamon rolls, and hot rolls. We go to the high school and use the big mixers and ovens; that way it won't take so long and it's a good time for fun and fellowship, ladies from other churches are invited to join us.

Kenneth and Shirley Cooper

"HOW MUCH MORE CAN BREAK?"

How Much More Can Break? Two weeks ago, Jessica called me into the nursery after service to show me that the tile floor was breaking up. This isn't all that unusual for various reasons. I found a good deal on a better quality material to replace it, and we are waiting until Rafael's dad can get loose from the job he's doing so he can come up and lay the new floor for us.

When he's here to participate in our services, Rafael sleeps in a room set up for that purpose in the church building, and uses a bathroom there. Last week, he told me that the floor in the shower that he uses is suffering from the same fate - the floor tiles are coming loose .



This means that the water is infiltrating into the concrete sub-floor - NOT GOOD ! To be able to fix this problem, we need another bath with a shower stall working . However, in an earlier remodelling job, done while we were in the U S, the showers in the other bathrooms were eliminated. That means it will be necessary to find a way to install a shower stall in one of the other bathrooms to be able to fix the one that is presently being used - a "catch-22" - one has to have both to do either, but since one doesn't exist, and the other is broken... However, the kitchen at the church is looking good, although there's more yet to be done.

Whosaidbeingamissionarypastor isn't an interesting job?

Please don't forget to pray:

- Vera Lucia, our youngest daughter continues with her chemotherapy sessions.
- Our missionary account continues to suffer the effects of the financial crisis.
- Our church is continuing the process of preparing for transfer to a Brazilian Pastor.
- Our health continues to be reasonably good for "old folks" . Pray that it will continue.

Jim & Vicki Sturgill
December 2009

ELK RIVER CONFERENCE

The Elk River Conference met with the Pisgah FWB Church on Nov. 14th. We were blessed to have with us Dr. James Cox who gave a report on the state association and upcoming events. Brother Cox also brought us a wonderful message from God's word. We were also blessed to have the gospel group "Unity" from Oak Hill WV with us. What a blessing and treat they are. We also had our Thanksgiving/Christmas dinner. What a meal was enjoyed by all. We thank all the cooks. This was such a blessed day for all of us and we thank everyone who came. It felt like the old days for us. Sister Garnett Crisswell resigned as conference clerk and Rev. Dennis Vance was elected. Please pray for Sister Garnett and Brother Fred who have both been in failing health. We all thank you Sister Garnett of your years of service to the conference and Pisgah Church we love you and thank you. Also pray for Rev. Basil Hershberger and Sister Virginia who also are having health problems. Brother Basil has been in the state association for 50 years and served as Pastor of the Pisgah Church until September 30. Next conference will be at Kelly Hill FWB, Clendenin WV, on Feb. 20, 2010.

GREENBRIER-NICHOLAS CONFERENCE

The conference met at Nile Chapel near Summersville on October 24. All the churches reported with letters and finance. Rev. Denver Danberry was the moderator, Rev. Bud Casto, was the assistant. Glen Wiley brought the message from John 1:1. Dr. Jim Cox gave a report on the work of the State Association and told about his trip to Guyana. We enjoyed a wonderful day of fellowship and singing. The next conference will be at the O'Delltown FWB Church on January 23, 2010. Rev. Dale Priest is the pastor and will moderate the conference.

EASTERN PANHANDLE CONFERENCE

The Eastern Panhandle Conference has moved its quarterly meetings from Saturdays to the second Friday evening of February, May, August, November.

TUG RIVER CONFERENCE

The next meeting of the Tug River Conference will be at the Phelps FWB Church on February 12/13, 2010. The Tug River FWB Church will have the Devotional.

Brother Daniel Scott will bring the Message on Friday Evening.

BROTHERHOOD CONFERENCE REPORT

The 372nd meeting of the Brotherhood Conference met at Spring Valley FWB Church where Rev. Willis Mills is the pastor. Daniel Castle was ordained. He is a member of the Good Shepherd FWB Church. Bro. Harold Scarberry and Bro. Arthur Smith transferred to the Brotherhood Conference from the Logan Conference pending letters of good standing.

Rev. Steve Williams and Rev. Ray Williamson were re-elected to the Executive Committee for three year terms. Bro. Irvin Scarberry resigned as the Director of the Youth Camp. Rev. Travis Baker was elected as the new Director.

The Placement Committee announced the following meeting dates and sites for 2010:

Jan. 8,9	Faith FWB Church,
April 9, 10	Central FWB Church,
July 9, 10	Conference Center,
October 8, 9	Camp Creek.

The Obituaries from the Brotherhood Conference are as follows:

Central Smith	Virginia
Trinity	George Bicker
Camp Creek	Alice Lucas
	Charles Holley

GREEN BRANCH CHURCH HAS HOMECOMING

he Green Branch FWB Church reports having a wonderful Homecoming on the second Sunday in August. Rev. Orvill Syner was the guest preacher. They had a tremendous crowd and the church had a great time. They also celebrated Pastor's Appreciation Day to honor their Pastor, Rev. Bennie Blankenship. Rev. Jackie Grimett preached and the church served dinner afterward.

FAYETTE YOUTH GROU VISITS CHILDREN'S HOME

Churches from the Fayette Conference of Free Will Baptists are teamed up with Hope Outreach in October to send a team of students to Free Will Baptist Family Ministries in Greeneville, TN. The trip was service oriented, which is a major focus of Hope Outreach. Our teens are regularly involved in service projects around our community," said Jeff Bennett, director of Hope Outreach. "We've helped clean up the neighborhood, raise money and collected food to stop hunger, and are planning several projects for the upcoming year." Bennett also explained that "this service project offers our teens an opportunity to spend a weekend mentoring at-risk teens and sharing the love of Christ with the less fortunate."

Family Ministries began in 1939 as a dream of a group of ladies to start a Free Will Baptist orphanage. Out of that dream has grown a multi-faceted and diverse ministry that is making a positive difference, from protecting the lives of the unborn to caring for senior citizens. The ministry serves young people through residential homes in Tennessee, Virginia and



Arkansas, as well as an intensive alcohol and drug treatment program, foster care, The Hope Center crisis pregnancy resource center, The Oaks Retreat Center and The Laurels Retirement and Assisted Living facility.

The trip was October 31- November 1 and items donated were in the form of household items and school supplies. Churches from the Fayette Conference visit Family Ministries twice each year - in the spring and fall.

For more information about Hope Outreach or how you can be involved with Free Will Baptist Family Ministries, you may call (304) 877-5827 (304) 877-5827 or visit www.kilsythchurch.org.

Church Experiences a Refreshing

In the 1950s, Reverend Omer Williams' idea of baptizing new converts meant taking a trip to the local swimming hole. Oftentimes breaking the ice, newly saved Christians would experience a true refreshing when following this sacred ordinance set forth by Christ in the New Testament. However, much like other modern-day conveniences,



baptisteries are very common in churches today. No longer does Skelton Free Will Baptist Church have to make a special trip to the swimming hole, but Christians can be baptized within the confines of their sanctuary. Under the leadership of Pastor Bill Bennett, Skelton Church installed a baptistery in 2006 and this mural was painted this past summer. God is truly blessing Skelton Church with new converts and workers in the church. The wonderful things God started with Rev. Williams in 1958, is continuing to thrive today.

Please pray that the people of Skelton will continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Feel free to visit Skelton's website at: www.skeltonchurch.com

WARD VANCE DIES

Rev. Ward Vance passed from this life on September 2, 2009. Rev. Vance was the pastor of the Little Harts FWB Church for more than 24 years. Rev.

Joe Lane, Charlie Rakes and Rev. Moses Vance conducted the funeral. Brother Vance will be sorely missed by his wife, Ida and other members of his family and church.

Our prayers are with the Vance family and the church.

COOP and STATE OFFERING GIFTS (October)

Bright Star FWB Church **	\$100.00
Brotherhood Ministers & Deacons **	\$ 30.50
Brotherhood Conference **	\$ 75.00
Carbon FWB Church	\$ 82.00
Christian Fellowship Center **	\$100.00
Emmons FWB Church	\$301.55
Evergreen Hills FWB Church **	\$200.00
First Altizer FWB Church **	\$200.00
Kopperston FWB Church	\$ 91.29
Loudendale FWB Church	\$ 75.00
McCorkle**	\$4511.00
McCorkle--Missionaries	\$4658.00
McCorkle--Family Ministries	\$1546.00
McCorkle--Evangelistic Outreach	\$1546.00
Montana FWB Church **	\$159.00
Nolan FWB Church	\$538.80
Parkcircle FWB Church **	\$192.00
Parsley Bottom FWB Church	\$300.00
Pierpoint FWB Church	\$100.00
Springdale FWB Church	\$339.00
Unity Conference **	\$ 82.00
Victory FWB Church	\$386.52
Virginia Odell FWB Church	\$ 87.00
Virginia Odell FWB Church **	\$393.52

** Special Offering received for State Offering Month

Note: This list is offerings received for October only.

Gifts to the State Offering are still being received and accepted.

REPORT FROM FAMILY MINISTRIES

The Christmas Season is a time of reminiscing. As I reflect upon this past year, I am reminded of the personal challenges I have been faced with over the last few months. A check up revealing colon cancer required surgery, and now I have begun a round of chemo treatments. Though I have been through a challenging ordeal, God's faith and sustaining power have been a constant in my life.

The events of this year also take me back 12 years ago when I was contacted about coming to Family Ministries. On my knees I asked God, "Is this mountain for me?" And in response, God challenged me. Today, I continue to give Him honor and praise for endurance through each new challenge, each mountain. If we choose the easy way, asking for peaceful valleys, we will never see God's power displayed to enable us to take a mountain. If we seek out these mountains, we will witness God doing things through our lives that can be explained only by His mighty presence.

The children entrusted to our care often come to us as a challenge. Because we ask for the mountain, we have been able to serve hurting families from all across the United States. We have assisted young women and their babies through The Hope Center, counseled troubled teens, & intervened in families' time of crisis. We have been blessed with 105 children so far this year making decisions for Christ!!

During the next several months as I undergo chemo, I will not be able to travel and personally meet with our wonderful supporters or share my burden about this great ministry to those who may not know what we do. This makes YOUR generosity this Christmas even more important. I am challenging you through this written appeal to reach out to our children. For ten consecutive years, more than 100 children per year have given their heart to the Lord. I know of no other ministry with such an outreach. This season, your help is critical to our financial well-being. Earmark your checks "Christmas Appeal" or go online at www.fwb_fm.com to make your credit card donation. If you are interested in giving a year-end contribution, time is of the essence for making a tax-deductible gift.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Dr. James Kilgore
Executive Director

One shining star to make the world bright,
one infant child on that wonderful night,
one little prayer for those we hold dear.
to bless you at Christmas and all through the
year.

D6 CONFERENCE - A BIG HIT IN FRISCO, TX

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I commend thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. Deut 6:4-9 KJV

What a conference! Big names, many activities, so much information! As Cindy and I flew into Dallas Love Field, we were not sure what to expect. Our Pastor (Rev Thomas Hoffmaster) has been promoting the first ever D6 Conference for over a year. After it was all said and done, this 2-day event was more than I ever expected, it was life changing.

What is D6? It's a return back to biblical principle stemmed from Deuteronomy Chapter 6. It challenges our present way of thinking by placing the responsibility for spiritual leadership back in the home, where God always intended it to be. It challenges church leaders that 1/168th of a child's time (1 hour per every week), is not enough to impact them spiritually. The statistics are staggering: "According to George Barna, 75% of young people who are active in your youth group today will no longer be in church within five years after high school. He further points out that only 5% of church parents have a biblical worldview." There is a huge disconnect, from what a child learns in Sunday school compared to what they pick up at home. If our young people are going to be reached spiritually in a sustaining way, then the church needs to equip and challenge parents, so that they can fulfill their spiritual leadership role as God intended them to have.

Both parents and youth today are influenced by our culture's tendencies to take the least resistive path. This can be seen when people maneuver to keep all options open in critical areas of their lives. This trait often results in compromises in moral, ethic, and spiritual issues. We especially see this in the area of relationships between non-committed couples.

In contrast, a common characteristic amongst parents who were successful in raising spiritually minded youth, were parents that exercised INTENTIONAL living. INTENTIONAL living focuses on principles and purpose, which was the prevailing theme at D6. Scripture provides many examples; such as Joshua's challenge in 24:15, Naomi's impact on Ruth, and the nurturing spirit of Joseph and Mary, to name a few. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 teaches parents to live INTENTIONAL lives so that they will be in a position to develop worship, wisdom, and perseverance to the next generation.

Today's youth is not the same as the youth that I grew up with. Their music's different, the way they connect with friends are different, their worldview is different. If the church is going remain relevant and have a significant impact on their lives, then it's going take more than the 1 hour we have with them on Sunday morning. It's also time for church leaders to tool-up parents in the teaching of spiritual issues in the home. A young person's life can be greatly impacted when both parent and church work together to meet their spiritual need, especially during the rocky years of adolescence. The D6 Website (<http://d6conference.com>) can provide many resources to help with connecting parents, church, and youth. I've been excited to see how our Pastor has implemented these resources to engage our youth and parents already.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:10-14



PROMOTIONAL DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT

September – 2009

Sept. 6--Returned from Missions trip to Guyana, South America

Sept. 9--Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College – Made a DVD promote October State Offering Month

Sept. 12--Homiletics Seminar at Good Shepherd Church in Huntington

Sept. 12--Preached at Valley View in Hurricane.

Sept. 15 Taught Sunday School Ministry at Bible Institute at Central

Sept. 17---Trip to SWVCTC to approve DVDs.

Sept. 19 – Homiletic Seminar at Kilsyth Church in Mt. Hope

Sept. 20---Preached Homecoming at Susanna Church at Milton

Sept. 22---Sunday School Ministry at Central

Sept. 27 ---Showed slides of Guyana trip at Springdale

Sept. 29---Sunday School Ministry at Central

Month-- October, 2009

Churches Visited--

McCorkle,

Mills Chapel

Central--Huntington

Valley View---Hurricane

Springdale-----Hurricane

October Report (con't.)

Conferences Visited

Brotherhood Conference Oct. 9, 10

Greenbrier Nicholas Conference Oct. 24

Logan Conference Oct. 31

BIBLE INSTITUTE

We have two Bible Institutes meeting at this time, one at Nolan and one at Central in Huntington. We have ordered well over 125 books for the Bible Institutes. God is blessing and I believe it is a great thing for us to be training so

many people for ministry in our churches. The Promotional Director has been teaching "Sunday School Ministry" each Tuesday night at Huntington.

MAILINGS

We have done two mailings this past month. One was DVDs to every church about the October State Offering. The second mailing was to area churches about the Homiletics seminar at Victory FWB Church on Nov. 7. We mailed announcements to about twenty churches outside the Logan Conference. Announcements were hand delivered to the Logan Conference churches at their conference.

OTHER

The Promotional Director preached a homecoming at The Community FWB Church in West Jefferson, Ohio where I pastored from 1974-78. It was their fiftieth anniversary. I preached twice at the Keensburg FWB Church in Elizabethton, Tennessee on Oct. 18th. On Oct. 20th I preached at the Appalachian Conference Revival in Johnson City, Tennessee.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Promotional Director has presented three Homiletics Seminars thus far this year. He will be presenting another at the Victory FWB Church on Nov. 7, 2009 at the Victory FWB Church at Pecks Mill where Roscoe Chaffin is the pastor.

STATE OFFERING MONTH

The Promotional Director has vigorously promoted October State Offering Month the past few weeks. Many thanks to those churches, conferences and individuals who supported. May God bless you for all you do.

Free Will Baptist International Missions thanks you for your participation in sharing the gospel with thousands of people this year through your gifts and prayers.

Pray for efforts around the world to share the Good News of Christ's birth during this Christmas season.



The St. Nazaire live Nativity is one of many creative methods used to meet people and share the gospel message.



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Photo by Jerry Gibbs

PREPARING THE HEART TO PREACH

The scripture tells that Ezra (Ezra 7:10) prepared his heart to teach the Word. What does it mean “he prepared his heart”?

God must call a minister, but the minister is responsible to prepare to teach. It does not come by osmosis. Preaching *is* teaching. It is done somewhat differently than classroom teaching but the intent is to inform and motivate. Notice in Nehemiah 8: 4-8 that Ezra stood on a pulpit of wood. He then read the law distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused the people to understand. For me, that is the classic definition of preaching. Get whatever training you can, continue to pray and study, then preach.

A heart that is prepared to preach God’s Word is filled with a passion to preach. I have on several occasions heard men say that they did not want to preach. If a man does not want to preach I don’t want to hear him. It is when he has that burning desire to preach a message that souls will be thrilled and saved. When God has given us a burning message we cannot wait for the singers to sit down so that we can deliver that sermon. It is like Jeremiah who said it was burning fire shut up in his bones, he could not keep silent. Never turn down an opportunity to preach. Paul says that a man who desires the office of a bishop desires a good work. We need a desire before our hearts can be prepared.

Next, preaching must be a priority with the man of God. Preparing and delivering sermons is time-consuming and hard work. Many things can interfere with our preaching, but pastors and preachers must give diligence and make their preaching a priority. You cannot neglect preaching for hunting, fishing, television, sports and every other matter that comes up. Not even a secular job should keep one from their call to the pulpit. I heard many weak excuses for men not attending our Homiletic seminars. Some do not consider preaching to be their life’s priority.

Third, a preacher should have a purpose for preaching and should have a purpose for each sermon he preaches. The purpose may be to win some lost person or it may be for the Christian. We often need to preach a message of comfort or hope to the church. They are hungry souls who are buffeted by the world and come longing to hear from God. Sometimes they need correction or instruction in righteousness. Pastors should tell their people how to live. We need to preach stewardship, missions, visitation, prayer, and many other topics. Preach the whole counsel of God, edify (teach) the saints.

Finally, preaching should be powerful. The Word itself is powerful. Paul said it was quick and powerful. Preachers will be powerful if they are students of the Word. Study to show yourselves approved unto God. Live Godly, clean lives and dedicate yourself to preaching, and your preaching will be powerful. When Ezra taught the people they wept when they heard the law of the Lord. Being a powerful preacher does not necessarily mean that one is loud or animated. It does mean that people will be engaged and moved by the message. Just preach the Word and the Word will either convict, convert or consecrate. The Holy Spirit will do the rest. Rabbit hunting does not make good sermons. Powerful sermons come from intense sessions of prayer and long hours with your Bible.

CAN YOU IMAGINE?

Can you imagine a city with limited electricity; mostly fueled by gas generators, and only for a few hours a day? Can you imagine a place with no water except from the river where women and children go twice a day with towels, toothbrushes and dirty clothes to wash; all in the black water of the Essquibo River?

Imagine if you can cows, chickens, goats and other animals walking freely along the so called streets. More bugs, mosquitoes, ants, lizards and frogs than you have seen in a lifetime. Houses built on stilts to keep the wild animals out and where you sleep under mosquito nets. A place that is 100 degrees and 100% humidity day and night, with no place to escape it. Can you imagine having Vacation Bible School with 100 children, in a one room church with wooden benches? Food, lessons and crafts are all held in the same place. Oh, and did I mention that you get to this VBS by Boat? Not a boat like we have here, but a wooden boat with a few boards to sit on and water and bugs in the bottom. Imagine if you can a storm coming up on this river that is three miles wide. To keep you and your VBS supplies and food dry, you cover up with a stinky tarp. When you arrive at one of the 365 islands, that make up Guyana, you wade water to get to the island. Then you climb up rock cliffs and stairs to reach the village.

Can you imagine? I don’t think so. However, amidst this poverty, and lack of what we know of as a way of life are people who love their families and try to work and provide for them the best way they can. They are thankful for what they have and are so willing to share their meager supplies with strangers from a land that is so unlike theirs. They love God and are not ashamed to worship Him with their whole heart.

Bartica, Guyana, South America---August-September 2009

Submitted By: Linda Hutchison

Our Missions Trip to Guyana, South America

Diana and I flew To New York, then to Trinidad and Tobago, and finally to Georgetown, Guyana. Guyana is a small country on the Northeast coast of South America and is on the Atlantic Ocean. We spent a few hours in Georgetown after our two day trip, then began our journey up river. We had met up with our team of eight people in Georgetown, including Jim and Linda Hutchinson from the Central FWB Church in Huntington, WV. Four members of the team were Southern Baptists from Mississippi including a medical doctor, an associate pastor, and two ladies.



A van took us about twenty miles to Perika where we boarded an open boat for our forty-five mile trip to Bartika. During the trip we ran into a deluge. This is rain forest country. We never even slowed down during the rain. The river must have been at least three miles wide and very muddy.

Arriving in Bartika we had to step out of the boat into water and carry our luggage up a bank to the back door of the pastor's home. We stayed in the home of Pastor Yasin of the Full Gospel Church. The next morning being Sunday we went to the Bartika Baptist Church at 7:30 where a preacher in our group, Brother Lee preached. Then we went directly to the Full Gospel Church where I preached. Church began at nine and we were a little late. No problem. Pastor Yasin told me that they usually let out by twelve but if I preached a little longer, it was OK. The singing was outstanding.

That evening, the men took a boat three miles across the river to Camp Goshen, a very primitive little church camp at the edge of the river and surrounded by jungle. We had to sleep under mosquito nets or bathed in repellent. Monkeys fought in the banana trees at night. For the next week we had a group of church pastors and leaders whom we taught each day. They were wonderful people who sang and laughed as they worshipped. From 7:00 AM until 9:00 PM we taught these dear folks in a building with open slats on the sides to let in the air. The temperature was around 100 degrees each day. Four men took turns teaching. The doctor taught the Book of Revelation. I taught Colossians. We taught and ate in the same building. One day someone caught a big fish in the river in front of the building so we had fish for lunch and dinner but the mosquitoes had us for supper.

We did not see our wives until afternoon on Friday. They were conducting one-day Vacation Bible Schools at various villages along the river. The women would take school supplies and craft material. They travelled by boat up one of the rivers to a little village. They would scramble up the banks with their goods and food where they would enter an empty building. Soon 80 or 90 kids would show up for the Bible school. They would teach and then cook lunch for the kids of the village. Lunch consisted of a huge pot of rice with beans and chicken or fish. No pizza. The kids were of all ages and they loved the school. The women fell in love with the children. It was a marvelous week and Jesus was exalted.

Part of our team left on Friday evening to go home to Mississippi. We had a free day on Saturday but what do you do in Bartika? We took a boat ride up the river in a very fast boat. Dredges were scraping the bottom of the river for gold. We parked our boat at one site and hiked into the jungle to look at some falls. Beautiful parrots flew overhead and a snake crossed the path between Diana and me. Many strange sounds came out of the jungle. It was after dark when we returned from our little adventure.

On Sunday I preached three times and assisted Pastor Yasin in a marriage ceremony. Monday we all went across the river to Camp Goshen teach a new group consisting of all women. However, each afternoon Diana and I boated back to Bartika where I preached revival services. Jim Hutchinson came with us some evenings to sing. Back across the river Sister Linda Hutchinson did hairdos and makeovers one night. The native women were delighted. Diana did blood pressure and diabetes screenings. But again they worshiped and studied each day. On Friday afternoon we began our journey back down the river,



then home. Diana and I got home Sunday night with wonderful memories of how the Lord had blessed us in Guyana. We have dear friends that we may not see again until we meet them in Heaven.

Diana and I wish to thank the WV Missions Board for helping to sponsor our trip. Dr. James H. Cox

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS AMBASSADORS MEET IN NASHVILLE

Free Will Baptist International Missions' Ambassadors gathered September 21-22, 2009, to discuss the success of the 2009 World Missions Offering (WMO) and to plan WMO initiatives for 2010. During the meeting, the Ambassadors voted to set the 2010 WMO goal at \$600,000.

The Ambassador program was established in the fall of 2006. Since then, WMO church participation has increased by 48% and the monetary growth has skyrocketed by 83.5%.

Development Director Barry Simpson stated, "The Ambassador team is essential to the success of the WMO. These men and their wives have done an outstanding job with their assignments and I look forward to promoting the WMO and the *Change the World* coin banks with them in 2010."



The 2010 Ambassador team (and the states in which they will promote the WMO) is:

Jimmy and Janie Aldridge (Alabama, Florida); Earnie and Jean Deeds (Oklahoma); Galen and Barbara Dunbar (South Carolina); Fred and June Hersey (Alabama, Georgia); Tom and Nancy Hughes (Arizona, Idaho, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Northwest District); Jerry and Carol Pinkerton (Missouri); Mark and Deanna Price (Kentucky, Ohio); Norman and Bessie Richards (Arkansas, Kentucky); David and Pat Shores (Illinois); Henry and Virginia

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