



Growing Churches in Ghana

Healthy local churches are an important part of the GRID-NEA development model.

In Northern Ghana, people usually acknowledge spiritual forces as real and integral to their lives. These forces, which might be called gods or spirits, are recognized as having power over all aspects of community and family life.

As a result, any form of development that happens in Northern Ghana intersects with people's spirituality at some level. GRID and NEA recognize this, and seek to help people develop strong and healthy faith practices.

We believe that the local traditional religions breed fear and poverty in communities. People give unaffordable gifts seeking power or other benefits from the gods. A person never knows if they have strong enough protection against enemies who may want to harm them, which encourages more spending for more power.

We therefore work with local churches to explain to people the

hope and security that we have found in Jesus. This usually happens after we have worked long enough with a community that they have asked us about our faith. Sometimes, however, we have had communities from outside of our program ask us to come and explain our faith to them!

We have been introducing Jesus to Northern Ghanaians for over 20 years now. Many men and women who were seeking a way out of traditional religions have found hope and a new life in Him. There are now 35 new churches planted in our project area.

These growing churches need pastors and leaders, and the men and women who lead must be equipped to care for the believers in their communities.

In this issue we are going to introduce you to some of the special people who lead the churches in the Deg area, and to those who volunteer their time supporting church growth in Northern Ghana.



Doug and Virginia Webster joined us for a week this past June. Doug teaches pastoral theology and preaching at Beeson Divinity School, and it was a privilege for our pastors to learn from him. The Websters have been long-time friends of GRID. Currently Virginia, a GRID board member, volunteers her time in creating our quarterly newsletters.

GRID (Ghana Rural Integrated Development) and NEA (Northern Empowerment Association) are partner organizations working to alleviate poverty in Northern Ghana. Motivated by Christ's love, our mission is to assist poor communities to meet their basic needs in a sustainable manner. You can learn more at grid-nea.org.

Pastors' Leadership Conference

by Virginia Webster



In June 2011, Doug and I made our way to Carpenter for the Pastors' Conference. There were 75 pastors from the 35 churches planted by GRID-NEA. Ten women active in ongoing ministry joined them.

God is at work and it was a joy to experience it once again. In a country that labors under such burdens and obstacles, the Lord has richly blessed the work.

You can imagine the logistical effort to feed and house everyone for six days, but NEA's head of hospitality, Abraham, kept the kitchen at full capacity and everyone was happy to have time for fellowship and theological teaching. By God's grace and David's skilled wisdom and translating skills, the negative and positive tensions of ministry were explored. We were deeply rooted in the Word of God the whole time.

The level of quick, animated discussion was an encouraging sign. There was a lively discussion on whether preaching or farming was harder work. You would have thought you were in the company of the early church fathers as they debated the eternal values of the Kingdom and the necessity of physical labor. It was exhausting and invigorating at the same time.



Building Churches

by Brenda Mensah

In May of this year, 30 volunteers from Westney Heights and Uxbridge Baptist churches joined us in Ghana to construct a church building and to teach in the town of Subinso.

Each day, 11 volunteers taught three primary schools: two Catholic and one Islamic. We weren't sure if the Islamic school would welcome us, but the headmistress was thrilled to see us. There were over 800 students between the three schools. Our volunteers did an incredible job of having lessons prepared for each class for each day. By the end of the two weeks progress could already be seen.

Our volunteers had gathered so many school supplies that we were able to give two full suitcases to each of the Subinso schools, along with a fourth school -- and we still have supplies to give away!

The other 19 men and women from Canada worked alongside 20 pastors and several members of the Subinso congregation at the church construction site. Our foreman, Ebenezer, did a great job of conducting his orchestra of masons, carpenters, and unskilled but willing hands. Since the



Westney Heights and Uxbridge Baptist Churches Team

foundation and floor had already been done and the blocks had already been molded, the walls came up very quickly. The weather was considerably better than expected and there were a number of days with short rainy periods or cloud cover that were much appreciated. There were no accidents, for which we are thankful.

Seeing the Canadians and Ghanaians working together meant a lot to the people in Subinso. Several people came to talk to David at the worksite and told him they'd be coming to the church once it was opened -- including one elder of the town who said he'd never been in a church before.

There is a man in Subinso who once made his living with witchcraft and who had brought it for us to burn. Even though he needs a pretty sturdy walking stick to get around, he came to the worksite nearly every day, and once with a gift of yams for the visitors. He told us one day that he thinks he's happier than anybody else in the congregation that this church is being built. He explained that the place they

meet at now is such a long way away that he usually has to sleep at the meeting place since it's too long for him to walk both ways in the same day. He shared how happy he is that he has found Christ - even his dreams are sweet - and that he is never going back to the old ways.

The beautiful new church in Subinso is the 16th church building that has been constructed in the area with help from GRID, NEA, other organizations, and our much-appreciated volunteers.

URGENT Reminder!

We are still receiving mail at our old address in Nova Scotia. We don't want to miss your correspondence, so please send your mail to:

GRID
PO Box 398
Milton, ON
L9T 4Y9

Effective October 2011, we will not receive mail sent to our former address.



Completed project:
the Subinso church

Dedicating the Kandige Church



Doug Webster was present for the special ceremony



Kandige was the 15th church constructed in the area



Ebenezer worked very hard to see this day!

A Note from the Chief ...

Things continue to be exciting here. We are so busy right now! Our ground nut crop is excellent this year and we are in the middle of harvest. The rains have come, making it really difficult for our endeavours. Don't pray for the rains to stop, though -- we need all the rains we can get!

In the last months several new things have happened in Carpenter, particularly in the aquaculture sector. In addition to growing tilapia, we have now successfully hatched our first batches of catfish fingerlings -- another breakthrough. We have had a machine made in Ghana that allows us to make our own fish feed pellets, which will greatly reduce the cost of production since we can grow several of the ingredients needed.

Our latest addition to the crop sector is ginger. Our experimental plot is about two acres and it is looking quite healthy!

We have had some very special times with recent visitors. It was great to have the team from Westney Heights/Uxbridge Baptist Church to build a church in Subinso and to work in the Subinso primary schools. We were delighted to have our dear friends and GRID board members, Dr. Doug and Virginia Webster, for a training time with the Evangelical Christ Apostolic Churches pastors. Our NEA senior staff was particularly pleased to receive project management training in June from Lynnta Weber. We are grateful for each one who made the effort to be with us and use their unique skills to support GRID/NEA's efforts in Ghana.

We are also grateful to each of you who continue to support and follow the progress being made in life after life in Ghana.

Together, in Christ's name, we are making an incredible difference. Shalom,

David Mensah

P.S. One of the more surprising events over the last few weeks was a visit to our Janga project by a stray male lion. It caused quite a concern to our herdsman and our cattle but we are pleased to report that when last seen it was heading in the direction of the Mole National Game Park - a much safer place for the lion, the staff and the cattle! It's another reminder that we really are working in rural northern Ghana!



Donate to GRID

Online

<http://grid-nea.org/donate>

Cheque

Cheques made out to Ghana Rural Integrated Development should be sent to our address in Milton.

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