



Celebrating Gifts of Love

A Christmas letter from David and Brenda Mensah

Dear Friends,

We have been able to meet with many of you in recent months, and you have overwhelmed us with your kindness. We have been blessed by your interest in our work, your faithful prayers, and your unexpected, generous donations.

Some of you shared with us the stories behind your donations. We learned of friends in difficult circumstances who sacrificed much to help the poor in Ghana. We heard of children who emptied out piggy banks or gave up their birthday presents, wanting to help Ghanaian

children. We know of team members who are not only volunteering their time, but are also donating funds so that our work together will be successful!

We are grateful for these gifts, and many more, that you have so freely given.

Your generosity reminds us of God's spirit of giving, which He so powerfully demonstrated in the gift of Jesus that first Christmas two thousand years ago.

As we enter the Christmas season, we want to use this newsletter to celebrate the spirit of giving. The stories that we



share in these pages are about gifts of love that have changed lives. Each page is a heartfelt "thank you" to you, our friends, for your many gifts.

Merry Christmas, and may God bless you richly in the new year,

David & Brenda Mensah

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**.



Junior High School, Carpenter

The Gift of Education

The Carpenter Junior High School was funded and built by two special teams. Today it is the top school in Bole District.

When GRID and NEA started work in the Deg region in 1996, among our many concerns were the school children in Carpenter who had to walk about one hour to attend school.

In 2008, two of GRID's friends were celebrating their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary and wanted to do something meaningful to mark the occasion. They asked if they could help out in Ghana in any way, and we mentioned the need for a junior high school in Carpenter. So they organized a big family and friends team to celebrate their anniversary! They raised funds for half of the materials needed for a school, donated money for travel costs, and gave up their time just to

start a Junior High school in tiny Carpenter.

Soon after, another group of consistent friends from Bloomington Evangelical Community Church did the same thing: raised funds for half of the building materials, donated money for travel costs, and came to finish the building.

And just this past month we have had the wonderful news that every student graduating from Carpenter's Junior High school has qualified for Secondary School. This is quite an achievement, and it is the only school in Bole District to be able to boast of this. That is news worth celebrating!

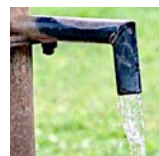
Our sincere thanks to the team members and their many supporters who gave so generously, making it possible for children in Carpenter to receive a good education.

Newborns Rescued



Your faithful giving this year has saved forty-four babies. Your donations to the Leyaata Project, matched by CIDA, were used to train community health volunteers to identify sick newborns and refer them to clinics for help. On behalf of the 44 precious little ones who were saved by this care, thank you!

Life-giving Water



Claremont Baptist Church provided funds for a well to be drilled in Carpenter. This well has been pouring out clean water for nearly 10 years, and is crucial to our aquaculture program. Today seven communities harvest fish ponds stocked by the fish hatchery that was made possible by this well.

Gifts for the Church



We have been blessed by pastors who have given of their time and skills to train church leaders in northern Ghana. With 36 churches growing in the area, the gift of equipping leaders to care for their congregations is far-reaching. We are grateful.

Youth Helping Youth



The youth of Westney Heights Baptist Church creatively raised funds to help 26 poor students go on to secondary school! Thank you for giving to your peers in Ghana.

Gifts from Africa

by Dr. Jennifer Wilson

In the past five years that the Ghana Health Team has traveled to Northern Ghana, we have been showered with gifts: fruits, vegetables, rams, eggs, and chickens.

As precious as these gifts are, even more valuable to me are the non-material gifts that our Ghanaian friends have given.



The Gift of Hope

NEA is restoring hope to thousands of people through its development programs. Nonetheless, there are still only 17 doctors for 2.5 million people, and none in the area where NEA works. There is little hope that illness can be cured. And yet our friends continue to hope. One chief told me, "Never did we have hope of ever seeing a doctor. That you people would come through the air to visit us brings us hope that the world cares, that we are not forgotten, that there is hope for a better future for our children." I now understand the value of hope.



The Gift of Time

Our friends in Africa don't have the time-saving devices that we in North America do. Yet they seem to have more time for family, for friends, for leisure, and for God. I have learned from them that there is indeed enough time for the important things in life. It is up to us how we choose to use the gift of time.



The Gift of Thankfulness

Thankfulness in North America is easy: we say thanks, and maybe send an email. But in Ghana, thanking someone involves making a journey to meet them, presenting them

with gifts, and then spending time in thankfulness with them. From them, I have learned what it means to be truly thankful to God, the giver of every good and perfect gift.



The Gift of God's Hand

I have never seen God's hand at work so obviously as when we are in Ghana. Like when torrential rains miraculously stopped the day we began our first clinic, and resumed as soon as our last clinic was completed. Or when a little girl, unconscious from anemia, was prayed for and recovered prior to any treatment being given. It is a gift to see the hand of the Most High God at work. Here in North America we think *our* hands are strong enough to deal with life's circumstances. What a gift it has been to learn to rely on God's hand.

All of these are gifts that I have received from my friends in Ghana; ones that I continue to unwrap for myself.

Did my gift make a difference?

Recently a young girl asked us if the money she had donated to GRID would be enough to help other children. We thought some adults might have a similar question, and so we'll share with you the value of some of the common things that we spend your donations on.

Your gifts, large and small, have made a difference. Thank you!



Mosquito Net

Malaria is the primary cause of death in the region. A mosquito net is the best way of preventing malaria. With your help, we plan to distribute thousands of nets.

\$10



Goat

When we provide a woman with a goat and training in animal husbandry, she agrees to pass the first female kid on to another woman. It's a gift that benefits many!

\$125

Peanut Farm

Your gifts enable us to provide seeds, tools, and training to a woman so that she can start a peanut farm. This will feed her and her family for life.

\$200



Scholarship

Many young people can't afford to go to secondary school or beyond without the scholarships that we can provide with your help.

\$500



<h2 style="color: #0056b3; margin: 0;">Contact Us</h2> <p>Ghana Rural Integrated Development PO Box 398 Milton, ON L9T 4Y9</p> <p>T: 289-429-1099 F: 905-878-4597 E: grid@grid-nea.org W: grid-nea.org</p>	<h2 style="color: #0056b3; margin: 0;">Donate from Canada</h2> <p>Donate Online grid-nea.org/donate</p> <p>Donate By Cheque Please make your cheque payable to GRID and mail it to us in Milton (see address at left).</p>	<h2 style="color: #0056b3; margin: 0;">Donate from USA</h2> <p>Please make your check payable to Evangelical Community Church, and designate it to GRID.</p> <p>Mail checks to: Evangelical Community Church 503 S. High St. Bloomington, IN 47401</p>
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