



IMPACT UPDATES

IN ALL THINGS - WE ARE THANKFUL

BY: JACQUES LAPOINTE (GRID CHAIRMAN)

COVID -19 will long be remembered worldwide for its negative impact on almost every aspect of life, and GRID-NEA was not exempted. Yet despite this, ours is a story of thanks, encouragement, and hope. I hope you will be encouraged by what follows.

WE ARE THANKFUL THAT...

None of our Ghana staff or their families were stricken by COVID, in fact, there has been no report of a single case in the four districts where most of the 200,000 people that we serve live. Thanks to the Lord for His protection.

Despite nation-wide lockdowns, all of our major projects are tracking positively again. Yes, construction sites were shut down for some weeks, and Leyaata Ane was delayed because of travel restrictions, but all are back on track for successful completion.

Our churches continue to grow. We have planted two new congregations and graduated three new pastors in 2020. For a number of months, churches were closed throughout Ghana, but with the creative use of technology, Dr. Mensah delivered Sunday messages that anyone with a cellphone could pick up, and many did. Churches have now re-opened with few restrictions.

We are weathering the storm financially. Our hardest hit sector was deliveries of shea butter to The Body Shop. This had been NEA's largest source of

earned income but has been severely affected in 2020. Thanks to its financial reserves and other sources of earned income, NEA has managed to self-sustain and meet its payroll. In Canada and the USA, our faithful donors have dug deeply in this time of need so that we are only slightly behind 2019 donation levels. We have also been able to take advantage of the Government of Canada COVID support program which has also been a tremendous help. Thanks to the Lord for His care.

WE ARE ENCOURAGED AND HOPEFUL THAT...

In 2021 we will see the opening of the Leyaata Hospital that will become the focal point of our health care work. Construction is on track for completion in mid-2021. Equipment, staffing and other pre-opening activities are progressing. The completion of a 100-bed dormitory is also expected next year. This is needed for training, for Chiefs' conferences and other large gatherings that have become the norm. Training is the key to building sustainable development.

We will be able to construct at least two new church buildings for congregations that desperately need them, thanks to funding from a major supporter. The new 500 capacity church building in Carpenter will be completed in a few months and pastors continue to be trained at Bible College.

We will be able to support new deserving students through our Scholarship Program.

--> (continue on page 4)

The Next Generation of Church Leaders

RISING UP AND SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE

BY: DR. DAVID MENSAH (GRID & NEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)

Christ's love is our motivation in helping the weak, standing up for those without rights, healing the sick, and comforting the broken-hearted.

For many years, you supported us in reaching out to community after community to speak and live out the Gospel. The result is the establishment of 46 congregations.

YOU helped train pastors and lay leaders.

YOU sponsored several gifted leaders through college training.

YOU provided motorbikes for the pastors so that they can more easily visit those under their care.

YOU helped build church buildings in many communities.

'First-generation Christians' make up most of the ECAC's (Evangelical Christ Apostolic Church) congregations, but that is rapidly changing as their children (about 65% of the youth) are rising and taking leadership in many ways. By definition, in the church, 'youth' includes school-age children up to college and careers - or the under 30 set. This update will focus on some of the things this church demographic is up to.

Pastor Solomon, one of the recently trained pastors, assumed the role of ECAC Youth Pastor, providing oversight of youth programs for the 46 ECAC congregations. Elijah, the ECAC Youth Coordinator, supports him. Based on proximity to each other, the youth groups are divided into four zones: Kintampo, Yaara, Subinso and Bamboi.

Each zone has a youth leader who works with the youth in the local church. Youth leaders organize monthly zonal meetings and rotate around to the churches within the zone. They invite other ECAC pastors and church members to speak. Youths meet at least twice a week for times of praise, study of

God's Word and mentorship from senior leaders in their home churches. They are also involved in "Youth Ministry Week," whereby they lead all the church meetings, including the Sunday service.

Every year, youths from all the churches come together for a "Youth Conference." They take the time to pray, hear from senior pastors, play games, and even go on a field trip. Last year's Youth Conference had over 200 in attendance. It was amazing to hear that they worked at various jobs like weeding people's farms or gardens to earn funds to pay their way to attend. It was too important to miss!



2019 Youth Conference attended by youths from the four zones: Kintampo, Yaara, Subinso and Bamboi.

The Bamboi Zone organized a special program for the Junior High and Senior High Graduates with the Theme "Let Us Exalt His Name Together." The purpose was to come together to praise and thank God for helping them reach these educational milestones. The 45 girls and 31 boys who attended are now in a 'gap year' as they await their results before proceeding to secondary school or university. They were encouraged to take good care of themselves during this period.

--> **(continue on page 3)**

The Next Generation of Church Leaders

RISING UP AND SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE

(continued from page 2)

One of the pastors helped establish the Service Brigade. The young men and women who are part of this group provide service at large church gatherings (conferences, weddings and funerals). They carry and set up canopies and chairs, usher people to available seating, distribute water to the thirsty and bring a special dignity to the role of pallbearers in times of bereavement.



Service Brigade getting ready to serve their congregation.

Youths at the Carpenter Church noted that a senior church member's shelter was inadequate and unsafe and came up with a plan to remedy this. All of the youth group moulded the mud blocks needed to build a better building. Youths employed in the area contributed from their earnings to purchase some building materials. With an additional donation of some cement and roofing sheets, they completed the work. They had a meaningful 'commissioning' whereby they handed the building over to the owner and prayed for him as he took possession!



The old house (photo above) and the new house (photo below).



It is thrilling to see this next generation rising up and continually looking for ways to love the Lord with all their hearts, souls, minds and strength and their neighbours as themselves. We look forward to seeing all that God will do in and through them in the years ahead.

Special acknowledgement to Prosper Yeaka, NEA staff and one of the key church youth leaders who provided information and photos for this update.

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(continued from page 1)

WE ARE ENCOURAGED AND HOPEFUL THAT...

The Leyaata Ane Project will be successfully completed and the new Babanayaa Project will be initiated for its three-year run. Both of these are major multi-year projects funded by both the Government of Canada and donations from our donors. The impact of such projects is life-changing for large numbers of people.

One new shea butter order has recently been received. It may be a long time before this gets back to normal again as it depends on how quickly the rest of the world opens up, but it's a good start.

Our 2020 year-end donors will dig deep once again to help replenish our GRID reserves. 50% of our annual income is typically received in the last six weeks of the year. Much of what can be accomplished in Ghana in 2021 will be determined in the next few weeks. How many wells we drill, how many farmers receive help, how many women can be trained to sustain themselves and their families, and many more such activities depend on our generous supporters.

A PERIOD OF RE-FOCUS

With the completion of a number of major capacity-building projects in 2021, we will be re-focusing on programs to accelerate the building of healthy, self-sustaining communities. With 160 villages and towns under our care, there is much to do.

Early in the New Year, Dr. Mensah and I will be communicating plans for this and how you can be involved. So much has been accomplished, yet there is so much more to do. We always seek wisdom and direction from the Lord, so your prayers are much valued.

I simply want to conclude by thanking you on behalf of all of us and those who are impacted by your faithfulness. May you receive the Lord's blessings as we celebrate His birth and wait with great expectation for what is to come in the New Year.

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KEEPING THE LEGACY ALIVE

Joan Maguire first set foot on Carpenter soil in Ghana, West Africa in 2009. Since that day, she dedicated her entire being to helping deliver health and hope to thousands of men, women and children in Northern Ghana.

In June, it was with a heavy heart that we bid farewell to our dear Joan as she went to be with the Lord. It is not surprising that Joan has requested donations in her memory to provide opportunities for young men and women in Ghana to enter this profession, which she loved so dearly. Over \$15K has been raised toward nursing scholarships in memory of Joan.

Joan's legacy will live on in the lives of all she touched in Ghana and in the future Ghanaian nurses whose training was and will be made possible by her and her family.

We are so thankful to GRID & NEA for their partnership in creating the Joan Maguire Nursing Scholarship, and we are overwhelmed by the generous donations that have already been given in our mom's honour. As a family, we want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for giving so much generosity. We hope that her legacy of love will continue to ripple through the nurses who receive scholarships. To their families, patients and community.

- Meagan (Marcus, Noah, Finnley and Levi)
Jeff (Robyn and Emmett)



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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.