

buzz

November 23, 2014

Benin Bible Institute Celebrates 30 Years of Ministry

The weekend of October 16-19, 2014, Benin Bible Institute celebrated its 30th anniversary. For history buffs, this counts BBI's start as occurring when Dr. David Shank of Mennonite Board of Missions began teaching a one week yearly seminar in 1983 for Benin's church leaders.



Arlette and Theophane Boko, who have visited WMC

The theme for the weekend celebration was entitled, "Church and the Development of African Nations: A Benin Case Study."

I was able to attend because the organization for which I currently work, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM), held its annual board and ministry meetings in Benin in October. Our AIMM delegation, made up of Mennonite leaders from Congo and Burkina Faso, and mission representatives from North America, was able to participate throughout the festivities.

The weekend began with Thursday and Friday being designated as "Open Door" days, meaning that the general public was invited to become acquainted with BBI by visiting the premises.

This lack of a structured program on Friday turned out to be of great benefit for our delegation. We were able to travel with BBI Administrator Bonaventure Akowanou, Board President Frederic Djodjouhouin and Vice President Bruno Gansa, to visit BBI's farm at the village of Oumako toward the Togo border.



There has been wonderful development on the farm. A major step forward has been the completion of an 18 bed dormitory for students, as well as a classroom.

There is an agricultural advisory group working on organizing the contents and length of the various courses to be taught, i.e. rabbit raising; market gardening; etc. Once the course modules have been finalized, the farm can begin its teaching ministry! The farm has really moved forward in terms of agricultural production. One hectare of plaintain bananas has been planted, and another hectare of the "solo" variety of papaya. Both these items are popular in markets across Benin, and should be steady income producers for BBI.

The rabbits are sold to local restaurants, as well as for local consumption. The chickens are interbred, combining the disease resistance of local varieties with the superior size and egg production of imported chickens. The BBI farm is well on the way to becoming a significant income generator for BBI programs. Carrots, eggplant, hot peppers, cabbage, and greens are among the vegetables grown for the local market. Trees planted on the farm include moringa, acacia, eucalyptus, and mango.



My overall impressions of the 30th Anniversary BBI Celebration was that it was truly a celebration of what

God has done over these last 30 years. There was a good spirit among BBI staff- everyone made good contributions to the success of the event. We were served delicious meals by a current student who runs a catering service. Several of the "pioneers," those who made contributions years ago that led to the establishment of BBI, including Papa Michel Dossou, Gaetan Simenou, Theodore Hounbedji and Augustin Ahoga, graced a session or two with their presence. We heard inspiring and challenging presentations which illustrated the relevance of Jesus, the church, and its message for true and lasting national development. Current church to BBI partnerships were acknowledged for their importance for the ongoing life and vitality of the Bible Institute.

—Rod Hollinger-Janzen



Faith Temple Reestablished in New Orleans

(see pictures on left)

On Nov. 7, the people of Faith Temple Church of God dedicated the house at 3817 Buchanan St. in New Orleans as their

new meeting place and the dwelling for Gladier Dalton and her granddaughter Brandi Morris. Joining them were friends and neighbors and six members of College Mennonite.

With this event Faith Temple can reestablish its work in the community from which it was flooded nine years ago following hurricane Katrina. It is now in a position to begin to develop ministries of evangelism and service in the community.

The dedication also marks the completion of the reconstruction work which began on March 9. This was possible because a massive team effort of an Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) partnership of five Goshen Mennonite Churches East Goshen, College, Eighth Street, East Goshen, North Goshen, and Waterford. Approximately 31 volunteers worked from Goshen helped with reconstruction. An additional 39 came in several service groups. Besides the work of volunteers and prayers, contributions amounting to \$44,365 were given.

The CMC-MDS Leadership Team of College Mennonite expresses heartfelt thanks to all who joined in this ministry and rejoices that by working together we have been able to assist Faith Temple in reestablishing its ministry.

The total cost of the project is approximately \$61,000, Approximately \$ 17,000 is still needed to pay for the materials. Contributions are welcome any time. Please designate your gifts; for the MDS Faith Temple Church.

Dig-In Book Return

We are waiting for people and classes who are currently studying the *Dig-In* study books to return them. They need to be distributed to the classes that will be using them next quarter. There is a “*Dig-In* book return” box on the lost

and found table by the library for people to place them the next couple of weeks. Please make sure you turn in your books when you are finished with them this quarter.

Website Face-lift

If you have been to our website in the past week, you should notice some exciting changes. We have updated our website with a new look, new features and some new information. It is now more visually appealing with Year of the Bible resources available. The new live streaming url is <http://www.waterfordchurch.org/stream> or you can access the live streaming by entering the url or going to waterfordchurch.org and click on Live Worship Streaming under the worship tab. The old url for streaming will no longer work. This new streaming will allow mobile and mac users to view the services. Our new website is more user friendly and we are in the process of adding new features such as an on-line calendar. Make sure you check it out!

Old Pews Available

This is a second attempt to reduce the number of church benches that are located around the facility. We will keep a few around for the occasional combined service but you are free to take any bench that is identified with a round green sticker. Some of you wood workers out there may be interested in the wood for other projects. Contact me if you have any questions at facilities@waterfordchurch.org or you can call or text me at 971-1277.

—Jan Oostland, Facilities Manager

Reading Scripture Together as a Spiritual Act

Did you want to read through the Bible this year, but got waylaid? Do you wish you had a time set aside that could help you get caught up? Are you successfully staying current, but wish you could read together in community? Fear not! Adult Nurture ministry team has your answer. This winter, we are offering an elective Sunday School class so simple it's not even a class. No instructor. No lectures. Just a facilitator and space for people to gather together within God's Word. The nurture hour should provide approximately and exactly enough time for reading that week's Year of the Bible texts. There is a sign up sheet at the Participation Station. Contact Aaron Lehman if you have questions.



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The *Waterford Buzz* is normally published weekly for members of Waterford Mennonite Church. Items for inclusion should be given to the editor by 5 p.m. Tuesday preceding publication.

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