

Inside Wyoming

The Newsletter of the Wyoming Ave. Baptist Church

Vol. 18, No. 6, August 17, 2003



On the Cover: Woven Together as One

by Walter Rice, Jr.

The image on the cover is of *kente* cloth, which is traditionally manufactured only in the central region of Ghana. Each strip is woven separately, then the strips are sewn together to make larger cloths.

The image serves as a reminder to us that we as the body of Christ are each individually knit together by God. We are indeed unique, given different gifts and talents by our good Creator, and called to serve the Lord in different ways.

But all of us who trust in Christ do not

stand alone. We are also woven together as one large fabric; we are built together as one building, the holy church of God, the temple of his Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul speaks of this truth using the imagery of the body. Each part is different. A hand is not a foot, and an eye is not an ear. In addition, each part is necessary for the body to be complete and to function as God intended. We read in 1 Corinthians 12:18 that "God has arranged the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."

Be faithful to whatever ministry God has put before you. You may think that a "ministry" is only for full-time workers or leaders in the church, but that is not the case. Putting your God-given abilities to work for the building up of the people of God is a ministry to which we have all been called. Mine may be using my computer skills and education to further the Lord's work. Certainly I will endeavor to be a good steward of these gifts and use them for God's glory. Your abilities may lie in baking, in teaching, or in being a good encourager. If you can't find somebody who could use some encouragement, you've got your eyes shut! Be faithful to use for God's glory the abilities he has given you.

And all this comes back to the *kente* cloth on the cover. As we glorify God in the ways he has given us to serve, we indeed resemble a beautiful tapestry, woven together by God, that displays his wondrous work to the world. Amen, let it be so!

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Wyoming Ave. Baptist Church
Vol. 18, No. 6, August 17, 2003*

Inside Wyoming is published by and for the members and friends of the Wyoming Avenue Baptist Church.

Contributions of articles and information are most welcome! Contact the editor, Walter Rice, Jr., at 215-820-0165.

U Nyame Ye!

By Meredith Bellamy
 (Narberth Presbyterian Church)
 and Walter Rice, Jr.
 (Wyoming Ave. Baptist Church)

Yes, indeed, God is good! The title above is in Twi, the language of the Asante people of central Ghana. From July 21 through 31, God blessed us with the opportunity to serve at the Christian Service College in Kumasi, in the heart of Ghana.

Not According to Plan

Initially, one of our primary purposes in going to the college was to deliver and setup about 50 PCs donated by Jay Jenkins' (one of our team members) employer, Keystone Mercy Health Plan. The computers were configured, packed, and shipped at the beginning of May, and arrived at the dock in Tema, Ghana, about a week and a half before we left for Ghana.

The problem is that when we arrived, the computers were still at the dock. They were never released, and so they never arrived at the college. Shipping delays are frustrating when you're trying to setup computers at a place only a couple minutes away; but when the travel time to Kumasi is two days from the U.S. and costs \$2,000 per person, shipping delays can be a mission-buster.



However, God had better plans, and the fact that the PCs never arrived worked out better than we could have imagined. In fact, I (Walt) can't imagine how it would have worked if the PCs showed up. By focusing on training and on the Bible camp, we were able to fellowship and build relationships with the staff and some students of the college, and with the kids from Scripture Union. In the kingdom of God, that's a priority greater than what we had set out to accomplish in terms of technology.

Not that sending the computers and setting them up wasn't important, but God's timing was different than ours. The computers arrived at the college two weeks after we left. Since God provided a new Information Technology staff member, we know they will be able to set them up.

Met by a Colonel

When we first arrived at the airport in Accra, we were met by Colonel Opong and Abraham Obeng. These men are Christians who work for the Community Services Foundation, and they were a great help getting our logistics organized. Although often behind the scenes, these men are two examples of how God provided all kinds of helpers to facilitate our trip.

After finally getting our luggage into the vans with their help, they took us to the Granada Hotel for the night. Our first night in Africa! We discovered the next day that Accra is a very busy place. We saw Ghanaians carrying things on their heads and many people selling handmade goods on the side of the road. Our driver, Bishop,

drove us to Cape Coast. After driving for 3 hours on a bumpy road in a tightly-packed van, we were warmly welcomed by the owners of the Jangles Hotel, where we would be staying that night.

In the few hours we had before dinner at the home of Professor Kofi Anane-Fenin (Ekua's Father) and we were able to visit the rain forest canopy walkway at Kakum National Park. We walked above the rain forest on rope bridges that were suspended from the tallest trees. It took a bit of courage to complete the walk!

The Slave Traders' Castle: Elmina

Our second day in Ghana, while visiting Cape Coast, we drove a couple miles along the coast to Elmina Castle. The visit was



*Left: a woman carrying a load on her head in Accra.
Below: At the airport in Accra - Isaac (our guide),
Abraham Obeng, Col. Opong, Jay and Sydney Jenkins.*



Right: *Elmina Castle, and the short and narrow gate through which slaves left to board ships for the New World.*



Below right: *the new building of the Christian Service College in Kumasi*



both solemn and thought provoking. It was quite a shock to be walking in the same places as slaves did one hundred and fifty years ago. The slaves were held in this castle for only about 3 months but during that time they were starved and beaten. They were not treated well at all and were made to become weak so they could not put up a fight. There was not much ventilation in the over-crowded rooms, and many of the doorways were made low and small so it would make it more difficult to escape.

The Portuguese built Elmina Castle in 1482. While it started as a post for trading merchant goods with the Africans, they later housed slaves making it one of the largest slave trading posts in the world. After the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British each owned the castle as well. While the Portuguese, Dutch, and the British all claimed to be Christians, you have to wonder how they could have been so horrible to slaves. That doesn't seem very Christian of them.

Arrival at the Christian Service College

Thursday night when we arrived in Kumasi, we went to meet some of the staff at the Christian Service College (CSC). We became acquainted with the building, learned that our computers had not arrived, and we figured out the schedule for the next few days.

Friday morning, computer training began after a time of worship and prayer. We taught three one-and-a-half hour sessions to

the CSC staff. While some had used a computer before, others had never even touched one. They learned how to use a mouse and the keyboard. Paint and Microsoft word were introduced as well. The staff was very excited to learn about computers and wanted to know more and more. Saturday, we planned time for them to work on the computers at their own pace editing an article with us there to help them. They had many questions for us and were even more eager to learn all they could.

One of the most exciting things that we were able to teach them was e-Sword, a Bible program that allows you to search through the Bible, in multiple versions, and look up original Greek and Hebrew words, as well as read various commentaries on the Scriptures. The professors and staff were avid “students,” amazed by the resources that were available and enjoying the ability to dig deep into t h e W o r d without having to take a lot of books out of the library.

Church

On Sunday, we went to one of the largest Presbyterian churches in

Ghana, Ramseyer Memorial Presbyterian Church, located in central Kumasi. The team got to the church a little early for the 7 a.m. service. It was a large church but there weren’t many people there. By 7:30 or so, that changed completely. The church was packed with more people than I (Meredith) could imagine. Everyone was very enthusiastic and ready to go. We enjoyed singing the hymns in Twi, and the Ghanaians sang (in Twi, Ga, or Ewe, three tribal languages) while dancing and clapping. The experience was incredible.

Meeting the Chief

Sunday afternoon, Isaac, our guide and CSC staff member, took us to meet the chief of his village. We pledged two computers and twenty bags of cement to the library they were building, and presented a male



The team with the chief of Kwamo.



sheep (a ram) and two bottles of gin to the chief as a gift. In return, the chief made us honorary citizens of his village, Kwamo. As the leader of our group, David Bellamy was “enstooled” (like enthroned, although a chief sits on a stool), made a chief of the village and given the name Nana Osei Owusu. The whole town came to watch this event and we were very honored to become citizens of Kwamo.

The Fruit of the Spirit

Sunday evening we very blessed to participate in an informal time of worship to open the Bible and computer camp for college age kids. The camp was in conjunction with Scripture Union, a Christian organization that works in secondary schools (high schools) and junior secondary schools (junior high schools). The students at the camp were all members of S.U. while they were in school.

On Monday morning, the camp formally began, studying the Fruit of the Spirit. On Monday and Tuesday mornings, Judy Farrell and Walt Rice each gave a talk on two or three of the fruit. We covered Love, Joy, Peace and Patience on Monday, and Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control on Tuesday. After each talk, we had small group time where an adult and teenager from our team would



Above: Jay leading the group in worship.

Right: Walt teaching on the Fruit of the Spirit.

Below: Students in the camp learning how to use the computer.





Our Team and Partners:

First Row (l to r) Emma Bellamy and Sydney Jenkins; Second Row: Carol Bellamy, Meredith Bellamy, Julie Senavoe (Principal of the Christian Service College), Sherrie Jenkins; Third Row: Rev. Isaac (our guide), Judy Farrell, Thomas Farrell, "Bishop" (our driver); Fourth Row: Barry Harper, Walt Rice, Dave Bellamy, Jay Jenkins.

One in Christ

All things considered, life for us is very different from the lives of our fellow believers in Ghana. We may earn in one year what it would take a

lifetime to earn from a good job in Ghana. We have access to technology, transportation, communication, and healthcare that is unprecedented. In a worldly view, it would be easy to feel superior to the Ghanaians.

But one thing that was made clear to us during our trip is that, despite our different circumstances, we are all one in Christ. We serve the same King, and strive for the same goal, to make the gospel known in all nations to all peoples. We are equal partners in the work of the kingdom. We were blessed to work with Scripture Union and with the Christian Service College, not as "philanthropists" but as humble servants for the glory of God alone.

join with seven Ghanaian students. We worked through a Scripture passage, discussed the fruit and explored how we are to practically walk in the Spirit. They were very open and were willing to talk about their faith, which allowed both the students and our team to learn a lot from each other. Much more than we could have imagined.

In the afternoons, the computer lab once again turned into a classroom, this time for the camp. The students learned how to use a mouse, create documents in Microsoft Word, use Paint to draw pictures, and explore e-Sword Bible software. Just like the staff, they were excited to learn everything we could teach them and they asked many questions.

VBS 2003... "Shear" Joy!

by Debby Crockett
VBS Director

Vacation Bible School, held this year July 7- 11, was a whole "flock" of fun! Aside from all of the bad sheep jokes, our students, teachers, and helpers had a glorious time sharing with the children about Jesus, our Good Shepherd. With a focus on Psalm 23 and the parable of the Good Shepherd, the children learned how Jesus cares for them, leads them, and will always be there for them, even when things go from bad to worse. They learned how, like Peter, we have gone astray and how God's love and forgiveness reaches out to us, transforms us, and sends us forth to feed His sheep.

Did you know that it is only in the Holy Land and the American Southwest that shepherds LEAD their sheep instead of HERDING them? That fact tied in the Native American and Mexican flavor to our decorations, music, and skits. The skits followed the adventures of Spike, Shirley, and Wooly Sheep as they went astray from the flock, and needed extra care from their shepherd, Bueno, to find them, protect them from danger, and lovingly bring them baa-ck home again. (Sorry, that's the last sheep joke.)

We had more children then we had



planned for, but with God's grace, and a little creative thinking, all of those who came got everything they needed for a meaningful VBS experience. One interesting feature of this year's materials was brightly colored rubber bands with each day's memory verse printed on them. Each child was given one to wear as a wristband as they entered the building every day. Now, the director was sure these would turn into distractions (or worse, weapons) as the day wore on. But

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VBS 2003

much to her surprise, they became highly prized and collected by the kids (and youth staff!), many of whom were wearing the

whole collection of five by the end of the week. What a simple but effective way to send the Word of God home!

Of course, more traditional methods were used too, in the form of worksheets and books, as well as Bibles for those that needed them. Many of the teachers supplied Scriptures for their kids, as well as treats and other things to enhance both the experience of VBS and the learning of the Gospel message.

Which brings us to the fact that VBS could not have been what it was without the time, money, effort and prayer contributed by each one who had a part. Whether you taught or assisted all week, helped for one day, helped by making preparations before VBS, gave money, or prayed, your part was vital to the success of the program. But it's not over! Pastor Daniel will be visiting the homes of as many of the children he can in the coming weeks. Please pray that he will be received, and that these families will be open to the Gospel and to the invitation to return to our church.

Faith and Prayer, from page 12

depreciated; everything else is renounced, save Jesus only. The name of Christ -- the Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ -- must be supremely sovereign, in the hour and article of prayer.

If Jesus dwell at the fountain of my life; if the currents of His life have displaced and superseded all self-currents; if implicit obedience to Him be the inspiration and force of every movement of my life, then He can safely commit the praying to my will, and pledge Himself, by an obligation as profound as His own nature, that whatsoever is asked shall be granted. Nothing can be clearer, more distinct, more unlimited both in application and extent, than the exhortation and urgency of Christ, "Have faith in God."

Faith covers temporal as well as spiritual needs. Faith dispels all undue anxiety and needless care about what shall be eaten, what shall be drunk, what shall be worn. Faith lives in the present, and regards the day as being sufficient unto the evil thereof. It lives day by day, and dispels all fears for the morrow. Faith brings great ease of mind and perfect peace of heart.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusted in Thee."

(Excerpted from E. M. Bounds, The Necessity of Prayer.)



Faith Weaver is Coming!
Weaving Faith Into Life

*by Debby Crockett
Sunday School Superintendent*

Through the centuries Christians have been given the task of making God's Word a part of their everyday lives, putting God's laws and God's love and mercy to work. This has always been one of the things our church has tried to help people do through the years. The message of the Bible is timeless and unchanging, but teaching methods have changed over the years as we learn more about how children and adults learn, retain, and apply the Bible's truths to their lives.

Beginning September 7th, the Sunday School, from Kindergarten to Adults, will begin using a curriculum called FaithWeaver, which is different than any other we have ever used, in two important ways. First of all, each week, everyone will begin with the same Bible story or passage, and will be looking for the answer to the same "key question." Now that doesn't mean that the adults

will have the same lesson as the first graders! What it does mean is that each group will look at the lesson in a way that is appropriate to their stage of life, making it relevant to the issues each one faces every day.

Secondly, recognizing that different people learn best in different ways, lessons at all levels will provide several "approaches" to learning that will get each student involved. There will be discussions, object lessons, and hands-on activities for all that are designed to draw everyone into the topic.

The publisher says "Research shows that the most powerful influence on faith development is the conversations about faith that take place in the home. Since all family members study the same Bible story at the same time, at their own level, families will emerge from church with a common point of reference that will spark discussions at home."

Come join us at 9:30 each Sunday to learn more about how to "weave faith into life."

PRAYER CORNER

Faith and Prayer

Among the large and luminous utterances of Jesus concerning prayer, none is more arresting than this:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it.”

How wonderful are these statements of what God will do in answer to prayer! Of how great importance these ringing words, prefaced, as they are, with the most solemn verity! Faith in Christ is the basis of all working, and of all praying. All wonderful works depend on wonderful praying, and all praying is done in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amazing lesson, of wondrous simplicity, is this praying in the name of the Lord Jesus! All other conditions are

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Wyoming Ave. Baptist Church
123 E. Wyoming Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19120

