

THE YELLOW STAR



**The Mission
Newsletter of
the Magruder
Family, United
Methodist
Missionaries
to Cameroon**

Patience is a Virtue

During the week before Christmas, the electricity in our neighborhood went out several times. Our family learned how to sit and wait patiently in the early evening, playing games or simply chatting about the coming holiday.

We're getting good at waiting. Life simply unfolds at a difference pace in Cameroon. The missionary who preceded me had warned me not to become too tied to a "Things to Do" list – he said that if I got one significant thing done a day, I'd be fortunate!

Over the last few months, I've honed that difficult virtue known as patience to a finer degree than ever before. I've waited in traffic, in office buildings, on dirt roads, and in churches. Rarely do appointments take place at the appointed time, and I have learned to be late – on purpose!

And the Mission is in waiting mode, too. We're waiting for the president to sign our registration papers once and for all, making us legal in the country ... and we're waiting for the ordination of our first group of pastors ... and we're waiting for the day when every one of our congregations and ministries have a partner church in the US. We are excited about the

possibilities and potential, but still watching and praying ...

Of course, Christians ought to be very good at this sort of thing. The Psalmist sang, "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry." For centuries, the



The first ten probationary pastors of the United Methodist Church in Cameroon ... waiting for ordination.

Israelites yearned for a liberating king who would inaugurate the new reign of God. The earliest Christians waited for a number of things – the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the return of Jesus, and the end of

persecution. Even now, we know Advent as a time of waiting for the birth of Jesus, and Lent as a time of preparation and repentance before the resurrection of Jesus.

Still, it's difficult to learn the discipline of "waiting patiently." We want to run at our own pace, and score impressive, immediate victories which will earn praise and applause. But God runs on his own time schedule, and it's not mine.

In the meantime, we recall the Psalmist's words: "I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me."

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To support the work of the United Methodist Church in Cameroon, give through The Advance for Christ and His Church, using the following numbers:

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- Leah Magruder, #14944Z
- Cameroon Initiative, #00344A

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Kids Are Missionaries, Too!



By Chloe Magruder, age 10

Things are going good here in Cameroon. We moved into a much bigger house, but I still don't get my own room. Me and Mallory have a clubhouse.

It's the end of the rainy season and it is so hot. But I don't blame Cameroon. The equator is right through it. Thankfully it doesn't go straight through Yaounde.

School is also good. Mallory and I do homeschooling with another family. In the other family, there is a girl my age named Gaby. We have been going very well.

Maman Leah's Corner

By Leah Magruder

It's hard to believe that we have just celebrated our third Christmas in Cameroon. And again, it was wonderful. We were a bit concerned that Santa might not find our new house, but he's so smart. Apparently, it was no problem.

As some of you may know, we made some pretty big changes in our family this school year. Rachel now goes to Rain Forest International School where she is in 8th grade. It has turned out to be the perfect place for her. She is flourishing like we couldn't have imagined. Chloe and Mallory are being homeschooled with another missionary family, who happen to live about 1/4 of mile away and happen to have children their same ages. They love it so much.

We also moved into a new house in June. It 's across town from where we used to be, and we are in a neighborhood in which we feel very comfortable. The children have room to play now and run with Jina, our dog (who's finally out of the puppy stage!)

We look forward to our first furlough this summer. We are making all our plans for the three months we will be there. I can smell the enchiladas from here!

PRAYER REQUESTS

The most significant way that you can be a part of our ministry in Cameroon is by agreeing to pray for us on a daily basis. Take this list and post it somewhere handy — use it daily, please!

- ✂ For Leah in her job as Area Financial Executive and Christian Education Director
- ✂ For Wes in his job as Director of Mission
- ✂ For Rachel, Chloe, and Mallory in their school situations. Rachel is an eighth-grader at Rain Forest International School, and Chloe and Mallory are homeschooled by a missionary friend
- ✂ For the final registration of the United Methodist Church in Cameroon
- ✂ For the remaining partner churches needed; we have sixteen of twenty-one, to date!
- ✂ For Ginger Cooper in her role as Partner Church Coordinator ... and all the other roles she plays, too!
- ✂ For Pastor Rosalie Nzie, who begins working in the Mission Office in January 2007 as the Women's Desk Coordinator
- ✂ For the creation of new Anglophone congregation in Yaounde, tentatively named Gateway UMC, to be led by Pastor Simeon Nomo and myself
- ✂ For the move to the new Mission Office
- ✂ For the regional conventions in Douala and the Southwest Province
- ✂ For the Pastors' Retreat at the end of January 2007, which will be led by a team from Alabama-West Florida Conference, including Bishop Larry Goodpaster, Rev. Neal McDavid, Rev. Tonya Elmore, Rev. Jan Davis, and Rev. Don Smith
- ✂ For Rev. John's Thornburg next visit to Cameroon for the hymnal project, currently scheduled for March 2007
- ✂ For Bishop Benjamin Boni, and his pastoral responsibilities in Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Cameroon

Ministry Review

New Church Started in Douala: This summer, we started a new congregation on the outskirts of Douala, in a quarter known as PK 14. Pastor Bernard Mbehna moved from his church, Jericho UMC, to help get the new church organized. They chose the name Nazareth UMC, and began worshipping in a layperson's home. Now they have found a room in a building on the main road, and are starting to grow.

Three Weeks of Training for Probationary Pastors: After our Annual Meeting last April, the Mission was directed to spend three weeks with our ten probationary pastors in intensive training. With the help of Professor Rev. Nathaniel Ohouo (Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference), we gave the pastors a crash course in Methodist theology, liturgy, history, and preaching. At the end of the training, five of the pastors received a special pastoral delegation from Bishop Boni to administer the sacraments.



Visit of Barbara Jacobsen: Maman Leah received a visit from Barbara Jacobsen, GBGM missionary and AFE from Sierra Leone. We went through missionary training with Barbara and were thrilled to host her in our home for two weeks in September.

Hymns Galore, Part III: Rev. John Thornburg visited for the third time in October. He continues to work toward finalizing the list of songs for inclusion in the Cameroon hymnal. He's planning to come again in spring 2007!



Visit of Parents: My parents, Walter and Marie Magruder, visited us in our home in October. We had a wonderful time, showing them what life is like in Yaounde.

Trip to South Africa: I attended the African Editors' Conference of Upper Room Africa Ministries in Johannesburg in November. We are excited about becoming vital partners in distributing French- and English-language copies of The Upper Room in Cameroon and other parts of West Africa.



Visit of Sam Dixon: Our "boss" from New York, Rev. Sam Dixon, Assistant General Secretary of GBGM, made a short visit after attending the Council of Bishops meeting in Mozambique. He met a few pastors, toured the new office site, and played with our children!

Trip to Geneva: I made my annual visit to Geneva at the end of November, for the Franco-phone Methodist Education meeting. It's also my one opportunity all year to wear a sweater!

Changes at the Mission Office: The end of the year arrived with some big changes on the horizon for the Mission. We will be moving soon into our new offices, thanks to a generous offer from The Fobang Foundation and Dr. Wilfred Mbacham. Joining us in that office will be Pastor Rosalie Nzie, who begins her new job as Chair of the Women's Desk.



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*Preach peace till you have it; and then,
because you have it, you will preach peace!*



Season's Greetings from the Magruders!