

THE YELLOW STAR



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

Making Covenants in Kumba

*"Lord, let me be your servant,
under your command.
I will no longer be my own."*

Pastor Charles Ndobe was relentless. He kept ringing my phone, asking when I would be able to come visit his cell group in Kumba. In the midst of a busy autumn, I kept putting him off.

Finally, I pulled out my calendar and squeezed in a brief weekend trip to the Southwest Province between my flights to the USA and Geneva.

The cell group, only a few months old, meets in a schoolroom on the grounds of a small vocational college in the Fiango neighborhood of Kumba. The Sunday morning I visited, I was met by twenty adults and nineteen children, who were waiting expectantly to see and hear "the missionary." There were even two journalists present!

Fourteen adults had completed my Bible study, "The United Methodist Christian" and were confirmed, as we prayed John Wesley's Covenant Prayer together ...

*"I freely and with a willing heart
give it all to your pleasure
and disposal ..."*

The cell group has also now passed to the second stage toward becoming an "official" United Methodist Church. They are now a "Mission Congregation" and must fulfill the requirements for two



Above, the children of the Fiango cell group. Below, the landlord of the property where the group meets.



more stages before becoming a church. This process was created to help form an orderly way for prayer cell groups to form, grow, become trained in Wesleyan theology and organization, and eventually become self-supporting.

I drove all the way back to Yaounde that evening ... exhausted but convinced that something important was happening in Kumba. A new covenant had been made; the promise of something big had been planted in fertile soil.

*"You have now become my
Covenant Friend.
And I, through your infinite
grace, have become your
covenant servant. So be it."*

Volume 2, Issue 1
January 2006

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

- Wesley Magruder, #14943Z
- Leah Magruder, #14944Z
- Cameroon Initiative, #344A

The Advance Office
475 Riverside Drive,
Room 1400
New York, NY 10115
Tel: 212-870-3790
advance@gbgm-umc.org

Inside this issue:

Maman Leah's Corner 2

Prayer Requests 2

Ministry Review 3

Kids Are Missionaries, Too! 3

Maman Leah's Corner

By Leah Magruder

Instead of talking about my job, this time I want to tell you a story. This year my parents very generously gave us some money to buy something "nice" for our staff. When I say "staff," I am talking about the people that work in our home. We are so fortunate to have lots of help in our house. It makes for a wonderful working environment for everyone. So two days before Christmas, I gave everyone a new cell phone, including Geni, our housekeeper; she was thrilled because her old phone was constantly on the blink.

We like to spend Christmas Day with our staff; they are our family here. But when Geni arrived at our house on Christmas Day, something was obviously wrong. She told me that her new phone had been stolen with her purse the day before.

Geni went on a 6-day quest. She was determined to find her thief and get her phone back. She began calling her number to see if he would pick up. He did pick up, and when she told him she wanted her phone back, he asked her how much would she pay him. She told him 5,000 francs (\$10) and he hung up on her. The thief then started calling all her friends and some of his own. This is where the story gets very Divine.

Geni has a friend that repairs cell phones. She told this friend that her new phone was stolen and asked him to help her with the phone company to try to find the thief via the phone calls he was making. She gave him some money and her phone number to take care of the situation as he had been through this before himself. After many failed attempts to retrieve her phone, she was beginning to

lose hope and then ... her friend received a cell phone from a young man which needed repairing. As he was repairing the phone, he noticed that Geni's phone number was in the phone's directory. Someone had rung that phone from Geni's phone since it had been stolen! This was the break they were hoping for. Geni's friend told the young man that unless he told him who the thief was, he wouldn't get his phone back.

Geni was ready to go toe-to-toe with her thief. She took along a policeman friend of hers, and when he came to see her, the policeman threatened him. Geni told him that she didn't want to harm him; she just wanted her phone back. When the thief realized that the policeman had recorded on tape everything he had said, he agreed to return the phone. Finally, Geni met him and received her phone.

The most amazing part of this story is not the series of coincidences that occurred to resolve the situation; it's what she did next. She sat this young man down and shared her faith in Jesus Christ with him. Then she led him in a prayer of salvation and invited him to church with her. I don't know whether this young man was serious about receiving Christ into his life. I hope he was. What is important is that Geni forgave him so quickly and then did what we should all do in our everyday lives and that is share the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ even with those that hurt us, steal from us or try to bring us down.

I love Geni. She is more than a housekeeper -- she is a sister in Christ, and I learn from her everyday.



Geni, thief-catcher and evangelist!

Kids are Missionaries, Too! By Chloe Magruder

Life here in Cameroon is going fine. Everyone is fine, and so am I. I got used to it quicker than I thought.

We all had a great Christmas. I was happy and thankful for all the stuff I got. I got an extremely cute stuffed animal rabbit. I got a Nintendo DS. At first, when I looked at it, I did not know what it was, so Rachel told me. I also got a nice button set, a Bratz doll, some DVD's and books. It was a really nice Christmas.

On Christmas Eve, we went to the orphanage for a party. We ate macaroni and cheese and chili. The orphans and their families ate fish and plantains and drank milk mixed with grenadine. There were a lot of people! I think the orphans had a nice Christmas, too.



Ministry Review

Wes Earns Air Miles, Part I: I traveled to the United States in late October for two weeks. First, I attended a meeting at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina during the Council of Bishops gathering. At this meeting, I met our new presiding bishop, Bishop Benjamin Boni, from Cote d'Ivoire, and members of his conference. We discussed our plans to have an Annual Meeting in April, during which our first group of pastors will be formally interviewed by the Board of Ordained Ministry. I also traveled to Columbia, South Carolina to meet the creators of eChristianEd, a new online course for teachers which we are introducing in Cameroon in January. I spent my second week in Mason, Michigan, at the home of my good friends, Tim and Susan Tuthill. I had the privilege of speaking in two churches while there!



Wes Earns Air Miles, Part II: Only two weeks after returning from America, I then hopped on a plane for Geneva, for a meeting about theological education for French-speaking United Methodists!

Fighting Malaria and HIV/AIDS: Our Volunteer in Mission, Ginger Cooper, and Collins Etchi, a member of John Wesley UMC in Yaounde, traveled to Freetown, Sierra Leone for a week-long seminar on Community Health Care, Malaria and HIV/AIDS, sponsored by the West African Central Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Christmas Baptisms: On Christmas morning, I preached on "When God Came to Earth" to the congregation at John Wesley UMC, served communion, and baptized four children.

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
- ✂ For Wes in his job as Director of Mission
- ✂ For Rachel, Chloe and Mallory who are in their seventh, fourth, and first grade years respectively at American School of Yaounde
- ✂ For Ginger Cooper, a Volunteer in Mission, who is planning our 2nd Annual Youth Camp this summer
- ✂ For a planned conference of United Methodist pastors in January in Kribi
- ✂ For Rev. John Thornburg's second visit to Cameroon in March and April 2006
- ✂ For our Annual Meeting in April, featuring the first official visit of Bishop Benjamin Boni
- ✂ For the interviews of our pastors by the newly-formed Board of Ordained Ministry in April
- ✂ For the second phase of our AIDS team project, which is to take place in Anglophone Cameroon
- ✂ For continued improvement in learning French for the whole family
- ✂ For the final registration of the United Methodist Church in Cameroon
- ✂ For a printing press
- ✂ For the first class of ten people who will be taking the online eChristianEd course starting in January
- ✂ For Leah and Ginger's upcoming trip through the Southwest Province to check on the status of Sunday School and youth work

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

United Methodist Church in Cameroon
B.P. 491
FEMEC
Yaounde, Cameroon

Phone: 237-223-5235

Fax: 237-223-5236

Email: preachpeace@hotmail.com

**Keep up with the
Magruder's at [http://
preachpeace.
blogspot.com](http://preachpeace.blogspot.com)**

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



*Season's
Greetings from
the Magruder
family.
Have a blessed and
beautiful 2006!*