



EMS OF ECWA

2nd Quarter

Mission News 2009

From the Director's Desk

FEAR NOT!

THE CHALLENGES OF THE FAR NORTH



A Bible scholar has said, there are approximately 365 'Fear Nots' commands in the scriptures, one for each day of the year. The scholar posits that God purposely did that, so that believers will have a 'fear not' command to use for each day of the year and so dispel any fears whatsoever from their lives.

If there is any weapon that the enemy is using to keep his captives in perpetual bondage in the far northern part of this country, none has proved more portent and powerful than the weapon of FEAR! This discovery came to glaring light when as the then Pastor of ECWA Goodnews Church Maitama, we went on Missions Visitation trips to Kano, Katsina, and Jigawa States. Everywhere we went, the story was the same, many of those who have heard the gospel through our missionaries, want to surrender and put their faith in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord but for one thing – Fear!

It is very pertinent to note that their fears are not unfounded. They have genuine reasons to be afraid of declaring for Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. As believers in Christ within the Far North, they face great contempt and ridicule. Converting to be a Christian earns you the tag 'kafiri', a contemptuous and slanderous term for unbelievers. You atomically become not just

second class, but basically a classless citizen, with your basic privileges being denied you and your rights being trampled upon with impunity. Secondly, as believers in Christ, they are often ostracised from the community. In many cases, wives or husbands are forcefully taken away and families torn apart and farm lands, which are their means of their livelihood are confiscated, because of putting their faith in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. Lastly, but certainly not the least, believers in Christ in this region, face the danger of physical violence. Infact, for most of them, accepting Jesus as Saviour and Lord is a matter of life and death. In a certain village in the Far North for example, despite the vast land in the mainly rural agrarian community, the Christians there tried twice and built a church in two different locations but in each instance, the church was razed to the ground by religious fanatics. Ultimately, the church had to be built right inside the compound of a believer! Praise be to God that this church is being completed today. The Lord has greatly used the members of ECWA Goodnews Church Maitama to encourage the severely persecuted believers there and to help them complete the building of this church.

The other side of the coin is that due to the fear of being ridiculed, ostracised or even physically attacked, some believers there are too timid or afraid to witness Christ to others. Very sadly, in one mission station we visited, a combination of pressure and persecution from even official government quarters and the bait of money, motorcycles and other material things offered by the government, was too much a temptation for the converts to resist, they all went back to Islam, except for only one old woman who has remained faithful to the Lord. The ECWA Goodnews Church Maitama Evangelism Team has made this particular mission station a special target of its prayer and evangelistic outreach. We shall keep you posted when the village is finally stormed with the gospel.

Brethren, the Scriptures say God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (2 Tim 1:7) Also that the wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion. (Proverbs28:1) The Lord Jesus encouraged us in Matt 10:26-33 saying, "do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven." Moreover, Hebrews 2:14 talking about the Lord Jesus says, "since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil"

The worst the devil can do is to kill believers physically, but he has no power over our souls. Our souls are safe, in the hands of our dear Lord Jesus Christ, for precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saint! (Psalm 116:15)

So then, let us stand in the gap and fight the battle against fear over the far North. Let us first and foremost pray that like the times of the great apostles, God will pour out His Spirit afresh

upon believers there, so that they can be embolden to proclaim Christ, anytime, anywhere, anyhow as in Acts 4:23 - 31.

Let us stand in the gap and destroy the hold of the enemy through fear over the people of the Far North. Let us stand on and claim the promises of Hebrews 2:14 and enforce the victory that the Lord Jesus has won for us against the fear of death that is wielded by the devil. Let us pray that God will delivers those in the Far North from this bondage to fear and bring them to the saving knowledge of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ. The greatest weapon we have against the enemy of fear is the Love of Christ. 1 John 4:18 says, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love." Let us pray that believers in Christ shall so filled with the love of God for these unbelievers in the Far North that we shall even be ready to lay down our lives in order to take the gospel to them, like Walter Gowans, Thomas Kent and Roland Bingham were ready to lay down their lives to bring the gospel of Christ to us so that we could be saved.

Right now, there are several Local Governments in the far North that do not have a single church. Any believer that for any reason finds himself in such Local Governments will have to travel long distances across several Local Governments before finding a place of worship. These are privileges that Christians in other parts of the country take for granted.

Thank God for the Radio Programme that is being aired on several Radios in the Far North and for ECWA Headquarters which has agreed to support a full time Radio Evangelist under the auspices of EMS. However, the Radio programme is an aerial bombardment of the region which needs to be followed by the ministry of ground missionaries to follow up on very wonderful enquires and responses we have been receiving.

A survey of the Far North shows that to effectively cover each Local Government, we need at least 10 Missionaries. This means we need 2,730 (Two thousand seven hundred and thirty missionaries). So far, EMS of ECWA has the highest number of Missionaries working in the far North and as at date, the missionaries are just 107. This is grossly inadequate.

We want to send in more missionaries and we believe that we can get the missionaries, but we need the sponsors of the missionaries. If you are touched by the challenge of the Far North Region and will want to sponsor a missionary, please let us know through emsdirector@ecwaofems.org or any of the official communication lines stated in this Newsletter. May God bless you real good. Amen!

– Rev. Stephen Baba Panya

CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP

To the glory of God, EMS of ECWA has continued to experience Leadership touch of different personalities. Rev. Adamu Maga, who had been in the EMS Board for many years became the Director in 2007 and God helping him, after putting 33 years of active service in ECWA, he retired on 31st December, 2008.

During the retirement service on 17th December, 2008 a lot took place which included the inauguration of the new EMS Director in person of Rev. Stephen Baba-Panya. Alongside with him were: Rev. Zachariah Salihu installed as the Director, Church



Related Ministries; Asso. Prof. Rev. Yohanna Byo as the Director, Education Department; and Rev Nuhu Leo as the Prayer & Renewal Ministry Coordinator.

The new EMS Director, before his appointment, was the Senior Pastor of Goodnews Church Maitama, Abuja. While he was a Pastor, he so distinguished himself as a Mission focused Pastor with mission minded congregation. ECWA Goodnews Church Maitama, with a congregation of just about 450 members, is the leading ECWA Church that is sponsoring 30 EMS missionaries, apart from its direct involvement in visiting mission stations, helping in building churches in Mission field and sending support like motorcycles and other equipment to Missionaries. That means a budget of about 5.4M per annum for missionaries allowances alone and spending additional funds in Mission field projects. In God's timing he brought this man in to the EMS leadership.

The transition between Rev. Maga and Rev Panya was smooth. EMS is said to open another chapter in its history with an Ordained Chattered Accountant, who

heard the call of God to serve in the ministry of the word. He is the sixth child of a retired EMS missionary and former EMS Director Rev. (Dr.) Panya Baba,.

Already the new Director has been going round ECWA Churches, gatherings and conferences challenging ECWA members of what God is doing through EMS of ECWA both within and outside the country.

30 More Missionaries For The Far North!

We want to increase Missionaries to the Far North. 2,730 is the eventual target. We right now have 107 already in the Far North Field. We hope to send at least 30 more missionaries within the next one year to the Far North. If you want to support one of the Missionaries, please contact us!

THE MISSIONARY PRESIDENT

We thank God for blessing ECWA at this time with a Missionary President. This has greatly reflected in his approach and attitude to Ministry. Not only has he maintained godly simplicity, but Rev. Anthony Omolewu Farinto, has remained a missionary at heart and even as ECWA President, he has gone to visit missionaries in the field. This visionary mission-focused and servant leadership, which has permeated the entire ECWA Executive



and is being promoted among ECWA rank and file, has been a great encouragement to us in EMS of ECWA. We have captured here, highlights of an interview we had with the Missionary President and pray that this will serve to further galvanize us to greater commitment to the Great Commission of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ – Missions and Evangelism.

FULL NAME:

Rev. Anthony Omolewu Farinto

CONVERSION:

I was led to Christ in 1964, by an SIM Missionary Nurse called Kay Lane, in far away Republic of Benin. My cousin was sick with Tuberculosis (TB) and was taken to the SIM Medical Centre at Benbereke in the Republic of Benin. I went along to take care of him. As God would have it, a lady missionary nurse had been posted to this hospital to work there. Miss Kay Lane, as I later on knew her, would come around the hospital and speak to people in French. One day, however, the then young Anthony Farinto, who was just about 16 years, spoke to her in English, asking her why she would not speak to him. Knowing that there was someone she could speak to in English, excited the missionary lady and made her to take interest in the young African boy.

At that time, I was a Catholic, but on being asked by the Missionary to help with domestic work, I gladly accepted, although holding to my Catholic profession and attending a Catholic Church, but was not yet Born Again. The Missionary however, continued to teach me the Bible and many memory verses. Gradually, I began to get convicted by the Holy Spirit about my sins.

I became so convicted that I went to the Priest for confession. Unfortunately, after the confession, I met the Rev. Father I confessed to indulging in the same sin in a worse manner and this really discouraged me the more.

One day during the Wednesday Prayer Meeting, 1John 1:8-9 was expounded upon. That if we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. The Holy Spirit used this to touch my heart and to so much convict me that I could not sleep. One particular sin that the devil had used to torment my conscience with was when back in 1961, a herbalist had asked me to help him pound a concoction for his medical portion, only to realize that among what he asked me to pound was a small baby. But praise the Lord, on that Wednesday night, even after the Prayer Meeting, as I was kneeling in deep contrition, it was as if someone literally tapped me on the shoulder and said to me “Your sins are forgiven!”

Meanwhile, Miss Kay Lane, noticing earlier that I was deeply troubled, but did not know why, resolved that night to pray for me. She actually spent the night praying

and weeping for me. Praise the Lord, as the morning dawned, I was saved and the yoke of the devil over me was broken! Jesus had set me free and free indeed!!

The devil had put a yoke on me right from birth as my middle name indicates. I came from a traditional polygamous home and typical of such setting, there were bound to be acrimonies and the use of traditional demonic powers. My mother was the third wife and gave birth to the first born male. This bred jealousy and the attendant in- fighting through spiritual means. Consequently, each time my mother got pregnant and was about to deliver, the child before would suddenly die. This went on until five of my siblings died and that is why there is a gap of 20 (twenty) years between my elder brother and myself. When my mother got pregnant for the sixth time (that was me), she decided to go to a herbalist. The herbalist told her that, he would “tie” the child, but could not guarantee that the child would live. He frankly told her not to put her hope on the child as his survival was very questionable and thus undependable. “Omo” means child and “Lewu” means undependable. Thus, the middle name given to him was Omolewu, which means a child that you cannot pin your hope on. Secondly, the herbalist warned that on the day I dared marry and my wife conceive, I would die.

But on that night, after the Prayer Meeting as I cried and confessed before the Lord, I literally felt like a spirit leaving my body. The yoke was truly broken that night and the burden lifted. By morning when Kay Lane saw me, the difference was so noticeable that she remarked that she was seeing a brand new Anthony. I told her that she was indeed right. She then asked me to prepare the most delicious food for a celebration. What I did not know was that Kay Lane had prepared for this celebration two years before. Two years before, she had ordered from home, two coats, two pairs of pants, singlets, pairs of trousers and shoes. This she had kept in a carton waiting for the day of celebration of my new birth. That day, she told me to go and bring the cartons specially kept for me. I did that and my joy was full! In fact, both of us were so happy that day that I really wanted the Lord Jesus to take me straight to heaven!.

I had for long lived and dreaded the power of evil and satan, but I then experienced and saw that the power of God was real and much greater.

Miss Kay Lane then encouraged me to start listening to Radio ELWA every 5.00 p.m and that helped to build me up spiritually.

CALL TO MINISTRY:

After my conversion, Kay Lane wanted me to take after her and to train for Nursing. However, my desire to know and preach the word of God became stronger and instead I chose to go to ECWA Theological Seminary Igbaja for theological training.

MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE:

United District Church Council (UDCC) Egbe, employed me in 1977 after my graduation from Igbaja and sent me straight to a Mission Field in Gurai, a village between Nigeria and Benin Republic. This turned out to be really providential because there, I met a tower built in 1959 by a UMCA Missionary. Yet, 25 years after, the community was with only a single convert. The only convert was about to turn back to Islam as no one was ready to give him a wife to marry within the community, because he was a Christian. God used me to reach out to that community and Churches were planted and today, that community has its own LCC.

Later on when I applied to UMCA to do my Bachelor of Theology course, the white missionary before the interview, told me that he would not admit me. Nevertheless I still went for the interview. On the interview day, on hearing that I was a missionary from Gurai, the white missionary enquired about the place. I told him about a UMCA tower and bell and the single convert that I met, but then told him how Gurai land was now having several Churches, with many Christian worshippers. The white missionary then told me that he was the one who built that tower and bell 25 years earlier. Even though I did not eventually attend UMCA Seminary, because I got admission to Igbaja ECWA Theological Seminary, the white Missionary who had already given me admission to UMCA Seminary, sent two semester school fees to me at ECWA Theological Seminary Igbaja.

My first salary as a missionary was ₦250.00 (Two hundred and fifty Naira) per annum. Even then, I was short-changed by an unfaithful superior whom for seven (7) years was paying me ₦150.00 per annum instead of ₦ 250.00 and he was pocketing the balance. God however, dealt with that unfaithful superior and blessed the works of my hands such that I always had enough to meet my needs.

After many years in the field, the educational needs of my children became critical as the place we were serving was very remote without any school. So I applied to Lagos Agege as a Pastor. I was accepted and from there was sent to Warri from where as a Pastor, we started sponsoring EMS missionaries on salary levels that were far above the amount being paid generally. That was because, with my

background as a missionary, I knew the kind of challenges missionaries were facing.

MARRIAGE:

My wedding day was the saddest day of my life. Everyone was gloomy because of the devilish prophecy that had been made about me, that on the day I dared marry and my wife conceived, I was going to die. So everyone was very sad on my wedding day. It was more like my funeral day. In fact, because of the devilish prophecy, my dad refused to educate me because he said that, he was not going to waste his money on a child whom he knew would soon die. But like I said, I knew on that Wednesday night, the yoke of satan over me was destroyed. The devilish covenant was broken and I entered into a new superior covenant by the power of the blood of Jesus. The fact that I am still alive today is a testimony of the superiority of the covenant we have with Jesus by His blood, over any covenant that the devil had foisted on me.

UNREACHED AREAS:

One of the greatest challenges of the Church is Syncretism. Some areas that we think are Christian dominated are not. They only have a form of godliness but no true spirituality. Many Christians today are half baked and their spirituality is very shallow. However, there is a place between Nigerian border with Republic of Benin called Boko Area which is still in need of the gospel. Most of those Boruba people are idol worshippers who are living in darkness and engage so often in devilish power contests to prove the superiority of their powers. Other very needy areas include Oke-Ogun area in Oyo State, Igboho, Shaki, Okeho, Iganna, Idiko – Ile, and Ijio where I come from. I will like to see more missionary activities in my area.

WELFARE OF MISSIONARIES:

Missionaries should not be segregated and looked down upon as if they are not qualified pastors. Missionaries should be paid their full salaries based on their qualifications. Missionaries should be visited. I remember that as a missionary myself, I was not visited for so many years until one day the then DCC Chairman visited me. That greatly encouraged me and the entire community. The Local Chief remarked that he did not know that I was a “needle with thread.” That means that, I had the backing of very important people.

MISSIONS AND THE FUTURE OF ECWA:

Remove Mission from ECWA and ECWA is dead. We should desist from building walls and instead build souls. ECWA must consciously invest in bringing souls to our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ. Those who brought Christ to us paid dearly for it. I think of Kay Lane who often refers to me as “my dear first fruit in Africa”. She had to pay the price of coming to Africa and so must we be ready to pay the cost of taking the Gospel to other unreached areas.

OTHER PROFESSIONALS:

The idea of other professionals being involved on Tent Making Mission is a very good but, the professionals must be truly called and details of how they can be engaged must be carefully worked out. They also must be very well trained theologically and practically.

ECWA COMMUNICANT MEMBERS.

All ECWA Communicant members should see themselves as people on a mission. The reason God spared your life is to know Him more and then to make Him known to other people. That is Mission, everything else is secondary! Chikenan!

THE CHURCH ON A MISSION

ECWA GOODNEWS CHURCH MAITAMA, MINISTER'S HILL

The ECWA Goodnews Church Maitama is a congregation of between 400 to 450 adult worshippers and about 70 to 120 children. It has only been in existence for about 12 years but has a very big vision and is strongly focused on Missions and evangelism.

The ECWA Goodnews Maitama considers it a great privilege by God Almighty, to be involved in missions, especially in the Far North Region of Nigeria. Though the missionaries they support cut across various regions of the country including the Middle Belt and the Eastern part, the Far North

Region is their topmost priority because of its histo-religious significance.



**Pastorium roofed, plastered & painted
(Gurnabus Kano DCC)**



**Pastorium before renovation
(Anguwar Tabo Katsina DCC)**

The Church's special interest in the Far North Region stems from the fact that, believers in the Far North are going through harsh pressures and threats because of their faith Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Those that have accepted Jesus go through hard times

and so many trials and denials. In view of these and much more, the far North needs

as much response in action, as well as continual earnest prayers for the pulling down of the strong holds of the spirit of bond woman in the land. Understanding

the need in this area has helped galvanised resources by the Church members, which are continuously being deployed mainly in four core North DCCs where our missionaries are situated. These DCCs include;

1. Kano DCC

- I. Hayin Gada, Gani LCC
- II. Sharbayi, Gani LCC
- III. Kwarin Tagwai Karaye LCC

2. Katsina DCC

- I. Dangude, Kankara LCC
- II. Unguwar Tabo Kankara LCC
- III. Gurnabus

3. Kebbi DCC

- I. Maje Bargu, Bagudu LCC
- II. Gajimare Atabu, Yawuri LCC
- III. Azozo, Yawuri LCC
- IV. Maga, Zuru LCC
- V. Marne, Zuru LCC
- VI. Ubandawaki, Tungan Magajiya LCC

4. Jigawa DCC

- I. Dingare, Gumel LCC



**Church roofed, plastered & painted
(Gurnabus Kano DCC)**

In the above mission fields, the church pays monthly allowances of the missionaries except Gurnabus. In most of these mission fields, the church is doing at least a project in accordance to the need of the mission field. In addition to supporting the missionaries, the Church

is involved in various Missions Projects including

Church building projects, construction and in some cases renovations of Pastoriums, and in some fields, renovations or painting of already existing structures. Motorcycles have also been provided to missionaries that are in need of mobility.

CHALLENGES:

During its recent outing to Missions Stations in the core North, the church could not but take note of More land that needs to be taken for Jesus. The missionaries are doing their best through the grace of God. The educational needs of the Missionaries' children who are working in areas that are too remote to attend any school is very acute. The Church has therefore intensified their effort to



Church & Pastorium roofed, plastered & painted (Anguwar Tabo Katsina DCC)

increase their support to EMS Children's School.

CONCLUSION:

- We give honor and glory to God for taking hold of this Church to do what is His heart beat. We are praying that God will use the ECWA Goodnews Maitama wonderful contribution and involvement in Missions as a challenge to spur other churches into doing more for the greater advancement of His Kingdom here on earth through Missions and Evagelism. Amen.

EMS is Helping Rebuild Southern Sudan

Ruth and Ubandoma Nadab in Atar, along with Stephen and Victoria Adamu in Yabus, are vital members of a unique multi-cultural team of missionaries working to rebuild both the nation of Southern Sudan and the church. I had the great joy and privilege of visiting these two families on their stations and bring this report with their greetings back to Nigeria.

Atar: This tiny village lies on the banks of the Atar River. Our tiny Cessna 206 flew in to the airstrip, since there are no roads to this village. You can only reach it by boat or airplane. We were met by a singing and dancing delegation (see below) of Christians from the village that met our plane and welcomed us.

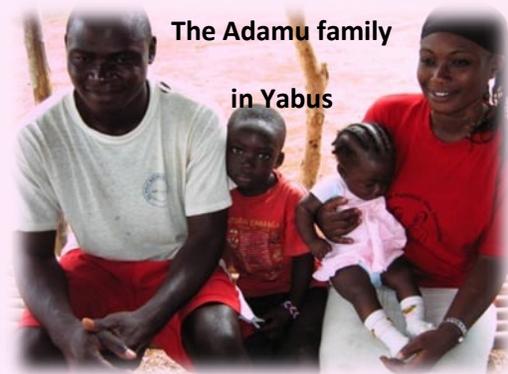


The Nadabs bidding me farewell from Atar

The Nadabs have a wonderful relationship with the Dinka people of Atar. The primary ministry is basic education. The three year program trains illiterate young adults up to primary 8 level. Graduation in Atar takes place in April. A primary school is being built

so that the graduates of this BELC (Basic Education Learning Center) can become the teachers. Ubandoma is supervising the construction of this classroom. In addition he is reaching out in evangelism, discipleship, and church planting.

The Adamus were next on our itinerary. We flew east toward the Ethiopian border about 1 and ½ hours to reach Yabus. Stephen is teaching science in a secondary school. Victoria, in addition to caring for their 2 children, teaches at the BELC. Stephen also has sports outreach and a music ministry in the Mabaan church in Yabus.



It is interesting to see how both Stephen and Ubandoma are saving lives with the black stone method of extracting venom from snake bites and teaching others how to make the black stone. I was impressed by the level of dedication and sacrifice by these two families who work in extremely harsh conditions of heat, no electricity, very limited variety in their diet, little communication with the outside world, no roads, and in the midst of both extreme poverty and very high cost of living. For instance, the simple classroom in Atar will cost the equivalent of N8 million due to lack of sand, cement, and other materials.

Pray for the Nadabs and Adamus as they minister with joy in the midst of trying conditions. You can encourage them by email at ubansim@yahoo.com (the Nada's in Atar) and visit the Adamu's blog at godsloveinsudan.blogspot.com. – Bill Foute, EMS Member Care Consultant

THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE US TO JOIN THE GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES

We are here to serve God's will in our generation. The life we live is for a while. While we live, we serve the purpose why God made us. In the year 2008, some of our missionaries went home to be with the Lord. The following families were bereaved. Please pray along with them for God's comfort:

- The wife of Past. Waziri A Sayo who is working in Jamjara, Dong LCC, Waja DCC was called to glory in the process of child birth.
- The wife of Past. Jephtha John who is working in Danden, Kurmin Gyada LCC, Kurmin Musa DCC slept in the Lord on 14th March, 2008.
- The wife of Past. Diga Gagare and his daughter died while he himself had a fracture.
- Past. Barnabas Waziri lost his wife during a child birth. He works in Gidan Kafinta, Kubacha DCC.
- Past. James Kato was also bereaved, his wife passed on during a child birth. He serves at Kwaliko, Kubacha DCC.
- Past. Dogari Anchau finally went home to be with the Lord and his body was put to rest in Gure on 1st May, 2008.
- Past Yakubu Musa passed on to glory last year.
- Early this year One of our supporters in Gombe named Dr. Ali Yunusa also went to join the great cloud of witnesses.

May the Lord raise other workers in their place and may He keep that which they left behind in the faith to meet on that day when the Master appears.

WHY EMS NEEDS TWO BRAND NEW HI-LUXES PICK UP VANS.

Apart from over 800 home missionaries that are working in often remote and difficult terrains, EMS Missionaries are also spread all over 8 West African Countries, including Niger, Mali, Togo, Cameroun, Chad, Republic Of Benin, Togo and .. These Missionaries have to be taken to the field, be visited for encouragement, or be evacuated for medical and other reasons. The only vehicles we have and have been used in the past to take these missionaries to the field, as far as Mali and to visit them, are a lorry which has broken down and its maintenance has become uneconomical . We also have two second hand Peugeot 505 cars that have been now overused. One of the vehicles basically collapsed after a trip to Mali. Infact, even in their 'New' state, these secondhand vehicles could barely make the trips to these far away West African countries and even back at home, they are not suitable for use to go to many mission fields because of the very rough terrains. The best solution is to buy two brand new four wheel drives that can be used for long distances to take Missionaries to the field and to visit and attend to other welfare needs of Missionaries on the field. Please pray and contribute as the Lord enables you towards this critical need.

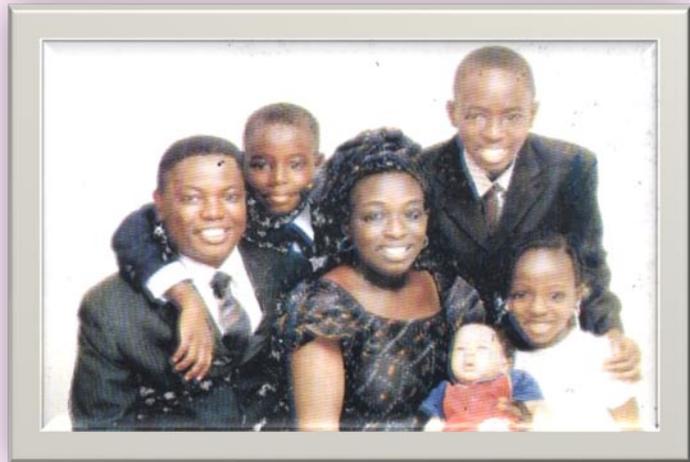
CALLED TO BE A MISSIONARY

A TRIBUTE TO REV. STEPHEN BABA-PANYA

WRITTEN BY GOODNEWS MAITAMA

It is as if the Spirit said, “Set apart for me Rev. Stephen Baba-Panya for the work to which I have called him”. Following in the footsteps of his father, Rev. Dr. Baba-Panya, a retired ECWA pastor and former EMS Director, Rev. Stephen Baba-Panya was called to a ministry of evangelism, revival and missions.

Indeed he was interviewed as an Evangelical Missionary Society (EMS)/ECWA Missions candidate for the Sudan. His stay for the past ten years at Maitama Goodnews which he started in 1996 as pioneer pastor is actually under the aegis of the EMS urban Ministry (Abuja DCC). Though a pastor of this Church, Steve has lived a life of an evangelist, a revivalist and missions-three areas of his calling that have dominated his work for the Lord. When he talks about missions he talks with consummate passion.



Looking at Maitama Goodnews today, (in terms of physical development, spiritual growth and its missionary activities), one would hardly believe that this is a church that started with only 18 people (ten adults and eight children) at her

inaugural service in 1997, and was unable to remove debris from its cleared the site because it had no N5, 000 (five thousand Naira) to hire trucks!

And so from a humble beginning when Maitama Goodnews was ridiculed, maligned, slandered, opposed and intimidated, and operating from temporary structures, stand a worship edifice and a Sunday school, a school building structures of grandiose magnificence because Steve weathered the storms of discouragement, resistance and opposition knowing that it is “not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit” as the Lord says. Today, we can celebrate and TELL OF ALL HIS WONDERFUL ACTS and shout a loud EBENEZER – thus far has the Lord helped us (also a befitting name to the last Pastor’s child at Maitama).

Maitama Goodnews under the ministry of Steve has a vibrant pulpit, a prayer bond, Men Women and Youth fellowships, Sunday school, the Hills Christian Academy, Family and Marriage ministry, Welfare Committee, Widows, Widowers and Orphans ministry, Evangelism team, Visitation team, Drama team, Ushering team, Choir, and a Band of high standard.

Rev. Steve has under God and persistent teaching guided Maitama Goodnews into a worship and revival centre, a soul winning church, an evangelistic and church planting church, a caring church, a teaching church, a missionary church, a leadership training church and a human and monetary resources mobilizing church. Without burdening the congregation about finance, he taught the benefits of giving and it is amazing how God has used members to voluntarily give their money, time and other resources such that project targets have been astonishingly met!

As Steve moves on to head ECWEA Missions’ work, he can look back with fulfillment at the fruit of his missionary efforts at Maitama Goodnews – ECWA Gwarimpa, Mabushi, Koroduma (Asokoro), Dawaki village, Tungan Madaki, Yanga village, Koton Karfe, Angwan Tanko, Kpaduma and several other assistance rendered to missions, missionaries, and theological Institutes/Colleges.

While Steve was busy in the above areas, his wife Naomi, apart from supporting him also committed her time to the Women Fellowship, Children Sunday School

and later, the Hills Christian Academy, Their children - David, Panya Jnr, Ruth and Ebenezer have been good examples of children from a Godly home.

Born 46 years ago, Steve who lost his mother at a tender age attended ECWA transferred School, Karu (1969-1975), E.S.S. Miango (1975-1980), School of Basic Studies, Zaria (1980-1981), London School of Accountancy (1981-1986), and ECWA Theological Seminary, Igbaja (1995-1996). He holds the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) certificate, Chartered Associate of Certified Accountants (ACCA), Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) certificate and a Masters in Biblical Studies (MABS).

His working career started with Parnell Kerr Forster Chartered Accountants in Jos, where he moved and briefly worked with Lion Bank and later Nigeria Merchant Bank. It was with the River Blindness Foundation (Now Global 2000) where as the Chief Accountant that Steve answered the call to a ministry of evangelism, revival and missions. Steve is a lover of music as expressed during various worship sessions. He has two albums to his credit including "Solemn Favourites".

As you move to Jos, Steve, be rest assured that God has used you to build a base for your missionary work at Maitama Goodnews. We are proud to "send you out". God has taught us that indeed He owns the church and the work. You have only been a "vessel of honour". We look forward to occasions when you will have opportunities to visit us.