



LIGHTHOUSE

MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

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Lighthouse Newsletter



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LMI Fall Fundraiser Supper
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GTI - Ghana Teacher Internship

LMI is excited to have launched the first iteration of the Ghana Teacher Internship program also known as GTI in summer 2023. GTI is a mutually beneficial program between volunteers, North American teachers, and Ghanaian teachers and their students. North American volunteers and Ghanaian teachers participate in cross cultural evaluations to broaden perspectives and gain fresh ideas while co-teaching in the classroom. Volunteers receive cultural orientation upon arrival in Ghana in preparation for their stay in the country and interaction with the local people. Teacher workshops are offered to both the volunteers and their teacher partners and Ghanaian teachers outside of the partnerships. Volunteers are responsible for paying their own trip expenses or raising their own funds.

The summer 2023 team of 11 North American volunteers, led by Matthew Frey as group leader, spent

4 weeks in Ghana. One the words of one participant: "I would definitely encourage others to participate. It was a blessing to come and experience Ghana culture, and especially the people. More than that, I find the purpose of GTI is beneficial to both the Ghanaian schools and myself. I think this program is a great opportunity. It was stretching at times for me, but in a good way. The welcome generosity and friendliness here have touched me. The children in particular have tugged at my heart strings. The little hands reaching to hold mine, the eager eyes, the voices calling me "Auntie", the group crowding close to sing or listen to a story are among my best memories. The group of us at the compound, I found very much like family in a short time. Being able to relax, discuss things, eat meals, and sing together have been a wonderful experience for me."



Volunteer Experiences

You see, I knew what to expect. I knew it would be warm. I knew the culture would be different. I knew I would be doing some form of teaching. I was sure I knew what to expect. Then I landed in Ghana. Expectations became a word found only in the dictionary.

Ghana was the place where we tossed the dictionary and lived in the moment.

For a few weeks I got to be immersed in a world of children on a different continent than the students I have taught in the past. But children the world over are similar – full of stories and giggles. In a Ghanaian student named Jerry John, I saw one of my Canadian students. Born to be a leader and full of charm. In Nora, I saw the child in my former classroom who struggles to understand. In Jayden, I saw my



quiet, observant student. Frimpomaa was the sweet, curious girl figuring out what it means to be a young woman. Baffour, the child who made a wide circuit before landing in his seat and proclaiming that he had come down from heaven, reminded me of another youngster I once taught. Ever the life of the party.

Children also provide a connection for adults, and this was a reality when we stepped into the Ghanaian schools. The lessons I learned from the teachers and students were invaluable. The teacher with whom I was partnered often took opportunities to teach her



students life lessons. She would pray with her students before the class period and then find ways to incorporate 'by the way' teachable moments. She spoke with them about prayer not being a joking matter and

how every child is smart in some area and many other little chats that the children absorbed and were encouraged by their teachers to put into their coconuts. It gave me fresh inspiration and courage for my next school term. I will miss the daily, “Auntie, please, good morning!” and the welcoming attitude of every classroom I entered.

Our trip made me realize anew what is truly important in life. At the end of this adventure, I want to tell the Father again that “I am on my way coming” and now I have added some sweet new faces to my repertoire of friends. I know that I want us to be together in Heaven.

Steph Ropp



Teacher workshop for North American and Ghanaian teachers



“How are you?”

“By the grace of God, I am fine.”
If you hear this answer, you know you are in Ghana.

It could have been at the school where I spent three weeks, observing and taking classes. The new things I saw were many; some to learn from and remember, and some to forget. If you think your school in Canada has too few books, recognize that many Ghanaian schools have no library at all. If you think your classroom is crowded, hear about the classroom that could hold 25 Canadian students but holds 78 Gr. 6 Ghanaian students. Then when we feel the Ghanaian prejudgement that every North American is filthy rich, we cannot but admit that they are probably correct.

When I think over the last month,

I recall unsanitary restrooms, garbage in the gutters, and people who make it their life dream to move to North America or Western Europe, but I also recall delectable local fresh fruit, sincere Christian worship services, people who have a vision to improve their communities through Christian education, the crowing of roosters, and the twittering of birds that signals the sun rising over a horizon of coconut palms.

And I remember our gracious host, Sir Williams, saying half in jest, “Now when you get back home and you hear someone say, ‘In Africa, everybody is bad people,’ you can tell them, ‘No, that is not true, there is this one man Williams...’”

Jared Martin

Where Is My Home?

Christian* is a seven-year-old boy who lives in Ghana. He doesn't have any brothers and sisters and lives with his Grandma.

Christian is thankful he has a grandma to live with. He is not able to hear because he is deaf. All their talking is done with hand signs.

"Grandma," Christian used his hands to ask the question, "why are you still in bed this morning? The sun has been up for some time."

Grandma looked at the puzzled face of the child. She knew she was not feeling well. She had been trying to act like everything was going well for some time now. She knew she had to care for Christian because there was no one else to do it. Christian's mom had died a long time ago and his dad was not interested in caring for a child who could not hear.

Grandma remembered how there were times when she could not make enough money selling water to travelers on the road to feed themselves. She thought about the hungry times and about the happy times.

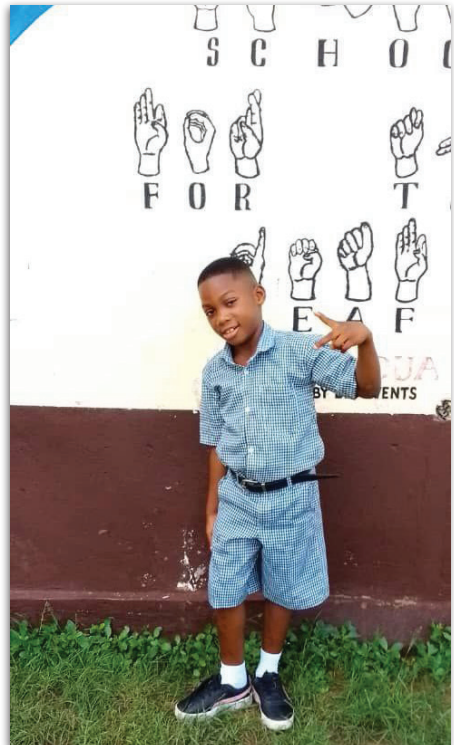
Now Christian was asking her what the problem was. "Christian, I am sick. I can't go and sell water anymore. I am sorry, Christian, but I will not be able to go to church tomorrow either."

Christian raised his hands in the 'now what' sign. He could see his

grandma was sick and he couldn't depend on her for help. There was very little money in the house too. What is a seven-year-old boy supposed to do?

Taking the basket used for cold drinks Christian filled it with a few of each kind. Carefully he arranged the towel on his head to balance it and out he went. It was a big basket and a heavy basket, but Christian knew he had to do it if they were going to eat.

Walking between the cars when they stopped, beckoning to drivers as they waited for the road to clear again, Christian did his best to sell as many bottles as he could.



The hours crept by. Business was poor, but enough was sold to buy bofrot, a deep fried sweet bread, to dull the edge of hunger. Anything more had to go towards medicine for Grandma.

Taking the money home Christian showed it to his grandmother. She was pleased with his work. "Good job, son," she signed and reached to take his hand in hers.

He pulled away and told her that the money was to buy medicine for her.

"No, no, it's not enough yet, but I am still pleased with you," she patted his hand and sent him to bed.

That night Christian slept soundly, the hard work had worn him out.

The next morning Christian woke up and put on his traditional clothes. He knew his grandma wanted him to go to church. How was he going to get there if he couldn't go with his grandma? He started off walking toward the home of another deaf boy who went to the same church. It was a long walk and he wanted to get there before they left.

At church Christian was happy to see his teacher. He was happy to see his friends. Busily they talked with their hands, Christian telling them about his adventures in the market the day before. His teacher observed the boys then beckoned Christian to him.

"How did you come to church?" he asked.

"With him," Christian pointed to his friend.

"Where is your grandmother?"

"At home. She is sick."

"Who is caring for you?"

"I care for myself."

"Hmm" the Sunday school teacher tugged at the little tuft of hair on his chin. He waved Christian off. A seven year old boy could not live on his own. Maybe a boarding school would be an option. The rice donated to the family would be long gone.

After church the Sunday School teacher was still mulling over the problem. He happened to meet with the director of the LEAF program. (Lighthouse Education Assistance Program) Perhaps someone would adopt Christian?

Christian is seven. He is deaf. He has a lot of energy. Sending him to a boarding school is only a temporary solution. What will he do when he comes back?

The LEAF program has been involved in this family for several years. They've seen Christian every month when he comes to pick up the food parcel. They've selected a school for him. Now they hope to find him a new family. There is still hope for Christian to be part of a family with a mother and father.

There are many more children who are finding innovative ways to care for themselves. If no one else does it, they do it themselves!

Board Report

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Matt 5: 5

Well known verse to those of us that are familiar with the sermon on the mount. We had a message on this verse in church recently and it got me to thinking about how the beatitudes have a condition or action that is followed by a promise. The promise attached to meekness is rather interesting. Why is the term “inherit” used for the meek. The meaning of the word meek has many close synonyms such as humble, compliant, deferential, gentle, passive, docile, serene in the English language. I have at times confused meekness with simply being humble. The favorite definition that was shared with me by a friend, is that meekness, is power that is kept under control. In this scenario, I am able to do something, I am within my rights to this thing, I can make a claim that doing so is fair, it may well

be that others would be fine with me acting on my ability to exercise on the action, but I choose not to because another person will be disadvantaged by my gain. Now, back to the use of inherit. If I choose not to exert my power to gain advantage, I will by earthly rules become poorer. Here again we are informed that the Kingdom of Heaven operates by a different set of rules for engagement. The creator of all things dispenses an inheritance to those who do not exercise their power to act when it would be in their best interest but at the expense of others.

May LMI as an organization and each of our stakeholders be known as meek, so that the almighty God can dispense his rich inheritance to us.

Blessings to all who contribute in the many ways that make the work in the Lord’s kingdom prosper.

Arnold Frey

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