



## *Son-rise in Africa Newsletter*

CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Report by **EARL & KATHI COOPER**

(for Newsletter Archives go to <http://www.discipleshipministries.ca/>)

**November - December 2008**

### **Ministry Update...**

The Lord continued to bless our travels and ministry throughout November and early December. The churches we visited were receptive to the challenge of reaching "Our Dark World" at home and abroad. We count it a privilege to be used of God to challenge His children toward mission ministry. Despite some adverse travel conditions the Lord kept us safe and on time. Earl continues to work on Africa Bible College curriculum writing as well as preparing special studies for the overseas ministry opportunities in 2009. With the 2009 teaching lull in Ghana and Togo, many opportunities have arisen throughout the world to teach, some even unsolicited. A pastor from Nigeria called to ask Earl to teach there in 2009. He discovered our website on the internet and promptly called from Africa. Although the 2009 "overseas" schedule is already filled, we may be able to accommodate him in 2010. The need for teaching in developing countries is desperate. **Please pray** for God to raise up men who would continue their theological education to become equipped, and willing, to carry on this essential ministry. **Please pray** for God to give wisdom and means for ABWE Canada to develop a program to encourage churches to participate in preparing such men.

### **Here is a Word in Season from Earl (see our website for daily devotionals)**

Christmas is such a special, people oriented time of year that most families try to capture those moments in film. Part of the Christmas tradition itself is viewing past Christmas Celebrations. Although there were no cameras at that first Christmas scenes, the scriptures paint clear scenes for us to reflect upon.

What becomes immediately obvious when our attention is focused upon these scenes is the marked contrast in how the Christ Child was received. In Luke the first scene is painted with the colour of indifference; "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7). An opportunity to take best advantage of good business prompted the management of Bethlehem Inn to look with cool indifference at the circumstances of a needy couple. In marked contrast to this is the bright colour of jubilation in the scene of the shepherds; "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us... And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." (Luke 2:15,20).

In Matthew the scenes of the First Christmas are painted with equal contrast. Here the soft colour of reverence is evident as the wise men come from a far land to pay homage; "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." (Matthew 2:11). This delicate hue of reverence is sharply contrasted by the scene at the palace where intolerance and hate fill the picture: "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men." (Matthew 2:16).

As the scenes of that first Christmas are reflected upon, it becomes obvious that little has changed. The films and photos of our Christmas Celebrations are marked by the same contrasts of reception toward the Christ Child. If time is taken to consider the cause of the contrast, the answer comes readily. The contrast is caused by who is in the centre of the picture. Where man is in the centre, the scenes are filled with indifference and intolerance, where Christ is in the centre, jubilation and reverence are predominant. As much as Christmas time should be people oriented, it must be Christ centred. To focus otherwise is to miss the truth of Christmas: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:17). What colours fill the scenes of your Christmas, indifference and intolerance or jubilation and reverence?

## **Please pray with us...**

1. For effective teaching where God leads while BATA is organized in Africa. Our prayer is to labour in the Spirit's power to bring understanding to the pastors and equip them to teach their own people.
2. For travel safety during Earl's upcoming winter trips to Romania and Alberta.
3. For preparation of the studies for Romania, Cameroon, Trinidad, India scheduled for 2009.
4. For our support deficit of approximately \$100 month. ***With the Canadian dollar dropping and flight costs increasing, we anticipate a review of our support will result in a necessary increase for 2009. Please pray that the Lord will meet the need.***
5. For ministry opportunities in Canada and U.S. as we continue filling our 2009 schedule.

## **Present Itinerary:**

We are presently making contact with churches to complete our 2009 schedule. This is more difficult this year because Earl's "overseas" schedule is still not finalized. **Please pray** for opportunities to share the ABWE Canada needs throughout Canada as these dates are finalized.

January 15 – 27: Romania

February: Calgary

June: Cameroon

September: Trinidad

November: India

## **Kathi's Notes...** Merry Christmas!

We are about to flip the calendar to a new year—2009! Before that happens, we want to say thank you to those who have faithfully given support to us in the past year. You have encouraged us and enabled us to continue in the ministry to which God has called us; we appreciate you so much.

In 2008 we have supported the airline industry with multiple flights to Ghana, Florida, and Cameroon, and also to Nova Scotia and Seattle, WA. There have been road trips across Ontario, the Maritimes, and to Pennsylvania. We are thankful for a car that works, safety, and the provision of funds. God has been so good to us in our travelling adventures! We are hoping to take a holiday in Florida between Christmas and New Years to visit the newlyweds. Earl plans teaching trips to Romania, Cameroon, Trinidad, and India in 2009 —more air miles!

Our family has grown this year. Teresa & Adam now have the famous "My Three Sons". Nathan David Leeder arrived on Feb. 11 to join brothers Malakai and Izaak. They are an active family, always with a project to work on, whether it is re-modeling, building, decorating, baking pies, or entertaining in their home. On August 24 we welcomed Aleece to the family as David's bride. It was a joy to share in their wedding near Seattle, WA. They are living in Pensacola, FL while Dave finishes 2 Masters degrees—newsflash-1 down, 1 to go! Meanwhile, Michele & Minne are busy preparing to join a team of ABWE missionaries who are planting churches in Portugal. Ministry through sports will be a natural outreach for them; Drew & Caleb are now playing basketball and will soon be into the skating & soccer seasons.

## **Air Miles Assistance - Cooper Air Miles No. 8006 178 1930**

***Thanks to air miles assistance we have traded for grocery vouchers. For those who have passed on your earned air miles to us, we thank you. You can help our monthly costs by using our Air Miles number. This is a practical way of supporting our ministry travel costs. We thank you for your consideration.***

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