

Sellers Sequel

December 2020



COVID has not slowed the growth of the church here or the energy of local Christians. In the four months since our return to Côte d'Ivoire, we have reconnected with church leaders and friends, visited several local churches, taught two IBAO modules, and made trips to three other regions of the country where new churches are being planted. We recently visited a new church plant in the northern suburbs of Abidjan. These new believers were full of joy and emotion in their worship and listening to the word of God.



Larry with IBAO student

A young woman with a mentally challenged child felt led to donate a pulpit for the new church even though she was part of one of the other Church of God congregations in the city. When the local leader learned that we would be visiting that Sunday, he was concerned that they had no pulpit. He shared this with another man in the church, who assured him that God would provide whatever they needed. Just then he received a call from the young woman wanting to donate one. At great personal sacrifice she had this pulpit made by a carpenter and then delivered it to the local leader the day before our visit. She then decided to come to the service there on Sunday when Larry preached from the pulpit for the first time. What a rare privilege for us and an amazing story of faith and obedience to God!



Service at new church plant



Local leader
Olivier
beside the new
pulpit !





The Lakpolo project is making steady progress with a well drilled and functioning, a water tower and pump house erected, and over 2000 blocks made to begin building a perimeter wall and sixteen shops. These are the elements of the first phase of construction that has been possible due to the generous donations of many last year toward this project. The second phase will be the building of a retreat center for the national church's use in the future.



The primary effect of COVID here was an economic one, which, coupled with a poor harvest in some areas, has made life very difficult for many ordinary people, especially for pastors and churches. Because of this, church giving to local and national needs has been virtually curtailed for most of 2020. It is uncertain if the General Assembly will take place in March of 2021 since churches have not given their participation funds for this event. Several other national events have been postponed or cancelled as well, such as the national youth retreat and the all-pastors meetings.



The end of the year “Finish Strong” Campaign for Global Strategy has highlighted one of our projects for matching gifts among fourteen projects being helped globally. Funds sent to this project by the end of the year will be matched up to \$50,000 to benefit all fourteen projects included in the campaign. Would you consider making an end of year donation to this project, providing much needed funding to help the church in Côte d'Ivoire carry out national ministries and events until funds begin to be generated internally through the Lakpolo project and other self-help projects in early stages of development? For more information on this, please click on this link: <https://www.chogglobal.org/FinishStrong/>



While 2020 has been a most unusual year for all of us with many unplanned detours, we have seen God use these to accomplish some amazing works of redemption and provision. We trust him to continue to provide in amazing ways in 2021 as well, whether it turns out to be a “normal” year or another one full of detours and surprises.

Joyeux Noel ★ Merry Christmas
Larry & LeAnn Sellers



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