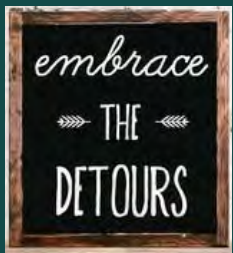


THE SELLERS SEQUEL

Larry & LeAnn Global Strategy Missionaries
serving the Church of God in West Africa



Detours are not something new. We see examples throughout the Word where people have experienced detours in their lives, some due to their own choices or someone else's choice. Think of Saul on the way to Damascus, he had a major life detour that we read in Acts 9. Paul embraced his detour and changed the course of history and still changes lives today.

The detours of life for those with whom we work have been of many kinds: some expected, some unexpected, some positive some negative, and some have brought radical life changes. As a new school year starts in Côte d'Ivoire, more detours will affect the lives of families in major ways.

Over the past eighteen months, life for most people has been marked by detours of many different kinds all around the world. This is no less true for those with whom we work even though COVID has not been as devastating as in other parts of the world. Unlike in the USA, families often have to face the difficult decision of sending their young children to school in other parts of the country because of better educational opportunities or because there is not a secondary school in their town or village.

Sometimes it is due to financial constraints. For instance, the children with LeAnn in this photo are siblings. But due to their father's passing, two will live with an uncle to attend school in another city. While one, along with an older sister, will stay with their mother for schooling locally. Such detours are a common part of life for African families.



A Day-Trip to IBAO

The IBAO program is set up to have three years of study, followed by a six-month-long internship in another local congregation. This allows students to put into practice what they have learned under the supervision of an experienced pastor. We are now setting up internships for four students. While this is expected, it is still a detour for many who will leave their homes, families, fields, and familiar lives to minister in often very foreign settings.

IBAO is also preparing an Open-Door Day for prospective students to visit our campus to spend a day and night and experience the life of an IBAO student. They will attend class and chapel, talk with students and professors, and receive information and have time at the table with the IBAO Family.





Maneuvering the potholes

Since 2013, the Church of God in Abidjan has been seeking to purchase and take possession of a significant tract of land in the largest municipality in the country. This process has involved many unexpected detours along the way, including court cases, opposition, squatters, police, and government involvement. We are at the point now of waiting for the police to clear off the squatters who are using the land illegally for their own commercial activities. Once this has happened, we will need to begin building on it right away, first putting up a temporary fence, then a more permanent wall, so that the local church can relocate on the property from the tiny hidden rented spot that they have been using for several years. This new location will give the church much more space, high visibility, and room to establish other ministries as well.

As Joshua and the Israelites circled Jericho by faith that God would intervene, would you please join with us to circle this property with our prayers of faith that God will intervene to see the walls of bureaucracy and opposition brought down and God's victory made clear for all to see. And join us in thanking God for his help in maneuvering the many detours and overcoming obstacles along the way to where we are today, ready to cross over into the promised land that he led us to eight years ago.



IBAO off the beaten path

IBAO is not just a classroom setting! We encourage the students to get outside the walls of IBAO and put into practice in a local context the things they are learning. Each student will carry out an internship in a different area of the country from where they live, starting in late March 2022. They will work with a congregation under the leadership of the pastor. The IBAO committee will make visits to encourage and evaluate the students.

During the times that IBAO is not in session, the teachers also visit the congregations where the students are serving. This gives professors chances to observe students and to give feedback on their messages in real time. It also gives the professor time to listen to how the students are putting good principles of preaching into practice. In the above photo, Larry is giving a student in Abidjan some feedback after seeing him preach in his home church.



National Youth Retreat

In mid-August the National Youth Retreat was held in Bouake. Moise Yeo was one of the main speakers. He encouraged the youth to think about how to use their resources in ways that will honor the Lord and be helpful to their future.

Moise is a young man who grew up in the Church of God in Korhogo, and is now active in the Abidjan Church of God.

The youth also held an evangelistic outreach.

Prayer Requests and Praises!

- Pray for IBAO's upcoming classes in November 2021: Homiletics and Introduction to Missiology.
- Pray for the OPEN DOOR EVENT for IBAO on November 8 & 9 for prospective students.
- Pray for the new Executive Committee to lean on the Lord's guidance in introducing changes.
- Pray for the Abidjan land to be cleared with no problems or further delays.
- Pray for the Sellerses as they transition back to Abidjan in the future.



Leading Youth by Radio

For twelve years our CBH French Radio team has been leading youth to Christ through radio by consistent and relevant biblical teaching geared towards African young people. The program called **Tribune Jeunes** is produced in the Church of God studio in Yamoussoukro every three months to be aired across most of the country on Fréquence Vie national Christian network of stations. In September the team met for three days, bringing in guest speakers and consultants from a variety of backgrounds, to prepare thirteen broadcasts that are being edited and will be aired in early 2022. These continue to elicit responses from people across the country.

God-ordained Detours open new Doors

In our thirty-six years of mission service, we have maneuvered many detours in our life and ministry, including illness, coups, wars, refugee influx, hurricanes, family losses, sudden death of church leaders, and genocide. Many of these have been while serving in Côte d'Ivoire over the past twenty-five years. We spent our first five years living in the metropolis of Abidjan and the last twenty in the smaller city of Yamoussoukro, living in the same house for those years. However, our landlord recently gave us notice that we must vacate this house by the end of January, 2022. While we knew that this day would come sometime, it has brought a new detour into our lives sooner than anticipated.

Though an initial shock for us, we see it as a God-ordained detour that will serve several necessary purposes. After having lived in Yamoussoukro for many years where the national church ministry center is based, we feel that the time has come for us to transition out of some of our responsibilities and turn them over to others who are trained and capable of taking these over, or at least begin doing them under our guidance while we are still in the country. It will also allow us to relocate in a different area where we can be involved in some significant new thrusts in ministry and service to the church on a broader scale.

We were planning to stay in our present location and ministries at least until our next home assignment, scheduled for summer of 2022. However, now we must vacate our house by January and finding a new home in Yamoussoukro for less than a year is not easy. And making a move for such a short period while we complete or transfer ministries to others is not very practical.

So our mission leadership has approved that we take an early home assignment, leaving probably by April of 2022. This will allow us to finish some already arranged events and responsibilities, put our belongings in storage, and turn over other responsibilities to our colleagues and national leaders. Our plans upon our return to Côte d'Ivoire after home assignment are to resettle in Abidjan, where our West African journey began twenty-five years ago. Our next letter will share more details about this new part of our journey.



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