

From: April LaRose a.larose@monclovabaptist.org
Subject: Fwd: Snooks: Journey in Togo
Date: February 12, 2024 at 8:15 AM
To: Anita Eis a.eis@monclovabaptist.org



April LaRose | Secretary to Pastor Rands
(419) 866-0773
monclovabaptist.org



----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Brandon** <brandon.snook@abwe.cc>
Date: Sat, Feb 10, 2024 at 11:17 AM
Subject: Snooks: Journey in Togo
To: <a.larose@monclovabaptist.org>

Journey in Togo



"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations. Knowing this.

... my brethren, count it all joy, when you fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" James 1:2-4

We think about these verses often, wondering how the trials of life could help us be more joyful in the Lord. The testing of our faith often means that best laid plans are sabotaged or there is a tragic situation that is out of our control. That said, we can conclude that joy is not rooted in circumstances or feelings. There is still joy knowing we rest in the Lord even as we experience sadness, frustration, or discouragement. These verses help us to examine how much we trust God: Are we willing to trust Him when nothing seems right? Do we trust Him only when things go our way?

When we do trust him with all things, he works patience in us. That means being steadfast in our faith as we prayerfully wait on Him, instead of immediately trying to find our own solutions. Practicing patience allows us to know that our faith is made complete in our Savior, needing nothing except Him. That patient peace in the Lord is truly joyful.



Brandon giving the message at church before a wedding. He is standing near our friend Chris, who is interpreting to Ewe.



Caydon and our friend, Mensa, are handing out Christmas gifts to the kids at church.



Our family is continuing to attend the small church in the village of Patatouku. We recently learned that this village is considered somewhat of an "outcast" in relation to the surrounding areas. Several decades ago in Kara, a large city in Togo located in the north, a village chief discovered that some from

the Kabiye tribe were practicing witchcraft. He decided to banish them to Patatouku. At the time, there were deadly wild animals that were known to kill all who attempted to live there. Several people from the tribe were sent to die there. To everyone's surprise, the banished people were able to kill the feared beasts and eventually formed a community there. Patatouku is unique, in that it is one of the only villages with a predominately Kabiye population in a predominately Ewe region. The name actually translates to "victory over the wild beast". As a result, our small church speaks in both the Kabiye and Ewe languages. We have a special friendship with a Togolese gardener who we take to church on Sundays. He has been very helpful with language interpretation. Our other Togolese partner, Chris, has had a wonderful opportunity to study abroad at a Bible institute in Africa. We are sad that he will not be with us, but happy that he is able to continue in his training.

As we keep attending this church, we have been thankful for the relationships that are developing. Brandon was asked to give a message at a sister church on Christmas Eve, right before a wedding. He focused on the godly and faithful relationship of Mary and Joseph. It was an honor for our family to be asked and attend the wedding afterwards.

At present, the church is building a larger brick structure on some recently purchased land. It is nearly finished, with the exception of the roof. The builders are waiting for the first heavy rain (by March?) to help cement the bricks in place before constructing the rest. We anticipate moving to the building in early spring. The new meeting place strategically sits between two villages: Patatouku and Sodo Zion. We are hoping this encourages people to attend from both towns.





Johnny visited clinic to have a dressing change.



The hospital continues to be busy. Brandon sees many patients who have advanced medical conditions and there is little that can be done to treat them. Still, these patients and their families are taken care of both physically and spiritually. "Johnny" had been suffering with a chronic debilitating bone infection in his leg that prevented him from walking. Brandon was afraid that he might have to amputate the affected leg. After a long hospital stay with antibiotic treatment and multiple surgical debridements, he didn't require an amputation. In fact, "Johnny" started walking with crutches. His infection, however, will never go away and Brandon anticipates seeing him again. What is reassuring is that the Johnny has heard the gospel message several times now. We hope and pray that he will make a decision to follow Christ.

After seeing "Samia" in clinic, Brandon found that she had an advanced breast cancer. He was able to perform palliative surgery for her, although her condition is terminal. Even though "Samia" and her family were from a traditional Muslim background, they still listened to the gospel message. Please pray with us for their

background, they still listened to the gospel message. Please pray with us for their conversion.

The OB/GYN ward has not been open at HBB for a few years. However, the government has recently given HBB approval to reopen. There is a high mortality rate among pregnant women and among new-born babies in Togo. The hospital anticipates a surge in OB patients, which brings more C-sections, high-risk pregnancies, and preemies. Please pray for the hospital as they take on this enormous responsibility. We are also praying for the OB/GYN ward to be well-staffed.



Picture of the HBB Surgical Team and the new PAACS surgical residents, Sweni and Patiente.

L'Hôpital Baptiste Biblique (HBB) welcomed two residents to the PAACS surgery residency program at the end of 2023. The HBB surgical team will be sharing in the teaching of surgical lectures and hands-on surgical training. We welcomed Patiente from Rwanda and Sweni from Cameroon. Although they are African, Togo is still very different in terms of culture and language and will be a major adjustment for them. Please pray for their success as they begin this rigorous surgical training program.





Izzy playing with the children at Kids Club.

The weekly Kids Club had to cease from meeting at the local school due to complaints from certain groups in town. They did not want Christians to gather in a public space. So, for a few weeks, our children couldn't help with this youth outreach.

Still, the Lord has provided. A local pastor graciously allowed the Kids Club to continue at his house, which is near the school. While the space is significantly smaller, there are still many local kids who attend. Our children are excited to work with other missionary families in planning games, presenting the gospel, teaching songs, reciting Bible memory verses, and handing out snacks. Kids Club continues to be a first-hand way our children can be part of missions. They see how lives are impacted by the gospel.



We had our first personal visitor out this fall. We welcomed Dr. Samson Otuwa to HBB. He spent much of his time in the hospital, performing anesthesia during surgical cases. It was a great encouragement to see a familiar face from home, especially for Brandon. We encourage anyone interested in medical missions to plan a trip to Togo. HBB is not just a hospital. Rather, it is a community of missionaries and Togolese Christians who have the same goal of reaching the lost in the surrounding villages while attending to their physical needs. By the same token, there is much need for people who are gifted in areas outside of medicine

to work with our Togo team. For example, as we expand the hospital and compound housing areas, we are in need of an experienced foreman and construction workers. Furthermore, John and Betty, two of our beloved missionaries, are preparing to retire in June after 30 years on the field. They have been maintaining the hospital, guest housing, missionary housing, and grounds to keep the mission functional. While we have qualified short-term people to help, we are looking for a long-term missionary to fill in this enormous gap.



Some at the HBB mission represented ABWE at the annual regional conference held in our village of Tsiko in December. The theme centered around end-times and redeeming the time. The conference was comprised of all the church plants that have been established in the plateau region of Togo over the last 40 years. It was a three-day event with thousands of worshipers. Our family, along with other missionary team members, sang a special in French during the Sunday morning service. It was amazing to witness how much God has done in this region through the decades.





Kate has been spending much of her time helping the children meet their schooling goals. This has been a learning curve for us, as first-time homeschooling parents with upper-level high school students. We are thankful for all the help and advice that many at home and here in Togo have shared. In fact, we recently met a short-term missionary who is an experienced college counselor and facilitator. The Lord provided such a friend to help us set-up and polish our older children's transcripts. We are very thankful!

Nearly every week, Kate has been meeting the ladies from the mountain for a Bible study. The study is slow-going because many of the ladies do not know the Bible. At present, the study is in Exodus where a sacrificial lamb was required to be saved from the tenth plague, the death of the first-born son. Emphasis was put on the need for a sacrificial replacement in order to be saved from certain death. The use of a perfect lamb was also underscored. The women have been asking intelligent questions and seem to enjoy learning about our mighty, holy, and loving God.

Kate also joined the hospitality and Guest House ministries on compound. She will be helping as the hospitality treasurer and assisting the guest house with billing. In general, Kate finds herself with much to understand and do throughout the week.





Family Update: The children are doing well in school, especially in the in-person courses at the missionary schoolhouse. We are thankful that they have mostly adjusted to school life and have enjoyed the fellowship of other missionary kids too. Caydon is applying to colleges and hopes to start in September 2024. He is happy to be wrapping up high school. It will be difficult to see him leave, especially while living on another continent!

We are already planning for the next school year in Togo. We are sad to say goodbye to Miss Jacquelyn, the elementary school house teacher, this spring. Thankfully, we have another gifted elementary teacher arriving this summer. However, we do not have a dedicated teacher for the middle and high schoolers for next year. We are praying for the right teacher(s) to help with MK secondary education, as well as become part of our team's missions' outreach.

In December, our family was approved for and received Togolese residency cards for one year. This was a huge answer to prayer. The process was not easy and will have to be repeated next fall. Still, we are thankful to have it completed. The Togolese government sees every resident card renewal as continued commitment to the country. As a result, we hope that they will extend the length of time between renewals.

We celebrated Thanksgiving and Christmas for the first time in Togo. It was very nice to have a grand spread and family-like atmosphere for a team-wide Thanksgiving dinner. Christmas was sweet...low key and simple. It allowed us to reflect on the gift of a Savior and the underserving gift of salvation that He extends to all who believe. While we missed family, friends, and traditions at home, we were comforted by the community of believers here.

It is funny how God works. We found out that one of our church friends named Gabe is working in Togo. The kids grew up going to a small Christian school in Las Vegas. They have known Gabe and his family for a long time. It is unreal that he was sent here, to such a small, mostly unknown, African country. We are able to see him when we go to the capital from time to time. To see a familiar face is such an encouragement to us, especially the kids. It is like having a family member who lives just a couple hours away.

Well, goodbye for now. We really appreciate your prayers and partnership in our ministry to Togo. You are a blessing to our family.

Praises:

1. HBB welcomed their first two PAACS surgery residents, Patience and Sweny.
2. The Patatouku church building is nearly finished.
3. Caydon is nearing high school graduation.
4. We had a visit from a friend (Samson) from Las Vegas.

Prayer Requests:

1. For the development of relationships with individual Togolese.
2. For language acquisition: Ewe, further improving in French
3. For the Lord to continue to guide us in serving at the ABWE church in Patatouku.
4. For a head pastor to lead in that local church.
5. For more teams to undertake the many hospital and compound building projects at HBB... especially a foreman, construction crews, specialty crews (electric, plumbing etc.) who are interested in short-term mission's work.
6. For the ABWE Hospital of Hope (HOH), ABWE team members, and the people of Mango, Togo. The water pumps from the river to the city are often broken and many go without water for long periods of time. HOH uses 40,000 gallons of water daily to run the hospital. Please pray the water situation stabilizes and a permanent solution is found.
7. For the Lord to provide the necessary long-term missions staff to replace those that are retiring. John and Betty T. have been at HBB for 30 years, maintaining the hospital and compound. They retire in June.
8. For spiritual protection, growth, and encouragement in our family.
9. For the Snook teens to finish strong in school.
10. For good health.
11. For wisdom and fruit in ministry: the Patatouku church, the hospital, the women's Bible study, the PAACS program, and kids club.



Sending Church:
Southern Hills Baptist Church
6425 W. Pebble Rd.
Las Vegas, NV 89139
702.388.7422

Support Info:
account No. 0170511

<http://www.abwego.org>

Contact Email:

brandon.snook@abwego.org

kathryn.snook@abwego.org

Facebook: [Southern Hills Baptist Church](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

