

## EVAGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – SIERRA LEONE – SEPTEMBER 2013 UPDATES

### **Fintonia Church**

Dominic is growing in respect and reputation among the Muslim inhabitants in Fintonia. A couple of prodigals have shown great enthusiasm about identifying themselves with Christ and coming to the Church. The children on the other hand (without a clear understanding of what it means) just love the new idea of 'being neatly dressed and going to church on Sundays'. There has been no reported Muslim convert though a few are 'going to church' and are open to the gospel.

*Praise God that*

- *Dominic is settling down well and building relationships*
- *The people are being open to the gospel and are not being hostile*

*Pray for*

- *Dominic's family (wife and 2 girls) as they move to Fintonia finally any time now*
- *The road construction to Fintonia which is well on the way (we have lots of school supplies, building materials and even Dominic's family waiting to go to Fintonia but the road is closed due to the broken ferry.*

### **Rokassa Church**

Thomas is building strong relationships with some of the believers who were baptized early this year. His meekness and integrity is being commended by the Muslims in Rokassa. One person said that he cooks his meals and share with people. A couple of Muslim elders are studying the gospel of Mark with Thomas weekly. A number of people from neighboring villages are coming to church. Some of the teachers are a real support to Thomas, one of them is Paul Charles who is gifted and is helping with teaching the kids in Sunday school.

*Praise God that*

- *Thomas is settling down well and building relationships*
- *The church seems to have kicked off with able leaders and willing 'seekers'*

*Pray for*

- *Two Muslim leaders currently studying Mark with Thomas*
- *One Muslim leader who is considering the Christian faith because 'when he was recovering from a hernia operation in Freetown, the two leaders in the Mosque in Rokassa had an affair with his two wives and the Muslim congregation later begged him to forgive them but he is not feeling at peace being in their midst'.*

### **Mayatta Church**

There are 5 very strong men who are 'pillars' in this church. They and their families consider themselves as the 'founders' of the church. They are very enthusiastic and hopeful that a church structure will one

day be built in the village. One of them leads the teaching ministry of the church. RTS student Amadu whom we sent to Mayatta to serve during the holidays lacks discipline, integrity and maturity. In the few weeks he was there,

- He openly argued with the Head Teacher regarding the use of the school building which was under rehabilitation
- He despised the town chief who spoke to him to calm down during the argument,
- He refused to take my counsel when I told him to report to Freetown after I heard about the situation and
- He demanded that the church pay his transport to Freetown even though I gave him more than enough transport to and fro.

He has since returned to Freetown and in a meeting with me, he acknowledged having a dispute with the head teacher and said sorry but when I discussed this with Rev. Hasasan Koroma, we both agreed that he is not yet ready to serve with us in the Mission field. Rev. Koroma said he has had a history of 'uncontrolled anger' at RTS. Rev. Koroma will be recommending someone else in the near future.

*Please pray*

- *For Amadu as he allows God to deal with his anger and shape his character*
- *For a suitable Pastor to shepherd the flock in Mayatta (We have an application for Rev. James Koroma who teaches in the Mapainda JSS and pastors a Wesleyan church in that area)*
- *For the Lord to continue to uphold the small congregation in Mayatta. (One of them has serious personal challenges relating to one wayward son and a mentally ill daughter whom she believes are under a curse)*

### **Mapainda Church**

Like the Mayatta church, this church has challenges. They seem to have a reputation of being 'impressionists' as each time they see guests, they have a way of galvanizing themselves and 'showing a face' but clearly there is so much spiritual aridity there. While dealing with Oliver's confession to consulting a witch doctor, it's obvious that the people need to continue to hear and see faithful Bible teaching and exemplary lifestyle. Sadly, RTS student Philip as hard working as he is was overbearing the flock. Initially, he asked the congregation to take care of his feeding including taking funds from the meager offering they get. This was corrected. Then he abandoned the church and was corrected by me but did it again a second time. This is even after I spoke to him about 'enhancing good communication' between the office and the Mission field and finally two weeks after I took a large sum of gift for him from you, he said farewell to the church and asked for money to be given him for transportation. Le. 30,000 was eventually taken from the church coffers to pay his transport. When I told some of the members (Oliver and Sorie Sesay) that he had been given Le. 100,000 for his return transport, they were shocked.

Rev. Koroma and I agree that he has not been a good testimony and we thought we will not like to send him there again.

*Pray for*

- *The Lord to raise a faithful teacher of the Bible in Mapainda*
- *True conversion of those who attend church there*
- *Philip as he deals with financial challenges in his personal life*

### **Maikonko/Makump Church**

A man named Sorie is helping to run the church in Maikonko. He can only read Themne so he uses the Themne NT Bible. His assistance with the Maikonko church meant that RTS Student Idrissa spent more time in Makump. He did a fantastic job there even bringing the two churches together for worship twice. Idrissa also visited 7 nearby villages where one or more members come from to attend church including Massa's village. He also provided personal training and support to one of the Maikonko teachers (John B. Larkoh) who is now helping to run the church in Makump as the former Pastor (Sankoh) has had a job in Makeni and hardly comes to Makump these days. Idrissa did a proper organization of the church, said farewell and brought with him a report including photos of his time in the two communities.

Rev. Koroma and I agree that Idrissa is a suitable person to work with and we would like to continue to support him both with his studies and for ongoing monthly trips to Maikonko/Makump.

*Praise God*

- *That Idrissa had a fruitful time of ministering in the two communities*
- *That the two churches seem to have a little bit more organization and stability and are growing*

*Pray*

- *For Idrissa as he rejoins his family in Freetown and resumes his studies at RTS*
- *For the two churches to continue to grow and thrive in those communities*

*Gbenekoro*

Rev. Hassan Koroma and I met again Pastor Abraham (Kabala) for a second interview in August in Freetown and we both agree that he is ready for the work in Gbenekoro. We told him it is not for us to determine the 'right timing' and so encouraged him to 'hang in there'. He has since started effective visitation and evangelism in the community. He reported that the chief expressed delight that his regular visits there indicate that 'the white men' have not forgotten them.

Finally, please pray for me in my many travels, for my personal godliness and the ability to balance work and personal devotion to the Lord. Sometimes traveling to these communities is quite challenging but just being there and being used as an instrument to bring encouragement to the people and thereby bring them closer to God is always worth the travel. I am enjoying every bit of the challenge and I am confident that through our ministry together, we can plant God honoring churches in these communities.

Samuel