

SPECIAL REPORT ON AFRICAN TRIP- FEBRUARY 23-APRIL 1, 2009

Re: Levi Clarke, AAP

My first trip back to the continent since my new assignment as Africa Area Presbyter has been one of immense joy and satisfaction. Joy, to see the progress and inroads that the Gospel is making on the continent through the efforts of indigenous leaders that we have poured in over the years, and satisfaction to see that all the hard work, prayer and financial resources that have been dispensed in the area have not fallen by the way-side.

This trip basically covers a series of Leadership conferences in the West Africa region, namely: Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria and Ivory Coast. This was also an opportunity to re-acquaint myself with some of the most passionate and committed leaders whose hearts and eyes are on the African harvest, people such as:

General Overseer: Bishop Randy Howard

Liaison to the General Overseer: Shaun McKinley

General Presbyter: Sherman O. Allen

African Administrative Committee: Steven Masilela, Cyril Odendo, Ntambwe Beya, and
James Kolawole.

West Africa Regional Coordinators: Kadato Richard and Kossi Antoine.

The Church of God of Prophecy is now operating in over 39 nations in Africa. In the last ten years, the continent has experienced unprecedented numerical growth. The membership stands at approximately 750,000, with the Democratic Republic of Congo accounting for a substantial amount of this figure. Based on the reports and projections the possibility of 1,000,000 members by the year 2010 is a distinct possibility. Indeed, this is exciting! In spite of the socio- economical, political and ethnic unrest in various areas of the continent, God is pouring out His Spirit on the land, and our leaders remains committed to the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

Trip Overview

I arrived in Ghana on February 24th and the following day left for Cameroon. A very warm welcome from the National Overseer Bishop Mayeke James and the leadership was extended to me at the airport. We

traveled back to Limbe where I spent the next five days. Bishop Mayeke James seized the opportunity to organize a Pastor and Leadership Conference for three days under the theme: **‘Empowering the Leadership for the Harvest.’** There were forty-five Pastors and Leaders that participated in this three days conference. God’s presence could be felt during this time of sharing. It was especially wonderful to see almost all the pastors and leaders from the French sector of the country participating even though the notice was short. What a joy it was for me to renew acquaintances with leaders that my wife and I have helped to shape and deployed in ministry over the years, as well as the new ones! There were expressions of joy to know that my wife and I are back on the continent to offer our support and mentorship. During the nights, we had evangelistic meetings which resulted in many experiences.

Bishop Mayeke James and his leadership are doing a great job. I was impressed by the emerging leaders in the nation. The National Overseer and leadership are working very hard in trying to fight poverty and the spirit of dependency. Some of the way in which they are trying to eradicate this spirit of dependency is by establishing social projects. They now have two health clinics functioning, one of which we started while we were national overseers. They have also established two preparatory schools that are doing very well. I was privileged to visit one of the schools and see the young lives that are being shaped in a Christian environment. These efforts are not merely generating financial resources, but have also created employment for members of the church. The future of the work in Cameroon looks very promising. I am looking forward to be back to conduct training in the French Region and to offer our support where possible.

NIGERIA: March 11th-15th, I visited Nigeria and participated in their leadership conference which was held in Lagos at the Headquarters Church Freedom Gate. There were at least 150 Pastors and Leaders from all over the country. General Presbyter, Bishop Sherman O. Allen and the Africa Administrative Committee Members were also a part of this conference. What a privilege to be able to minister to such committed group of pastors and leaders. I spoke on Effective Leadership; Bishop Steve Masilela on Realizing the Vision; Cyril Odendo: Yes We Can; General Presbyter, Sherman Allen gave an Overview on Where we are on the Journey and Where we are going. Other topics were: “Your Church is Unique and “Managing your Church without Stress. On Sunday,” Bishop Kolawole, national overseer made some appointments, redefined their vision and then challenged the leadership and laity to move forward into the harvest. Again, this conference was very meaningful, informative and at the same time provided a unique opportunity for leaders to meet and fellowship with each other.

In addition to the above mentioned presentations, all the department leaders gave their vision and projections for their respective Ministry. Among the many things that I took note of was the passionate worship before every session, even heavy feet like mine was forced to move. Bishop James Kalowale and his leadership are doing an excellent job. I greatly admired the high degree of transparency and team work among the leadership in Nigeria.

Bishop T.A. McCalla, former National Overseer and “Papa” for Nigeria along with two other delegates from England, was also a part of the visiting delegation. As usual, Bishop McCalla’s contributions both financially and along the line of mentorship are quite obvious.

The Headquarters building in Lagos is a tremendous undertaking, funded for the most part by the members of that local church there in Lagos. When it is finished, it will offer adequate representation to the Church of God of Prophecy in the Nation. They are in need of additional financial assistance to finish the National Building: "Freedom Gate." If you believe in this vision and is moved to make a one-time contribution toward this project, it would be highly appreciated. You can do so by contacting the Global Outreach Ministries, and indicate that your gift is for the FREEDOM GATE BUILDING PROJECT, NIGERIA.

Thanks and appreciation to Bishop Kalowale and his team on an excellent job in accommodating us from the moment we arrived at the airport until we left on the 16th of March.

IVORY COAST – March 16-24, 2009

The Team consisting General Presbyter, Sherman O. Allen, Levi Clarke, Cyril Odendo, Steven Masilela, Ntambwe Beya, arrived in Abidjan Ivory Coast on March 16th, 2009. We were gracefully welcomed by the National Overseer Kossi Antoine and his entourage at the airport and were later taken to the accommodations prepared for us. The African Administrative Committee, Bishop Allen and I stayed at the National parsonage.

West African Leadership Conference

The West African Leadership Conference started on March 18 and ended on the 20th. National Overseers and Field Secretaries from the entire West African region were in attendance. The focus of the conference was to review the progress of the 'African Vision, "fighting poverty," Equipping Leadership to effectively accomplish the unfinished task, as well as implementing plans for health insurance and retirement for National Overseers on the continent. Progress in these areas seem slow at the moment; however, we feel that this conference will serve as a strong motivator and encouragement to everyone. Yes, the vision is alive and is catching on. There were nine National Overseers and eight Field secretaries from the region to this conference. The conference was held in the National Complex at Komassi, Abidjan. The National Overseer Kossi Antoine and his team are to be commended for a total make-over of the national facilities, it looks really beautiful.

The General Presbyter used the occasion to re-enforced and define the role of Field Secretaries in their respective areas. Another highlight of the conference was, to see the impact being made by indigenous Overseers in the West African region. Overseers like Kadato Richard, Antoine Kossi, and Brother Peter from Guinea Conakry are not only evangelizing their respective nations, but they are advancing the Church into new nations, the latest being, Cape Verde where Brother Peter is working with a group. The regional conference ended on a very positive note.

Ivory Coast Ministers and Leadership Conference

On March 21 – 22, was the Ivory Coast Ministers and Leadership Conference, in which we were invited to participate in.

National Overseer Kossi Antoine moderated and did an excellent job of motivating his leadership as well as casting vision for the work in the nation. The work in Ivory Coast suffered tremendous set back due to the ongoing Civil War. Bishop Kossi Antoine was appointed National Overseer for Ivory Coast at the last General Assembly, and he is making a tremendous impact on the work. His involvement in the community and with other religious organizations speaks volume for the Church of God of Prophecy in Ivory Coast. The TV and Radio were involved in both conferences and the interviews were televised twice on their National TV station. Bishop Kossi is without question, the man for the hour. However, he faces tremendous challenges. Presently, he does not have a car to get around, he relies on taxi which is very expensive and time consuming. We pray that God will touch hearts to help this visionary leader to get a car soon so that he can continue this great work.

I was very impressed with the national overseer's ability to motivate the leadership of Ivory Coast in raising a substantial amount of funds for evangelistic efforts and the launching of a Health Insurance program for the pastors in the Nation. We must continue to hold Bishop Antoine and his family up in our prayers and support them in every way possible.

It was so wonderful to have our General Overseer, Bishop Randall Howard and his Liaison, Shaun McKinley. Their presence brought strength to the leadership both morally and spiritually. Bishop Howard addressed the Leadership and challenged them to continue to dream. Bro Shaun made a presentation on the Proxy Process, which was very informative and will be helpful for participation in the 2010 General Assembly. We commend our General Overseer for making this visit to the Ivory Coast at such a time as this which made him so accessible to everyone.

Expression of Appreciation

On behalf of the entire team we would like to express our heartfelt appreciation and thanks to Bishop Antoine and his fine group of protocol for their hospitality and the way they took care of us from our arrival at the airport until our departure. We mistakenly forget our lunch in the taxi that took us to the conference one day, but this was just another opportunity for these dedicated people to demonstrate their hospitality and love to us; they provided lunch for us every day. May the Lord bless them!

GHANA – March 24-31, 2009.

Unlike the three previous visits, Ghana presented some difficult challenges. However, by the grace of God, we were able to see a glimmer of hope, by the time we were ready to leave on the 31st of March. The activities of our visit include: a series of meeting with the leadership and laity, a visit to the McCalla Preparatory and Secondary School, visited two other properties purchased for the Church in the nation, and try to resolve some ongoing legal issues. We were joined by Bishop James Kalowale, the regional coordinator on Friday. His presence was a great source of encouragement. He ministered and challenged the nation on Saturday morning. Our visit was climaxed with a Leadership and Membership Conference which was very well supported.

The theme carried from the other conferences was used: (Be ye Watchful and Strengthen the things that are left and is ready to die deducted from Rev 2). By the end of the conference on Sunday, there was

clear evidence that some progress was made and the people once more were encouraged to move forward. Bishop Allen along with the National overseer, George, made new appointments.

There is still much work ahead of us in Ghana; however, I strongly believe that God is up to something great in this nation. We are convinced that this trip was a great source of encouragement to everyone. We are hoping to return soon.

Conclusion:

Overall, this was a blessed trip; God is doing wonderful things on the continent. May I offer a word of encouragement as well as thanks to those of you that has been supporting Africa over the years, please do not relent, your efforts are not in vain. You are investing in fertile soil.

Yours in the Harvest,

Levi Clarke

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Africa Area Presbyter

Please see photographs of the trip attached!