



## MISSIONARIES TO BURKINA FASO



CMF INTERNATIONAL PRAYER NEWSLETTER

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### **FAMILY!!**

*"Nous vous considérons comme notre famille (We look upon you as our family)."* If you had suggested only a few years ago that I would ever hear such words from a Muslim in West Africa, I would have suggested that you go see a good psychologist. Yet this was the sentiment expressed this week by our friend Mamadou Traoré, chief of the Jula village of Kangoura. He was referring to all the team members who have been regularly visiting Kangoura, about a 100-minute drive from our house, for over a year now. Numerous times, we have brought visitors from the US to visit our friends in Kangoura. We have truly grown to love and appreciate them.

It is in Kangoura that we are establishing the Small Farm Resource Center. I have been conferring with the farmers of Kangoura about the type of experiments we can undertake in the Center that would be most useful to them. They now refer to the Center by the Jula name that I have given it: *Hereforo* (hëřëforo), which means farm ("foro") of peace ("hëřë"). Hëřë seems to be more or less the Jula equivalent of the Hebrew word "shalom." Our prayer is that God's blessing will be on Hereforo, so that the agricultural activities will enjoy a high degree of success, and that through Hereforo, God's shalom will come to the people of Kangoura and eventually to all the region.

We have been frank and open about the fact that we are doing this work among them in the name of Nabi Isa (the Prophet Jesus), and the village leadership has welcomed us with open arms. They even ask us to pray before we eat meals together, and they knelt and prayed along with me recently when asking God's

blessing on the digging of a well for Hereforo. However, Mamadou has also been frank with me, telling me that we



follow our Prophet, and they follow theirs. In spite of our deep and growing friendship, it is evident that, if any Jula residents of Kangoura are to become followers of Isa, it will be through the mighty work of God Himself in their hearts.

In addition to Hereforo, I am seeking God's will about beginning ministry often referred to as Participatory Agricultural Development, in which the facilitator helps village farmers identify agricultural challenges for which they would like to seek solutions, using local resources and know-how for the most part. Also, Pulcherie has had several women ask for her advice on nutrition for them and their families. She is considering starting a series of lessons on nutrition for a group of ladies there. Just yesterday, I spoke with Chief Mamadou about both ideas. He told me he thought there would be a high degree of interest in both areas, and is willing to play a supportive role in getting things started. We especially need God's wisdom and grace in integrating key Biblical teachings in these meetings.

Pulcherie's wonderful God-given gift of hospitality has been absolutely crucial to the development of close



relationships with our Jula friends from villages and in our hometown of Banfora.

## DOING THE MATH

We're diligently working on our addition "ones" table. Our teammates, Brian and Tabitha Hauser, are awaiting the addition of a boy to their family, due in April. Our newest addition, Kendra Marie, is due in May. We are looking forward to the arrival of another family on the team, Ken and Anita Hoch, hopefully in the fall of this year. And another new family, Tom and Suja Brane (with their daughters Ana and Naomi), have very recently discerned God's call to join our ranks in ministry among the Jula.

More fun math: Through the great generosity of one of our partner congregations, God has provided virtually all the funding for the establishment and the first two years of operation for Hereforo.

## OTHER RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

Our family and the Hausers traveled to Koutiala, Mali, in November. There is a mission hospital there where both of our families plan to deliver our babies. The language there is Banbara, which is indistinguishable from Jula (to me, anyway).

We spent the Christmas holidays in Benin with Pulcherie's family. While in Benin, we also visited Pendjari game park in the north, the country's commercial capital Cotonou in the south, and a slavery museum (former Portuguese fort) on the coast. Pulcherie's sister, Alice, returned with us to Burkina Faso. Alice has been a great help in keeping house and cooking.

Brian, Tom Brane, and Burkina missionary colleague Geoffrey Richter, and I traveled together to Accra, Ghana (a three-day trip), to take part in a Transformational Development Conference. It was a rich experience providing many ideas, broadening our network of colleagues and resources, and encouraging us in the ministry.

## FOR PRAYER

- Please pray for a happy, healthy baby for the Hausers and for us.
- For our family, that God will continue to lead us in following and serving Jesus together.
- For our gardener and friend, Check, a Muslim who has an interest in the Gospel of Jesus and may have the potential to become a key player in the ministry here.
- Please pray that God will protect us from the enemy and lead us in spoiling his house.
- Pray for continued good health. God has richly blessed us in this regard.
- Pray for God's wisdom and blessing on Hereforo and our nascent agricultural and nutritional ministry activities.
- For continued progress in learning the Jula language.
- Pray that God will open the hearts of the people of Kangoura and other villages in the region, and that sooner or later, there will be many who follow Jesus together.

*Andrew*

Andrew for the Gordon family



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