



The BMC Update

Summer 2001

An update on the ministry at Baptist Medical Centre
Box 50 • Nalerigu via Gambaga • N/R • Ghana, West Africa

Spotlight on Burkwalls

Ministry to Fulani grows in Nalerigu and beyond

Fulani, the largest nomadic people group in the world, number more than 20 million in 20 countries of West and Central Africa. Dr. Paul Burkwall, coordinator for Fulani outreach there, sent team member Gene Smith to Ghana in 1992 for a survey. Would he find any Fulani in Ghana and was there a Christian witness to them?

Gene reported that several hundred thousand Fulani are scattered around Ghana, most moving south from Burkina Faso. Some own cows, but most care for cattle of local people. There were no Christians, and the only work with them was in the Nalerigu area, where Dr. Fran Greenway had become burdened for those who came to BMC for medical help. During her last years in Africa, Fran spent much time in village visitation.

Paul and Faye Burkwall then hosted a conference in Abidjan in 1993, with representatives from 13 African countries, to look at Baptists' involvement in Fulani ministry. Fran had retired, but Dr. Jim Hancy reported that she left a small group of interested Fulani in the Nalerigu area.

The Burkwalls, along with the Nigerian Baptist Convention, sent a Fulani pastor, Moses Audi, from Nigeria to look at these beginnings. With the pastor's opinion that the work should go on, the Burkwalls left a growing Fulani ministry in Southwestern Nigeria that already had Fulani churches and pastors, and—with the new IMB structure—they began to phase out the continent-wide Fulani team and to focus in on one location.

So, after 30 years in Africa—in Zambia, in Nigeria, and in serving as Fulani advocates across Africa, Paul and Faye moved to Nalerigu, where they live on the hospital compound.

"It was as if the Fulbe knew we were coming," Faye says. They welcomed us enthusiastically." From the first day, the Burkwalls have had a hospital ministry with Fulani patients and their families. Within the first month, preaching stations began at nearby Dintigi and Ghangu.

The Burkwalls live on the hospital compound. Their house has become a school—first for literacy, next for women's craft and sewing classes, and then for four men who became the first students of the Fulbe Pastors' School of Ghana. Paul and Faye Burkwall, along with Jennifer Mauldin, Lois Norman, summer missionaries, and volunteers, have taught in these schools.

Four graduated from the Pastors' School in December.

Others are in leadership training. *Gime Fulfulde Ghana*, a songbook, has been printed and become the focus of a popular music program.

The Burkwalls leave Nalerigu in March 2002 for retirement, so future pastors will train in Tamale.

The first baptism for Fulani in Ghana was in July 1998, with 22 baptized. Today beautiful little church buildings are in Nalerigu, Ghangu, and Dintigi, and a fourth will soon be constructed for a growing congregation of Fulani in Naamasin, Zaadintinga, and Zaambulugu.

The hospital brings daily opportunities for the Burkwalls and the new believers to witness to large numbers of Fulani, not only from Ghana but also from neighboring Togo and Burkina Faso.

For example, Adama came from Burkina Faso with a sick father. After caring for the father each day, Adama, like dozens of others, made his way to the Burkwalls' house. He learned to read the Fulani language (Fulfulde), but, more importantly, he accepted Christ. His father died, and Adama returned to Burkina Faso. In a few months he was back in Nalerigu to say that his brothers and friends now believe. Paul baptized Adama, and the Fulani Christian community sent him back to Burkina as their missionary.

So it is that God is using BMC and the Burkwalls to share the good news with the Fulani people group, and the message is going far and wide.

Pray Around Africa

August 3, 2001, is the day that the International Mission Board has called for believers all over the world to lift up the continent of Africa through fasting and praying. • Our summer missionaries—Jonathon Barron and Seth King from Alabama, will lead area churches in prayer-walking and praying for their continent. • A prayer-walking team from First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., will also be here. • We all will gather at First Baptist Church, Nalerigu, on August 3 for a Prayer Celebration.

••• Put this date on your calendar and join us •••
as we pray for the nations of Africa.