



These are the areas where we have mission partners in the Central/West Africa region. Most of these countries speak French – and are homes of Lutheran church bodies that are growing quickly.

## WHERE I'M GOING

The counties highlighted above are the ones where the LCMS has an active church partner or mission partner. "Church partner" means a synod with whom we are in pulpit and altar fellowship. "Mission partner" includes emerging churches along with those church partners whom we are assisting in the Lord's ministry.

While I'm primarily going to the French-speaking ("francophone") fellowships, I have also been asked to help the church in Ghana with their new hymnal project. They, along with partners in Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, are English-speaking ("anglophone").

How many francophone mission partners do we have in this region? ELEVEN!



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to [\[firstname.lastname@lcms.org\]](mailto:[firstname.lastname@lcms.org]) with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MagnessAfrica/>

## Why I Am Going



Dear brothers in Christ singing the Lord's song in Dapaong, Togo.

Some of you are just getting to know me, so I thought I'd share with you my motivation for this ministry. I could put it bluntly: I am a Christian; I am a teacher; I am a musician; I speak French. Voilà!

But let me unpack this a bit. You see those young men above? This pic was taken a couple of years ago when they were at the Lutheran Center for Theological Studies in West Africa, our Lutheran seminary for the region. I know all three of these guys, because I was privileged to teach them for a few weeks on my last trip to Africa. They are all three back in their home countries now, working on establishing congregations. They would be the first to tell you how important singing is in the ministry - and how they treasure songs that proclaim Christ to the nations and equip the saints in the one true faith.

I would love to see them again. We keep in touch via Facebook and I consider Christophe (left), Protais (center), and Jadben (right) to be my dear friends. But the odds are that I won't see them again, at least not all three right away. Africa is a big place. They are in their parishes now. I'll be teaching new students at our schools in Togo, Guinea, and Congo-Brazzaville. Perhaps they might have reason to be in a place where I'll do a workshop, but we'll likely remain miles apart.

I am thinking of the next Protais, the next Jadben, the next Christophe. Or the next Rallias, the next Jean-Pierre, the next Joseph - friends I made on previous trips to Congo. There are so many stories I can share. In the coming newsletters I will do just that. I want all who align with me in this mission to understand the impact psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs have on my students, how they take what they've learned and adapt the music and the texts to the realities of their local ministries, and how the Lord's song strengthens us in "the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

Ephesians 4 goes on to say that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." We share in that unity when we sing the Lord's song together. Let us rejoice and sing!

# HOW I'M GOING

*Wherever your congregation is, there is the Synod. You are "Synod in this place."*

As I travel about seeking supporters to align with this ministry, I'm often asked "Doesn't the Synod fund your ministry?" My answer to that is "Yes, you do." You see, the Synod is not a building in St. Louis; the Synod is YOU.

Sure, there is an office and a staff that supports, trains, and resources LCMS missionaries. The Office of International Mission takes wonderful care of us. But the work of individual missionaries depends on the gifts of individuals and congregations.

So please join me in prayers of thanksgiving for the congregations who have given me an audience so far:

- *Immanuel Lutheran Church – Redondo Beach, California*
- *Trinity Lutheran Church– Davenport, Iowa*
- *Immanuel Lutheran Church and School– Perryville, Missouri*
- *Faith Lutheran Church – Pierre, South Dakota*
- *Concordia Lutheran Church– Kirkwood, Missouri*
- *Zion Lutheran Church– St. Charles, Missouri*



**Singing "Praise and Thanksgiving" with the saints at Faith Lutheran in Pierre, S.D.**

As I share this ministry, I always try to get the groups I meet with to sing. I like to teach them a simple song they don't already know, so that they might experience my approach, understand how I work – and share the joy.

In the coming weeks I'll be sharing the joy in Boise, Idaho (11/24); Fairview, Texas (12/8); Keller, Texas (12/10); New Berlin, Wisconsin (1/5); North Prairie, Wisconsin (1/5); and Cedar Rapids, Iowa (1/22). The January 5 event in North Prairie is a circuit-wide Epiphany hymn festival at St. John's at 5pm that evening. Be sure to attend if you are in the area! Then, on February 8, 4pm, I'll be leading a Mission Hymn Festival at Zion-St. Charles.

## WHEN AND WHERE I'M GOING BACK NEXT



The question I'm most often asked is "When are you going back?" Here's the answer: On February 20, 2020, I'll hop on a series of flights that will get me to Lomé, the capital of Togo. After a night at a seaman's lodge (*Le Foyer des Marins*, a Reformed mission), I'll then head up the *Route Nationale* to the seminary in Dapaong. The trip takes 10-12 hours, sometimes more, depending on traffic and obstacles. Sometimes it is best to make it a two-day trip, stopping overnight in Kara, Togo's second largest city, en route. I'll tell you more about the *Route Nationale*, the *Foyer des Marins*, Lomé, and Kara in future newsletters. The point here is the destination: the seminary in Dapaong!

Once in Dapaong, I'll assist with worship at the annual meeting of francophone church leaders. Representatives from 11 of our mission partners will be in attendance! This is a great way for me to build relationships with the churches I'll be serving. That meeting will be at Dalwak, a Catholic retreat center just outside Dapaong. During that week I'll also have choir practices with the seminarians who will be attending my seminar on hymnody the following week at the sem. This trip will be three weeks instead of four – time I'll make up later!



**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

- Safe travel to Togo.
- Preparations for the trip.
- Peace in the region, particularly that radical Islam not move further in from the north.
- Growth in support for this ministry. More donations are needed!

**GIVE THANKS FOR:**

- The sustained growth of confessional Lutheranism in francophone Africa.
- The faithful service of the missionaries with whom I work: Rev. Gary Schulte and his wife Stephanie, Rev. Jacob Gaugert, Rev. Micah Wildauer.
- CPH providing copies of the French LSB, Liturgies et Cantiques Luthériens (LCL), at a generous discount.

**PRAISE GOD FOR:**

- Congregations and individuals who have joined in this mission effort to “get people singing about Jesus in francophone Africa!”
- Giving us a song to sing which comforts us in all circumstances, brings us hope amidst all troubles, and gladdens our hearts in the unity of faith and the bond of peace.

# NEWS ABOUT MY FAMILY



This past summer, Cheryl (at my right) and I were blessed to have a full nest again as our oldest son, Trevor (second from left), spent several weeks at home. Accompanying him was his girlfriend, Amalia (third from left). We all went out for brunch after Divine Service at Village Lutheran in Ladue, Mo., and had a great time at Route 61, a Cajun roadhouse in Webster Groves. Here are some family highlights:

- Cheryl loves her work as managing editor of *Reporter*.
- Trevor is pursuing a doctorate in piano performance at the University of Iowa, where he is a teaching assistant.
- Caitlin (left) is making her way in the “gig economy” with three part-time jobs: worship secretary, contract writer for LCMS Communications and extra hours at Andy’s Frozen Custard!
- Evan (fourth from left) is a sophomore at Lutheran High School South, where he runs cross country, plays tennis, and sings with the Lancer Singers.



*“He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord” (Ps 40:3).*

*Wherever we may be, may our song be the song of salvation, that many may behold the great things God has done for us in Christ Jesus. Amen!*

*- Phillip Magness*



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](http://lcms.org/service). Click on “Service Opportunities.”

To support the LCMS through the work of Phillip Magness, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
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Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks “Support of Phillip Magness.” Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at [lcms.org/Magness](http://lcms.org/Magness)