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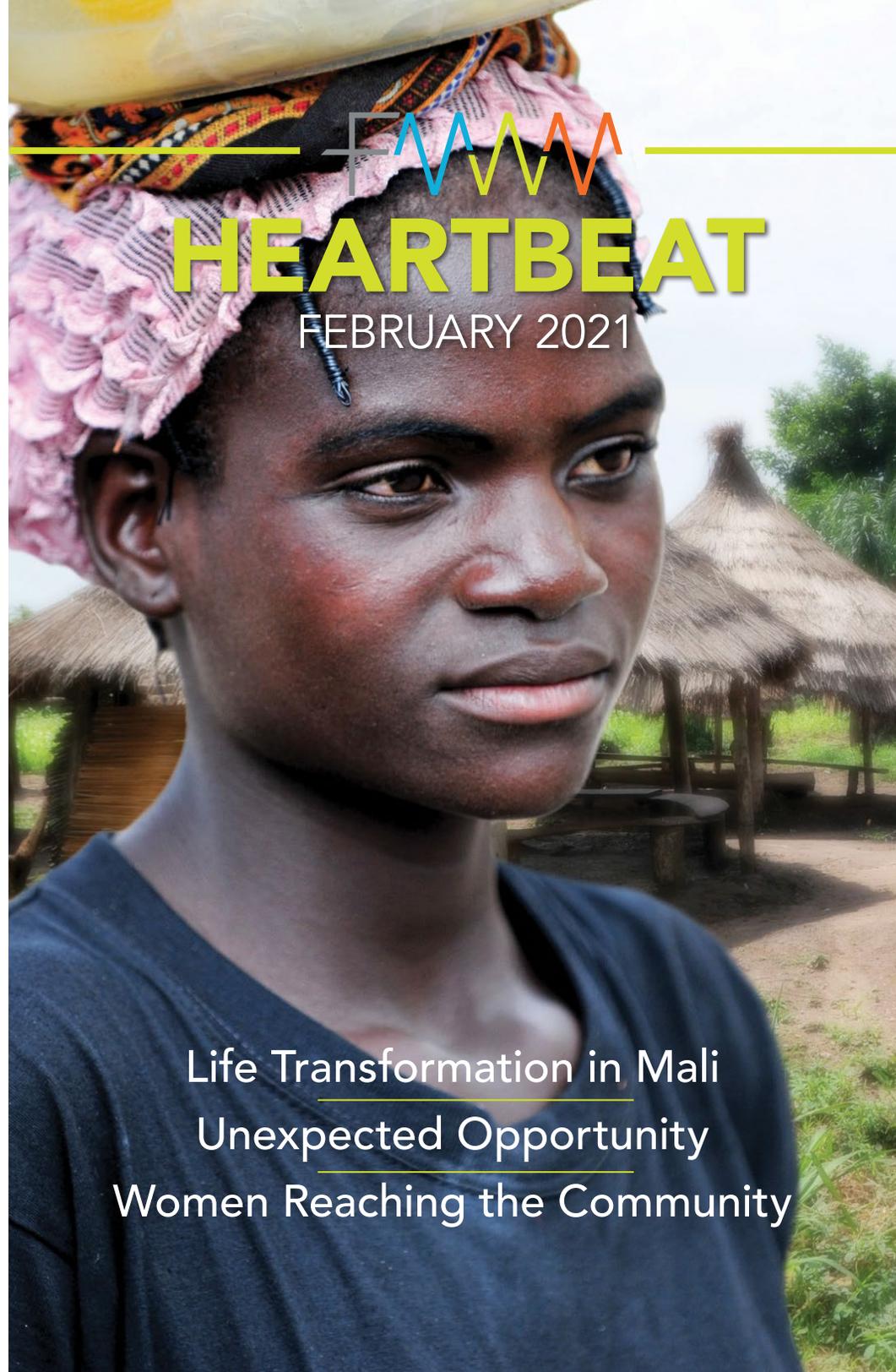
HEARTBEAT

FEBRUARY 2021

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Free Methodist World Missions makes disciples by mobilizing the global church and empowering international leaders
to establish transformational churches.



Life Transformation in Mali
Unexpected Opportunity
Women Reaching the Community

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Life Transformation in Mali

By Mike Reynen

It began in 2014. Free Methodists began exploring new work in Mali. It took a few years, but eventually we discovered Debora Keita, a Togolese businesswoman and pastor in Bamako, the capital city. In 2019 we adopted the church plant she had initiated, a church that meets in her home.

Debora recently told me the stories of two women in the church with whom she has been working. One of them, Lydia, had been a prostitute. She had moved around, living in several places. When she came to Bamako, Lydia met a man who attended Debora's church. He brought Lydia to the church. This was not a simple thing — she did not want to come to church, but Jesus met her there. Pastor Debora and another visiting pastor prayed, asking God to deliver

Lydia. And praise the Lord, she was set free. A new sense of freedom and acceptance led her to surrender her life to Christ. Lydia is now doing ministry in the church. Her "yes" to Jesus has genuinely become an abandoning of her old life.

In many African cultures, it is customary in a traditional marriage for a man to pay a dowry for his bride. As things progressed in Lydia's life, the man who brought her to church has paid the dowry for her. They are planning for their church wedding in 2021.

The second woman in Debora's church had a personal business history of selling alcohol in bars, and anywhere she found buyers. This woman came to Debora's church and heard the gospel. She gave her life to Christ, and big changes started to happen. She decided to stop selling alcohol. Then, through her new involvement in the church, she too met a man in the church. Their relationship developed, and now they have plans to be married. Debora and the church celebrate how the Lord brings about these life transformations.

Debora's telling of these two recent stories brought a third to mind, her own. She hasn't always been known as Debora. She used to be Rose. As Rose, she was a Catholic. She did not have a bad life, but then again, she did not have real life. It was when she moved to Mali that she first attended a Protestant church. There she found her own transformation when she gave her life to Christ. She found a life she hadn't realized was missing.

Celebrate with us the life transformation taking place in Mali!



Unexpected Opportunity

By Gabriel Lamah

Unexpected opportunities are what we found one Saturday in early August. We went to visit the family of Jean Simbiano in the village of Pobengou, Guinea. Jean is an active member of the Free Methodist Church of Bendoubenggou. After giving birth, Jean's wife passed away, leaving behind a baby.

When we arrived at the village in mid-afternoon, we found Jean was not yet back from the fields. So, we decided to visit others in the village. The Lord Jesus brought us to the family of Emmanuel Ouamouno. After greeting him in French, which Emmanuel did not understand, he continued splitting the wood he was preparing to sell in town. We took seats on a bench near where Emmanuel was working. After 20 to 30 minutes, a young girl named Dadié passed by, and we invited her to chat a bit. Then, another young, sickly girl came and took a seat beside us.

With the help of the young Dadié as our interpreter, we presented the good news of Jesus to Emmanuel and his family. Emmanuel, his wife, the young girl and Dadié all agreed to confess

Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

After a prayer of confession and thanks, Emmanuel explained that the sick girl was his daughter. The mother asked her daughter to show us her injury. To our surprise, she showed us a very festering sore on her stomach.

Immediately I was reminded of a similar visit and a discussion with the Rev. Dosseh Takpale. We had talked about meeting the needs of the suffering. Faced with this situation, the Lord put it on my heart to act.

I was prompted to go quickly to the city to look for medicine and health care supplies. After



the first-aid treatment, there was great joy in Emmanuel's family. This compassion encouraged him to bring us to the home of his father-in-law. After Emmanuel's testimony to his father-in-law, we helped his father-in-law understand it is Jesus Who is good. The entire household of the father-in-law and some neighbors, 14 people in all, accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Today, this church is now led by Sister Tewa Margueritte Bongono and has more than 29 active members.

May God's love continue to reach the heart of everyone bringing salvation to their souls!

Women Reaching the Community

By Superintendent Rufus Kahn

Women in Liberia are reaching the community through the transforming love of Jesus! Each district in the Free Methodist Church of Liberia has an active women's ministry. My wife leads the one in the Monrovia District. This group meets monthly for intercessory prayer. At times they also design teachings, something to speak to the women's needs.



A few years ago, we began teaching the women to get involved with active ministry. We realized most of the women's ministry was restricted to

intercessory prayer. Prayer is good, but we thought there should be more. The women could reach their communities, and through the teaching times, we helped them understand and catch a vision for community outreach.

They decided to reach out to the community where Throne of Grace (the local church I pastor) is located. Their first target group was men who are drug addicts and substance abusers in the community. In the beginning, it was not easy. The men did not want to receive us. They did not want any group of people coming to minister to them. They thought perhaps we were spies, and later the police would come to arrest them. This had happened before. But graciously, we prayed, and the Holy Spirit



began to work. We found ways to make them more comfortable and willing to receive us.

In October, a small group of these men agreed to attend church service. We ministered to them, and the women prepared a fellowship meal. Three men were bold and told us their stories. The men fell in love with the church. In fact, after that Sunday, we began to follow up on them, and most have now agreed to start coming to the Free Methodist Church.

Please join us in praying for the Holy Spirit to work through these ministries. Pray the men will not just come to church but will surrender their lives to Christ. And pray for our women's ministries to be obedient as the Lord leads them in reaching the community.

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FEBRUARY PRAYER GUIDE

01 ▶ Monday | Mali

Thank the Lord for life transformations in Mali. Pray for Pastor Debora as she continues to lead this new but growing work. Ask the Lord to give her continued effectiveness in discipling new believers.

02 ▶ Tuesday | Taiwan

Pray for the new superintendent in Taiwan as he helps develop new strategies of mission and church renewal for the conference.

03 ▶ Wednesday | Kenya

As Rift Valley Academy resumes in-person classes, pray Roger and Deb Varland will have grace and find unique opportunities to serve their students, always demonstrating the love of Jesus.

Birthday: Deb Varland

04 ▶ Thursday | Bulgaria

Pray for the missionary team to have wisdom and discernment as they respond daily to both the continual needs and opportunities around them.

05 ▶ Friday | Nicaragua

Ask the Father to provide for families who lost their homes due to the hurricanes in November. Pray for the Lord to assist mission district leader Hiuberth Zapata as he leads churches in caring for the needs in their communities.

Birthday: Sandra Zapata (International Missionary)

06 ▶ Saturday | Middle East

Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits — who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases (Psalms 103:2-3). Use these verses in praising the Lord for physical healings and forgiveness of sins being experienced throughout the region.

07 ▶ Sunday | SEED

Women and men in the Jinja Free Methodist Church up-cycle paper into beautiful beads and unique jewelry, expressing incredible creativity. Pray for this group as they continue to train others.

08 ▶ Monday | Creative Access Asia-IN

Pray for widows in the central region of this country. Ask the Father to comfort and provide for the physical needs of these often overlooked women.

09 ▶ Tuesday | Greece

Praise the Lord for how He is using the church in Thessaloniki to share the love of Jesus with immigrants and refugees from many countries. Give thanks for how they are being united as one body in Christ.

10 ▶ Wednesday | Iraq

Ask the Father to give Hany and Joanne peace as they serve in a volatile region. Pray for increasing love and unity in the body of Christ as they continue to reach new areas and disciple new believers. **Birthday: Hany**

11 ▶ Thursday | Peru

Pray for the political stability and economic recovery in Peru. Ask the Father to strengthen the church as it shares the hope and peace of Christ during these challenging times.

12 ▶ Friday | Nigeria

Praise the Lord for the City of Refuge, a center in the Northern Conference of Nigeria where Muslim background believers are being discipled and cared for as they grow in their faith. Pray for spiritual strength for the many who face persecution and rejection from family members and friends.

13 ▶ Saturday | Creative Access Asia-BG

Praise the Lord for the baptism of many new believers in the past year! Pray for continued courage and boldness in proclaiming the gospel.

14 ▶ Sunday | Middle East

Pray Dale and Dawn will continue to listen to God and rely on His leading as He changes the way they do ministry while still being fruitful and effective.

Birthday: Dawn

15 > Monday | Brazil

February is the first month of classes for the seminary. Dan Owsley, the academic dean, will teach a module on Introduction to the New Testament/Acts this month. Pray for a good start to the school year, the new students, and the effective use of digital platforms to teach students from several states in Brazil.

Birthday: Dan Owsley

16 > Tuesday | Spain

Praise the Lord for a growing number of students at the Mosaic Cultural Center in Rivas Vaciamadrid. Pray for the continuing missional impact in the community.

17 > Wednesday | Creative Access-X

Pray for leaders' ability to visit houses of peace despite the lack of access to gasoline.

18 > Thursday | Middle East

Praise the Lord for how the powerful message of the cross of Jesus is speaking to the hearts and minds of majority-background believers. Pray many will seek redemption in Christ.

19 > Friday | DRC

Malaria is a treatable disease but, if left untreated, can be deadly. Inpatient treatment for children with malaria costs \$25-\$50. Due to costs, many are afraid to seek treatment. Pray for Deaconess Nundu Hospital as it provides medicines and treatment to help save lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

20 > Saturday | Creative Access Asia-IA

Although Islam is the dominant religion in this country, pray church planters will have eyes to see the people of peace who are open to the gospel.

21 > Sunday | ICCM

ICCM operates three study centers for children in Cambodia. These centers offer lessons and activities for spiritual, social, cognitive and physical development while also feeding children. Pray for the children in these centers.

22 > Monday | Haiti | Portugal

Pray for our churches, child-care ministries, schools and the Dessalines Hospital as they continue to overcome great adversity in serving people with overwhelming needs. **Birthday: Dan Synder**

Pray for ministry in Portugal during these challenging days and the ministry being developed by Portuguese missionaries in São Tomé and Príncipe (Africa).

Birthday: Eduardo Angelo (International Missionary)

23 > Tuesday | Set Free Movement

Foster youth are extremely vulnerable to human trafficking. Pray for the Set Free team in Seattle as they care for foster children, support and encourage social workers, and mentor foster parents.

24 > Wednesday | Sierra Leone

Pray for the Holy Spirit's anointing on individuals who will be called as devoted pastors and church planters, forming a solid core of leadership in Sierra Leone.

25 > Thursday | Japan

Pray the hearts of young people will be opened to the gospel. Ask God to raise up a generation of faithful followers willing to live boldly for Him.

26 > Friday | Ukraine

Pray for the ongoing ministry of the Lighthouse of Hope Rehab Center in Rivne. Ask the Father to give each person victory over addictions and a new joy and hope found only in Jesus.

27 > Saturday | Paraguay

Pray for pastors, leaders and church planters to be filled with the Spirit for the work to which God has called them. Ask the Lord to continue to give them discernment in recognizing people of peace (those open to the good news) in their communities.

28 > Sunday | Cambodia

Pray for students at the Phom Penh Bible College. Pray they not only will acquire knowledge but will increase the depth of their relationship with God.