

# STEPHEN & JULIE KNICKERBOCKER BURKINA FASO

**March 2020**

Dear Pastors, supporting churches and praying friends,

## Ministry Amidst the Pandemic

It is hard to believe that life can change as dramatically as it has with this global spread of the COVID-19 virus. We are grateful to be in US during these urgent times and are doing our best to shelter in place since Julie's lungs are fragile at the moment. The virus is now in Burkina Faso. The Burkinabé government has given a curfew for the towns in which cases have been identified and have closed down city limits: no one in and no one out. They have also forbidden all meetings of more than 50 people. At first, I told Bienvenu that he could still hold the church meetings since the gatherings do not reach 50 people, but after more consideration, we both thought it best to cancel the church meetings for the time being. We are keeping in touch with several church members via social media and have asked Bienvenu to keep in touch with the folks of the church during these unpredictable times. Thankfully, before all this happened, Christine was able to teach a bible lesson on the life of Lydia for a ladies meeting.



## Reporting in Churches

Several of our scheduled meetings were canceled due to the virus. When I attended my father's wedding in VA, a church that had previously postponed our meeting due to laws forbidding large gatherings, asked me to come and speak to the church through their online broadcast. It was a joy to report to those who support us although they weren't present physically. We are grateful that technology can be used to encourage believers in this time of need. It was good to be with family again and I was grateful to attend my dad's wedding and see him unite his life with Tammy, a Christian lady who loves the Lord.

## Special Request for David

David is one of the most faithful members in the church. Although he had a difficult past, he's had a sweet testimony and joyful demeanor since we've met him. We've seen him make a profession of Faith, baptized him, and witnessed him grow tremendously in his faith. He has been extremely involved in the construction project, in witnessing to neighbors and in teaching the church members and children during bible club. David had told me that in the past, he had lost his mind and would turn into a different person with a violent behavior. He told me that since he's been with us and faithfully attending church, he had no problems. Unfortunately, a few weeks back, we received the news that he was struggling again with that past issue. The church folks expressed concern when he began acting differently than his typical behavior, then they expressed greater concern when his behavior became out of control and dangerous. Because of his recent actions, he has damaged the testimony of the church in the community and has even threatened some of the folks in the church and in the community. This is especially difficult to deal with since we are not currently in Burkina. One of my missionary friends, Dallas Brown, has really helped out with the situation. David is currently back with his family at the village and we will monitor the situation to see where to go from here. Please pray with us that God would touch David's body and mind, that he may not return to his past behavior. Please pray also for the testimony of the church, to be faithful and pray that the community would not discredit the church's ministry because of this situation.

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and partnership with us in the work of the Lord.  
Looking unto Jesus,

*Stephen & Julie Knickerbocker*

*"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." - Matthew 10:28*

## Prayer Requests

- Health of the church during the pandemic
- Wisdom in planning trips back to Burkina to carry on with the ministry
- Car debt: \$4,000.
- Building funds: \$4,615 needed
- Bienvenu as he leads the church in our absence
- Training of the faithful men of the church that they may carry on with the ministry
- Safety and wisdom for church construction project
- The fight against terrorism in Burkina Faso
- Spiritual and physical growth of the church
- A stable job for Vincent, Blaise, David, Bienvenu, and Serge
- Salvation of Ivette

## Praise Report

- We found a home for our family to settle in during our temporary stay in the US
- Our family is healthy
- Ladies meeting went well
- Attended dad's wedding

## Contact Information

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## Sending Church

Temple Baptist Church  
Pastor Clarence Sexton  
1700 W. Beaver Creek Dr.  
Powell, TN 37849  
(865) 938-8182  
templebaptistchurch.com

## Missions Agency

WWNTBM  
P.O. Box 725  
Kings Mountain, NC 28086  
wwntbm.com

## Birthdays

Stephen 9/15  
Julie 9/26  
Alina 8/12  
Kezia 5/26  
Anniversary 8/7