

ESWA ECHOES

Light your heart, Impact your world

December 2023



Evangelical
SEMINARY of WEST AFRICA



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SEASON'S GREETINGS

BY DR. RICK AND CAROL CALENBERG



Believe it or not, it is already December. Christmas is almost here, and 2023 will be history soon. What a year it has been at ESWA! Each of you reading this are a reason why it has been a great year of growth in every way.

Mommy and I want to send a warm and joyful "Blessed Christmas" greeting to each of the staff and their families, as well as friends and well wishers of ESWA. Your commitment to the vision of ESWA and sacrifices to help realize that vision are crucial to the progress we have made. This year we celebrated our first graduation and these five graduates are the first fruits of the harvest we believe will continue until Jesus returns.

We met the Tully family who came with Dr. Tully in July. We welcomed a new class in August and saw older students return to continue their studies. We were blessed by the arrival of Dr. and Mrs. McKnight who are making major contributions to the administration and development of ESWA. We had a number of visiting faculty from the U.S. and Nigeria including Dr. Yusufu Turaki, esteemed professor who once again brought transformation to the thinking of our students and staff alike.

2024 is going to be another year of major growth and transition. We anticipate the development of a new ESWA campus including the construction of two buildings. Hopefully by June we will move there as our permanent site. In May, Dr. Mark Yarbrough, President of Dallas Theological Seminary and his team will be arriving in Liberia to visit ESWA and to speak at the second graduation. He will teach a two day Story of the Bible Conference as well. This training will bless many pastors and they will learn about the Bible and about ESWA and hopefully want to study here in the future.

All these blessings are because our Sovereign Lord has chosen to meet our needs and used so many generous people, particularly friends and benefactors who have supported Mommy and me for the past 40 years. We thank God and thank them.

2024 will be the year we finally "retire" after 50 years of teaching ministry, much of it in Africa. We are blessed and thankful that he allowed us the opportunity and strength to help begin ESWA. We will leave it in your hands and His.

God bless us all as we celebrate the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ Who has made it all possible and to whom all the glory belongs!

MCKNIGHT'S CORNER



By Dr. Gary & Liz McKnight

Merry Christmas! We rejoice in how God has answered our prayers and in what He has done to bring us safely to Liberia (August 2023), to our new “home” here, and His team at ESWA. This year at Christmas, we take courage and marvel in His grace as we remember our Savior’s miraculous birth, life, death, and resurrection. The LORD Jesus Christ, our Messiah King, brings salvation for all who will believe in His Name. That’s Good News!

The angel announced this wonderful news to the shepherds watching over their flock one glorious night. Luke 2:10-14 (NKJV): “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’”

At ESWA, we have the privilege of participating in God’s work to train leaders to teach the Bible accurately and share this Good News. We praise God that He has set us apart “to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Eph. 4:12) “to the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1:14).

ESWA develops, equips, and trains godly servant leaders—pastors, educators, and ministry leaders—for the African Church.



Gary has already taught courses on Educational Psychology and Spiritual Formation; is serving as a thesis advisor and developing materials to help other thesis advisors and thesis students; and as Vice President for Academic Affairs, has established needed new policies, begun work on curricular revisions, scheduled courses and instructors for the remainder of this academic year, and started scheduling for the 2024-25 academic year. Also, Elizabeth has jumped in serving as a Christian Education Specialist in various areas and helping with the website. Next year from January to May 2024, she will also be the primary teacher for the Educational Ministry of the Church course required for all ESWA students.

Thank you for your prayers. We both look forward to all God will do as we serve him at ESWA this coming year, 2024. To God be the glory!



WHY DID GOD CHOOSE MARY? (LUKE 1&2)



By Mama Carol Calenberg

She was a virgin, a young woman probably around 15-17 years of age and was betrothed to be married to Joseph.

The angel, Gabriel, said she was highly favored by God and the Lord was with her. Mary was greatly troubled, even afraid at the angel's greeting. He told her not to be troubled, she had found favor with God. Why?

Gabriel then announced that she would bear the Messiah, Jesus, whose "kingdom will never end." She questioned, how could that happen? By the power of the Holy Spirit. Mary's response: **"I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled."**

"How many teenaged young women do you know would have that kind of response to the visitation by an angel with such news?"

Her song in vs 46-55 reveals just how mature, godly and humble Mary's attitude and heart were.

She recognized the incredible honor it was to be chosen to bring the Messiah into the world and yet she acknowledged the mercy of God in choosing a humble human instrument such as her for the privilege.

Later she delivered her child in a dirty stable in a town away from her family, fled to Egypt to save Jesus's life from Herod, and she frantically searched for Jesus at the Temple when He was teaching the religious leaders at the age of 10. She witnessed His miracles. After all that, she experienced the grief and pain of watching that precious son of hers be chased by the religious rulers of the day and nailed to a cross to die a gruesome, torturous criminal's death.

How often did Mary question the wisdom of God—as I would?

My conclusion: Mary was not chosen by God randomly. She was highly favored by God because of her humility and sensitivity to spiritual realities and God Himself. She was a strong woman with determination to carry out God's plan for her and her Son. She did not have full understanding of what God's will would look like, but she followed Jesus to the cross and beyond.

May we be people of character and determination to please God as Mary was, whatever our age and circumstance.



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ESWA STUDENTS / GRADUATES GIVING BACK

CORETTA KING DABIEH

The Evangelical Seminary Of West Africa has its students and ex-students who are actively serving in ministry. Amazingly, each one of them tends to transfer the values and competencies acquired over the time from their studies at ESWA. They are striving to make the difference at all cost. In this edition of ESWA echoes, we will be talking about Rev. Ugo Peterson who is the Pastor of God's Presence International. He happens to be one of ESWA's first graduates. Every Sunday at his church, over 100 children in the Johnsonville community on an average are being fed.

Feeding God's children is a passion for him and his spouse, as many children in the area can barely eat good food, due to poverty.

"It is such a blessing to meet the needs of these children. when they come we share the love of Jesus with them and teach them some core Christian values which will enable them to stand firm as true believers in Christ..." as expressed by Rev. Peterson. We are so glad that God is providing on a regular for this ministry and it is also our hope and prayer that God's purpose for these children be fulfilled.



Children
Feeding @
GPHI

*"Christmas is, of course, the time
to be home - in heart as well as
body." - Garry Moore*



ESWA Construction Project

Praise God! We are so excited about the new ESWA site development on the ELWA SIM campus. The land is being cleared, and the wall is almost finished. Soon construction will begin.

We are trusting God for His provision of the remaining \$75,000 for completion of the library and administration buildings by July 2024. Please consider how you may partner with us prayerfully and financially with this project. To God be the glory!



Prayer Requests

We have come this far because of God's goodness and mercy. We are also grateful for all of you who have always been there, through your prayers and donations to ESWA. Here are some prayer requests we wish you could pray for:

- *Funding and development of the first phase of the new ESWA campus by summer 2024,*
- *God to raise up and provide more staff and faculty for ESWA as the work increases,*
- *For God to raise new students and more scholarships for current students, as well for God to help them finish up with their course work.*
- *For strength for the incoming graduates who need to finish up their thesis before graduation,*
- *For the "Story of the Bible Conference" coming up in May 2024,*
- *For Rick and Carol who are on home assignments currently,*
- *For smooth transitions as the president, Rev. Dr. Calenberg and his wife Carol who will be retiring by June 2024,*
- *For journey mercies for all those who will be traveling across oceans and seas to serve at ESWA.*

