



# GTFB M

## Gather The Fragments Bible Mission

*Stephen & Laura Holt*  
*Sierra Leone, West Africa*

### FIELD REPORT: JUNE 2021

#### Greetings to our Family and Friends!

To conclude our retrospective of the 2020-21 dry season circuit, we have assembled some photo pages with minimal text to give you a visual overview of this key ministry. This season GTF Bible Mission has expanded into several new areas, and is working with established local churches to develop some exciting new venues for future evangelism.

*“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die ...”* Revelation 3:2 is a constant call to action for the dry season circuit. Churches in Sierra Leone are weak, some are failing, while others will soon be overcome by Islam if they aren’t strengthened. This strengthening is not simply in numbers through evangelism, or “membership drives” but more importantly, through the teaching of foundational Bible doctrines to strengthen the believers’ faith and confidence in the inerrancy of the Bible, as well as God’s desire to work through His word in their daily lives.

**THE NEXT STEP:** One of the main goals of the circuit is the development of trained, well-seasoned team members who can rotate traveling the circuit with me. These leaders will then train teams at the churches we visit, leading them in local evangelism. This is designed to free me up to stay behind with the pastors, Sunday school teachers, and select church leaders to provide teaching in basic Bible doctrines and practical Christian living. These two elements are sadly lacking in churches throughout Sierra Leone. This year’s circuit has shown me that we are at the point of being able to begin implementing this teaching phase in the mission’s organizational plan. This vision was developed before we moved to Sierra Leone, and it’s a blessing to see it coming to fruition after 12 years of plowing on the field. Over the course of the next year, I will be tailoring a basic curriculum to meet these specific needs.



*L: Hassanatu training a church member from Bethany BC in the use of the wordless evangelism book.*

*R: At the Next stop, this new recruit gave a good gospel presentation while Hassanatu and Zainab stayed in the background, available to assist as needed.*

**EXPORTABLE  
TRAINING WORKS!**



**BUILDING PROJECT:** The 2021-22 dry season circuit will focus on local areas of evangelism training. This is due to the long awaited commencement of our building project! Maintaining a more local theater of operations, “Jerusalem and Judea,” will allow me to regularly pick up supplies, while also affording me the necessary flexibility to quickly return to the building site if needed. Brother Mustard and I plan to begin building in January 2022 with Bro Mustard serving as project manager. It is planned that we will have small teams from two Stateside churches come to assist us. However, with the constantly changing landscape of the Covid threat, it cannot be determined at this point whether or not they will be coming. We ask that you make this a matter of specific prayer as their service would greatly facilitate this project.

*Breaking up raw ground in the rough mining village of Victoria. Being nearby, this is one of the villages we will be able to visit for evangelism during the building project. There is currently no church in Victoria but we are prayerful that one day there will be!*



**SOME PERSONAL NOTES:** I will be returning to the States in July for just a few months. Laura’s geneticist has further diagnosed another condition which is complicating the management of her Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS). This new diagnosis is secondary mitochondrial myopathy which is weakening her muscles. As with the EDS, there is not much to be done medically speaking, though she is having some relief from painful muscle cramps and spasms by using a creatine supplement. Her doctor wants her to see another who doctor specializes in physical therapy for these conditions, and I need to help my bride navigate this next step in her health management. This mean spending a few weeks out of town to get her started. She will then be monitored by the use of tele-med appointments as well as an iPhone app. The wonders of technology are a great benefit in this. She continues to work as she’s able on the completion of the next set of two illustrations. It is planned for me to carry these new banners back with me in December. Laura’s work is now being used in other West African countries as well as Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines! That is a big encouragement indeed.

While in the States, I will be undergoing chiropractic treatment for a severe and debilitating injury to my low back and leg. Actually it’s the combined affects of several injuries over the years, this latest one just put things over the top making it nearly impossible for me to sit at all. I’m more than dreading the long plane ride home, and am very hopeful the chiropractor can get things working properly again.

We marvel in all that the Lord is doing this year in Sierra Leone. Thank you for making it possible for GTF to represent you in West Africa. You have much fruit to your account.

*Because He is Worthy*  
**Stephen & Laura Holt**

Please scroll down to enjoy our photo pages!

Just as this letter was about to be sent out, the president of Sierra Leone sent down an official edict concerning the “third wave” of Covid-19.

1. A curfew has been set from 10pm - 5 am.
2. Bars can remain open until 9 pm
3. Weddings/funerals permitted but limited to 50 guests
4. **Places of worship cannot meet. At all. Period.**

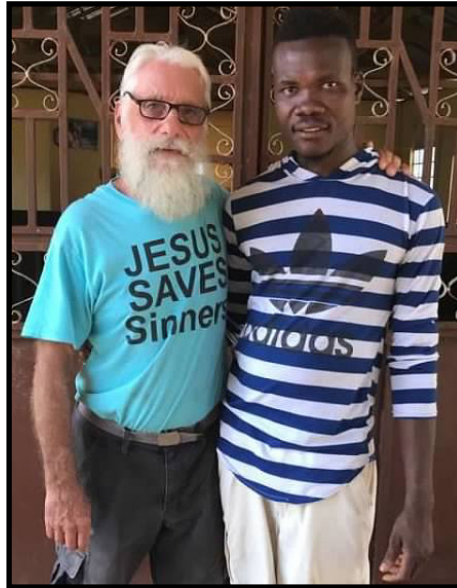
*We are going to encourage small house “cell” groups limited to 3 families. This edict is said to only be for the next month but we want our people to be prepared for it to be extended, as we know how easily that can happen.*



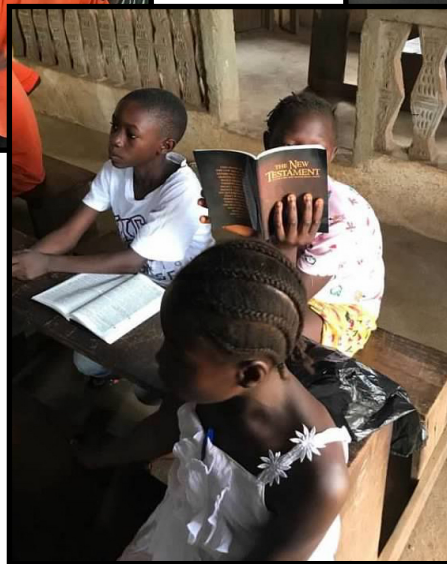
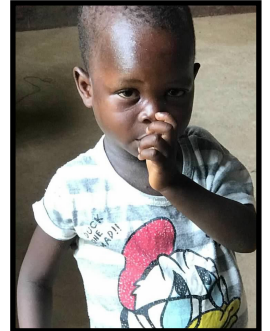
# Strengthening in Makankuri

This Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) church is the perfect example of why I do not turn down any reasonable request for Bible teaching and evangelism training. This is a gem in the rough! There is not much holding this little church together and they need a lot of strengthening. They attend church on Saturday simply because that's how it's always been. Any Christians in Makankuri have no other choice for church; the only other religious option is a mosque.

I had a very good time here and was encouraged by the reception. Though the class was not well attended, those present listened well and became very stirred up by what I was teaching as compared to their SDA teachings. It became clear to me that they have a good understanding of salvation, and seem to know more Bible than SDA doctrines. But they do not know how to counter the SDA teachings. This is a church we will visit again. Because they wanted only teaching we did not conduct any evangelism this time, but I told Pastor Isaac that next time we will include definitely evangelism training.



Ishmael Isaac is the pastor in Makankuri  
Though young and inexperienced, he  
has a strong desire to learn!



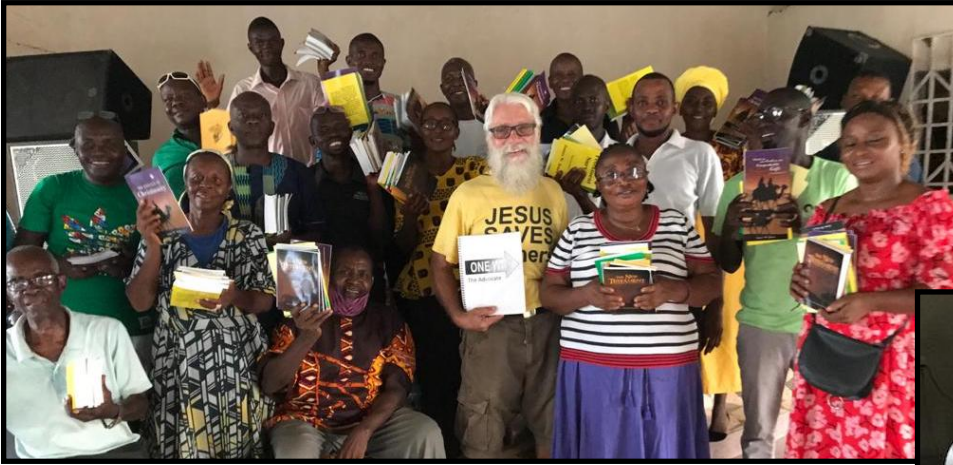
While I was teaching, Bro. Michael Sillah had a grand time with a pile of children! The SDA churches typically have very good schools which are well funded and the children in these schools learn to read well. We distribute Scripture portions or New Testaments to the students at all the schools we visit and these make their way into students' homes. The seeds sown in the hearts of these children could easily bear fruit in future years. This is another reason why I will not reject an invitation from an SDA church or school.



For their Saturday church service, Michael gave  
the gospel banner presentation



# Equipping in Moyamba



New Harvest Church in Moyamba is another of our several first-time visits for this circuit season. We were warmly welcomed by an enthusiastic group ready to learn evangelism. Two highlights from this visit will be featured.

*Equipping and encouraging the body of Christ throughout Sierra Leone is the heart our circuit!*

It was a pleasure to be invited to teach evangelism to a group of pastors and church workers who assembled for a council meeting. This was very well received with an excellent response. Not viewing evangelism strictly as a membership drive was an eye opener for them, and they really could see the difference after explaining it. We were able to provide a package of several study books to each pastor. This is a great contact which I believe will bring access to more churches in this area.



The second highlight from our time in Moyamba was an unexpected opportunity when we were granted access to a prison. We were given an hour to present the gospel using the wordless booklets with many good questions following. It was very heartbreaking but I'm grateful we had this opening.

This has planted the thought to add prison work to our circuit season travels, equipping local churches to minister to these needy souls. The system is so starved for help of this nature that they are allowing all manner of cult in to fill the gap. GTF needs to take advantage of the opportunity, encouraging churches to minister to their own countrymen.



There are 92 inmates in this facility; 92 souls going somewhere. Most of these inmates were in their 20s with very little hope of life ever being much better. Due to lack of funding, there are no separate facilities for female offenders. This prison has two women inmates; one of the women is raising her baby with her behind bars.

*The man in blue is the head warden who asked me to take pictures and show the crowded appalling conditions. A christian himself, he was pleading with me to bring spiritual aid to these desperately needy prisoners.*

**These photos are used by permission**



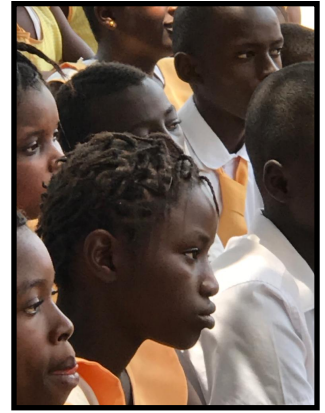


# Little Fragments

With 60 % of the population being under the age of 25, GTF ministers to lots of children. Youngsters are naturally drawn to Laura's colorful artwork, both books and banners, giving keen attention to our gospel presentations.

Religious and Moral Education (RME) is a required course in all levels of schooling and we are regularly asked to give our presentations in schools throughout the country. We always distribute Scripture portions or New Testaments along with tracts, getting the gospel into countless homes.

*We call our children's ministry*  
**Little Fragments**



Top: Children in Masethlehi assembled in the village barrie to hear the gospel!



Top and Left: Girls' secondary school receives New Testaments

Top: A primary school in Moyamba, lined up in front of their classroom doors.

R: Later, all classes assembled outside to hear the gospel.





**A small tour of  
GTF Partner  
Churches**

# Getting Around!



Mile 91



Top: Makeni

L: Lokomassama



Bitima



Makeni

A New Name  
Written in  
***Bo!***



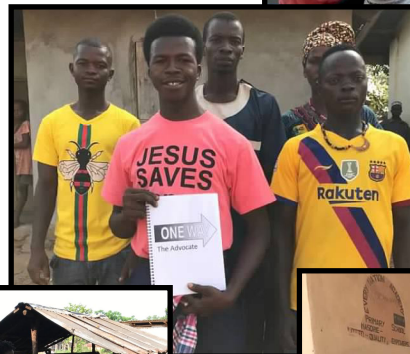
Top: Kenema

L: Kamakwie

Bottom: Kambia



Moyamba



Freetown



Bo

