

Benin FFWPU Project report

7th August 2016

Amy Brown, Katharina Eder, June Darby

Here in Benin we have been received so warmly by the Family Federation members, CARP members and local Beninese people. In total we are 4 European members, Viktor Vanalderwelt from France, Katharina Eder from Germany, and June Darby and myself from England. We've been privileged to be able to get involved with the many activities going on in Benin, together with CARP and the Japanese Cheon Il Guk missionaries, and with the Tribal Messiahship department. Both are really booming with energy and have gained a lot of momentum.

CARP has been holding regular workshops; a 1-day seminar is held for new guests almost weekly, and 7-day workshops are currently happening once or twice a month for new guests to study Principle. As the European team, we have been witnessing on the local university campus with CARP members and have also been supporting at workshops. We have joined in for part of the 1-day, 7-day and 21-day workshops to support and encourage new guests and future CARP members.



CARP one-day workshop, over 100 new guests attended to hear Principle of Creation and the Human Fall for the first time. CARP-Benin holds this workshop nearly every week.



Inauguration ceremony for Youth Federation for World Peace. Students and VIP guests from the government and universities were invited to hear about Vision 2020 for the social and economic development for Benin through strategic goals based on True Parents teachings.



European members meet the 21-day CARP leadership workshop participants.



CARP 21-day leadership workshop for first and second generation, 24 participants



One- day Blessing education seminar for newly blessed couples. Content included Divine Principle lectures and also talks and discussions about how to inherit the tribal messiahship mission and spread the teaching of the Blessing to their local communities



Blessing ceremony held at a Beninese village, where newly blessed couples could celebrate together with their community.

The Tribal Messiahship team has been working extremely hard to bless and educate many couples around Benin. During the past 2 weeks we have attended meetings with 2 mayors, 2 local chiefs and the leader of a peace and family education NGO called Fiffawa, (meaning 'peace' in the local dialect), to discuss giving the Blessing ceremony to the local couples. The leaders have all received us very warmly and have had a very positive response to supporting Blessing activities in their communities.

The Tribal Messiahship team also go to villages and cities around the country not only to give Blessings, but also to give Blessing education to support newly blessed couples throughout and after the 40-day separation and 3-day ceremony. Through this education, newly blessed couples receive Divine Principle lectures and also learn to inherit the tribal messiahship mission themselves, and feel inspired to spread this message to the rest of their community.

So far almost 800 couples have been blessed in Benin, and a few hundred more are to be expected within the coming months. I have attended 3 Blessing ceremonies in different locations. In the past 2 weeks alone over 90 couples have received the Blessing.

It seems like the biggest challenges the team are currently facing are financing all their events, travel, and finding enough manpower to take care of and educate all the newly blessed couples. Their teams are very small and of course most members cannot be dedicated to their mission full time. Moreover, there is a big issue with polygamy in many parts of Africa, preventing many married people from being eligible to receive the Blessing.

Despite their many challenges, I have been amazed at the incredible results of the hard work and dedication of the members here; they are in contact with many leaders, including the President of Benin, they hold a vast range and great number of events weekly, and have been giving Blessings and teaching Principle across the entire nation. I really feel that this is a leading nation in bringing about Vision 2020.



61 couples receive the Holy Wine at the Blessing ceremony.



National Leader and his wife, leader of Tribal Messiahship in Benin and his wife and the Japanese Cheon Il Guk missionaries at a workshop centre.



European team perform at the inauguration of the Youth Federation for World Peace event.



2 week Divine Principle workshop for West African second generation at Benin FFWPU headquarters.



Meeting with a district Mayor, who received the Blessing with his wife, and wants to support FFWPU in giving Blessing ceremonies in villages and communities across his district.



21 couples, invited by the village chief, receive the Blessing ceremony.



7-day Divine Principle CARP workshop participants, (11 new guests participated), with the national leader, Cheon Il Guk missionaries and European team. This workshop is held once or twice a month for new guests. CARP members and first generation members share the roles of lecturing and staffing.

Report from Benin

In these week staying here we had the chance to meet many quite high position people. It seems to be quite easy to get a chance to meet them and they all welcomed us. For instance we got to meet the major of this city Godomey and he invited us to celebrate independence day with him on the 1. August.

According to the responsible person of our meeting the major gave a permission to bless people in his city this time on paper. Before he refused to write it down as he has more wives.

On the 1st August we had the chance to meet some people and the mayor invited us as private guests to his lunch. One of the people we met was the consultant of the mayor and he told us that even though we hadn't really got involved with the other people, just sitting quietly on the side, we were friendly to everyone leaving a good impression on him. So maybe next time this builds a foundation for one of our members to visit him and invite him to the blessing conference and encourage him to bring other people.

People here are very open if we talk about our goal to educate people to have proper relationships in their families and come without any real concern.

Also the district chiefs were very pleased when we visited them and they said we can have the blessing conference at their places. One of them personally would invite 100 couples and the other 50 couples. Unfortunately they themselves are not able to receive the blessing as they have more than 1 wife. This blessing is about to take place on Saturday 6th August.

Also on Saturday we invited many students to take part in a conference organized by the CARP team. I expect many people to come although some of them didn't really ask what it is about. Many got a short explanation and we are hoping they will be coming. It seems that the conferences which included an introduction to the DP and lunch together will cost quite a sum. I am not really sure how they manage to keep themselves above water but I believe they need a lot of financial help here. These conferences seem to take place every two weeks as well as the blessing conference that takes place every Saturday. Although this time will be the biggest number of couples they had so many people are needed to help out.

I believe for us its very interesting not only to see a total different country with different customs but to see how people get easily inspired to join the blessing and have a good foundation themselves concerning family values and their relationship with God. I am sure for many young Second Gen from Europe would have a really good experience if they came to help. As Kathy already said just the fact that there are people coming people from Europe to help out here inspires not only many members but also guests.

Katharina Eder







June Darby

25th July

I have just found out that I will be going to the mayor of Cotonou office this afternoon at 3pm to get final permission for blessing every single district in Cotonou. It has been verbally agreed but needs to become official, papers to be handed in and plans, programmes submitted. So I WILL BE WORKING WITH THAT Blessing programme. Amazing, it will be an incredible experience I am sure.

27th July

We will be doing a blessing and education programme this coming Saturday 6th August. The blessings in Cotonou begins 11th Aug until 13th Aug.

It will be mainly be for the district leader and his counsellors. That will be done in each district. Those leaders will be educated then later they will follow up with doing more blessings in each district.

28th July

Thank you for your prayers. Yesterday 'a meeting was cancelled due to an emergency meeting with a government minister, so we went again this morning. He was positive about supporting the family and will give us written authorisation. Also, there was someone present who has responsibility for villages outside the city limits who promised us authorisation.

We will go to visit 2 of the 9 district leaders from Calavi, where we were this morning. There we will discuss with them about how and when to bless in their districts. First the district leader and his counsellors are blessed and educated. Then they help with blessing the people living in their district.

29th July

The members are all very kind and heartistic. I was dropped straight into the Blessing programme, that is being done in the Cotonou area by a very capable and hard working couple, Pascal and Olive Degbey, who fortunately speak English.

On my 1st day we visited the Mayor of Cotonou 's office to submit the plans for the Blessing programme. Amazingly the 2nd Gen said that we should spend 3 days, not 1 day, in each district to give more people time to be blessed! The city has 13 districts and a population of 1 million. The District chiefs and their Counsellors and wives are blessed first and educated. Then they bring their people to be blessed. We begin this on 11-13th Aug. Next we visited the Mayor of D'Abomey-Calavi, Mar George Badas. He used to be an M.P. and is a dignified, impressive figure. The city has a population of nearly 1.5 million, with 9 District Chiefs. He had give I permission to bless in his city but some District Chiefs require the Mayor's written authorisation, which he willingly gave. Evidently all the City Chiefs are moved by seeing a delegation of foreigners and become more open to our proposals.

Last night a couple came to hear about the 3 Day Ceremony and received their pack- holy handkerchiefs, candle, matches, holy salt.

Today we visited the District Chief of Zinviev, in Calavi city travelling along a bone shaker of a road. Mar Christophe Avissi was very welcoming, he is young, a programmer as well as chief. After expressing his views and support for the program he promised to bring 100 couples to be blessed next Saturday, 6th Aug! Then he took us to his luxurious home and showed us the upstairs balcony. It has a shelter and a huge open tiles expanse. He said that it would be perfect for the Blessing! Better than the Community hall. Then he took us to meet the Chief of the next District, Mar Ettienne Boyle. We sat outside under the trees while Pascal explained what we were doing. Mar Ettiene was also very encouraging and supportive, promising to bring another 100 couples to be blessed in the afternoon of the

6th Aug! Neither Chief would be blessed because they are polygamous, yet they are helping so open heartedly.

And so the Blessing programme which started here in April is gathering speed and beginning to gallop along. Last Sunday 100 couples were blessed in village and one Blessed member couple is blessing people every day. 32 couples around the country are focusing on Blessings and to date 700 have been blessed.

Tomorrow there will be a blessing here at the HQ Peace Embassy. It is a very exciting and inspiring being here!

1st August

We all arrived before important meetings with 2 Mayors who were not being so co-operative, but when they met with a foreign delegation their hearts were opened and they agreed for us to bless their cities, one has 2 million the other one million. So more foreigners are needed to help do blessings, there aren't enough people here to do the work and money is badly needed, to pay for transport, pictures, 3 day packs, refreshments. Also the young people here are having so many positive experiences and their faith is being strengthened.

2nd August

Today we visited 2 more district chiefs to arrange dates for blessing their people. These chiefs and their counsellors have been blessed and are finishing their 40 days. The one has 11000 in his area. He was very positive, wanting to cooperate and work with the FFWPU on future projects. I wonder how they are going to cope with all the blessings waiting to be done.

June Darby





