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They had served the Lord in the Canada East District as a pastor and wife, and then they went back to Nigeria to serve. And I'm sure it must have been a real warding experience when they saw their children decide to serve the Lord too in foreign missions. And I'm sorry, I don't know what Karen's state is right now, but I do know that Brad and his wife is serving the Lord in Tanzania with Missionary Aviation Fellowship.

And I know that since they have come home and prior to them coming home, that many people have been praying for you. And I'm sure that there'll be many of us that will continue to pray for you and for Rini as she recovers health wise. And we just pray that during this time that the Lord will minister to you.

And as you speak to us, it will be ministered to. Thank you. And it's a joy to be here this morning and share with you.

We do appreciate the prayers of God's people that I know every missionary says that, don't they, when they come home. It's only because we mean it. It's only because that's the way it is.

And we could not have gone through what we did and come home with a sense of accomplishment without your prayers. And that is just from our heart, an expression of thanks to you for your love and kindness and for how you have supported us. The work of missions today is more difficult than it has ever been at any other time.

I am sure I speak the truth on this. Because there are greater stresses living in third world countries today than there ever have been before. Just to know that you're working with nationals who are now in charge and they have a way of expressing their nationalistic spirit.

And then you're working with a church that is developing. Formerly we were working with missionaries and we could usually work out our own plan and we could accomplish what we wanted to accomplish. But now we have to wait on the national church.

There are health problems that we face and overpopulation. I think that's true in most countries. The heavy population and things that we were controlling before.

We had our own hospitals. We had doctors who could care for us. Now that is not true.

And I just want to say the stresses of living in these countries now are very great, very great. Thank you for your prayers for us. Reni had developed this virus problem.

We didn't know what it was. And when we were home a year ago in February and we got tests and nothing showed up. And all the tests, they can take enough blood to paint the hospital, but they can't find anything there.

And Reni had taken all the antibiotics that were known and still didn't feel well. But we thank

God that you prayed and we were able to now as we've come home away from some of the stress, getting better foods and rest. She is a lot better and we thank the Lord for that.

And we know that you haven't forgotten us in your prayers since we have come home. And this is very very meaningful. I want to also take time to mention to you about Peter and Becky Dennison.

You know that they've had a very difficult first term. I don't know of a couple, there may have been some, but I don't know of a couple who have gone through more difficulties than they have gone through in the two year period that they have been there. It's just about not quite two years that they went.

But a word was received just about two weeks ago that Peter fell from a roof somewhere. I don't know many of the details, but he damaged both of his heels. And if you, from what I understand anyway, he is incapacitated.

You lose both of your feet. You are incapacitated, aren't you? And probably is in a wheelchair. And they're supposed to start school this weekend.

The students are to return to TM. And Becky has three children to manage. We just heard, I just came back from Fort Wayne last evening, and they said that Peter has been given the freedom to come home.

And I believe, it's my understanding, the word has come through that they will come home the end of the month, the family. And so we need to remember them in our prayers. They will travel home probably, I suppose, in a wheelchair with three little children.

I think Eric is, I don't think he's five yet. He may just be reaching five. And then so there would be about five, three, and one, one and a half years old.

So this will not be an easy thing. They must be packing up now and getting things ready to come. All of this puts stress on those who are there, how to compensate McDowell's.

I know this will make real changes. And so these are things, I just can't relate to you all that this means. And the things that we face on the field are really great difficulties.

Somebody asked us when we came home, knowing the difficulties that we had, the letters that we wrote, I guess, indicated some of the difficulties. People said, was it really worth it? You can ask this. People will ask us, was it really worth it? It was necessary, as has already been stated.

And Mary, I appreciate what you've said this morning. You can understand the difficulties that we go through, and it's not easy to be there. But the person who called us is not the church or not, we're not going because it was a nice easy time.

We knew that the Lord had called us there for a specific ministry. And we were able to accomplish what we set out to accomplish by your prayers. And this again, we could not have

accomplished what we did without your prayers.

We went this time specifically to begin the upgrading of the Bible schools to an English program. And we were able to see in this time, three of our Bible schools upgraded to teaching in English. And just for me to relate that, I just want to really relate something of that quickly for you today.

Because it is with the evangelism that is taking place, the increase of Christians in villages, and the need for pastors, the youth of the country are speaking English, they want something in English. It was very necessary for us to upgrade the schools of our UMCA to the English level. We have always had the Lawrence Theological College which taught in English and grants degrees and so on.

But the youth who come out of schools today don't have the equivalent, the English equivalent to go to those classes. And we find that we're getting, we needed pastors who were trained in English, who were trained somewhat locally, and then they would go back and be pastors among their people. So it was our vision to begin at TM where there was already a school functioning.

We upgraded the curriculum to a three-year curriculum. We tried to develop materials for the classes. We worked with the schools to put in better boards of governors so that we're setting up something that wouldn't fall down when we left.

And we saw the school, I think they had seven students when we went there. And the next class, the next class that we had, we had 33 students in that class. And they have just that last, the largest class has just graduated.

And those, some have gone on to Lauren, but they graduated I believe 26 students. And we just got a letter as I came home yesterday, I read from one of the students. He said, praise God with me, I'm out in a village now, and I'm the pastor here.

And he seemed so thrilled to tell us that he was pastoring a new church. It's a new church. And we just know that God has, is really going to use those young men.

I, the, there are the greatest number, I don't know how many of this last class are actually going into full-time ministry, but I know out of the former class of 13 that we had, all of them went into full-time ministry. It's one thing to train them, but then the next thing to get them to go into the work that God has called them to. And we are seeing a great number, the greatest percentage of these are in full-time work.

And that's tremendous to me. I think we need to develop the nationals to do their own pastoral work. Just to give you an idea of the financial side of that, when we wanted to have a new teacher for a Betty school, we found that we could, by paying a national with a degree from Eloran, a Bachelor of Theology degree from Eloran, for 800 U.S. dollars a year, we can pay the man's salary.

Now, do you know what it costs to put one of us out on the field? I hate to even tell you, do you know what it costs? We don't get \$50,000 a year, but that's what it costs to put a Canadian missionary couple or family on the field, \$50,000 a year. And we have 27 workers just in one class, the last class that graduated, 27 who have gone into full-time ministry, and so I believe we're multiplying our work. From TM, we felt we wanted to go to Sherry, and that's why Peter and Becky came out.

We were so thankful for God's opening the door for them to come. They took over at TM and we moved to Sherry to upgrade the Nupe school. And there, I just have to say that the Nupe people are of a different disposition than either the Yorubas or the House of Speaking People, and we faced things at Sherry that, well, we knew what they were like.

We had worked there before, but really, it was a different situation there, much slower moving, less apt to act on what you say. But we thank God that a year ago now, we took in 14 students in that first class, and we were happy with that number. We would have liked to have had many more, but this is the class now that Harold and Elda Knights are going to be working with.

And right now, this weekend, the students will be returning for their second year, and I believe that God will give good workers out of that class as well. And all of these classes are set up with the same curriculum, and since they're being taught in English, students can come from the north or south, and they can attend any one of these schools and fit in. So, we're thankful for that.

The third Bible school that we had as an interest to upgrade was Igbeti. Now, the Yoruba folk are more aggressive. They're much more able to start their own work.

And so, as they heard and saw what we were doing, they said, well, we would like an English Bible school at Igbeti. They had the former teacher training college grounds that were all there. The wind had blown the roof off, and the grass had grown up 10 feet high, but they took it on themselves to raise support, and they got enough money to put on the roof.

And in January of this year, they began the Bible school English course at Igbeti. I believe they have 11 students enrolled there. Tim and I were talking about goals and what we could set for the number of students, UMCA students who are in training, in Bible school training in Nigeria.

And we set as a goal 88 students who are training, that is missionary church students who are training in Bible school in the year 88. And as we look at the school year now, I believe that we will be over 88 students. God has helped us to oversubscribe the number who are in school training for pastors and Christian workers in our own schools in Nigeria.

That is including our vernacular, our English schools, and the Laurent Theological College. 88 young men in training. And this is just what we need.

You know, I could go on to tell you about the number of new churches that are starting. And Reverend Amau, when he was just here, he said in Salka, they started two new churches just

now in this last few months. And so there are churches all over the place.

They now have seven districts. They have 30,000 people in our UMCA churches. We have a church of 30,000 people, 170 pastors at present time.

And so you can see how the church is growing. And we were happy to be there and to be a part of the work as it's functioning. Lois Fuller is working in the Nigerian mission school, mission training school.

And again, this is a thrilling thing that God is doing through Nigeria. When she went back early, last furlough, she went and lived for three months with the Nigerians in Nigerian culture, setting, everything. She ate food, she drank water, she did everything with them in order that she could integrate her mind and her thinking to the missionary, to the nationals who are working toward missionary preparation.

And then last year she started the new school in Joss, a school of training Nigerian missionaries to go out and cross cultures, going to other countries. And it's a great opportunity that she has. So you can see how the church is developing.

I just, I just can't put all of that into words. But this is what God allowed us to do, to do and to share in this last time back. Was it worthwhile? We knew what God had asked us to do and we accomplished what God had asked us to accomplish.

And we were glad to be there and to be a part of it. And we will not stop praying for those who are now in charge and carrying on the work. And I don't know what will happen when Peter and Becky come home.

Their school is also to restart this weekend. But we need to remember those who are continuing, whether Joan will go over and help there. She's doing TEE, but whether she will go over or whether they will find a national.

But we do need to pray that God will help them in this time. I was really moved by what Mary said to us this morning. And I want to just perhaps I can pick up now what I want to share with you as well from the word of God.

I was reading in Matthew 13. It's such a familiar passage, but I would like if you just have your Bibles, maybe you'd like to turn to to Matthew 13. And in the middle of the teaching that Jesus gave on the parable of the sower, there's some interesting words.

I'm not going to read the parable of the sower. You know it so well, but I want to read in the middle of that the verse starting at verse 10, Matthew 13 verse 10. The disciples came to Jesus and asked, why do you speak to the people in parables? He replied, the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.

Whoever has will be given more and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have even

what he has will be taken from him. That really struck me that we have an abundance.

The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven have been given to us. And I just believe that the challenge that has come to us from Mary McLean this morning, we need to take so very very deeply. We understand the gospel.

You don't need people to explain the sowing of the seed and all of the parables that Jesus taught. They're clear to us. It has been given to us, but it says that those who have, it may be taken away from us.

And I find today that the things that that we had, unless we preserve them in our churches, beginning with the prayer meeting as it has been spoken, unless we preserve these in our churches, they will be taken away from us. And our eyes will be blinded as he goes on to say, and this comes right out of Isaiah chapter 6. I may get time to just refer to that, but it comes out of Isaiah 6. He says in verse 15, as you follow on, for the people's heart has become calloused. They hardly hear with their ears.

They have closed their eyes. That's people themselves in the church. It's us, missionary church.

The missionary church, the name itself, if we're not careful, will be an indictment against us. That we will lose so that our eyes cannot see, and that we will not have our sons and daughters to go. It's not enough for us to say, let the nationals do it.

Thank God for 27 young men. Thank God for those that low us this training. But if we ever stop sending our sons and our daughters, God will judge us.

And I know that we're a mixed group here this morning. We come from many churches. We have old and young.

We have grandfathers and grandmothers, and we have young people, not enough young people to suit me, sorry. We have to do something. We have to do something in the missionary church.

We who travel to deputation schedules, I'm starting out on the deputation schedule on September the 8th, and we'll travel until the end of November. But do you know who we speak to? Old people like you. I don't know where we speak even to the missionary church as a group.

This is a missionary church mission day in our district. I don't know how to convey to you the burden. I can't reach the body of the missionary church.

When we go to a deputation meeting, we have 20 or 30 minutes. They want to hear about Nigeria, so they should. Should I drop speaking about Nigeria and speak to the hearts of the people? I think from this meeting today, as we pray, as has been suggested, then we need to go back and bear the burden to not only the women's fellowships, but the men need to come to grips with the burden of missions among us.

And we need in our whole church emphasis to come back to what we really stand for as a missionary church. I really feel that we need to guard as we've been involved in separating the Canadian and the American church. I believe we need to be very careful that we don't lose the missionary emphasis among us.

It's okay, as I go, I've been scheduled to speak in Indiana and Michigan and so on, the districts in the south. And the people say, why are you going to the US? Aren't you a Canadian missionary? And people will ask the same question of those who come up here to speak in our Canadian churches from the south. Listen, we are one church, one body, and we have one mission.

And whatever we're doing, if we ever separate ourselves by way of the mission emphasis of the missionary church, we will lose something. And I don't feel at all happy that we are trying to say, well, I'm going here. And we try to slot people.

We are the missionary church around the world. And I want us to pray for missions of the missionary church and the fields that we have always supported, wherever it is. I think we have 12 or 13 fields where we are responsible for, and we can't categorize or pigeonhole or relegate the work to nationals.

We have to see that our missionaries are represented, your sons and daughters, people who are going to support in any way. We need full-time committed missionaries to go. We need short-termers.

We need work teams. We need staff of all kinds, youth. But these are our mission fields.

And let's never let down or say that the job is finished or that we can dismiss the national churches from our prayers and our fellowship. And that's just the way it is. If we ever forget that, we will close ourselves off.

Our heart will become callous. We'll hardly hear with our ears. We'll hardly see with our eyes.

And God will not be able to do through us what he's counted on us to do. We were raised in missions. This is the Canada East District of the missionary church.

And I believe we need to go home and tell people that there is a job to be done, and that our sons and daughters need to be challenged. And we'll raise up missionaries. Who was it said there are, they could use eight missionaries.

Wonderful in Sierra Leone, eight couples. We need missionaries in Ecuador. They are asking for 30 couples to go to Spain.

It's been suggested that five of those should come from Canada. Now if these couples come to us, what are we going to say? Is it too costly to support missionaries today? Don't we have money to send five couples? Just as we were in our deputation orientation this week in Fort

Wayne, we were saying that we have less missionaries now in the missionary church than we have ever had at any for a long time. Only around 100 missionaries, maybe 103.

And if we look at it, you say well it's so costly. If it's \$50,000, I don't know what it really costs. That's what they say.

Is that too costly to keep missionaries on the field? Shame on us. When we see what we live in, where we drive, the things we spend our money on. And as a body, we have some 70 churches.

And if we can't continue to support more missionaries, then there's something that is shameful to us. We have now, I think on the Canadian roster of missionaries, we have perhaps 26 missionaries. And I know that at least 12 of these are coming off of the support list for some reason or other, either retirement or whatever, in the next year or two.

That will put us down to 14 missionaries. Are you happy with that? Or will we give our sons and daughters to the Canada East District of the missionary church and our dollars to support? I think, was it the Van Hoffens who said that getting ready to go? Somebody said, oh raising support. Was that it? It's been said anyway, that raising support for going out to the field is a difficult thing.

It's more difficult when we feel that the church isn't interested. And that we can hardly get shares. Harold and Eldon Knights are in Nigeria on voluntary service.

He doesn't get any salary from the mission. He needed 55 shares to pay his support for the travel out, the flight ticket, and a few incidentals that are needed. 55 shares.

And in the June issue, they offered themselves in January. In the June issue, I think it was, or was it in the Communicate? He still needed 38 shares. I'm sorry folks.

55 shares could not be raised in that length of time. I don't know how many are still to be taken. Is there no money in the churches? Is this not a priority? Are we building churches and forgetting the ministry of the mission? If your sons and daughters apply and then start to raise shares or raise support, you'll find the attitude of people towards support.

I know. And so I just lay this at your feet. I don't come here to lay anything heavy on you.

I'm asking you to go home from here and stir your local congregations and take the word to the people because I believe that if we don't use the blessing, as the disciples were saying, the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven have been given to you. We're the missionary church and I want us to always be that. I was going to go on to say something about Isaiah.

I guess I will finish that way. You know the Isaiah chapter 6 passage. What Jesus quoted here came out of the words of God to Isaiah.

You remember he was sitting in the church in the temple and he saw the Lord high and lifted

up. People who will get a new vision of the Lord, a new vision of themselves, because the vision of ourselves will take us to see ourselves as Isaiah saw himself. He said, woe is me.

I'm unclean. I'm not ready to give that commitment that is needed to the missionary endeavor. And he said, Lord, come and touch me so that I will have the commitment to missions that I need.

Lord, come and touch me so that my finances will be given to the missionary cause. Lord, come and touch me so that whatever it will cost us to do, what we have to do as a Canadian church to the missionary program, we'll rise up and do it. Lord, touch me.

I'm unclean. And so the Lord sent an angel, fire, put it on his lips. He was touched and moved and cleansed and filled.

And he saw the Lord in a new way. This is my prayer. This is the only answer to the missionary endeavor.

It's the only answer for going to do the job. And so the Lord came and then after he had cleansed Isaiah, he said, whom shall I send? And who will go for us? You see what happened? His vision was enlarged and clarified. He could see the needs of the world that he was living in.

And we also will see the needs of the lost. Millions and millions today will see the lost of Spain, will see the lost of France, will see the lost of Ecuador and Sierra Leone. Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And who will support the young men who will stand up to do the job? And Isaiah said, here am I. Send me.

You see, it doesn't become difficult after we get that kind of vision. And our eyes will be open and right out of that sense of passage, Jesus said, you here, you see. Blessed are you because you understand these things.

Blessed are you, my people, who are here in this gathering this morning. You wouldn't be here if you didn't have a heart for missions. But somehow it's not enough just to have sat here this morning and then go home and be the same.

It's not enough. I don't know. You can touch the people where you are going to better than I can.

I may never get a chance to come and speak to the people with whom you worship and pray week by week. But I'm asking you to go home and make a change and ask people to be committed. If you want to use this passage or the passage that Mary spoke from in Matthew 9, go home and pray about it and be burdened and carry the burden to the people with whom you worship.

And I pray that we will continue to be a missionary church. That God will be honored and God will be glorified so that we will do something that nobody else can do. That's what God is asking

