

Lenten Witness Day By Day: Prayer Calender for Witness Work in West Africa

As the Lenten season is now well underway, this week's post highlights a creative variation of the Lent prayer calendar. Deb Bergen takes us day by day through the work of the Mobile Member Care Team supporting African Independent Church pastors, offering us insight into their work and the opportunity to pray for their context as Easter approaches. - Ed.

In 2013, my husband, Wes prepared to follow a long-held dream to work with African Independent Church pastors. Sometimes you have to travel a long way to find people who share your love of Leviticus! I was less clear about how my experience in mental health clinics might be useful in that setting; African understandings of behavior and relationships would be far harder to learn than a foreign language. But we see the days ahead when the global church is led by Africa, and we wanted to immerse ourselves in that movement, and so we moved to Accra, Ghana.

When I learned about Mobile Member Care Team, I couldn't stop bouncing. This inter-mission team targets cross-cultural church workers in West Africa to promote resilience and increase competencies to multiply supportive resources. Consistent with my experience, the team knows work has to begin with a strong spiritual life, developed in a community of vulnerability and grace, aware that God must guide wise use of too-rare skills.

The West Africa team consists of just four people. As a crisis response resource, there's no "typical" week. We choose among actions and reactions too large to make a list of "typical" activities. Specific stories can't be shared because any uniqueness could betray confidentiality and even safety. But I have found a way to share about the intersection of various themes of our work through a Lenten forty-day calendar.

Forty days is the time we take as the church to prepare ourselves for the Passion. One of the ways Africans lead the church is through a demonstration of the relevance of the Passion. The light of hope and healing shines brightest in places of fear and through our deepest wounds. Every day is a challenge and honor to serve here in Accra. In whatever way you choose to use this list of prayer concerns and praises, may it also challenge and bless you.

No list made in advance can stay relevant over weeks here, as our lives and work are unpredictable. For updated twists and turns, along with further information, check into and sign up for the blog PrayMMCT.wordpress.com. The blog will remain accessible after Lent.

View the calendar in Word [here](#).

Deb Bergen lives in Accra, Ghana, where she works with the Mobile Member Care Team, providing mental health care support for workers in West Africa. Her husband, Wes, teaches at Good News Theological College and Seminary. They are supported by Mennonite Mission Network.