

The Plan

Support for Missionaries.

In Mali our team will come alongside the missionaries to support their work among the Bambara people of West Africa.

Step 1

Focus on prayer.

Much of our time in Africa will focus on prayer walking among the people of Mali. Prayer is the work of the ministry. Daily, we will labor in prayer for the salvation of the Bambara people.

Step 2

Build Relationships.

The people of Mali value relationships. We will invest time each day building relationships in order to share the love of Christ.

Step 3

Share the good news.

Because of illiteracy the gospel must be presented in creative ways. One specific way our team will be trained to share the love of Christ is by using a special program that tells the Biblical Story through pictures. This particular method transcends the language barrier and describes the major biblical events from Genesis to Revelation with a focus on the work of Christ at Calvary.

Step 4

Evaluate for Partnership.

Throughout the time in Mali, our team will consider unique ways God may be calling First Baptist Church to partner with the IMB and missionaries in West Africa.

Step 5

Share the Dream.

Upon returning from Mali our team will present to the church the vision for a partnership.

We now ask that you...

Pray with us for Mali.

Pray that God will open the doors for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Acts 16:6-40

Pray our team will be a blessing and support to the missionaries.

Philippians 1:3-6

Pray for our training as we learn to share the gospel by using a biblical story tapestry.

Ephesians 4:11-16

Pray for wisdom to discern the possibility for a partnership between First Baptist Church, the IMB and the work in Mali, West Africa.

Acts 13:1-3

Prayer is the work of the ministry!

Vision Trip to Mali, Africa

With the International Missions Board (IMB) of the
Southern Baptist Convention



June 10-20, 2007



The Place

The region known as West Africa is very nearly the size of the United States and is home to more than 287 million people who descend from more than 1600 different people groups living in 22 different countries.



Mali is the largest country in West Africa at nearly twice the size of Texas.

The Bambara people, who comprise about 1/3 of the country's 13 million people, live in more than 30,000 small villages, mostly in the southern portion of the country.

The People

West Africans are one of the most ethnically diverse people in the world. Each of its people groups has its own history, language and culture. Most are subsistence farmers, weavers, fishermen, nomadic cattle and sheep herders, traders, merchants, and government workers. 75% of the population are under 40 years of age and the life expectancy is less than 50 years.

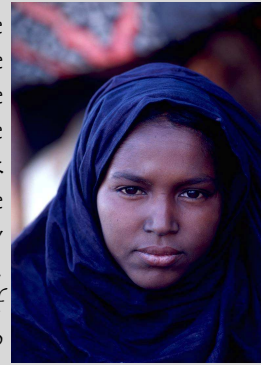


The Need

Ethnic and social conflict, unstable governments, and poverty haunt many parts of West Africa. Disease and malnutrition are high, while educational literacy is very low. HIV/AIDS is projected to reach almost 10% of the population, leaving more than 3.3 million AIDS orphans by the year 2010. 80% of the region's people are Muslim. Less than 2% are Christian.

A Window into West African Life

Every morning before the rooster crows, the mosque prayer call pierces the darkness, awakening me. I rise to pound millet and cook breakfast for my family. We have so many to feed—my mother-in-law, my husband, his two other wives and all of our children. It's difficult to feed everyone though, because the drought last year killed many of our crops. It's also hard to work while your stomach growls, but we do it, day after day. We are farmers. We depend on the rain. There are 4 million of us in Mali and five other West African countries. Another 6 million people speak our language. Fewer than 1 percent of us are Christian. My people follow Allah, and I follow my people. We also worship the spirits of our ancestors, the rivers and the trees. There are so many spirits to appease! ~a Bambaran woman



Jesus walked the earth some 2000 years ago. Southern Baptists began sharing His Gospel in West Africa more than 150 years ago. Still today, there are more than 355 people groups in West Africa who have never heard Jesus name. Jesus said, "The harvest is plenty but the laborers are few." We are praying for laborers who will serve in Mali.



Our Vision

Randy Arnett, International Missions Board regional leader for West Africa has said, "God wants to do something here that we've never, ever seen before; an awakening, a revival, a spiritual breakthrough that will impact the world. He's waiting on us."

The International Missions Board has developed three stages for reaching out to the peoples of West Africa.

Stage #1

The first is to "**engage**" or to make contact and begin working among the **unreached** people groups. Our vision trip will allow us to participate in this stage.

Stage #2

The second strategy is to "**advance**" where efforts are made to **help** established missionaries and local believers **engage** with people thereby setting the stage for church-planting movements. During our vision trip, we will provide support and help for full-time IMB missionary families.

Strategy #3

The last strategy is "**co-partnering**" where strategic **plans are developed** for the church to work along side national Baptist partners at every level. We hope that First Baptist will, as a result of our vision trip, begin a long-term partnership with the IMB in West Africa.

Our Team

Roger Haun is the Director of West Africa Mission efforts for the IMB. Roger spent 21 years serving in West Africa.

Keith Missel, senior pastor of First Baptist Church Aurora. Pastor Keith has extensive mission experience serving in the Dominican Republic, Ukraine, Romania and throughout North America.

Diana Otten is a member of First Baptist Church. Diana has served on missions in Ethiopia, Peru, Taiwan and North America.