

In His Hands

(Isaiah 49:16)



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Over the last year, Bintou and I have been praying for the Lord's leading for our lives and how to best combine our two professions: pilot and medical doctor. **We are excited to announce God's perfect provision for us in Gabon, Central Africa! Lord willing, we**

will be moving there this March!

We are so awestruck with the way God brought this together, I'd love to relay every detail to you.

However, I'll restrain myself and do my best to be brief (smile).



Although we could have remained in Yaoundé, our desire was to serve in one of the less-reached parts of West Africa where medical care is so limited and so desperately needed. Bintou also desired to work in a mission hospital again versus the government-run hospital where she is presently working. Initially, it seemed that the Lord was honoring these desires by opening a door for us to move back to Bango where Bintou and I first met. You can imagine our disappointment when we discovered the Bango airplane program would be closing in

August 2012 due to insufficient demand to support multiple aircraft.

However, earlier in 2012, Bintou began communicating with missionaries from the Bongolo Mission Hospital in Libamba, Gabon, regarding several specialization programs that interested her. Having flown a team there in 2007, I remember being very impressed with the service and ministry of the hospital. This summer I met Steve Straw, the founder of Air Calvary, a mission aviation program serving the Bongolo Mission Hospital since 2005. While being equally impressed with his ministry, I never entertained it as a possibility for us given the 200-mile distance between Air Calvary's base in Libreville and the hospital's location in Libamba.

But with the Bango program closing, I felt the Lord challenging me to ask Steve if he had any interest in relocating Air Calvary's base to the Bongolo Hospital's complex. To my great

surprise, he wrote back with an enthusiastic "Yes!" and expressed this proposal was a significant answer to prayer for him and his wife. For some time, they had been praying for an experienced replacement pilot so that they could move to Yaoundé to spend one final year with their children before they began to return to the US for college.

The leadership of Wycliffe in Cameroon and the Bongolo Hospital began looking into the possibility of a pilot exchange as well as practical questions related to relocating Air Calvary's base, available housing at the hospital complex and the possibility for Bintou to serve at the Bongolo hospital. Over the course of four short months, one-by-one the Lord miraculously opened each of these doors! We are so humbled by God's love for us in working out every detail for Bintou and me to be able to serve Him together and for answering another family's prayers in the process!



Bongolo Mission Hospital (www.bongolohospital.org/)

You may be wondering...**Will you be flying Bible translators?**

While my main focus will be supporting the hospital ministry through aviation, I'll be looking for and recruiting future Bible translators! One of the realities in Gabon is that there is very little translation work to meet the huge need for translation of the 42 Gabonese languages. Although Wycliffe has made two different efforts to start language work in years past, the seed never took hold. After meeting with Wycliffe and SIL leadership responsible for this western central African region, we are praying that through my daily contact with many people, I can identify and encourage individuals who are interested in bringing God's Word to their people and connect them to the training and resources they need to move forward. I believe this is God's desire as I have already met one Gabonese pastor with a passion for Bible translation who was recently in Cameroon for a workshop!

How does this affect your Wycliffe membership?

This will not affect my Wycliffe membership. At this time, I am being loaned to Air Calvary for roughly a two-year period. During this time, I will continue to work in collaboration with the Cameroon branch and expect to return to Cameroon at least two times per year for major

aircraft inspections since the aviation program in Bongolo has very limited resources. This is a huge blessing to this new program!

What airplane will you be flying?



N207FD - Cessna 207 (<http://www.aircalvary.com/gabon.html>)

Thank you for your prayers for Bintou and me as we prepare to make this transition. Last Monday, Bintou traveled to Ngaoundere to pursue her request to be transferred. Next Monday, I start a two-week "Leadership Matters" course in French. Once Bintou returns from Ngaoundere and my course is complete, we will focus full-time on preparations to move to Gabon.

Praise and Prayer Summary

Praises:

- 1) Two months of marriage; enjoying and adjusting to life together. We are almost caught up with thank you notes!
- 2) Answers to many specific prayers regarding the possibility of serving in Gabon!
- 3) Personal encouragement and spiritual growth. Thankful for "A Testament to Freedom" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Prayer:

- 1) Pray for joy and peace as Bintou and I as we are separated for a time. Pray for the love of God to be real to Bintou and I and to overflow to those around us (Rom 2:4).
- 2) Pray for Bintou as she works on several required documents and deals with a challenging context with certain members of her extended family.
- 3) Pray for Bintou and I as we prepare for our transition to Gabon and future life and ministry there.

In Him,
Rob & Bintou

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