



Video Guide: Francophone Africa Unpacked

Presentation by Rev. Gary and Steph Schulte | February 6, 2021

1 hour and 15 mins, including Q & A at the end

Opening thought: There is a parallel between the work in Francophone West Africa and Acts 4:31. Tumult and societal upheaval have led to the growth of God's church in Africa, much like it did in Acts.

PART I: Rev. Gary Schulte (about 43 minutes)



Early Work: Victims of War, Children of God (14 minutes)

- LCMS mission work began in Togo, Burkina Faso, and Benin with victims of war. The war experience drew people to the church (1980s). This pattern repeated later in Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire.
- **6:30: Guinea story.** In the 1990s, a new church was established in Guinea, a 95% Muslim country.
- 10:30: Fast forward to 2016: Burkina Faso, home to the newest French-speaking Lutheran church.
- 13:00: Book project (Lutheran theological resources for Africa)



The Lutheran Center for Theological Studies (CLET) (14:00-18:20)

- The CLET in Togo was founded in 1996.
- American missionaries are no longer there, largely for reasons of safety. Churches there are persecuted.
- Missionary update: LCMS missionaries have relocated to Brazzaville.
- Eight nations send men to be trained at the CLET. Presidents of the churches in those nations meet regularly with the CLET missionaries.

ON THE GROWTH POTENTIAL OF THE CHURCH IN AFRICA

"The population of French-speaking Africa is about 350 million. ... My hope is by the time Jesus returns, there will be more French-speaking Lutherans in the halls of heaven than there are German or English."



Tour of Countries (18:20-39:30)

- Our LCMS team makes visits to the countries served by the CLET (Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Guinea, Cote D'Ivoire, Burundi, Congo-DRC, Congo-Brazzaville)
- LOTS of great photos in this segment—church services, baptisms, joyful singing, ordinations.
- **Guinea excerpt starts at 21:30 (ends 23:40).** Missionaries provide theological seminars; Steph works with women (meets their needs, offers encouragement).



CLET Expansion (39:30-43:00)

- A move to more localized seminaries; new novitiate seminaries have been established in Guinea and Congo-Brazzaville.
- The goal: To seed churches with competent Lutheran shepherds.
- On recent grads from the CLET in the Congo: **“These men were baptized, confirmed, and trained as pastors all by French-speaking African men—no outside help. And THAT is what we are looking for when we plant a church.”**

PART 2: Stephanie Schulte (43-minute mark, roughly; about 20 minutes)



CHE (Community Health Evangelism; 43:00-47:25)

- Education is very grassroots. “What are the issues you’re facing? How can we work together to solve these problems?”
- At the end of the day, the women teach back what they’ve learned. (A highlight!)
- Steph integrates the teachings of Jesus during the sessions.
- CHE seminars cover topics other than health (e.g., agriculture).



MMTs (Mercy Medical Teams; 47:25-1:03)

- MMTs bring redemption three times over: from warfare, from pestilence (e.g., Ebola), and from false teaching.
- Walk-through of a typical MMT experience (from devotions to registration to treatment to prayer at the end of the process)
- 58:50: Uplifting story of Yendutien

PART 3: Questions and Prayer Requests (12 minutes)

The Schultes field questions about what’s kept them in Africa, the two Congos, Gary’s educational path, and COVID. Please pray for the new seminaries (men and women being trained there); for outreach through CHE and MMTs, for opportunities to resume travel safely, and for new Christians to remain strong in the faith.