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## Pastoral Team to Lead Twa Lay Pastor Training



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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

It has been an extremely busy summer. Whew! There was the last push to finalize the lay pastor training program and get it to the printer. Then there was a month of intensive research and writing (in French, not my best language) the brief history of the CBCO Baptist women's organization here, prepared for their 50th anniversary celebrations. What a story! Then there was the 50th anniversary itself: a week chocked full of activities attended by women from all over the convention, hosted here at the Kinshasa headquarters.

At the same time we were working with a foot-dragging printer to get the lay pastor training booklets in Lingala ready for distribution. A two-week job turned into a 7-week contest of wills. He has promised the final booklets today, but he still has to correct the defective books.

Finally, the Baptist convention held its elective general assembly to choose new leaders at the end of August. Again we were inundated with out-of-towners. The three-day general assembly aired the deep concerns of delegates for the future of the Convention and ended with a clear-cut commitment to restoring the focus on God's call to effective witness and mission – sorely neglected over the past five years. The dust has settled and the new team is now at work.

Amidst all the flurry, we have moved forward on the long awaited training for Twa Pygmy Christian leaders: pastors and evangelists. Pastor Jacques Mayala and his wife, Rose (our literacy coordinator), leave for Inongo on Wednesday September 16. They will lead the 5-week training. This is a key step in planting authentically Twa, authentically Christian churches. I have been working on this for over a year. You have given for it. You and we have been praying for it. Now the plane tickets have been bought and it is happening.

The training covers five modules, broken down into 204 lessons, each with questions for assimilation by the participants:

- o each person looking at their own allegiance to Christ and its implications for their life and work as a leader, then
- o an orientation to the Bible, especially some of the key stories,
- o training for discipling new Christians and inquirers,
- o a look at what the Bible says about common problems of life,
- o how to plan worship and other services, including how to preach,
- o all about the church: what it is, the church in Congo, and ministries of the church.

It is a challenging schedule for just one month with people not used to absorbing knowledge this way. We covet your prayers even more during this month, for teachers, participants and everyone involved.

The town of Inongo has recently become the capital of a new province carved off of the northern part of Bandundu Province, so there are lots of new administrative personnel without housing, hotels are full, and the resources are stretched to their limit. Although Jacques and Rose will start out in a hotel in town because of a lack of housing among our Twa friends, we will finance the building of a modest guesthouse in the Twa settlement from forest materials, where the Mayalas will stay as soon as it is ready to move into. We will beg room in a local church for the training sessions.

Our theme in mission this year is Stretching Forward toward the Goal of Advancing God's Kingdom. The Twa outreach is a stretch for the Baptist Convention. Many of you have chosen to join with believers here in stretching toward this goal. The World Mission Offering is another vital part of the puzzle that makes this possible. Please give generously.

World Mission Offering 2015  
Join us in **STRETCHING FORWARD** toward  
the goal of advancing God's kingdom on earth!