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March 02, 2015 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | Andrew McChesney/Adventist Review

Thirty inmates were baptized at a Togo prison chapel built by the Seventh-day Adventist Church after prison officials asked for help replacing a previous chapel that collapsed in bad weather.

The inmates took their stand for Jesus during a special dedication ceremony at the main prison in Lomé, the bustling capital of the sub-Saharan African country, Church leaders said Friday.

The chapel, which contains an outdoor baptistery, benches for 100 people, and electricity to run lights, fans, and a sound system, was financed with a $6,000 donation from the General Conference, the administrative body of the Adventist Church.

General Conference President Ted N. C. Wilson approved the expenditure from a special presidential discretionary fund after being contacted by the Adventist Church’s Togo-based Eastern Sahel Union Mission.

“Thirty souls sealed their covenant with the Lord through baptism in the new baptistery built with your donation,” Sélom Kwasi Sessou, executive secretary of the Adventist Church’s Togo-based Eastern Sahel Union Mission, wrote in a letter to Wilson.

The baptisms, conducted Saturday, February 21, were the result of an evangelistic series led by Bruno Amah, an Adventist member jailed in the prison, together with the Togo church’s Chaplaincy Ministries department, said Sessou, who headed a Church delegation at the dedication ceremony.

In addition, 120 inmates took part in a communion service during the ceremony.

The prison director thanked Sessou and the Adventist Church for the funds for the chapel, and he promised to pray for God’s blessings on the church.

“He promised that the room will be multifunctional and be put to good use,” Sessou said. "He said they will ask the Almighty God to continue to keep a benevolent eye on the Adventist Church and that He opens more doors for possible blessings."

A plaque on the front of the chapel bears the Adventist Church logo and recognizes the role of the Church and Wilson in the construction of the building.

Wilson expressed gratitude to God for the 30 baptisms and to asked that church members around the world remember Bruno Amah and all Adventist prisoners in prayer.
“Praise God for His leading in this prison outreach,” Wilson said.

CNN Features Adventists on Show About Healthy Living

CNN’s Dr. Sanjay Gupta highlights the longevity of Adventists in Loma Linda, California

February 27, 2015 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | Loma Linda University Health and Adventist Review staff

CNN television is featuring Loma Linda University and the surrounding Seventh-day Adventist community in southern California on a program about how to live a longer, healthier life.

The 30-minute program, “Vital Signs with Dr. Sanjay Gupta,” is being broadcast on CNN International throughout February and tackles the question, “What can one do to live a healthier, happier, and longer life?”

The setting for the opening portion of the show is the city of Loma Linda, and interviewees mention the key factors of healthy living as maintaining a plant-based diet, regular exercise, rest and relaxation, and having close social connections. They also speak of the importance of a sense of mission, which for Adventists is closely linked to their faith in God and their hope in Jesus’ soon coming.

One of the key factors to a better life is “having a purpose in what you are doing,” Richard H. Hart, president of Loma Linda University Health, tells the program.

Gupta, CNN’s chief medical correspondent, notes that Adventists observe the seventh-day Sabbath, giving them a break from everyday stresses and a chance to gather with fellow Adventists.

"Adventists also observe a strict Saturday Sabbath. It's a time to unplug, and unwind, and share time with other like-minded people," he says.

Author and explorer Dan Buettner explains on the program that a secret to living longer is to spend time with health-minded people rather than those who eat poorly and don't exercise.

In the show, Gupta focuses on the commonalities within the world’s five “Blue Zones,” which Buettner has identified as areas where residents live the longest. Loma Linda is the only Blue Zone in the United States.

Loma Linda University Health also has the distinction of engaging in the world’s longest-running research studies on aging and longevity. The studies, collectively called the Adventist Health Studies, are cited in the show.
The CNN show is posted online and can be accessed here.

Adventists in Loma Linda have been featured by a number of media organizations in recent years. In addition to the CNN program this month, Loma Linda Adventists took centerstage in a lengthy article by Christian Broadcasting Network News titled, "Secrets to Longevity Revealed in Denomination's Lifestyle."