

The **KNICKERBOCKER** family

church planting in Burkina Faso

January 2026

Dear Pastors, supporting churches and praying friends,

William's Wedding

What a way to start the new year ! Brother William Lido, a faithful member and pastor in training, has waited many years for the right woman to marry. Being from a Muslim family before turning to Christ has created many obstacles in his life. Over the years, he has been determined to do what was right before the Lord, even if his family did not agree. His family presented him many opportunities to get married in the past, but desiring to marry a believer, he refused each time. Afsatou (Esther) is a young lady who grew up in a Muslim home as well. When she was younger, she was allowed to follow her Catholic friends to church, where she first became familiar with Christianity and decided to become a « Christian ». When she was put in contact with William through a family relative, they began talking together and William told me about this prospect for marriage. We all sat down together and found out that although she was interested in Christianity, she had never trusted Christ as her Savior. When we explained to her how to be born again, she did not hesitate to pray to receive Christ as her personal Savior. Praise the Lord! Because of the proximity of our friendship and fellowship with William, he wanted Alina and Kezia to take part in the wedding ceremony as flower girls. Due to our inability to renew the visas for the children and their need to return to the US soon, we told William that in order for the girls to participate, the wedding would need to take place within a week. It may have all been planned and put together in a rush, but it was a beautiful and joyous day. The Muslim family members from both sides of the family were thrilled about their loved ones finally getting married. It was also thrilling to be able to share the Gospel to lost family members, some of whom had never attended a church gathering.



community cry as they said goodbye to Alina, Kezia and Korben during their last kids' club. Please pray as we wait for tensions to ease, that the kids may have their visas renewed. They already miss Burkina and the people they love.

Goodbye to Friends

The time came for our family to be separated again, for a little while, as we serve the Lord in a part of the world that is politically unstable. We have an amazing opportunity to serve the Lord and preach the Gospel in a Muslim country that has always been relatively opened to missionaries. Julie and I were fully aware that Burkina Faso may not always remain peaceful enough to serve there as a family, since extremist groups continually attempt to radicalize the west African region and political coups have happened several times. However, we never anticipated that political tension between the US and Burkina Faso would be an issue for our family. Burkina has imposed a ban on giving and renewing visas for American citizens seeking to come to Burkina Faso. Our last week together as a family with the church folks was emotionally trying. It was heart breaking to see kids from the

Mission Conference

The Lord has allowed me to develop great camaraderie with a local pastor. We have been able to partner with one in particular in outreach efforts because of the close proximity of our churches. Pastor Kalba was trained by a missionary friend and has shown great humility in desiring to learn and try new opportunities to help the church move forward. He asked me to preach a missions conference for him at Grace Baptist Church of Sonré. It was encouraging to fellowship with the folks of that church, to exhort them to look on the fields that are ready to harvest, and to encourage them to pray about what they could give for the cause of World Evangelism.

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and partnership for the work of the Lord. Looking unto Jesus,



Stephen & Julie Knickerbocker

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." - Matthew 22:37

Prayer Requests

- President Traoré and the fight against terrorism
- Pastoral training of David, Jean, Germain, William & Emmanuel
- Spiritual growth of Paterne, Anassa and Amed
- Spiritual and physical growth of the churches
- More members involved in outreach
- Kids' club ministries
- Evening School of the Bible
- 2 couples who are struggling
- Junior Camp fund raiser : \$1,550 donated of the \$4,000**
- Improved diplomacy between the US and Burkina/current separation of our family because of this.**
- Trips back and forth from America to Burkina to see Julie and the kids

Praise Report

- We celebrated William and Esther's wedding
- Funds received for Junior Camp
- 14 new students registered for the School of the Bible with a total of 33 students
- Great time preaching a local mission Conference
- Julie and the kids are with family and getting acclimated back in the US

Contact Information

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Sending Church

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Missions Agency

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Birthdays

Stephen 9/15
Julie 9/26
Alina 8/12
Kezia 5/26
Korben 12/7
Anniversary 8/7