



COE International Gathering Togo, August 10-17, 2011 A West African Adventure!

Karoline and Harriett were invited by Samuel Ayivi, the COE Hub leader in Togo, West Africa, to join a youth camp in the beautiful mountain setting of Danyi Djedrame in August 2011. Samuel and many of the participants and COE Hub members are part of a musical group that inspire their audiences to grow closer to the Divine. Thirty young people gathered in a lovely mansion in a quiet little village called Dzedramé where no traffic disturbed the tranquility. Each morning began with a meditation with energizing music and thoughtful sharing of the Bible.



Sports time followed, then breakfast and cleaning, then workshops.



Karoline presented a powerpoint on the work of COE. The Togolese were delighted to see the slide of Michael F. Dodin, the Hub leader in Pennsylvania who generously raised funds to help them buy various instruments and who sent an electronic keyboard donated to the group.



The powerpoint was followed by a workshop on what it means to be an ambassador of peace. The depth of the answers was amazing, and the similarities with the UNESCO Pledge for A Culture of Peace was immediately evident.



The following day, Karoline presented a fascinating workshop on Forgiveness as the first step towards world peace and the power of our thoughts to affect the world around us. She included a video clip from What the Bleep do we know and a clip on the work of Emoto, Korotkov and other scientists doing research on the effects of thoughts on water inspiring the youth to take responsibility of their own thoughts and actions.



In the evening, we piled into a van to go to a neighboring village called Apeyeme, where Sam's musical group was playing to inspire the large crowd that gathered. It was a wonderful experience of the power of music to unify and uplift.



On the last day, Karoline's workshop on the names of God in the sacred languages, as well as the importance of music was eagerly received, in that the Togolese were already chanting and singing some of these names in the songs that they share for hours on end. The clarification of the meanings of these names was much appreciated. We were then taken to the chief and the church leaders to say goodbye and express gratitude for the opportunity to be there.



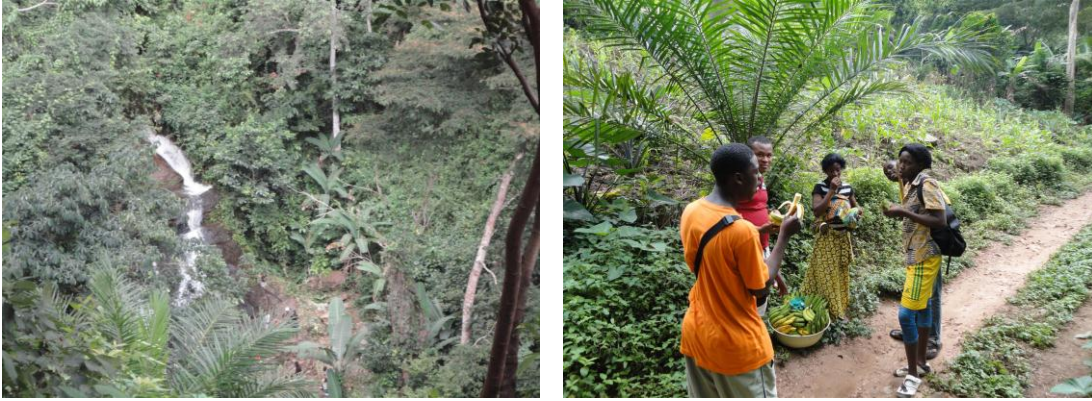
We climbed to the top of the fourth floor for a final circle of commitment and appreciation.



We were fortunate to spend 2 more nights as Sammy's guests in his home in Tsiko,



and we had a magical experience hiking through the tropical forest to breathtaking waterfalls, where we swam in the cold water.



Afterwards, Harriett and Karoline initiated a trash pickup campaign, much to the astonishment of our Togolese friends. “Be the change you want to see” includes picking up trash and plastic bags now and recycling them by making rugs ☺!!