



Atakpamé, Togo, West Africa

Relieving the Theological Famine in Togo

A project proposal of L'Église de la Grâce en Christ du Togo



INSTITUT BIBLIQUE
TYRANNUS

Alexandre and Wijneke Kanri

Alexandre Kanri grew up in Atakpamé and became a Christian during his early twenties. About ten years later, Alexandre was a part of the group of young men who laid the foundation of what later became “l’Eglise de la Grâce en Christ du Togo” (EGCT), the Church of Grace in Christ of Togo.

Wijneke grew up in the Netherlands but left her country when she was 23 years of age. She was saved in the UK where she did her nursing training. During her years in England, she developed a love for mission work in French-speaking West Africa. She first met Alexandre in 2006, in Benin, where she worked as an anaesthetic nurse in a mission hospital. In January 2010, they met again...this time resulting in a long-distance relationship.

Marriage: They married in Lomé in 2011. During the first years of their marriage, they lived in Atakpamé where Alexandre continued to pastor and preach in their local EGCT church. During that time they welcomed Neline (2013) and Niek (2014) into their family. In addition to his ministry within the church, Alexandre also worked in Atakpamé’s public library. As a librarian, Alexandre has developed a love for reading and is convinced of the importance of good books, not only generally, but especially for Christians.

Theological Training: In 2016 the opportunity arose for Alexandre to study theology at the Bible Institute in Brussels. The Kanri family moved to Europe where Wijneke supported the family working as an anaesthetic nurse.



Alexandre, Wijneke
Neline and Niek Kanri



Serving the church in
Togo since 2011

Return to Togo: After finishing his studies, Alexandre and Wijneke joined the UK-based UFM mission organisation and returned to Togo in December 2020. Thanks to support from churches and friends, Alexandre now serves the EGCT churches full-time. He especially has a burden to develop EGCT’s Bible Institute further and find ways to place good Christian books and resources into the hands of Christians in Togo.

A Theological Famine in Togo



Local children's library

Books are scarce and expensive

Access to good books is very limited since most are shipped in from overseas. This makes Christian books unaffordable for most believers and not always appropriate for the Togolese context. Customs procedures are also complicated and books can deteriorate in storage.



Low literacy hinders spiritual growth

Public education is improving in Togo, but it is still possible today that young men starting at a Bible institute might never have read a Christian book other than the Bible, making theological studies daunting. Good books in the local language are essential for the growth of the Togolese church.



Church leaders need sound doctrine

Many churches in Togo are theologically weak because pastors are often not able to refute errors of syncretism, an unbiblical focus on the gifts of the Spirit, and the prosperity 'gospel.' Church leaders need sound biblical training and resources to combat these doctrinal errors.



Togo is a French-speaking, West African country. In addition to French, 38 local languages are also spoken in Togo. There is little overseas support for the rapidly growing Togolese church because the Protestant church in more affluent French-speaking countries is very small.

What is needed?

- 1** A culture of reading in the Togolese church through wide exposure to sound theological books
- 2** A local print-on-demand facility that provides access to affordable and relevant reading material for Togolese believers
- 3** Well-equipped Togolese church leaders able to preach the Gospel clearly, teach the Bible accurately, and lead their churches effectively

38% of the Togolese are animist, 25% are Roman Catholic, 16% are Muslim, 20% are a variety of Christian denominations, and 1% are "other."



A Work of Grace in Togo

The Beginning: In 1990 a group of young men in and around Atakpamé (a town 100 miles north of the capital Lomé) started reading sound theological books and by God's grace came to recognise doctrinal error being taught in their churches. They joined together to start a church that would clearly preach the Doctrines of Grace and "*L'Eglise de la Grâce en Christ du Togo*," the Church of Grace in Christ of Togo, was born.



Atakpamé is located on the main north/south road in Togo.

God has blessed their efforts, and over the past 35 years, a small denomination of 10 congregations centred on the Word of God and salvation by free grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ has been established. Having adopted the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, the EGCT churches are using these doctrinal outlines from the past to prevent error and safeguard clear Gospel preaching in the future.

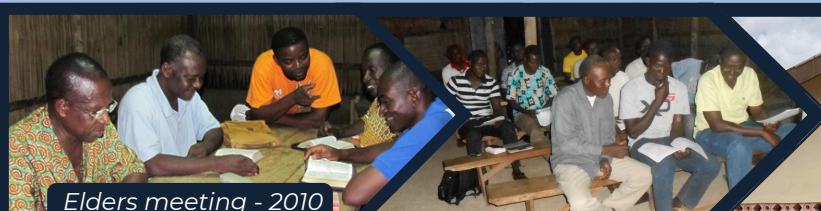


EGCT national elders meeting

Growing Years: Whilst most of the bi-vocational elders have never had official theological training, they have all continued to study, read, and grow—many through the correspondence courses from Europresse: 'Echos de la Verité.' For 35 years they have faithfully preached the Gospel, led Wednesday evening Bible studies and Friday evening prayer meetings, pastored the members, conducted funerals and weddings, and visited the sick. With the first generation of EGCT elders ageing, the need for the next generation of church leaders to be trained became imperative.



Translating, discussing, and applying a book together on Sunday afternoon



Elders meeting - 2010



First graduation - 2016

1990

EGCT planted by a group of young men

1990–2010

Elders study via correspondence courses

2011

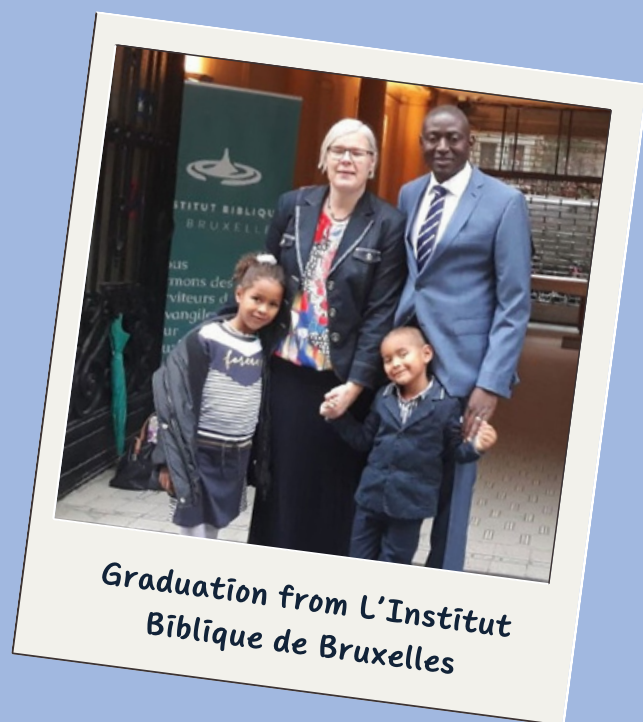
EGCT officially registered in Togo

2013

Institut Tyrannus started

Beginning in 2013, a Bible training course was developed and evening classes were held in one of the EGCT buildings. In 2016, one of the elders, Alexandre Kanri, had the privilege of starting theological studies at the 'Institut Biblique de Bruxelles.'

The Vision: Having finished his studies, in 2020 Alexandre and his family returned to Togo where, thanks to a network of supporters, he is now able to serve the church full-time. Alexandre's studies in Brussels made him aware of the necessity of more robust theological training for pastors and church leaders so that churches will have a more solid foundation for future generations. Alexandre and the other EGCT elders desire to expand the present Bible training classes further into an accredited Bible Institute where sound Biblical theology is taught.



Graduation from L'Institut Biblique de Bruxelles

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).



In God's providence, the EGCT was able to buy a plot of land in September 2022. After discussions and prayer, it was decided that it would be important to develop two additional ministries first. A conference hall and an on-demand print shop will both be important sources of income for the proper functioning of the Bible Institute in the future. In addition, through conferences and the much-needed locally printed books, many Togolese Christians will be brought into contact with the sound theology that is characteristic of Tyrannus Bible Institute, which in time we pray will lead to its growth.



2016–2019

Alexandre Kanri studied theology in Brussels

DEC. 2020

The Kanri family returned to Togo with UFM

SEP. 2022

Land purchased for Tyrannus Bible Institute

JUN. 2023

A borehole was drilled for water on the building site

Responding to the Famine



The current Bible Institute building is small and ill-equipped.

The Bible Institute of the EGCT: As soon as Phase 1 is finished, the Bible Institute will move to the new site under its new name, 'Institut Biblique Tyrannus' where it can start to build a Christian library. Evening classes will continue while the Institute gradually develops full-time courses that meet CITAF¹ standards so that it can offer accredited degree programs.

PLEASE PRAY: For God to provide all that is needed to develop the Bible Institute into an accredited course and for Him to raise up young men who will come to study at the Institute

An on-demand printing facility, 'Presse Tyrannus': Locally printing affordable, relevant Christian books will be an incredible blessing in the Togolese context where resources are so scarce. Tyrannus Presse will also provide jobs and generate income for the Institute, following the successful business model of a similar on-demand printing facility in Niger.

PLEASE PRAY: For God's leading and provision during our fundraising journey for the printing press and the whole building process (Psalm 127:1)



A similar on-demand printing facility in Niger will help with training.



Current conference facilities

A Christian conference venue, 'Salle Tyrannus': Phase 1 will include a space that can function as a conference facility for the EGCT's own annual family conference. The well-equipped venue will also be a blessing for other churches to rent, providing revenue and widening the exposure of the Bible Institute, its Christian library, and the books being printed.

PLEASE PRAY: That just like the school of Tyrannus in Ephesus (Acts 19:9,10), Tyrannus Bible Institute will be richly used by God to reach many Togolese with the Gospel of Jesus Christ

¹Council of Theological Institutions of French-speaking Africa



Institut Biblique Tyrannus



A building complex that will house a faithful Bible Institute, a Christian library, an on-demand printing press, a conference facility, and student accommodations

The various ministries of Tyrannus Bible Institute (TBI) will enable the EGCT to enlarge its reach to Christians of many theological backgrounds in Togo. We pray that Togolese Christians who attend the conferences will become familiar with Tyrannus Presse books, associate them with understanding the Bible better, and that, in time, this will lead to the growth and influence of the Bible Institute. May God use TBI to advance His kingdom to the praise of His glorious grace! (Eph 1:6)



Printing facility

Glue Binding Books

Classrooms & housing

2027
Phase 2
completion

2028
Installation of
printing press

2029
Phase 3
begins

2032
Tyrannus Institute
accreditation

Partner with Us



- **PRAISE GOD:** for the gifts that made the purchase of the plot of land in an excellent location possible.
- **PRAISE GOD:** For the many ways in which we have already received help for the building project: architectural design from an EGCT church member who is a locally licensed architect, writing and designing this project plan, and sufficient gifts to complete Phase 1!
- **PRAISE GOD:** Publications Chrétiennes has agreed to allow us to print over 500 French titles, and a network of similar printing presses across Africa will share access to African titles and other printing rights.

Project funds needed:

- Phase 1 (conference hall): € 108.000 (funds received)
- Staff training: € 30.000
- Phase 2 (printing facility): € 80.000
- Purchasing the on-demand printing press and initial supplies: € 45.000
- Shipping and installing the printing press: € 30.000
- Building the theological library: € 25.000
- Furnishing the Bible college and conference centre: € 45.000
- Phase 3 (classrooms): fundraising will start after completing Phase 2



For more information & to follow the building progress:
www.zendingintogo.nl/en/

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS:



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