

# Houge Mission News

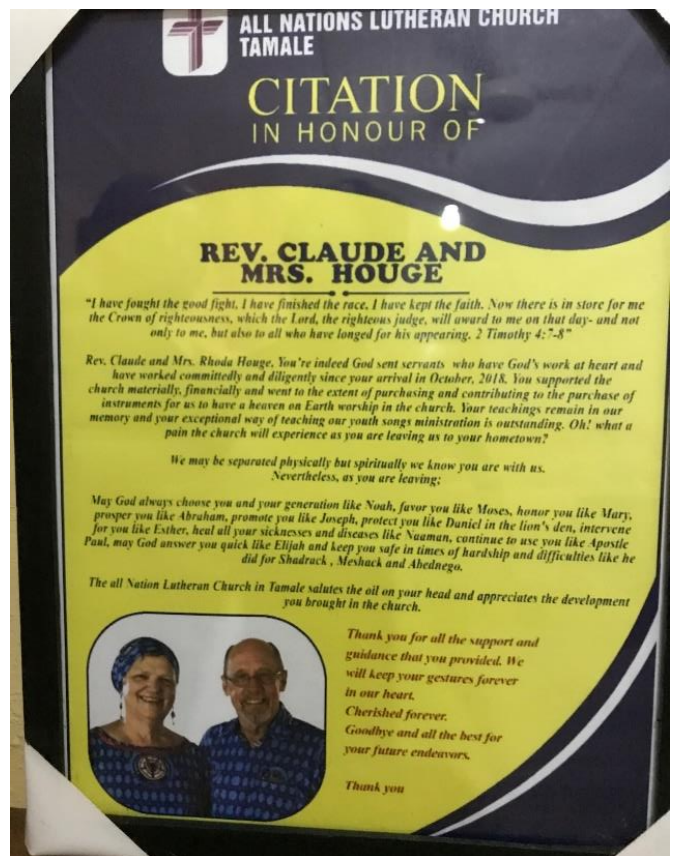
April - May 2020

*Claude and Rhoda Houge are serving with Lutheran Bible Translators in Ghana, West Africa, teaching the children of LBT missionaries David and Valerie Federwitz.*

Back in the USA!

In our last newsletter, we were uncertain when we might be able to return to the US. However, when the border closures in Ghana were extended until the end of May, the US Embassy arranged another emergency repatriation flight. We had the opportunity to take one of these flights earlier but felt it was too early. This time, we had almost completed the school year and felt it might be our last opportunity for a while. So we left for Accra on May 14 to be able to fly out on a chartered plane on May 16. The photo on the right was taken with the Federwitz family on the last day we were in Tamale. We will miss them greatly and were blessed to be able to teach the children these past two school terms.

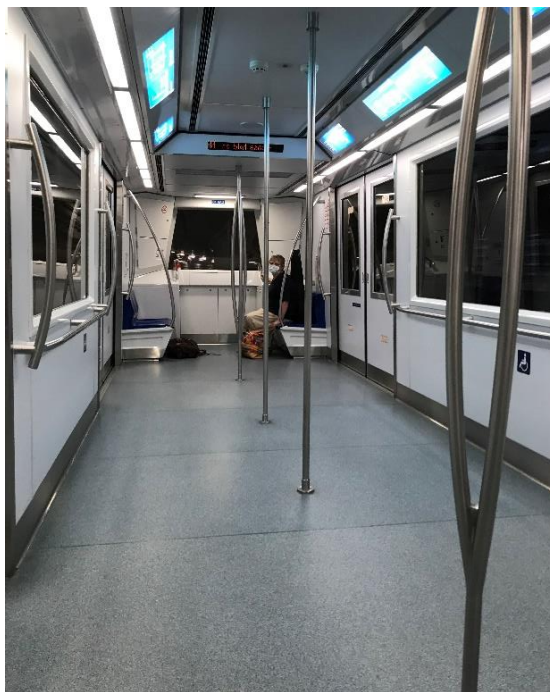
When the church people heard we were leaving, there were many phone calls of dismay. We had not been able to meet as a group since mid-March, and everyone was sad at not being able to see each other. It was very important that they could say good-bye. Some of the church leaders came by and gave us a lovely citation. Please continue to pray for this small church, especially that they will soon be able to meet again.



This evacuation flight was quite an experience. There were hundreds of people outside the airport, all hoping to get on the flight. Fortunately, we had an email with a guaranteed seat, but it still took hours to get everyone through all the various stages of the process. Even after we got on the plane, it took over an hour for personnel to get passport information from some of the passengers. We got to the airport at 8:00 am, and the plane took off at 3:30 pm. We arrived at Dulles (Washington DC) at around 10:30 pm Eastern time and thankfully had a hotel reservation so we could rest up before our flight to St. Paul the next day.



Here's a picture of Rhoda and a few hundred of our new closest (literally) friends at the international airport in Accra, all waiting and sweating together! This is in contrast to the almost deserted Dulles Airport where we found ourselves easily using proper social distancing on a tram. 😊



Now we are in an Airbnb for self-quarantine for two weeks, but it's close to our son Nate and family, so we can at least see them from a safe distance from time to time. We're still working on our plan for the summer. (You may recall that we can't get back into our own home until the end of September because the lease for our renters isn't up until then.) We have several options, so we just need to figure it all out.

We also mentioned in our last newsletter that we will continue as adjunct missionaries with Lutheran Bible Translators, kind of being "on call" to serve as needed stateside. Since we still have money in our account to cover possible expenses, we would like to encourage our supporters (and others!) to change from supporting our ministry to supporting the ministry of David and Valerie Federwitz. After being with them almost daily for the last nearly two years, we know what a challenge they face as David serves as West Africa Regional Director to work with missionaries and partners Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria, and Cameroon. Of course, David is not able to travel during this time of border closures and no flights, but now it involves even more time communicating from home to handle all kinds of situations. They have been living in Ghana for 17 years, and we were so impressed with how well they know the culture and can work with nationals and foreigners so easily. Their work is very important to making sure more and more people have God's Word in their own language. Check out their webpage at <https://lbt.org/project/david-valerie-federwitz/> and sign up for their newsletter to find out more about this important ministry. If you want to contact them personally, their email is [David-Valerie.Federwitz@lbt.org](mailto:David-Valerie.Federwitz@lbt.org).

Prayer Requests:

- Give thanks for our safe travel the US and guidance for our immediate future plans.
- It is uncertain whether David and Valerie's two older children can return to Ghana for the summer from boarding school in Concordia, MO. Please pray for all of them as they deal with the uncertainty and separation at this time.
- Pray for comfort, calm, and strength for those affected by this pandemic, both nationally and internationally.
- Pray for guidance in the midst of constantly changing circumstances for us and fellow missionaries.
- And, of course, pray for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic and that God would bring triumph out of tragedy.

Together in His Mission,

Claude and Rhoda Hogue

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Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT) is closely tracking the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The global situation continues to change. LBT encourages partners, staff, missionaries and their families to read LBT communications and follow guidance as information becomes available. Missionaries remaining overseas are observing best practices for limiting exposure. Staff and missionaries relocated to the US remain operational using technology and work from home protocols. We encourage you to continue to support your Bible translation ministries through your gifts and prayer. Whether in times of calm or turmoil, Bible translation cannot happen without partners like you. Put God's Word in their hands.