

STORIES OF GRACE

**Feature: Our missionaries that we support share some Stories of Grace
Eddie Mensinger served with Encompass World Missions**



I was born in Three Oaks, Michigan on February 13, 1937 the son of Benjamin and Minnie (nee Gluth) Mensinger. When I was four years old, my parents moved to a farm in New Troy, Michigan. While there we began attending the New Troy Brethren Church. When I was eight years old, I received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and was baptized. During my high school years, I felt called to the ministry.

Following my graduation from high school in 1955, I enrolled in Grace College where I received a BA degree. At that time, I met my future wife Linda Paden. After college, I enrolled in Grace Theological Seminary where I graduated with a MDiv degree in 1962. The year before my graduation Linda and I were married on August 31, 1961 in her home town of Harrah, Washington.

Following graduation from seminary, we went to Denver, Colorado to begin a new Grace Brethren Church in the suburb of Arvada. However, after 2 and a half years it was obvious that I was not a church planter. During that time, we were visited by Dr. Orville Jobson, the director of our Mission. He encouraged me to come to Africa to train pastors in French. During our National Conference in Winona Lake, Indiana, we responded to a message by Dr. Wayne Beaver, the former director of our Bible Institute at Bata/Bozoum in the Central African Republic. Soon after that we made application to join Grace Brethren International Missions.

We sailed for Africa on May 20, 1965 and arrived in Bangui a week later. During our first year in Africa, we studied French at Yaloke under the direction of Swiss missionaries, Gilbert and Francine Aellig. A year later we studied Sango at the Bata Bible Institute. During the next 18 years, I taught English, Bible, and history at the James Gribble High School at Yaloke.

In 1983 we moved to Bata/Bozoum where I taught in the Brethren Biblical Seminary which began in 1981. During the next 20 years, I taught Old Testament History, Church History, World History, and Major Prophets in the seminary and Bible Institute. From 2000 to 2002 I was also the dean of the seminary. In November 2002, we fled to Cameroon when the country was invaded by rebel soldiers from the Chad. My wife and I officially retired in 2005 after spending 40 years in Africa. However, since that time we have continued to spend from 6 weeks to 3 months a year between Cameroon and the Central African Republic training church leaders and future pastors. We will complete this ministry by spending 3 weeks in Cameroon and go to Central African Republic at the end of March and early April this year. It has been a great joy for me and my wife Linda to have served 50 years in Africa.

We have a daughter Suzanne who is married to Philippe Bousseau and they have 4 daughters, Elia, Melyssa, Jennifer and Kelly. They live in Dijon, France.

(See our missions news for a Story of Grace that Eddie shared of his ministry in the CAR.
Next month Linda shares with us.)