



RCA Missionary Update

from the Johnsons

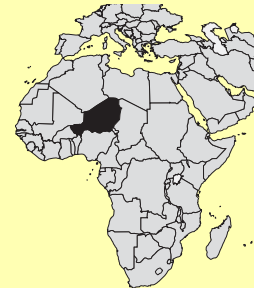
The Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger (EERN is its acronym in French) is the RCA's mission partner in Niger. Founded shortly after Niger's national independence in 1961, EERN is the oldest and largest Protestant denomination in this Muslim-majority (98 percent) country.

Located in the Sahara Desert, Niger is the world's poorest country (174th out of 177 on the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index, a composite measure of life expectancy, education, and living standard), and 50 percent of its population is under the age of 15. EERN ministries reflect this context: they focus on evangelization, education, health, and community development.

Tom Johnson, an international development specialist, and his wife, Aïchatou, represent RCA missions in Niger. They have two daughters, Marie-Florence and Laurey.

Niger facts:

- Population: 11,361,000
- Size: 1,266,700 square kilometers (slightly less than twice the size of Texas)
- Major religion: 98 percent Muslim



MINISTRY

Community Development

LOCATION

Niger

PARTNER

Evangelical Church of Niger,
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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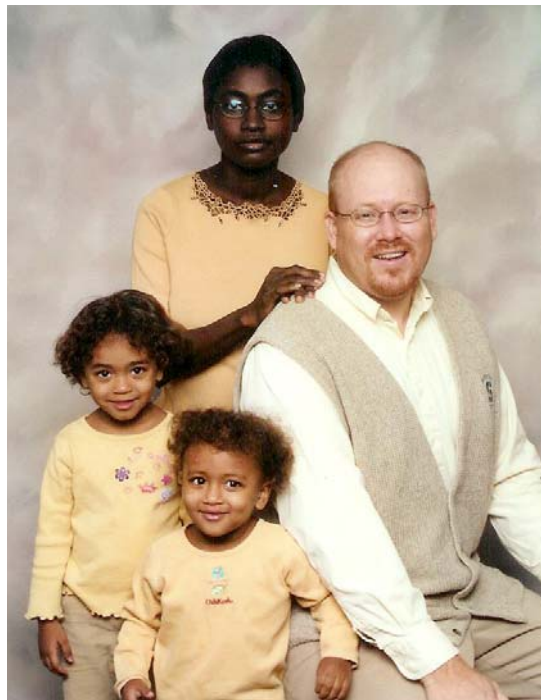
Dear Friends,

December 2007

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Our family wishes your family a joyous holiday season as we celebrate our Savior's birth and contemplate how we can glorify God with our lives in 2008. We pray that God will bless you and those you love with peace and joy!

We're still in the United States on home assignment where we'll remain until the end of January 2008. For much of October and November, our family has traveled together to visit churches in Illinois, Iowa and Michigan. We can do this since our kids are not yet old enough for school. Surprisingly, the girls have done very well in the car for these trips (a backseat DVD player helps), although they can be a handful once the car actually stops and they have all this pent-up energy to burn! We can see where meeting all of these new people have had a positive effect on them, as



they both seem much more outgoing than before.

Aïchatou and I did have one opportunity to travel without Marie and Laurey when we visited Hopewell Junction in New York for their 250th anniversary in mid-November. We had a very pleasant weekend with that church community and we were reminded of what life was like before the children had arrived. Since we're expecting a third child in April 2008 (likely to be born in Niger), there probably won't be too many other opportunities to be alone in the next few years!

The holiday season has slowed down our family's movements a little bit. The girls are going to be in one place (rural Oskaloosa) long enough to participate in our home church's Christmas pageant and they're now learning the necessary songs. They've already experienced snow in Iowa, but the weather has been a bit nasty

to go sledding or build a snowman. It looks like we'll get quite a bit of winter before we return to warm Niger, so they'll surely get more opportunities to play in the white stuff. We do wonder how the girls will explain snow to their Nigerien cousins.

In other news, it seems like we'll be preparing for several visitors to Niger in 2008. The RCA has identified one candidate to begin teaching preschool with our girls next fall. In preparation of this long-term need for home schooling, our home church at Ebenezer Reformed in Leighton, Iowa, is sending a team of 11 men and women to build an attached classroom and additional storage space at our Dogon Gao, Niger home in February of 2008. Another work team from Coralville, Iowa may also come to help with other projects in March. We've recently learned that another young woman from Central Iowa wants to spend the summer in Niger and work with our family. It is great to be able to meet these people one-on-one while we are in the U.S. and help them with their Niger questions!

PRAYER AND PRAISE:

1. Please pray for these groups and individuals (mentioned above) that God may guide them in their prepa-

rations as they seek to serve Him in Niger with short-term mission efforts.

2. It appears that we are on track to replace the Presbyterian Church USA funding that will be lost after July 1, 2008. As of this writing, we are about 2 full RCA mission shares from our goal. Thank you for your prayers and support in this regard and pray that the additional shares will be found.
3. Give thanks for the successful arrival of the Jeremy and Susan Beebout family to Niger in October, 2007. These RCA missionaries will work with the Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger in health, agricultural and volunteer ministries. We're excited to have them as our colleagues.
4. Pray for the health of Aïchatou and the child that she is now carrying. Pray for his or her development and the he or she may be a joy to all.

In Christ,



Tom, Aïchatou, Marie-Florence and Laurey Johnson