

Dear Friends,

I want to take the opportunity to wish everyone of you a hearty Merry Christmas, 2025!
As you read this, it may be past Christmas & I also wish you a very Happy New Year!

For myself & most Ghanaians, Christmas is viewed in our culture as the time & opportunity for members of any clan anywhere to travel from far and near to gather at the clan (ancestral) home of family. This is for renewals and strengthening of ties and relationships. Much like your Thanksgiving and/or Christmas when relations from far and near gather at the parents/grandparent's homes to share life experiences and ideas. Also, as I have had the occasion to mention previously, it is at this time that marriages are set up, in the *traditional manner*, before matrimonial in the church. If you want to know more about this, please check out two of my articles from a few years ago, online – Articles: February & March of 2015.

Christmas time in my Ghanaian setting is still the best time of the year for **the children**. Our Akrampa students & most Ghanaian children like to show off their gifts of new clothes, more so than toys & other things.

At the Akrampa School we set aside a day to dramatize the Christmas Story of Jesus with the students. Our school's program is set in the background of the **traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols**, which is celebrated in the churches of Ghana. The Nativity story is dramatized and the relevant carols and scriptures are read, with our students. It is at this time that we teach the children the significance of exchanging gifts at Christmas.

The traditional Festival/Service of Nine Lessons and Carols originated in 1918 as a Christmas Eve service from King's College in Cambridge in the United Kingdom. The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, which recounts the Biblical story from the Fall of humanity to the birth of Jesus, has been adapted in Ghana, closely following the traditional format established at King's College, Cambridge. It utilizes Nine Lessons, from passages of Scripture, to tell the story of the Bible from Genesis though to the Gospels. This service combines Scripture readings with the singing of Carols and has become a cherished part of Christmas celebrations in various churches & schools across the country. It was even hosted for thousands of Ghanaians from diverse backgrounds, in the capital city, at Accra International Conference Center in 2025. This service reflects Ghana's unique cultural identity in its presentations.

Let me use this occasion to again express deepest gratitude to you our readership and those of you who have stood by us in times of need. I still am trying to grasp the enormity of the gift of the **School Roof Project of 2025** & the provision of clean water from both the new **Cistern/Rain Catchment System** and also the new **Borehole/Borewell System** which have made the Akrampa School so unique. In the entire community within the administrative district of the Ghana Education Service, there is no school like the one in Akrampa, so blessed! Now I hear that the teaching fraternity compete among themselves wishing that they would be appointed to teach in our school because of the excellent environment.

The Akrampa Kindergarten students were especially blessed in 2024 & 2025. Our Kindergarten building was expanded to now have two spacious and adequate classrooms in 2024. And then a new roof, new paint & covered walkway outside because of the recent 2025 renovation.

Breakfast Program:

In last month's article, I shared some very specific details of my day-to-day ministry with the people and the children in Akrampa. I also shared with you the financial needs of the ministry and the Breakfast Program in last month's (November) article. Now, at the request of one of our 'Friends of the Mission' supporters, I'd like to share some **attendance data** for the school and how that is affected by the Breakfast Program.

Attendance is taken for both the students and the teachers at the Akrampa School. Teachers work for, and are paid by the Government of Ghana, therefore they too must be accounted for daily to be able to be paid.

Per the December 2025 roster: Akrampa School has:

595 = student population total + 18 = teachers total
which equals = 613 total **humans** to be counted each day

Currently, on any given day the total of *expected* people to be counted on attendance would be 613, at the school. There are only 18 teachers & the majority of them work every day, minus a sick day, so the following numbers are mainly about the differences in STUDENT attendance.

Eva, the Headteacher at Akrampa School, and I complied the attendance data from November & December 2025, just to give you a *snapshot* of how attendance is changed by Breakfast. The numbers below have been added and then divided to give you the **AVERAGE** totals.

Here are the Attendance Averages:

On the 3 days per week (Mon., Wed., Fri.,) that we do serve the breakfast meal:
the *average attendance* is = 594

On the 2 days per week (Tues., Thurs.,) that we do NOT serve the breakfast meal:
the *average attendance* is = 475

That means that roughly - on **AVERAGE** - there are about 118 and/or 120 **MORE** students attending school on the 3 days per week that we are serving the Breakfast Meal. This shows the significant impact that our Breakfast Meal makes for our students. Please continue to keep us in your prayers, and if you are able, please give financially to help our students. As we always say: We cannot do this without you! Thank you so much for our incredible year of 2025!

As you are reading this, our students and teachers are on their Christmas vacation from school. They will resume classes the second week of January 2026. Stay tuned for my next article, (January) as I will be sharing more information about our precious little Kindergarten students.

Blessings, Pastor Ben Wilson