

A Celebration, Indeed!

2020 may be a year with few celebrations but recently the Evangelical Presbyterian Seminary in Peki, Ghana indeed had a celebration.

As we entered the chapel for worship in Wednesday evening we could see a large wrapped box setting on the floor and a smaller such box on the table. Of course, these piqued our curiosity. What are these? And, in particular, what could be in such a large box? The sound of the organ and drums picked up and the choir began the opening procession. Following the opening hymn and prayer, the time to reveal the surprise had come.

The large box was opened to disclose a new offering box. The smaller box contained two new percussion instruments for the music department. These had been a wish of the recently retired seminary principal as the older instruments were worn and a plastic wash tub had sufficed as an offering box. A local congregation was aware of the needs and made the gifts possible. Prayers of dedication for them were made.

Music and offering are synonymous in the life of the church in Ghana. Traditionally, a drum was used to collect the offering. Over time, drums have been replaced by a standing box. Offering is not collected by "passing the plate." The offering drum/box is placed in a central location. Then, instead of a call to receive the offering, there is a call to celebrate! The music and the singing begin. The congregation dances joyfully up the box placing their gifts within. The celebration of music, singing, and dancing continue for several minutes past the time the last person has given thanks.

On this night, surely God's Spirit was in this place as the celebration went on for a lengthy time. There were new instruments sounding the joy and a new offering box to receive our gifts. This, in the midst of 2020, was a celebration, indeed!

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