

## Suriname Visit - Part 2

The original Jesus Film was released in English in 1979. Since then it has been translated into more than 1700 languages and shown to perhaps billions of people. More recently a shorter version for children was produced. A team of women managed the production of a version called Magdalena, which highlights how Jesus treated women. That now has more than 170 languages. In addition, the Jesus Film ministry has many short films of about 4 to 6 minutes length as discussion starters. Recent additions to their inventory include the Gospel of John and the Book of Acts in movie format. All of their products can be downloaded for free (but not mass-produced) from <https://www.jesusteam.org/watch.html>. A country lookup world map is available which then gives access to the films in the possibly many languages of a country. About a year and a quarter ago the Magdalena film (which comes in two lengths of about 60 and 80 minutes each) was made available in the Sranan-Tongo trade language of Suriname, potentially understandable to nearly everyone there. That translation had been requested by the Suriname Bible Society. It was during my visit that they began to show the Magdalena movie about Jesus to organized groups. Though the initial gatherings were somewhat small and of mostly churched people, it was a good start.



satellite image of part of New Aurora.

Our first showing was in the river community of New Aurora, with location shown on a satellite map in Part 1 of these reports and in more detail here. The river is black on the right. We docked the boat and carried our equipment up a hill to the church building.

The portable equipment included the screen, tiny projector, speakers, microphone, electrical cords, and battery packs. It was set up and tested. Then we waited for it to get dark and for people to arrive.



church building exterior



church building interior



Setup ready to go. Projector on middle table.



Watching the Magdalena movie. Brightened from video.

When the movie ended the local pastor invited those who had not yet decided to become followers of Jesus to do so. Five children responded.

We returned Saturday for children to be given illustrated books about Jesus in the Saramaccan language.



books for the children



children singing. From video



children and their new books

Long before the books were given, those children who had arrived first had started singing songs that they had learned. So several video clips were made of this nearly spontaneous concert of good quality singing without instruments. Later, some of the team adults simply mentioned a few words of a song and the children then sang it entirely.

The evening intention was to show Magdalena at the Nazareth village of the Eagle Wings Ministry across the river from the Menimi Eco Resort where we were staying. However, they reported that their solar power equipment had failed. So that showing was canceled. Our activity shifted to the main Menimi building, where there was electric power all day. Our team members were busy on their laptops and cell phones, charging them as well as accomplishing work of various sorts. During the afternoon I played the Magdalena movie with my laptop within hearing distance of one of the camp workers who was otherwise idle. She would not look at the screen but appeared to be listening to the movie content for about half of it. After dark, the older men on our team, who would have been running the movie across the river, set up the equipment in this large building and played Magdalena (long version) for the half dozen or so people who happened to be there. After the showing it was mostly quiet as people left to do other things. But they had listened to the entire Magdalena presentation in the Sranan-Tongo language.



Abenaston church building



during Sunday worship



giving books to the children

Sunday morning we went downstream to the church at Abenaston where we joined in worship. Afterwards we distributed more books to the children. Then we returned to the harbor at Pokigron, loaded our gear into the van, and drove back to Paramaribo for overnight.

The Monday morning drive to Moengo was not as tiring, being all on a highway (not a river) and for only about 1.5 hours. This time it was Jonathan and Marcia and me on the team, with Marcia replacing one from the river trip. We stayed in a small guest house. Ruth and Freddie joined our team there, replacing two others who had been on the river trip.



In the evening we drove away from the main highway onto a dirt road of mostly potholes. Eventually we reached the new church building beside a small but deep river. About 35 people arrived from the neighboring homes. Most were women. This time the short version of Magdalena was shown.

Monday evening church site for Magdala viewing



riverside



church building



Jonathan setting up equipment



After the movie the local pastor gave an enthusiastic summary of the important issues. She gave an invitation and five women responded and went forward for special prayers.

On Tuesday we did a morning trip east to the boarder city of Albina to visit a Baptist church on the river. We delivered bundles of books for children there in the Aucan language.

The evening showing of Magdalena was in what appeared to be a Roman Catholic boarding school. It was somewhat down the river from the previous night but with better access from the main highway, as seen in this satellite view to the left. We did not notice the community to the south of the school. Many boys were playing football (soccer) in a field beside the school buildings. However, none came to view the movie.



football game



some classroom buildings

the auditorium for our movie showing

our audience

About 25 people were present, mostly women with a few small children. After the movie the local pastor recognized that all of the people were from the church already, so he gave a prayer. Then the people just sat in quiet for a long time as refreshments were being served.

Wednesday morning we drove through the town of Moengo and saw buildings that are no longer in use. Then we returned to Paramaribo. It was May 1, a holiday in many parts of the world, including here. I spent the next days documenting the photos, writing these reports, and sometimes watching and counting the birds.

The Saturday shuttle to the airport picked up other passengers and me at 2:30 AM to start the trip back home to Denver for an eventual evening arrival. The route of four flights was Paramaribo - Port of Spain - Miami - Dallas/Fort Worth - Denver.

Dr. Ed Holroyd, 4 May 2019



Barred Antshrike, but not good focus



Black Skimmer, dragging its bill in the water to catch food



Blue-black Grassquit



Blue-gray Tanager



Ruddy Ground-Dove



Common Ground-Dove



Blue-gray Tanager enjoying a bath; water flying



Palm Tanager



Spectacled Thrush



Striated Heron



Pied Water-Tyrant