

BRADFORD EXCHANGE

ON MISSION WITH GOD IN NIGERIA

DECEMBER 2023

“LET HIM SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT”

1 Peter 3:11 Let him turn away from evil and let him do good.

Let him seek peace and pursue it.

Hello from Nigeria,

Martha and I have been busy this season as we continue in the work which He has called us. We have gone through the rainy season and then now into the dry season. Harmattan has begun which is considered the “winter” time where the temperature changes and gets cooler as the sun is blocked by the Sub-Saharan sands in the air.

Within the larger Egbe community, Martha encourages leadership in the youth center and continues to train and develop the teachers for the various programs that are running throughout the year. Music theory is her own favorite teaching class as well as the “new community band project.” We are thankful for all the donated instruments to allow this program to begin and carry on. Computer training classroom as well as the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) classroom is in full swing. The recording studio continues as well as the computer café and the youth room. It seems like the café is one the busiest rooms as many people from the community need printing done, or “online” registration for their various classes and entrance programs. Working through various portals gets many a bit frustrated as the internet in this country isn’t always so friendly or consistent. When I first heard of “Portals” I only thought of the sci-fi movies and where would they take me? The end of the year program and graduation just finished as well as the plans for the Christmas school break programs which give other school students a chance to learn computers as well as music while they are on school Christmas break.

Always teaching and learning.



Martha teaching



Centenary concert

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The Centenary Youth Development Center is so grateful for the solar project support from The Peoples Church in Toronto for the solar power to run the building. The price of fuel for our generator has escalated and we would not have continued to exist without the solar power. What a blessing to have consistent electricity throughout the day.

Thank you

Our ministry has had the opportunity to work with the local established church in bringing national missionaries to come and serve in the region. Some of the missionaries are placed in the small cluster of new believers and some have been able to start new churches, and some are in the very remote locations of the bush camps. We thank you for the support in being able to supply a motorcycle for many of the new missionaries. This will allow much more movement and outreach into the difficult places. Our partnership with the EMS (ECWA Mission Society) and the DCCs (District council of churches) has been a learning curve as the Lord teaches us to work together for the bigger goal of reaching lost souls for the Kingdom of God. New churches are being established in some of the more remote and bush regions.



One new congregation



Another new church in the bush

Education still is a great opportunity to reach communities that are reluctant to the message of the Gospel as many are realizing that they are being left behind. This bridge is a wide path to bringing many to learn the ABC's but at the same time to be together with other tribes and Christian teachers.

Hope Ministries, as many are calling us, has started up our first school project again in the very deep bush of a Fulani camp. The camp has been asking if we had forgotten them, or if they had offended us. But because of lack of funding and teachers we were hesitant to begin this school again. As many of you know we closed as Covid was a problem, but then we didn't think this particular Fulani camp was as serious as they could be for sending the children to school. We had a number of meetings with the camp leaders, and we agreed that we would open the school again. We thank the Lord for the teacher that is willing to travel everyday the 17 km to get to the camp. He is also willing to teach the children without help for now. We pray for another teacher to be willing to come and teach in this bush school. Our opening month has 38 children coming to school every day. This is certainly a Praise item.

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Pray particularly for teacher Silas as he continues to travel every day and prepare his lessons and works with this Fulani group of people. We are still looking for a place to rent for him that is closer to the school location, so if him and the house we are

We also thank the Lord which we have been now. In our first few visits would like to have us get water and school for live in the bush. This

Fulani were persecuted from another state in Nigeria and came here to settle down for some time if possible. They lost much during the persecution and were trying to start over. With your support we were able to drill a bore hole and get a hand pump for them. They were so thankful for the water. We hadn't figured out if we could help them with some form of education for the many children in the camp. Each continuous visit they would ask about the education for their children. We knew we had a difficult task to accomplish something like a school, but nothing is too difficult for the Lord.

“THE CHALLENGE”

CLEAR SOME LAND

CUT SOME TREES AND MAKE POLES

PUT STICKS AND GRASS FOR A ROOF

MAKE BENCHES FOR THE CHILDREN

you can, remember looking for to rent.

for another location visiting for two years they told us that they come and help them their children as they particular group of



The village called Liberia is deep into the bush where we have a missionary teaching the children

The land is not theirs so building a solid building was not going to be easy as permission and potential cost would be much. We had a permanent school in the next town for their people but that was still 4 km away. We gave a challenge to them, that if they were able to clear some land and bring back sticks and poles for a roof and grass the roof so that the sun would not beat down on the children. If they would make it so that rain would not fall on the heads of the children. Make wooden benches so that the children can sit down. If they could register each child that would go to school on a proper form with a picture of the child and pay for a book and pencil then we could bring a teacher to teach the children. I figured this challenge might be too much for them, and many people want something, but not many will do anything to start it. But this was not the case, as soon as we finished our challenge with them, we went around the camp to see the women and children. As we came back to the meeting place the men had already cleared the spot for the school and left to go and cut down trees for poles to hold up the covering (roof). I was surprised and was also challenged myself as we did not yet have a teacher and I couldn't remove anyone from the other schools. Yet while all this was going on, God had already put into the hearts of some people to apply to be teachers at our school. It took a few weeks for the camp to

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build their school. Today after 7 weeks we have a school of 74 children under a grass roof with a trained Christian teacher teaching these Fulani children how to read and write as well as the other subjects required for Nigeria. What is so amazing that in 7 weeks, the ability to speak English has increase so much. They greet us in English and recite and sing the alphabet and numbers.

If you asked me to dream.....of the possibilities....what is next? I am not really sure as I can only trust the Lord. Yet when I see the seriousness of the bush people here, I get really excited. I hope to be able to hire another teacher to help this school as 74 children is too much for one teacher to sustain. I also hope to make this particular school a little more stronger and water resistant. I would like to dream of putting metal poles as the sticks to hold the roof and put on a metal roof so that the water will not come down on the children during rainy season. I would like to have real benches and tables for them if possible. So, as we take a season break for Christmas, I pray that some of these dreams can come true.



Classroom end of the year performance



Two classroom blocks



New six classroom block

Our Okunran school continues to grow and develop as a “real school” for Nigeria. We are in the process of finalizing the government requirements and getting our status to be able to give out certificates for completing primary 6 level. We are not there yet as we need to be for 2025 when our first set of primary 6 will graduate.

We thank you for the support of the school as we are able to complete most of the 6-classroom block. Just the ceiling needs to be completed and some more permanent desks and chairs for the teachers and students. With 274 children register at this school we continue to bring the message of home to children and families that otherwise had little or no hope. Thank you for bringing the Hope.

While we continue the build the bridge of education, we also have been able to work with our partnered church missions’ group. Since May they have helped us with sending 20 national missionaries to our region and surrounding area. You have been a great support in helping equip them with motorcycles to get around. Not just a means to getting around but food items and housing items as well as ministry items to help reach those who have come from the northern parts of Nigeria. This ministry continues as the partnered church missions is developing, and your support to assist them is greatly needed. Please pray for this movement as 12 church groups have developed, and others are in the process of developing. Building churches after a group has begun to meet is not easy as funds are not yet

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there. Many of the people are farmers and small animals' keepers. This past week two of the new church plants have built mud block walls are waiting for the funds to add a roof.



New Missionaries choosing to live in remote places reaching those who want to know Jesus

We are so grateful for this partnership development as it means that God has heard our prayers for more workers as the harvest is plenty. We are still praying for more workers of the harvest.

Our MP3 (solar talking Bibles) ministry of the spoken Bible in their language continues as we are able to bring the Word to those who cannot read and write or comprehend the written word as well as those who find it difficult to see the printed word. We are meeting the need for 10 plus languages so far. Continue to pray for those who listen to the Bible with the solar powered MP3 from Galcom ministry.



Before handing it, we are showing how to use the solar powered MP3

I want to share with you that it isn't easy, as even some of those villages are attacked and burned down. The next two pictures show where I have been visiting a village and when I returned after having gone back to Canada for a couple of months to find it all burned down. We were told that rebel Fulani attacked them and burned down everything. Some of the people moved into the town and some ran away. We never know how long we will have to be able to share the News of Jesus to those around us as one day it could be all gone. We continue to pray for these villagers as we had given many of them the solar powered MP3 of the Bible before all this had happened. May the Spirit of the Lord speak to their hearts and to those who chased them away. As I mentioned that we never know just how long we must be able to tell the News of Jesus to those around us. Please consider how you can help us help get the news to many before it is no longer possible.

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This is only two of the homes as more than 50 homes were burned to the ground. Many were people of the north, both Muslim and Christians. We can only pray for them. As we go out to the remote regions, we do know that it is with the strength and security of the Lord. Yet as God spoke in the Bible, who will go out to tell them?

Isaiah 6:8-9 ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" ⁹ He said, "Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.'"

Here I am Lord send me.....

The Egbe Hospital has a relationship with medical missions groups to bring medical and mechanical trained people to come and serve for weeks, or even months. Many come working hard inside the medical compound and some ask if they can go to the remote area to see what is happening. This is a good thing as it encourages the people of the remote regions that someone cares and also to promote good medical treatment. One problem is that as much as the medical treatment is good and lives are saved, many cannot afford to get treated. While many Nurses come and do some follow-up when they have a chance, they also realize the conditions of poverty which they are living. Egbe Hospital has a Benevolent fund which helps those who may not be able to afford the treatment.



Medical nurse volunteers doing follow-up in the bush

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As we continue to visit many different villages, we see life as it happens. We come with Hope and many opportunities to help them in many ways. Children are many.



Children from many villages looking for the opportunity of hope which is only there with your help.

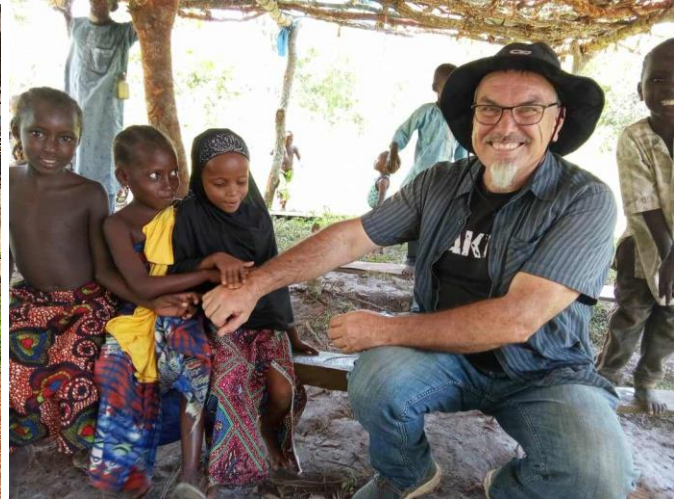


Hammude School logo and one of the blackboards of the new 6 classroom block

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Preparing food and fetching water from a dry river bed



One of our missionaries and his new friend Children are always curious of the “hairy” white skin

Christmas is coming, and so Martha and I are coming home for Christmas. We haven't been back in Canada at this season for some time and are excited to spend Christmas with our children and grandchildren. We also hope to meet with many friends as we are back for a couple of months.



January is my big 65th Birthday celebration and my family are planning a birthday gathering for friends and family. On January 6th at Heritage Green Baptist Church, 956 Paramount Drive, Stoney Creek. Time- 2-6 pm. Those hosting the celebration would like to know if you are attending so that they can have enough treats. Call our home number in Hamilton, 905-578-9091 or my cell number 905-537-

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4116 (when I am back in Canada) or my daughter Sarah's number 905-929-8794. I am not looking for gifts, but if you want to celebrate by supporting the ministry, that would be great.

Here is the web contact information for those who wish to financially support the ministry:

<https://donations.sim.ca/workers/Bradford>

<https://donations.sim.ca/projects/FulaniOutreachCenter>

<https://donations.ca/projects/EgbeHospitalBenevolentFund>

SIM Canada 10 Huntingdale Blvd., Scarborough, ON M1W 2S5
1-800-294-6918

SIM USA P.O. Box 7900, Charlotte, NC 28241-7900 **for US tax receipts**

If you sense the Lord's call to help with the ministry and receive a tax receipt, please designate the funds to our "**ministry**" account. If you want to help with our daily living expenses, and receive a tax receipt, please designate the funds to our "**support**" account. Please note: "Personal support" is just a personal gift and does not get a tax receipt, but we are still very much grateful for your support. If you would like to help in Fulani ministry, please click on the Fulani Outreach Center. If you would like to help patients who can't afford medical treatment, please donate to the Egbe Hospital Benevolent fund.

Prayerfully yours,

Rick and Martha Bradford, SIM missionaries in Nigeria



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Colossians 1:10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Colossians 4:3-4 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.