



Rick & Debbie Bardin

Physician and Nurse in Cameroon



Rick and Debbie both attended church throughout their childhood, with their mothers as the primary spiritual influence in their lives. Rick responded to the Holy Spirit's nudge during a revival service in Fort Worth, Texas, at the age of 9. Debbie began to see her need for a personal Savior while attending weekly youth group meetings in high school and made her commitment to Christ on a retreat in the Colorado Rockies at the age of 17. While both were attending John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas, they met behind surgical masks in the Operating Room. Rick was an orderly getting hospital experience and Debbie was a graduate nurse. They married in 1979.

Debbie was first introduced to missions by a medical mission trip to Haiti while in college, where they visited an orphanage. Rick also took part in some day trips to El Farro Mission in Mexico. Starting in 1983, they served at Wallace Memorial Baptist Hospital in Pusan, South Korea, for two years under the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board. Debbie was a church and home missionary while Rick worked in the out-patient clinic for non-Korean speakers. They also were involved in rural health clinics. After Korea, Rick took a job with a Christian medical group in Kansas. Over the next three years, God called them to career medical missions, so in 1989 they moved their family of four – Jess, 6, and Jeanna, 2 – to Eku, Nigeria, for 11 years. Rick taught residents and treated patients at the hospital, and Debbie home-schooled the children, held a Bible study at the leprosy church, and taught pastor's wives at the Baptist Bible college nearby.

In 2000, Rick felt led to do a four-year pathology residency. Unable to find a request for a pathologist in missions, Rick decided to join Southwestern Medical Clinic, a Christian medical group in Michigan. He worked as an internist, geriatrician, and Medical Director of the laboratory. Debbie went back to nursing after 23 years and worked in their OB/GYN clinic.

In early 2009, they attended a mission conference in Kansas City, where they heard of the new Internal Medicine residency started by Dr. Dennis Palmer at Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon. There was a need for both faculty to support the residency and for a pathology service to be established to support the surgical residency program. After a visit to Mbingo, the Bardins became convinced it was where God was leading them to serve next. They began serving in Mbingo in August 2010. Rick started the pathology service and helped teach residents. As the pathology service has expanded, it has become a full-time job. Debbie has found her niche in the HIV outpatient clinic, which sees about 1,600 patients. She enjoys getting to know them personally and getting the opportunity to counsel them spiritually through scripture cards and discussions of God's Word. The Bardins desire to be instruments of Christ to encourage resident doctors and fellow staff to walk closely with Him and therefore be His hands and voice in ministering to their patients for His glory; and to also be ready to give an account of the hope that is within them to any patient or person God puts in their path.

Birthdays:

Rick – January 16

Debbie – June 12

Anniversary:

July 14

For more information, visit our website at nabonmission.org or email us at serve@nabconf.org.