

Rick and Debbie Bardin

Physician and Nurse in Cameroon



Rick and Debbie were raised in homes where their mothers were the primary spiritual influence in their lives. They attended church throughout their childhood. Rick responded to the Holy Spirit's nudge during a revival service in Ft. Worth, TX 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 during her "Solo-Survival" assignment at the age of 17.

The Bardins are both involved in medicine. Rick went to undergraduate school and medical school in Texas. Debbie, from Aurora, CO decided to go to nursing school in Texas. They met at John Peter Smith Hospital in Ft. Worth, TX behind surgical masks in the Operating Room. Rick was an orderly getting hospital experience while in med school and Debbie was a graduate nurse. They were 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 did some day trips to El Farro Mission in Mexico while they were in El Paso, TX. They were influenced by a young evangelist, Bryan Day, who had been to Korea on short-term foreign missions and challenged them to do the same. They went for 2 years (1983-85) under the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board to Wallace Memorial Baptist Hospital in Pusan, S. Korea. At that time, they had one son, Jess, who was 18 months old. 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 their Korean experience, Rick took a job with a Christian medical group in Kansas. During the next 3 years God convinced both of them that He was calling them to career medical missions. So in 1989 they moved their family of 4 now (Jess-6, Jeanna-2) to Eku, Nigeria, where they served for 11 years (1989-2000). Here Rick taught residents and treated patients at the hospital and Debbie home-schooled the children, did chronological Bible studying in a leprosy church, and taught pastor's wives at the Baptist Bible College nearby.

In 2000, the hospital was turned over to Nigerian leadership, Jess was ready to start university and Rick felt led to do a 4-year Pathology residency. Unable to find a request for a pathologist in missions, Rick decided to join a Christian medical group in Michigan, the Southwestern Medical Clinic. They needed help in Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, so he did a 1 year fellowship in Geriatrics before joining the group. At SWMC Rick worked as an internist, geriatrician, and Medical Director of the laboratory. Debbie went back to nursing after being inactive for 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 Internal Medicine faculty to support the I.M. residency and for a Pathology service to be established to support the surgical residency program, PAACS (Pan African American College of Surgeons). After a 1 week visit to Mbingo, the Bardins became convinced that Mbingo was where God was leading them to serve next. They began their missionary career in Mbingo in August of 2010. Rick started the Pathology service and helped teach residents. As the pathology service has expanded, it has become a full-time job (though he still mentors CIMS residents discussing cases with them). Debbie has found her niche in the HIV outpatient clinic. Her clinic 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 is 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 @ www.nabonmission.org or email us at serve@nabconf.org

