



MAY 2022

## OUR MANY TRAVELS

### *Prayer*

- For full healing for Sonya from malaria and that it not recur.
- For continued journey mercies for us, and for our ministry partners, in the wet and slippery season.
- For the local people in Nigeria to abandon the boycott of the clinic and access the medical services they need and help the clinic generate the clientele necessary to stay viable.
- For a successful end to the school year and success finding some teachers trained in braille or sign language for next year.

### *Praises*

- For safe travel to, from, and around Nigeria.
- For good opportunities to teach, encourage, and bless our brothers and sisters in Christ, both in Gembu and in the villages with our ministry partners.

*And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith.*

2 THESSALONIANS 3:2 (NIV)



Dear Friends and Family,

As I started writing this, we were in Nigeria in the Mission House in Gembu. I had been in Nigeria for a month, and Sonya joined me Palm Sunday. The bulk of my time has been spent in a small village, teaching each day during morning worship (between 5:45 and 6:45 a.m.), and spending a good amount of time visiting with the leaders here.

This is the longest I had been able to spend time here, and I have been enjoying it immensely. My language acquisition, though still slow, has been accelerated a bit here, and I am able to spend time with whomever I meet with at least a few things to say. My Nigerian visa is multiple entry, so I have been here three times since last December; I don't enjoy the motorcycle trip over the mountains too much, but it always serves to make the arrival that much sweeter. Plus, the scenery is spectacular!



While I was in Nigeria, Sonya helped a missionary colleague (who focuses on children and youth) to start a regular Friday evening meeting with the small number of youth we have – for games, some



singing, and a short devotional – and it seems to be going well. She also oversaw (and/or did) a mittful of repairs and paint upgrades to our compound wall and the Suudu Do'aare (house of prayer), which, while exhausting, is right up her alley.

Plus, she continued her work at the school, her February and March focus being working with a group of remedial reading group from Grades 5 and 6, which was both frustrating and rewarding.



Sonya was also proud to see her four-student badminton squad qualify easily for the regional competition. The headmaster (although he's not a badminton player) took them in her stead to the regional capital of Ngaoundéré and reported that they handily defeated the home region to qualify for the national competition. This will apparently be in Yaoundé in June and is quite exciting for everyone here, as no one has ever done this from our school, or even our quarter. The way they travel is exhausting, though, so Sonya was glad she's able to hand the responsibility to someone else. One of our players is hearing impaired, which has been a coaching challenge but has also been a great advancement for inclusive education in an area where many disabled students don't have a chance to be educated at all.



*Players marking badminton lines in our compound.*

I (Jeff) was here in Nigeria in January, (before our wonderful February visit from our partners and the NAB IO folks) teaching four courses for two weeks down at the Mambilla Baptist Seminary in Mbu. That was fairly exhausting, but I was able to recover quite well when I got to the village for a brief rest before heading back to Banyo across the border. Back then, they had mistakenly thought I would be teaching New Testament Theology, but I had to tell them no one had asked me to do that. I let them know I would be happy to prepare a course on that for the next time I was there.

This was 'the next time,' so I taught that course down at Mbu to about 30 or so seminary students. The following week, I was back in Gembu, offering three workshops to between three and four hundred MBCN pastors. They asked me to do seminars on our Baptist distinctives, the leading of the Holy Spirit and decision-making, and a third to encourage the pastors in their general ministry.



Sonya was supposed to spend about two weeks in the village and then join me for the pastor's conference, but some violent events in the





neighboring village prompted our partners to take us out only 48 hours after she arrived, so her financial work and visiting and language immersion were seriously hampered by that, plus the fact that she arrived unknowingly sick with malaria (from all that time spent working in the compound, plus forgetting to take her prophylaxis!). She spent much of those 48 hours sleeping!



*While in Gembu, we stayed in the Goodman house, where we lived with our family in 2008–09.*

However, she managed to keep herself busy in Gembu. She did what financial work she could by meeting with our partners who were able to come to Gembu. She was able to renew a few old acquaintances and make a few new ones, muddling her way through market to supplement the provided local diet with more fresh fruits and salads, as well as sorting through remnants of missionary cargo, tracts, and office supplies in the house (from our time here in 2008–09 and briefly thereafter) that hasn't been used by the MBCN, and finding good homes for it. She had a good time of sharing with the female staff, students, and student wives at the seminary, as well as speaking at chapel.

She also made herself available to speak with the pastors' wives during two of Jeff's sessions, and it was a real joy to share and encourage ministry wives. Apparently, this is the first time(!) they have actually had separate sessions for the pastors' wives at this event, and the women greatly enjoyed it. She was surprised at the request for a translator, but it made sense as many of the women don't speak English as well as their husbands. She was grateful to find her friend Grace there to be able to translate, as they worked together years ago on



*Since Jeff's photo here last newsletter, they have repainted the sign. Looking good!*

some teaching sessions and understand each other well.

We had some used smartphones and a couple of tablets donated while on furlough in 2020. These have come in very handy as our Nigerian partners have started to use the tablets and laptops and learning Excel and things that make the bookkeeping a lot easier. If any of you supporters have good, used smart phones, tablets, or laptops and are able to get things to Edmonton by August, please email Sonya so she can make arraignments to have them checked out to bring along or have put on the next sea container. Sonya's current challenges are squeezing in some meetings budget planning and other administrative tasks at the Banyo school before our much-anticipated NAB missionary retreat/conference in mid-May, as well as checking on the local fundraising for the playground she's been trying to get into the ground for eight months.

She was delighted to come back from Nigeria to see enough money collected to get a real start on it. There's only a few poles in the ground at this point, but it's a sign of real progress!



Unfortunately, it seems the malaria did not fully clear up and hit again this (busy) week, so at this





*The road to Mbu has been made a little more gradual, making it less treacherous, but is still a stretch that no one wants to negotiate in the pouring rain!*

point she is squeezing in trips up to the hospital for consultation and injections while trying to check another twenty things off her to-do list. We are grateful this is the first time she's had it since arriving in 2017, but these multiple bouts have stressed to us what most people suffer regularly, as well as the importance of faithful use of preventative measures.

We really did not travel a whole lot in 2021 but seem to be making up for it in 2022.

### *Jeff & Sonya Kilmartin*

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We've made numerous trips to Nigeria and have a trip out of country for this May retreat. We've gotten our COVID boosters to allow for continued international travel. I will also be teaching extension courses in a number of Cameroon locations in June and July and into the next quarter, and we will be using our holiday time later this year to come to Canada for our daughter's wedding. All of these will take place during rainy season when the local roads gradually deteriorate into an amazing array of potholes, mud pits, and (almost) sinkholes that wreak havoc on a vehicle's tires and suspension systems and a passenger's endurance. So pray that we may be wise but also patiently endure.

