



the Holmes Family

MISSIONARIES TO NIGERIA, WEST AFRICA

May/June 2020

Dear Praying Friends,

On Friday, May 8, my family boarded (what has been up until now) the last flight out of Abuja, arranged by the U.S. Embassy. There were stops in Togo and Liberia and an aircraft change in Dublin, making the trip duration a full twenty-four hours. Once we arrived in Washington, D.C., a rental vehicle was arranged; and we drove to Chattanooga, Tennessee, for two nights. Our family was thankful to have some time to ourselves to overcome the jetlag. By Monday evening, we were safe and sound at my mother-in-law's house in Denham Springs, Louisiana. The Lord arranged the timing for me to see my dad's older brother on the way to Louisiana, and just days later, I officiated his funeral. We were expected to stay at home for the first two weeks, and everyone is symptom-free. My family would like to relay a special thanks to everyone who responded to our Facebook and email messages concerning the evacuation flight; the money was raised to pay the unexpected expenses, and Sabrina's home church has already determined to help us with our return flight to Nigeria, hopefully in the middle of October.

Already, our family has been able to see plenty of relatives and take part in several furlough events that we had previously scheduled. We traveled to East Texas at the end of May for a Missions Conference in Gladewater after taking some time to visit my father-in-law (and an aunt and uncle) in Houston. I had the privilege of preaching at our sending church on the third Sunday after our arrival, and in June, I did pulpit supply at Sabrina's home church in Baton Rouge. Another "home" church for us is Temple Baptist Church in Gulfport, Mississippi; and in the beginning of June, I had the opportunity to preach in their Jubilee for the first time. The month of June rounded up with our three oldest children participating in the Summer Missionary Institute for Training and Evangelism in Milldale, Louisiana. I had the honor of preaching Monday night and leading music Wednesday night at the camp that "started it all" for us. Sabrina and I officially met at SMITE in 1997. It was our first meeting on full-time deputation in 2003, and we have now conducted 20 SMITEs in Africa!

Because there has been very little testing accomplished in Nigeria, it is uncertain how much the country has been affected by the coronavirus. Grace & Glory Baptist Church had not been able to meet since March 22, but they finally resumed Sunday morning services on June 14. Truth Baptist Church never stopped holding church services, and they utilized house fellowships for those who could not logistically get through the travel restrictions to attend on the church property. One of those house fellowships (started in our deacon's home) has recently become our newest church plant (now meeting in the chief's palace!). Please pray for the new Azunu Baptist Church. Plans are in place for our Temple Baptist Institute to resume on August 1 and for the students to return for another semester of Providence Baptist College & Seminary on September 2.

Believing God,

Mark Holmes, written 27 July 2020
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SERVING WITH

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SENDING CHURCH

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