



the HOLMES FAMILY

YOUR MISSIONARIES IN NIGERIA, WEST AFRICA

March/April 2023

Dear Praying Friends,

In the middle of March, we received not only an amazing opportunity but also a well-timed answer to prayer. White Oak Baptist Church in Stratford, Connecticut, arranged for Sabrina and me to be their special guests during the church's annual Missions Conference. I spoke six times in four days, met several new missionary and church friends, enjoyed the fellowship and activities, and was honored by the generous gifts and royal treatment that my wife and I received. Sabrina had been praying that we could see our oldest son before his upcoming August visit, and we were able to take three days before the conference to visit Joseph, tour his school, see relatives, and soak up some "tastes of home" in the Baton Rouge area.

For the first time since 2014, we were thrilled to host our pastor friend, who helped me conduct our initial six Soul-Winning & Leadership Conferences (SWLC), Bro. Ken Shinn of Lighthouse Baptist Church in Columbia, Mississippi. He joined Missionary Evangelist Curtis Hall for Truth Baptist Church's 14th SWLC in Abuja. We welcomed pastors and workers from more than 40 churches, and for the first time, there was a full day dedicated to well-received lessons and sermons on marriage. Bro. Hall then joined me for the 5th SWLC that we have held in Aba, Abia State. There are now ten different churches that have hosted our special meetings, which are designed to help independent Baptist churches throughout Africa's most populous nation.

Other highlights for these two spring months included the hosting of potentially new missionaries to Nigeria, the Barker family. Then, a first-ever two-day seminar was held for preachers who are currently reaching their local prisons or who desire to get access to inmates in their area for preaching and discipleship. Great Easter services were experienced in both churches where our family is involved, and an ordination was accomplished for one of our institute graduates and a longtime Truth Baptist Church member who now pastors in a nearby village. For our seminary, a four-day AWANA (Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed) training was conducted, and students were able to participate in a ten-day outreach to a church more than a twelve-hour drive away, where, through their efforts in soul-winning and Bible Clubs, more than 700 people were saved.

Unexpectedly, we received a sizable investment from an anonymous donor for the building of a new Truth Baptist Church auditorium on the other side of our property. For years, we have sought permission from government authorities to use an already-existing foundation for our first church. During the expansion of our seminary hostel, the development-control department finally approved our plans. It should take about \$60,000 to add pillars and a roof to make the area usable on Sundays, and we have already received one-third of what is needed! There is still much work to do on our previous project (plumbing, electrical, ceilings, and flooring), but please join us in prayer and consider donating as we take the steps to add a needed building that will truly help our church to grow.

Believing God,

Mark Holmes, written 15 May 2023
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