

Dear Friends and Family,

I am writing this note from a hotel room in Lubbock, Tx where we have spent the month of July. We appreciate your love, prayers and support which has allowed us to be here during this difficult period. My number is 312 478 4393 for any who may wish to contact us.

We left Nigeria in a state of crisis. I mentioned last time a few statistics, which is not able to tell the whole story. The numbers continue to paint a bleak picture, as the prices of things needed for everyday living continue to climb. For example a bag of beans is over 250,000 Nara up from 54,000 just in the last year. Yam, another staple food has increased almost 300%. This has left many people desperate to survive. I read a UNICEF report this morning stating that Nigeria has over 13 million children whose growth has been stunted by hunger, and other alarming statistics.

That is why I am thankful that your help has allowed us to continue to feed over 1000 meals a week. A little bowl of rice and stew with a boiled egg for protein is the only meal per day some folks who come to us can rely on. I cannot thank enough those who labor so diligently from early to late to keep things going in our absence. And I cannot thank you enough, those who God uses to make funds available for all this. May God continue to be honored as we strive to share His love to others.

A simple story helps us understand perhaps better than numbers. A recently converted family had been absent from our regular worship services. A sister told Nkiru that the young sister had not been well, along with their young baby. Our investigation revealed that the problem was acute hunger for both the mother and child. So we were able to invite them to stay at our house for a few days to “feed up”. They were yet to understand the depth and beauty of the fellowship we share in Christ, and felt ashamed to come and ask. We were happy to see the family quickly regain strength. We cannot save and feed all, but those who God brings into our lives, we still try to do the best we can to meet needs.

All of this hunger has led to protest and strikes. The national union of labor went on a strike demanding that wages be increased from the current minimum wage of 30,000 naira per month which is about 20\$. That is for government workers. Many in the private sector make less than this. Being organized, the labor union was able to shut off the national grid for 4 days, so the whole country was in blackout for the fifth time this year. Ports and airports were shut down, as well as fuel depots and other essential services. It took us six trips to the airport to finally get our daughter Jeleena and ourselves out from Port Harcourt. We learned later that the airport was blockaded again hours after we left.

An agreement was finally reached that minimum wage should be increased to 70,000 naira or around 46\$. But the youth have organized their own strike which is to start on August 1, feeling this was not a realistic wage. Already some blood has been shed, but we pray that things can be as peaceful as possible and that we can continue to survive individually and as a country.

Of course, what I have seen in America the past month makes me realize many prayers are needed for this country as well. I have seen and heard things I never expected, and prices of everything are at record heights. I thank all of you who have had to deal with inflation and other issues yet have remained steadfast in your support of our work together. I join legions for the Lord to guide in the affairs of the

country.

I did arrive to find things worse than I realized with Jonathan. We have tried to do the little things we could to make it better for him. With two episodes of cancer overcome, including a 31 day stay in the hospital which I did not know about, I know that it is the grace of God that has kept him through all these struggles. One doctor did not believe he could last much longer, but doctors have made such assertions before and been wrong. We just pray for God's will to be done in his life. As a parent, we pray for a miracle, but God knows best. His teeth have been destroyed because of radiation treatments, and he asked that I try to help him find an oral surgeon that would be willing to take on his complicated case. We finally got news today that the Dental School in San Antonio might accept his case. If they do agree, it will be an answer to his prayers as this has caused him difficulty in eating and constant pain. Please join us in praying for us to see the Will and Power of the Lord manifest.

Let me end by thanking all who have worked so hard along side with us. Nkiru did a good job of organizing things at home while we are gone. We killed a beef before leaving. Everyone knows what they need to do and have been doing it.

Video chats have helped us keep in touch from a distance. Issac, Divine and Udoka have left to Ghana to start their college studies. Udoka is to study nursing, and will be hopefully the 5th nurse in our family. With a son practicing as a doctor in Jamaica, three graduates in medical lab science and two more in med school, I am thankful for those who have made the miracle of our home continue to grow. It is beyond comprehension. Thank you for being a vital part of His working among those in need . We love you and remember you in prayer.

Love,
Cliff, Nkiru and family