

Dear Friends and Family,

We thank you for your patience and understanding while waiting for news from this side. It has been three months since some of you have heard from me. And I learned too late, some of you failed to get my last letter. My apologies for that long wait. As some of you know, we traveled to the United States and Canada, and were a bit delayed in returning. Hopefully the old adage of “No news is good news” still is true. Thank you for patiently waiting .

We left on the evening of the 5th of May, headed for Lubbock, Texas via Frankfurt and Dallas. Thankfully, we made that trip safely, and landed at the Air B&B my sister had reserved some 32 hours later. Part of our expectation was to be there for our son Jonathan’s surgery on the 7th. Unfortunately he had contacted a severe infection and the surgery had to be postponed until August. However, on the evening of the 8th, my sister Donna and her husband Brian and my brother Philip drove the 950 miles from Mississippi to come and witness the graduation of our son Kingdom from Lubbock Christian University .

What a blessed event that was, only made possible by the special grace of God and the love of so many people. Mr. Mark Griffin, who was one of the main instruments of God’s grace, was able to escort Kingdom to the stage. It was a special weekend of celebration with family and friends. We cannot say enough to thank those who have blessed Kingdom, especially during this important time of his life. We pray that each seed sown in his life will continue to bear much fruit to the Glory of God. The following Monday we got great news that he was accepted into a masters program at UT in San Antonio and also accepted to serve disabled children at a Christian summer camp. More on that later.

We were able to have a little time to spend in Lubbock thanking the good folks that had blessed Kingdom, before driving back to NE Mississippi. There we got to share some special time visiting those who have supported us over the years. There was the Gospel Meeting at Saucer Creek, the dinners at the fellowship halls, the warm encouragement from those whose support enables us to serve here. We appreciate each and every one of you, and being with you was strengthening in ways you can't know. Our travels took us to Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and even Canada. We met new brethren, spent needed time with our children in Texas and Canada, revived old friendships, and in it all we pray that we strengthened others as we too were strengthened.

One difficult part of the journey was when our beloved son Jonathan fell ill and was hospitalized. This delayed our return to Nigeria a bit. He suddenly lost a lot of blood while we were in Mississippi together, and we are still not sure how and why. This effort to reconnect with family and friends led to him having to fly back to Lubbock. There his medical team discovered his body is no longer producing the blood he needs, at least to date, and he has had to have numerous transfusions to survive. The crisis is over, but the long term outlook is unclear. Please continue to join us in prayer for Jonathan, for his strengthening and healing.

Our son Jeremiah was able to drive several hours from Alabama to visit his brother in the hospital. His three hour visit was not enough. Three hours in three years is not enough. There were so many others that we would have liked to have had time to visit but could not. I hope you understand that even though we were not able to visit all of you in person to say thank you, we hold each of you in our hearts. We thank God for you, asking Him to bless and keep each and every one of you. We look forward in hope of a time and place where we can visit and fellowship without the painful goodbyes.

We are finally and firmly back in Nigeria, finding our children well and the house in order. We thank all who worked as a team to see that the work continued in our absence. My hope and prayer is that someday, when that final goodbye is necessary, that God will raise up other servants who step in to fill our roles. It has always been the work He has called us all to do together. He has made our united efforts possible, and He will continue to sustain and enable as long as it is His Will.

None of us know the hour of our departure, whether from our current roles, or to our final resting place. For some it is after a long life of fruitful service, such as was the case of Jim McGuiggen and Sewell Hall this past week, both well known preachers. Or as a young person, such as our son Wisdom's friend, whose funeral he is attending today. They had just said good bye to go their separate ways when a truck ran over his friend. The Lord keeps sending these sharp reminders that this world is not our home, and that we can be called away at any time. Our son Jeremiah almost left this life this week, when he was stung four time by an insect, and went into shock less than 5 minutes later. He barely had time to call 911 before collapsing. Thankfully his life was spared and I am not on my way back to the States to bury another son. Lord, please help us to be ready for that day, that we resurrect to be united with you forever, and not to shame and separation.

To all of you, friends and family, we say thank you and God bless.

Until we meet again,

Cliff, Nkiru and family