



## May 2016

Thank you for your loving support of us and your participation in the work here in Nigeria during the past year.

- Please thank God for all those in the UK and Ireland who support us financially, in prayer, and in practical ways, both during our time here, and during our UK and Ireland visits.
- Thank him for his church in Nigeria and the privilege that we have in serving alongside others here who are committed to him.

## The Seminary

The end of the academic year is approaching. Our students will sit exams in the first two weeks of May. Some will then have a break until August, but others will register for the three-week intensive summer courses (in June/July). They will be joined by part-time students, including pastors (who work in their churches most of the year, but study in the summers).

- Thank God for all that has been learned, and pray that it will make a real difference in the way students live out their faith in Christ.
- Please pray for the summer programmes, that the courses will be well taught and the students will take in, remember and make good use of the course content.

## Chapel

This was Rick's first semester as chaplain and he has enjoyed the work.

- Thank God for students' positive responses to the Bible teaching and the 'spiritual emphasis week' events. Pray that what they learned from God's word will transform their lives and make them more Christ-like.
- Thank God for positive responses to the changes in the chapel programme. Pray that the models of preaching and music ministry will be useful to those planning church services in the future. Pray that during their time at college they will learn how to present God's word faithfully, and with impact – and to plan and lead services that bring glory to God and inspire faithful worship.
- Thank God for all the students who have come forward for counselling, and who have become more open with one another, and supportive to each other informally and in accountability groups. Pray that this will continue to bear fruit and that the seminary will increasingly be a place where sin (and hypocrisy) are challenged and repented of.

## Rick's classes

Rick's classes have been going well. His theology classes have been enjoying wrestling with some more challenging texts and ideas. One important issue students have been thinking through is this: the Nigerian church faces challenges of nominalism – i.e. people claiming to be Christians, but

without any real faith in Christ. This in turn can lead to wayward lifestyles. Some churches are tempted to combat this nominalism with legalism, instead of with the gospel (which is exactly what we need to 'teach us to say "No" to ungodliness... and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives' [Titus 2:12]).

- Thank God for the students' progress and enthusiasm, and the way they quickly apply what they learn to the Nigerian situation.
- Pray that God's Spirit will work in all the students as they study. Pray that they will learn with joy and humility, and that they will allow what they learn to change them for his glory.

Rick's class on "Preaching Psalms" has also gone well. Several students commented that in the past, they had used Psalms when praying, but hadn't any clear idea of where to start in preaching from the Psalms. People particularly enjoyed looking at Psalm 51 and Psalm 73.

### Girls' Brigade

Alanna has enjoyed working with the Girls' Brigade (GB) which was set up in the seminary for the daughters of faculty and students. The group is about to lose its key student founder, Nyella, who is graduating. (She hopes to return to the seminary in the future to do the degree programme).

- Please thank God for Nyella's hard work with the girls and pray for her as she looks for paid work.
- Pray that Alanna and Florence (who is leading with me) will have energy and determination to keep the group going and build it up. Please pray for some new GB leaders, especially one or two in their late teens or early 20s.
- Please pray for the girls to grow through our activities in their understanding and love of Christ, and in skills and abilities that will build them up to lead fruitful lives and ministries.

### Sunday School and Boys' Brigade

- Thank God that our children are settling well into these activities – it has taken time for them to feel at ease as the only 'bature' (ie Western) children on campus.
- Pray for the leadership of the Sunday School and Boys' Brigade. They are students with busy schedules. Pray that God will give them energy and ability to lead well, wisdom to make good decisions, and leadership skills to implement their plans and build up the teachers serving under them.
- Pray that good training and mentoring for Sunday School teachers will happen in the next academic year.
- Pray for the student Rick appointed to oversee various groups in chapel, that God will grant him good leadership skills, helping the groups be more effective in their ministry.

### Our Family

Alanna and the kids travel to the UK in early May (to stay with family while Alanna does her exams). Rick will join them in mid-May. We will visit family and churches in the UK and Ireland for before returning to Nigeria in early July. Rick will teach on the third Summer Module.

- Thank God for a successful and enjoyable academic year, for giving us strength to take on a number of new responsibilities.
- Thank him for allowing us to see him at work by his Spirit in the lives of many students.
- Pray for good meetings with friends, family and churches. Pray for the ability to clearly explain aspects of our lives here.
- Pray that we will encourage and be encouraged by those who support our work.



**Conor and Jack have been learning about the Tudor period**

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