

## 35 BAPTISMS DESPITE COVID-19

Ever since the closure of the school, because of the COVID 19, our weekend evangelism program was placed on hold. We were able to hold our outings from January to the weekend before the closure without any interruption. Within this time, we reached out to 11,469, with 2,883 continuing studies, having 35 people immersed for the forgiveness of their sins. We were planning our 2020 evangelism campaign for Christ, which was scheduled from May 1 – 9. All the prospective places were getting ready to receive our students and staff for the exercise. It is sad that many people who would have heard the gospel during this program did not have the opportunity. We pray for a solution to handle this pandemic problem and a resumption of classes soon. **Naphtali Dagasamah**

### A BRIEF MESSAGE

This year started off great as you can see by reading the article by Brother Naphtali. Students filled the classrooms, planted their garden plots, and fed the chickens and fish on campus. A football game provided a few hours of entertainment one or two nights a week. I arrived in Jos on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, and started roofing the chapel/activities building. For the next three weeks the campus was a “bee hive” of construction projects. My intentions were to work in Nigeria and Niger until the first of June. Just three weeks after my arrival I realized that, if I wanted to return home this year, I better leave Africa immediately. Our Lord, along with a great travel agent that booked me a flight through London and New York on very short notice, I was back in Savannah in three days! My visit through London and New York was like visiting the set of a science fiction movie where all the people had been abducted to another planet!

The following weeks have provided me with many lessons in patience and spiritual growth. In all my travels and experiences in life, I have never experienced anything like the last few weeks. Praise our Lord that He has been with us all the way! Please continue to pray that we will be able to return to a normal life very soon. **Steven L. Worley**

### *Thank You*

On behalf of the students, we wish to express our profound gratitude to the Antioch Church of Christ in Halls, Tennessee, and the Savannah Church of Christ who gave us the money to get food items for our students stranded on campus at this critical time. Of a truth, things are not easy for our students. Many of them have no food and no money, but now, they have enough to eat for some time. They are very grateful for this support. Among the items bought was rice, beans, gari, Indomie noodles, and kerosene for the cook stoves. May God reward the supporters abundantly in Jesus name, Amen!

**Emmanuel O. Egyegini** (*Dean of students, SBS Jos*)

## OUR FOREIGN STUDENTS

To begin with we want to sincerely thank the President, the Chancellor, the Director of Development, the Faculty Staff of the School, and our Sponsors in the United States for the support, love, care, and the training they are giving us to go back to our countries and preach the gospel. We remain appreciative to you all, and may He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food supply and multiply the seed you are sowing in us and increase the fruits of your righteousness in Jesus Name, Amen!

However, it is not strange news that the invasion of the current Pandemic Disease in the entire world has posed many challenges to many people; we as foreign students are not exempted. This deadly disease is affecting us because our school activities are being halted. The closure of the schools has affected us negatively because, some of us (3 final year foreign students) were to graduate on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2020, but it has been postponed indefinitely. The graduation is usually accompanied by our Annual Bible Lectureship where lessons are taught by various speakers which also creates room for people to travel both far and near to attend and make it memorable.

Presently, we are in the dilemma of how this could be possible as COVID-19 is still ravaging the world. Moreover, life on campus for us foreign students during the lockdown caused by COVID-19 has been a mixture of good and bad moments. It is a good moment because we have been having ample time for sleeping and resting; the academic stress of moving up and down to some extent has been minimized at this time. Not that we are totally happy, but at least we have enough time now to rest. Also, the school administration has been providing food items for us as we are on the lockdown, apart from the monthly allowances we have been receiving. This also is part of our happy moments.

On the other hand, there have been a lot of discouragements, frustrations and heart breaks, especially when we sleep and wake up every day, only to be hearing the devastating news of the Pandemic Disease. Movements have been restricted; no door-to-door evangelism and we are just here on campus feeling boring, not knowing when this will be over. It is only the school activities that keep us engaged, but since all schools are closed and we have nowhere to go at this moment, we will definitely feel bored.

Lastly, it is our earnest desire to graduate and go back to evangelize and establish congregations of Churches of Christ in our countries. We have always longed to complete our programs here and return home to

do the work of the Ministry, but as it is now, our plans are being tampered with and our desires to have graduated at the stipulated date have been frustrated, not by the school administration, but COVID-19. All airports and traveling routes are shut down and we are at the mercy of God to eradicate this disease, so that we can continue with our activities. Once again, we thank you and we acknowledge your contributions in our lives. **Peter Sahr Makundu** (Final year student from Sierra Leone), on behalf of all the foreign students on campus.



## EXTENSION TRAINING REPORT

In December 2019, Brothers Barnabas Manzo and Simon Dabish began our two weeks extensive training program at the new center in Gombe, Gombe State. This is our first training center where all the teaching is in the Hausa language. We had five students who enrolled in this new adventure for Christ. The church building, where we host the program, has a nice building on a large piece of land. It does not have a security fence yet, but the church is growing. The five students lived inside the church hall. It was not easy for them because of the lack of accommodations. One of the five students were a former convert from Islam and he was so happy to be part of this great new program. Some brethren from Goma, in Adamawa State, were hoping to come to the training this year, but due to lack of finances they couldn't attend. The School is appealing for assistance to bring them to the center in December 2020. The training center at Kaltingo City remains the English-speaking center for those who want to study the Bible in the English language and preach the gospel to those who can read both the Hausa and English Bibles. So, the school now has two centers in Gombe State and the response of the brethren to both of these programs is encouraging. Please pray for this program. **Coordinator Simon Dabish**

## A Status Update from the President

On the 20th March, 2020, the State and the Federal Government of Nigeria ordered the immediate closure of all schools in the country in a bid to control the pandemic spread of COVID 19. We thought it was a thing of one month, and plans were set for students to return to school at the end of April. Unfortunately, till now, our schools remain closed. The closure of schools and the societies induced by COVID 19 has affected all our planned programs. Our scheduled interviews for new intake of students on the 3rd of April was postponed, our second semester exam which was to kick start on April 17th was suspended, our evangelism campaign for 2020 was placed on hold, and our 2020 Gospel lectureship, whose preparation was already on high speed, was placed on hold. Our proposed speakers since then have been calling to know whether the program will be as scheduled. Our graduation exercise did not hold again even as the graduating students are left hanging, waiting for when the situation will change. Beside these, our extension program for June contact is not feasible in view of the current situation across the world. Our calendar has been altered altogether.

To ensure that we do not miss completely our academic program for this semester, we have invited the final year students to return to campus. Most of them were already on campus ever since the lock down, working on their final year academic projects. We have resumed classes with them, and in the next few weeks, Lord's willing, they will take their final exams. After we are done with them, we will invite in the third years students to clear the semester with them as well. We will adopt this approach till all the classes take their exams. We do not want to bring all classes at the same time because of the social distancing order. **Tom Udo PhD**

## A Letter from Abuja, FCT

As Americans, we have seen so many things change in relation to the current pandemic. I have been communicating with some of our brethren in Nigeria who are often out in the city distributing and collecting correspondence courses. I asked Bro. Jingfa Nancwat from our office in Nigeria to update us on the work that he and Bro. Henry Iddiong are doing in Abuja. Here is his response:

*“Greetings to you and your family. We pray you are doing well in body and in spirit especially at this time of the pandemic that is ravaging the whole world. It is our sincere prayers that it will soon pass away. Henry, my family, and I are all doing well.*

*Covid-19 started gradually in Nigeria with one person (an Italian national) in late February, and now it has infected over 8,000 people in Nigeria with over 200 deaths. The whole nation of Nigeria was under total lockdown for about 2 months. During the period of the lockdown, all offices, schools and businesses were closed except people dealing on foodstuffs, medicine, and power were allowed to operate. Prices of commodities went up so high.*

*Sequel to this, we couldn't go to the office during the period of the lockdown, although we have been communicating with our students on phone calls. We are thankful to God that for the past 2 weeks, the lockdown has been partially relaxed and thus we can now move from one place and the other to gather and dispatch lessons to our students. Last week we were able to enroll 41 students and gathered back 104 lessons for grading. We hope that the situation will keep improving. None of us is infected even though we are affected economically. Once again, we deeply appreciate you all for your tremendous support. May God continue to bless you.”*

(As you can see, even in adverse conditions these men continue to do the work of the Lord. I am very thankful to be able to work with them. Please pray for their well-being, safety, and fruitfulness in the work. God Bless! **Adam Cox**)

## Chuck's Message

When I was in preaching school it was always emphasized that “a preacher needs to be flexible.” The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly tested all of us, in every nation, people, and place. Marci and I hope all perusing this issue are encouraged in perseverance, hope, and, love with the indomitable spirit that our partners in the work at SBS JOS continue to demonstrate, through their support, both financially and spiritually. Our profound gratitude to the Antioch brethren in Halls, TN, as well as the Savannah church of Christ for quickly responding to the appeal for the international students, who were unable to return home following the implementation of the pandemic travel restrictions.

Travel restrictions put the brakes on our “home-cycle” plan to visit supporting congregations to network, provide update reports, and of course, conduct fund raising. Since we joined Steve in the work last July,

*Continued on page 4*

and returned from our first campaign in December, getting out-and-about, was the next facet of the work we were ready to take on. As things and places open up, we will do our best to make up for lost time...but not opportunity! After visiting the brethren in Chesapeake, VA, over Christmas, in May we had a wonderful visit to the Westside church in Texarkana, and then in June with Antioch in Halls, TN.

We were supposed to go to Uganda with the Walter Hill congregation in June, with great anticipation, on their VBS campaign, but that of course had to be called off. We look to next summer, count us in! We do in deed remain flexible on every account as we are eager to return to SBS. Again...we "planned" on the first term (Aug-Dec). If that has to push to the right to the second term (Jan-May), we will shift to that, as necessary, feasible, and prudent. On the brighter side, we will experience the flip side of the calendar in Nigeria, and be able to attend the graduation exercise and annual end of term evangelism campaign.

May you be well and safe, secure in Him. Please keep us in your prayers. **Chuck and Marci Cordon**

*"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Eph. 4:15-16, KJV).*

## LETTER OF APPRECIATION

It is with great joy and hearty spirit that I write this letter. I hope it finds you happy serving the Lord. The joy of serving in the vineyard, and the pain I had because many of our preachers in Africa, and Nigeria in particular, did not have the requisite Biblical training for the proper handling of God's Word. For this reason, I enrolled to study the Bible with the School of Biblical Studies, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. Shortly after my graduation in 2014, I secured a preaching job with the church of Christ 46/48 Orodu Street, Lagos, Nigeria. Shortly after my marriage, Brothers Solomon Aguh and Steve Worley gave me the idea of studying in the US in order to help teach preachers to become better equipped in rightly handling the word of truth.

To my utmost amazement, by August 3, 2018, I was in the US and Brother Worley had made the arrangements for all my expenses to be paid and I was set to study. The semesters went by and I had all that I needed to keep me focused. The plan was that by December 2019, I would have graduated and returned to Nigeria. However, my thesis needed more work and that led to my early return to Nigeria on September 23, 2019.

Gradually, I completed my thesis and defended the thesis on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. I received my Diploma on May 25<sup>th</sup>. The whole story above is to say that I am very grateful to all of you who spent your hard-earned money to support me and my family during the course of my studies. It can only be the grace of God and the love of Christ in your hearts that made this possible. Some of you have never seen me and may never see/know me, yet you gave your resources to see me through this study.

Therefore, may I express my profound gratitude to God almighty for His abundant mercies. Also, to Brother Steve Worley and Mama Dee, Brother Solomon Aguh and Sister Rachael Aguh, and the entire SBS family. Many thanks to Greg and Shelia Hamlin, Randy Baker and family, Charles and Marci Cordon, and the entire family of the Savannah Church of Christ. Many thanks also to the FHU family, especially President David Shannon, and the Bible faculty members for their immense support. My gratitude goes out to the Butterfields, Dr. Bruce Lewis, Mrs. Jean Rhea, and the entire Henderson family. To my friends, Jeremiah Settle and Family, Brothers Earl Edward and Tom Childers and the entire Finger family, I thank you. To my friend and sister Lucille Write, and the North Henderson family, I thank you. There are also many who contributed and supported us financially, whom I cannot recall at this time. I thank you all.



Solomon and Peace

May our loving father bless you all for empowering me. God willing, the work of making men better in the kingdom of Christ will conscientiously be done to the glory of God. Thank you so much and stay safe in Christ's name. Amen. *Yours in His vineyard,*  
**Solomon Usim.**

*Editors note: Solomon is the twelfth (12) African we brought to the United States for an education in Bible. ALL obtained their degrees and ALL have returned to Africa! Praise God!*

## A PLEA FOR HELP

In October of last year my wife, Rachel, and I took a one week vacation to Kilifi, Kenya. Kilifi is 60 kilometers north of Mombasa. We arrived Mombasa at 11 AM and left on the hotel bus to Kilifi. Before we left Jos, Nigeria, we wanted to make sure we had a church of Christ near by to worship on 13<sup>th</sup> of October. I phoned Brother Udofia in Nairobi and he connected us with the evangelist Justus from the Kilifi area. On Saturday, October 8, I called Bro. Justus, who came the next day to lead us to the church for worship. When he arrived, it was raining heavily that morning. We went to a congregation behind the University of Kenya Campus at Kilifi. The signboard clearly read Church of Christ. Since it was raining heavily, members could not turn up on time. Soon after, young people set up drums and guitars and started practicing. At this time, I sensed something was not right. This is not the place I would want to worship. I turned to Bro. Justus and asked, is this the church of Christ? Am I in the right place? Meanwhile it was raining heavily, and the tricycle that took us there had left. The service started with singing, drumming and dancing. Soon it became a dancing competition among the young people. Ladies were called to lead in prayers. I felt at this time as I was in prison as I never learned to worship this way.

The time for exhortations came and I was called upon to speak. My topic was "Offering Acceptable Worship to God by Worshiping in Spirit and in Truth." After the exhortation, the leaders called a sister to close the service with a prayer. During the course of the service, a collection was taken, but there was no Lord's Supper remembering our savior Jesus Christ the Lord, who died, was buried, and was resurrected overcoming death for our sins. I felt so empty.

After the service, I asked Evangelist Justus whether there was no other congregations of the Lord's church in Kilifi. He told me there is a congregation of 10 families meeting in homes, who do not play instruments nor dance; but he did not know where they were meeting that day. I told him if he had informed me earlier, we would have enquired where they were meeting. The brother told me that this congregation was a denominational church which was converted without adequate teaching because there were no people to teach them. At this time I started pitying instead of condemning them.

These people need help. We need to help them know the truth. Rachel and I left Kilifi on

October 18, 2019, for Mombasa on our way back to Nigeria. Two days later Justus called to inform us that, the leaders of that congregation came to see us on the day we left the guest house where we stayed, to talk with me. Please brethren, let us pray and see how we can help these brethren in that area. May the Lord bless you all. **Solomon I. Aguh.**

*Editor's note: Dr. Aguh, as the Chancellor of SBS, continues to be an evangelist for Christ. He is always searching for areas that need to have educated church leaders. Solomon then requests the local brethren to pick a faithful brother among them who can lead. He then arranges to bring that brother to Jos for an education in Bible and evangelism. After graduation the man returns home to lead congregations to worship our God according to His word.*

### Update on our Chapel/Activities Building

Since clearing the site for our chapel/activities building on April 10, 2019, we have made tremendous progress on its construction. The construction of the main building is completed along with the floor (terrazzo) and painting (both inside and outside). We have almost completed construction of the detached toilet building with its water supply, and septic tank. All our debts incurred so far have been paid.

The tasks remaining to accomplish is:

1. Electricity from the campus distribution board to the building .....\$3,000
2. Toilet windows and drainage.....\$3,000
3. Site land fill and landscaping ..... \$4,000
4. Chairs for our chapel students .....\$5,000

**Total: \$15,000.00**

If you can help us complete this project for our Lord, please send a check to 1175 Pickwick St., Savannah, TN, 38372, payable to the Savannah Church of Christ and mark it "SBS Dorm".



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*The School of Biblical Studies is located in Jos, Nigeria. SBS began in 1989 and is under the oversight of the elders at the Gadsden Church of Christ in Gadsden, Alabama. Dr. Solomon I Aguh is The President of SBS. SBS has a 4, 3, and 2 year curriculum in Bible, plus a 4-year degree program. We have recently added a 2 year Extension Program and a 2 year Agricultural Program. The student body presently numbers 137 full-time students with more than 600 graduates now in the field.*

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**Mission:** *To train men and women to teach and preach the Gospel and be responsible citizens and effective leaders in the church of the Lord, in order to aid the spread of the Gospel to the entire world.*

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