

Nigerian Christian Children's Home



October 2021

Dear Friends and Family,

It is our sincere prayer that all is well with you and yours. We know many of you are able to experience the beginning of the change of seasons, and all the excitement of the new school year and all that goes with it. We pray that you have the opportunity to celebrate all these changes, and that they lead you to greater growth and appreciation of what God is doing in your lives.

I mentioned in my last letter our request for additional prayers as we were facing challenges that only God could solve. The challenges remain great, but greater is the grace of God.

We have had to reapply for registration as an orphanage. We have always insisted that we are not an orphanage, but just a family open to sharing our home and lives with whoever needed a help, especially orphaned children. People can testify that our house is a home, not a dormitory with uniformed inmates. Even though we try first to help those in need within the confines of their biological families, there are some who seem to have no other alternative. Once you are a part of us, you remain always in our heart, no matter how long you stay.

We had to accept the name given us, so we are to be know at Christ Family Home for Children. Anyway, whatever will make peace and glorify God is acceptable to us. A friend here has been able to step in and help with all these unexpected legal fees, and those still to come. God continues to be merciful in our time of need.

The biggest change is the structure of our family. The government did not want us to have children over the age of 18 living in the house. So their view was that children would not even be kept to that age, unless of course the child is so physically or mentally challenged that no one else would take them. At the ripe ole age of 18 the children should be pushed out to face the world on their own.

Sounds good in a text book, and I agree with some of the reasoning, but that is not the way our family works, or worked until now.

So we are trying to empty the nest all at a time. For some, the Lord has provided a house 15 minutes from here. This was a house we have been using for some time to help those needing temporary shelter. So they have been working hard to tile and paint and repair and furnish. None of this was expected or budgeted, but the older ones are understanding and cooperating to help make things happen. As many as possible we are trying to get out of the country. With little hope of employment and some of our kids employed at unlivable wages, we are sending three of our girls to Dubai where one of their friends assures that many jobs are available. It's a big risk and change, but I guess this is a time for bold measures. Obinna is going to study nursing in Ghana, after his nursing school here was put on break for six months, and that is even uncertain. Things work better in Ghana, and hopefully this will help him be able to advance to a career in nursing, even possibly in the US. Jemimah is also moving to Ghana, so that makes five of our guys there.

After almost 29 years, this is not how I wanted things to work out, but I trust in God's divine providence. So often in my life God has made things to happen in ways I could never have imagined. Our being here all this time was not my plan. Our being able to minister to so many was not within our ability. It was all Him who was working in us both to will and to do. May we be able to see clearly where He is leading, and trust fully when we cannot see the way.

During this period we also had something happen that so many here have experienced, and that is kidnapping. James, the first baby to come into our lives soon after our arrival, is now a graduate working as a surveyor. Recently he was sent to a job to survey an oil spill in a swampy area. While there he was, along with his entire crew, kidnapped by militants. A group tried to rescue them and two young men died in the attempt. They were stripped to their underwear, hands tied behind their backs and marched deep inside the swamp. Kept under the rain and nighttime cold, they faced the tormenting mosquitoes with no food or water. He called after some time, begging that we send money or he would be shot. No parent should have to listen to such a call. We thank God that he and his crew were released and he is now back at work. Things could have been much more tragic, as it was for the two men who lost their life. In every tension and trial, there is still cause to thank God for His mercy.

We also thank God that we were able to help Br. Victor escape a plot to imprison him. I think I mentioned the torment he has been going through for the past several years. He was the fleet manager for a fuel marketer, not in charge of monies except that given to him to maintain the trucks. Yet the owner accused him and the accountant and manager of fraud and theft. Even though the police found no evidence that he had any guilt, he has had to attend trial for almost 4 years now. At times he has had to ride on the back of a cattle hauler, exposed to the elements. Once he was severely wounded in a car crash. The

tactic is to try to extract maximum pain, regardless of innocence or guilt. The day of the final court appearance took place, and he knew he was in trouble when the judge arrived at court in the car of the accuser. As expected, the judge ruled against the defendants, and the sentence was prison or to pay a fine of \$1,000 which is a huge sum for many people. The plaintiff had hired prison guards to stand by to transport him to prison, bought them pizza and champagne that they were noisily enjoying at the back of the court. Fortunately for us all, an extra donation came in at the right time, and we were able to pay the fine and save our brother from the pain of prison. You may wonder where your donations go. They go to unexpected places in unexpected ways to minister to folks who have no hope without the love you share with them. Thank God for His timely intervention.

We were blessed to be invited to speak to a gathering of folks for the United Nations International Day of Peace. Folks came from various parts of the country, including a number of Muslim leaders from the North. I tried my best to present the case that we are created beings, wonderfully made by a Father who loves us and has communicated through His Son the only way we can have peace with Him, with ourselves and with others. A rare opportunity to speak to such a diverse group. One of the Muslim leaders asked for a copy of my presentation, so at least a little seed was sown.

I told you about Emmanuel, the albino boy who has started coming to worship with us on Sunday. We were blessed to be able to get him into school this term, and we have been able to see him grow, to have a little more confidence, to be a bit more relaxed. It's hard to grow up knowing you are never really accepted, that folks are forever prone to make unnecessary comments about the way you look. I pray Emmanuel and others who come to us will understand the love and acceptance that only our Lord can provide.

I mentioned before that your donations have helped feed more than 30 extra mouths every evening, children from the slums around our area. Because of the extra expenses redistributing and restructuring our family, we have had to curtail this effort. We lack the funds and the personnel for now. We have been giving them each evening a couple of packets of ramen noodles, (which is still a considerable expense) or a portion of uncooked rice or a boiled egg. One boy wrote us a tear jerking letter begging us not to stop feeding them or they would be very hungry. He apologized if there was anything they had done bad and that they would do better. We tried to explain we are not abandoning them entirely, but it is hard for them to understand.

We lost four friends to COVID during this period, two African friends and two in America. One was a childhood friend I grew up with, the best tractor driving girl I ever knew. The second was a cousin in Mississippi. A reminder for all of us that the virus is still deadly and for the need to be vigilant. A good brother Don Locke tested positive while on a business trip and is quarantined. I know he would appreciate prayers. Also pray for Pat Massey, the

son of Br. Fred and Sister Peggy. He had a severe complication from the COVID vaccination, and is now in long term rehab.

We also have some good news to share. Jodie and her husband Patrick welcomed their first child into their home on Sept 3. Jodie had been in labor since Wed, and was finally delivered by CS early Friday morning. Master Henry Hailey weighed in at 10.25 oz and a lengthy 24.25 inches. It is a joy to see the chain of life extending. There were severe complications later requiring a second hospitalization due to a severe infection from the CS requiring a second surgery. Thankfully Jodie is back home recovering and hopefully there will be no further complications. The proud papa says the new mother is turning her son into a momma's boy already.

Let me once again say how much we appreciate you standing by us during this most difficult year. Your prayers and support are life sustaining to so many. If you could be here to witness the number of folks who come needing help every day then you would know how far your money goes to help so many. God alone will show you mercy, as you have remembered to show mercy.

In Christian love,
Cliff, Nkiru and family