

Nigeria Trip Report

July/August 2023 – CHAD WAGNER



In late July 2023, I departed from Memphis, TN to Abuja, Nigeria arriving on July 21st. I arrived in time for a graduation of the Bear Valley Bible Institute extension program there in Abuja.



On Sunday, I was able to visit the **Gwaladimawa Church of Christ** in Abuja where **Osita Onuora** is the preacher. Following the church service, I was able to meet with the elders of the **Nyanya Church of Christ** in Abuja. They were happy to receive me and welcomed future cooperation. Directly following that meeting, I was taken by Abiodun Adegorye and Dr. Tom Ekpot up to Jos, Plateau state, because I was wanting to visit the Jos School of Biblical Studies.

The **Jos SBS** has been a good school with a long history of service to the Lord's church in Nigeria and now several other countries. I was able to tour the SBS campus, get to know several of the faculty of this school and see the city of Jos area.



Following the visit to Abuja and Jos, I flew from Abuja to Port Harcourt, the location for this year's **Great Workshop**. This year's lectureship had **451 participants** with **9 baptisms!** To God be the glory. As Mike Udam, the Great Workshop director, notes, "the Great

Workshop is the biggest single gathering of preachers on the continent of Africa." At this year's workshop, each participant got a pack containing 3 Bibles and 4 different study books, including Mike Udam's recently launched book The Preacher and the Pulpit.



Great Workshop Crowd in Port Harcourt, Nigeria



Mike Udam (R) presenting an award to Monday John Akpakpan (C)

I am also thankful to **World Video Bible School** for their partnership in equipping various mission points with rechargeable projectors along with external hard drives with all WVBS videos/materials on them. These rechargeable projectors can be used in preacher schools, Bible classes, in village evangelism...there are many uses! This year, I was able to take two to Nigeria: one to Abuja and another to Port Harcourt teams. On Sunday in Port Harcourt, I preached at the **Church of Christ GRA**, a relatively new church plant in the city. The Lord surely is doing great things in this city!



While in Port Harcourt with Anthony Oluria (L), I had personal protection!



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After the close of the Great Workshop and church on Sunday, I traveled up to Ukpom, Akwa Ibom State to the **Nigerian Christian Bible College**. The first week of August was the college's annual lectureship. As usual, the crowds were impressive!



46 Baptisms at the NCBC Lectures! To God be the glory!





While at NCBC, I was able to have a good visit with **Monday John Akpakpan** in his home. Of course, his lovely wife, **Nerissa**, prepared fried chicken! The picture to the left of MJA and his wife standing at their school in Akwa Ibom called the **African Christian Secondary School**.

I was able to visit another day with the **Nigerian Institute of Arts and Theological Studies (NIATS)** which is in Abia state. This school has seen many years of service to Abia state, Nigeria. I met with the NIATS board of Trustees and the school's director, **Bernard Akokwu**. The school continues to make steady progress in their area. The rain and the roads were so terrible that we had to be picked up to get to the school!



On Sunday, I travelled with the NCBC team to Cross River state where **MB Archibong** preaches. I was able to meet him and his family along with his WBS work team.



MB Archibong (R) with his team.



MB Archibong with family.

On Monday after the NCBC lectures, I travelled to Lagos and then to the **West Nigeria Christian College** in Abeokuta. WNCC sits within easy reach of over 50 million souls and the churches of Christ in western Nigeria are booming! I believe this is in no small part to the work of WNCC as a hub of spiritual activities for the church in western Nigeria as well as her director: **Dr. Biodun Owolabi**. The WNCC lectures kicked off on Tuesday to unexpectedly large crowds. At all of the events I attended on this trip, the crowds of attendees were larger than expected. This surprise is due to the cost of fuel and transport tripling in Nigeria in the last few months. The government had recently taken away a fuel subsidy which kept the price of fuel low for ordinary Nigerians, but now with the subsidy removed, the cost of fuel has sharply increased. However, in spite of that, the brethren supported all of the events in fine style.



West Nigeria Christian College's lectureship was on *Restoring the Ancient Order of Things*. I am often asked here in the US if there are any issues doctrinally in Nigeria. I am happy to answer that there are relatively few doctrinal issues as the brethren there emphasize the principles of New Testament Christianity. This lectureship theme is a good example of their commitment. There were 3 baptisms during the lectureship.

At various points along the trip, I was able to meet with multiple **WBS follow-up teams** to discuss their successes and challenges. As you may know, we are organizing WBS work team in each state of southern Nigeria. Some of those teams are better organized...some are just getting off the ground. Ideally, we would like to see a dedicated work fund for each team for teamwork expenses, a rented office space in the marketplace where WBS/WEI students can come and pick up their next lesson, sign up for lessons, complete online Bible studies using a computer located on site, and serve as a meeting place for WBS workers in that area. We have a lot of work to do in that area, but we are making progress – especially in communication and organization.

After a month in Nigeria, I returned home in time to prepare for my trip to Sevierville, TN for **Polishing the Pulpit**. I was able to travel there with my son only to contract **malaria** on Sunday evening! I must tell you; I was quite sick. I am thankful to God that on Monday, I was able to load my camper and drive the 8 hours, sick with malaria, and arrived home safely. After a week of recovery, I am doing fine today. I now have a much greater understanding and empathy for what our African brethren must endure on a regular basis!



-Chad Wagner

