

February Update

My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

Salt, Oil, Goats and More: I had a chance to experience another piece of Nigerian culture. Emma, my Nigerian friend is getting married. He asked me if I would go with



him to pay the bride price. In Nigeria, the groom has to pay a price to the bride's parents before they will allow him to marry their daughter. Every family sets the required items and price for their daughter. Emma tells me he has to bring two big bags of salt, two large containers of oil, twelve bars of bathing soap, twelve bars of washing soap, ten bottles of lotion, four skirts, two blankets, two goats, and the list goes on. Then he has a certain amount of money he has to pay. It is several hundred dollars altogether. I thought, "Wow, all you have to do in America is ask the bride's parents if you can marry their daughter and if they say yes, then it is all done until the

wedding." Marriage in Nigeria is not done quickly. It takes a long time to raise all the money and make all the preparations. It definitely takes support from family and friends.

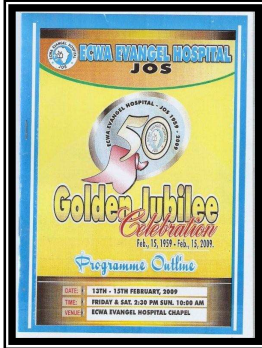
So the day came for us to go and deliver the items to the family. There were four men and me who went along with Emma. We met at the hospital to load up and go together. When I got there, I found the vehicle loaded with all the items had broken down. This is pretty typical so I am not surprised. They asked if they could put all the items in my car. I was agreeable except that I was not so sure I wanted two goats in my car. One of the other men drove up in a big car and they decided they would put everything in his car. Whew! I was off the hook. Off we went with his car piled floor to ceiling with gifts and two bleating goats and my car full of all the people. When we arrived, we were ushered into the sitting room to greet the family. Then all the gifts were unloaded and brought into the room. There were lots of introductions and talk, but since it was in Hausa I did not understand all of it. The mother came and checked to make sure all the required items were there. Then the money was paid to the father. The bride came into the room to greet everyone, but then left as this was between the groom and her family. By that time all the formalities had been accomplished and the mood lightened. There was talk and laughter and food and drinks were brought out for everyone. Since this family is Christian, the time was closed with a prayer for the bride and groom. It was a fun and interesting experience. As I always say, "There is never a dull moment in Nigeria."

A Taste of Dust: This is the time of year for the dust storms to come. You look out the window and you can hardly see the hills. I was driving down the road and the dust was so thick that it looked like fog and I could not see very far down the road. It is the season when you dust your house and come home at the end of the day to find a layer of dust on



the furniture again. One day when the dust was really bad, I went to bed and lay there unable to sleep because I could taste the dust in my mouth. I tried to put the sheet over my head thinking it might keep some dust out. Finally over time I fell asleep. The next day there was a lot of wind so some of the dust was blown away. This is not the time of year you really want to walk a long distance or do much outdoor activity.

Evangel's 50th Anniversary: As you entered the chapel, the Women's Fellowship of



Bishara 2 Church brought in the spirit of celebration with their singing and dancing. All the staff had matching shirts and the chapel was colorfully decorated for the celebration. The congregation stood and joined in singing the hymn, "Great is thy Faithfulness."

Rev. Yakubu Bakfwash, one of the chaplains of the hospital read portions of scripture and then opened in a prayer thanking God for all he had done in the life of Evangel Hospital. We had a welcoming speech from Dr. Chima, the medical director.

Dr. Verbrugge and Dr. Andrews, two doctors who worked at Evangel in the past came to Nigeria for the celebration. They gave a greeting and some memories from their time working at the hospital. We had a power point presentation on the history of Evangel showing its development through the years and the contributions of many missionary doctors and staff. We were all blessed by hearing some of the testimonies from patients and staff of the great treatment and training they received at Evangel. There was lots of singing, dancing and praising the Lord for all he had done through the hospital in the past fifty years. It was a wonderful three-day celebration full of worship, fellowship, and giving thanks to God. We look forward with excitement to see what God will accomplish in the next 50 years.

Praise:

- A big thanks to all my supporters for the abundance of funds given even during this time of economic crisis.
- All the wonderful testimonies of the work that God has done through Evangel Hospital to touch the lives of so many people over the past 50 years.

Prayer Requests:

- Cindy Jackson from Burn Care Inc. is here Feb. 27-March 7. She will be helping me to start a burn rehabilitation program at the hospital and will also be teaching our seamstress how to make pressure garments for burn patients to reduce scarring. Pray for us, as this project will take a lot of time and effort to get up and running.
- Pray for the girl's ministry at Gyero. We have gotten three new girls brought to the center in the last few weeks. They have come from some difficult backgrounds. Pray for their healing and for the staff as they work with them.

- Pray for the boys at Transition House as they are looking towards the future and deciding what training or career they want to pursue. Pray for wisdom for me as I continue to get to know them better and help them with their future planning.
- Pray for Baba and Mama Yasir, M couple I am witnessing to, as their son broke both his legs and is in the hospital.

Gay Lynn McCrady