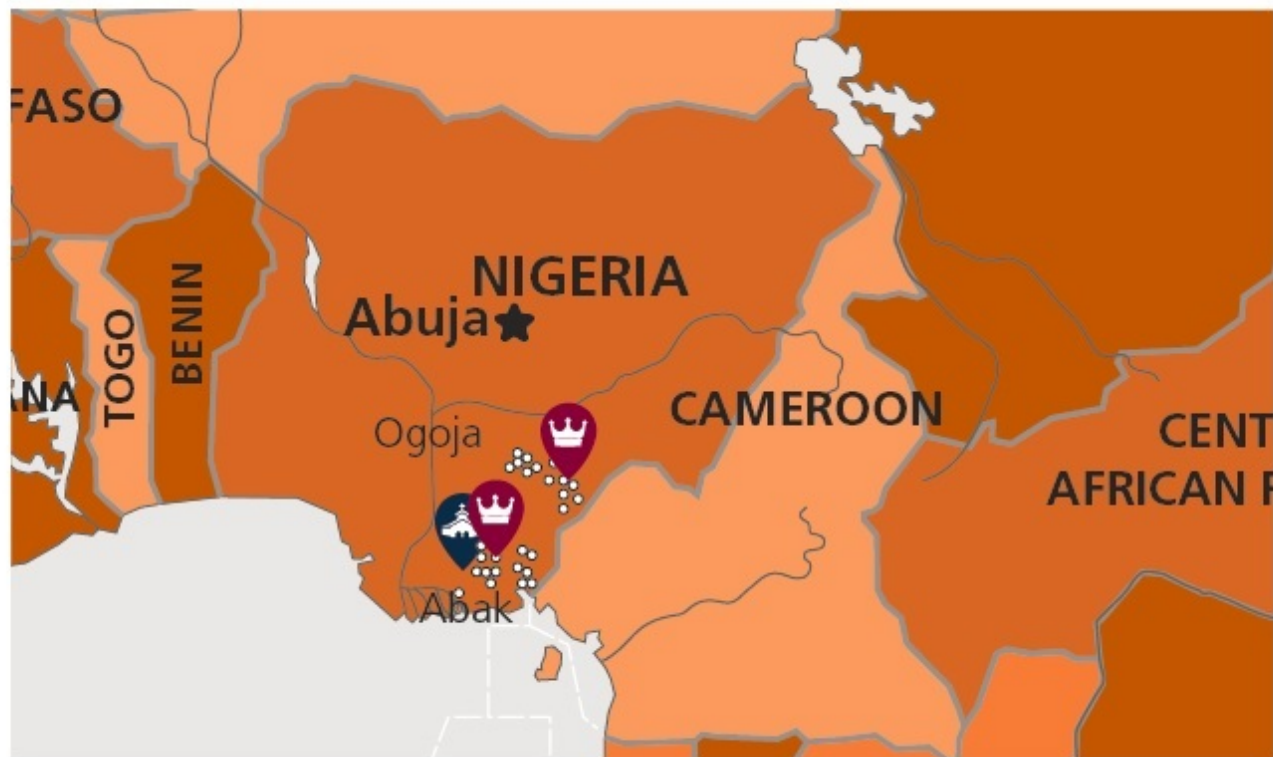


A Tale of Two Pre-Seminaries



Missionary Dan Kroll teaching

WELS Missions provides invaluable support to sister church bodies around the world as they train and prepare future pastors. Every country has a different approach to worker training, depending on resources at hand as well as the local culture. In Nigeria, two sister Lutheran church bodies work in tandem to support a joint seminary, but each synod maintains separate pre-seminaries that act as “feeder” schools. Missionary Jeff Heitsch recently visited Nigeria from February 21 until March 9. This week he shares his impressions with us:



★ Capital

👑 Church Headquarters

○ Church

🏛️ Seminary

One of the main purposes of my trip was to meet the students that are attending pre-seminary classes at both Christ the King Lutheran Church and All Saints Lutheran Church. On my first visit to Nigeria last fall, the schools were on recess so I didn't see students and teachers in action. I made meeting the students and seeing the classes in action my main focus this time.



Pre-seminary student
Francis leading the
opening devotion

Missionary Dan Kroll and I flew from our home base in Cameroon into Lagos, and from Lagos we flew to the city of Uyo. In Uyo we were picked up by our driver, Solomon George and headed to Christ the King Lutheran Church Mission House in the town of Uruk Uso. We attended a joint Communion service at the village of Meta 1 with four other congregations from that area.

Christ the King Lutheran Church Pre-seminary

On Monday morning we were up for a quick breakfast before heading to the pre-seminary of Christ the King Lutheran Church for the opening devotion. Nine full-time students take turns leading devotions. They also critique every devotion as far as its agreement with the Scripture text, its theme, introduction and transitions, as well as its applicability to the listeners. In addition, the students give feedback to the devotion leader on how smoothly he read the Bible verses, his command of English, his style of speaking, and his composure.



MOTTO: Sola Fide,
Sola Scriptura
Sola Gratia

Approach to Salvation
PRAISE THE LORD

Law
Gospel
Saved

LAW = SERVANT

GOSPEL = CHIEF

FILLS WITH GOD'S BLESSINGS

DEVOTION
8:00-8:30
8:30-10:00
James 2:10 BREAK
10:30-12:30

TEXT: Genesis 45:1-8

ME: Let's treat others with Love

- TS: ① By bringing them closer to ourself (v.11)
② By Protecting them (v.7)

Morning devotion at Christ the King

We sat in on a few lessons that their instructors gave and listened to the interaction, then Pastor Kroll and I addressed the class directly and gave our encouragement. We were able to observe devotions on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday but couldn't stay for class since we had planned various other meetings.

All Saints Lutheran Church Pre-seminary

On Thursday morning after the opening devotion, Pastor Kroll and I headed up to the town of Ogoja, which takes about 6 to 7 hours to reach by car. Ogoja is where our other sister synod in Nigeria, All Saints Lutheran Church, has its pre-seminary. Our driver Solomon said that it used to take twelve hours to make the drive because of poor road conditions. But because significant improvements have been made to the road, we left at about 9:15 a.m. and arrived at our lodge by a little after 3:30 p.m., even with a detour around Uyo. After we checked in and got settled, we had time to run into town for some bottles of water and then get back for dinner before dark.



All Saints Lutheran Church Pre-seminary

On Friday morning we were up early for breakfast and arrived at All Saints Lutheran pre-seminary by 8:00 a.m. We assumed that was when classes started but we were wrong ... they begin at 9:00 a.m. We waited for the pre-seminary director, Pastor Sunday Orem, to arrive for the opening devotion. Each pre-seminary group does things in their own way, and the students at All Saints will not be leading devotions until their pre-seminary studies come to a close in the middle of March.



President Sunday & Mrs.
Teresa Orem

After his devotion Pastor Orem met with Missionary Kroll and me privately to explain that one of the pre-seminary textbooks the school had ordered never arrived. Apparently the printing company was having issues with their machinery and Pastor Orem wasn't sure how to proceed. Pastor Kroll, who had taught this course before, shared with Pastor Orem that the lessons can be taught without each student having their own book, by highlighting key points on the blackboard and directing the students to write them down. Missionary Kroll took advantage of the opportunity to show Pastor Orem what he meant by teaching the opening chapters of this course to the students and had fun involving them in the lecture.



Joint communion service at
Boki

That weekend we held various meetings and attended a worship service in the village of Boki, then on Monday we were back at the pre-seminary in Ogoja to observe the morning devotion and classes. On Monday and Tuesday afternoon we traveled with President Orem to visit two rural health clinics that All Saints sponsors. One of the clinics has been in operation for a number of years, and they have just established a second.



All Saints Rural Health Clinic at
Wolechi

Our days in Nigeria were filled with classes, travel, and meetings and all too soon we were packing up for the journey back to Cameroon. We made the long drive back to Uruk Uso, then the next day after getting on the plane at Uyo and switching flights in Lagos, we arrived back home in Douala, Cameroon.

Please pray for the 9 men from Christ the King Lutheran Church and the 12 men from All Saints who will be completing their pre-seminary instructions this spring. Upon graduation from pre-seminary, these men will be assigned to rural congregations in their church bodies so that they can gain field experience. God-willing, the men from these two pre-seminaries will come together at one seminary in Uruk Uso starting in 2019. May God watch over them and bless them and their families.



L-R: Missionary Dan Kroll,
Missionary Jeff Heitsch

Missionary Jeff Heitsch serves as Friendly Counselor to Nigeria. He lives in Cameroon with his wife Stephanie. Read their blog at <https://jsheitsch.wixsite.com/africa>

Please pray for those working in fields that are ripe for harvest. Share their story, engage with future news and receive updates. Go to this link to learn more about our mission fields in Africa and how the Holy Spirit is working faith in people's hearts <https://wels.net/serving-others/missions/africa>