

A Moment in Mission — from Bethany Seminary

Groundbreaking for a Life-Changing Technology Center in Nigeria

The new academic partnership between Bethany and Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) reached an important milestone in July: ground was broken for the unique technology center, the facility where EYN students will take theology courses in real time via synchronous video with Bethany students in the United States.

A variety of courses from a global perspective will be offered through the center, collaboratively taught by both Bethany and Nigerian faculty. The center will also be the location for students to take intensive English language classes prior to enrolling at Bethany and in preparation for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), which international students must pass to be eligible for study at Bethany. The Seminary wishes to provide every opportunity for EYN students to succeed in graduate-level theological education.

This educational opportunity is desperately needed by EYN, which has been targeted by the terrorist group Boko Haram. Attacks have destroyed more than 1700 churches and six of seven pastoral training centers, killed more than 20,000 members, and caused more than 100,000 to flee their homes. However, EYN is currently experiencing tremendous growth in Nigeria, in spite of the violence they face and a declining economy. One thing that sets EYN apart from most denominations is their near unanimous commitment to nonviolence; they repeatedly refuse to retaliate against those who are killing them.

Bethany sees its new partnership with EYN and the construction of an unparalleled tech center to hold joint classes across the globe as a means to educate both Nigerian and American church leaders who have a deep commitment to peacemaking. Having provided ministry training for more than 100 years, Bethany knows that educated clergy help create stable, prosperous, and peaceful communities, which is the hoped-for result in Nigeria through this partnership.

The tech center is scheduled to be completed in late November or early December 2017. A dedication ceremony will be held at the site when classes begin in early January 2018. A photo gallery of the construction progress is linked at bethanyseminary.edu/eynpartner. For information about supporting the building project and naming opportunities, contact Mark Lancaster at 765-983-1805 or lancama@bethanyseminary.edu.

Bethany Seminary expresses gratitude for the many ways you have shown support for its mission. All are invited to take part in Bethany life, from campus visits, to support of a student, to inviting faculty and staff to provide a workshop for your congregation.