

# Rolling Stone

## ministries

*"An angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it... And the angel...said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who as been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen just as He said.'" Matthew 28:2, 5-6*

Newsletter

December 2012

## MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

### NIGERIA REPORT

Greetings from Iowa, our new home base. It has been almost two months since we packed up and headed to the Midwest.

We already discovered some advantages to having Iowa as our Rolling Stone Ministries headquarters. First, when we travel to Africa, we save around three hours each way in travel time due to Iowa being 1,700 miles closer to Africa, India and Israel. Six fewer hours in an airplane makes quite a difference in how exhausted we are when we return from a mission trip. Also, two fewer time zones makes adjusting to Africa much easier than when we launched from California, and the return to Iowa is not as taxing.

With those practical advantages, there are also fewer distractions in Iowa in the fall and winter, unless one is obsessed with watching a lake freeze. Yes, I miss golfing with the guys from church.

In the two weeks since we returned from West Africa we have had more time to reflect. Our trip to Jos, Nigeria (November 23 to December 3) was a step of faith for us, since the only person who would be there whom we had previously met was the evangelist, Tim Robnett, who invited us. We had spent a few hours with Tim in Kenya back in April where we both spoke at an evangelism seminar, and Tim saw something in Laurie and me that prompted him to ask us to join him in Nigeria.



As I researched Nigeria, it was easy to see why there was no one else staying at the Baptist guesthouse where we stayed during our teaching. The guesthouse can accommodate perhaps 40-50 people, but during our entire time there Laurie, Tim and I were the only ones staying there. This year alone nearly 800 Christians have been killed in Nigeria by the radical Muslim group Boko Haram, and Jos, where we stayed, is the epicenter of the violence that has been going on for three years. Thus, we understood why the guesthouse in Jos was nearly empty—it is a dangerous place for Christians.

Knowing in advance that there were safety issues if we traveled to Jos, we took all reasonable precautions, and solicited prayers from our Rolling Stone Ministries supporters and church friends, believing that if we were sent, the Lord would watch over us. The opportunity to teach key Christian leaders from Nigeria was the driving force behind us feeling called to go, especially since it would be a chance to encourage those who live under the shadow of Islamic jihad. The organization hosting the event in Jos, New Life For All, represents 13 denominations, and is a national organization in Nigeria that hosts evangelism festivals all over Nigeria and in neighboring countries.

What we found in the Christian leaders we taught was a level of maturity and commitment to evangelism that truly blessed us, and from all accounts our teaching had a

great impact on those who spent the week with us at the New Life For All headquarters. We were honored to spend time with Christian leaders who stand for the gospel in the midst of adversity and persecution.



We also met with several Christian lawyers in Jos, and they insisted that we come back and have Laurie provide them with biblical peacemaking and reconciliation training. The lawyers, including one magistrate (judge) want us to help them set up their own mediation center so that they can offer conflict resolution from a Christian perspective. We are currently considering returning to Nigeria in the spring to provide the requested training.

Blessings, *John*





John interviewing Josh McDowell - Life Streams



Laurie, John and Tricia Davis - Life Streams



Manna Bible Institute - Worldview Class

## The Year In Review

From January through March 2012, I hosted Life Streams Live! at our home church in California, a mid-week event that involved me interviewing and interacting with special guests, some in person and via SKYPE. The guests provided amazing testimonies and teachings.

The special guests included: Steve Geis, Wycliffe missionary; Rebecca Kiessling, pro-life attorney and abortion survivor who had been conceived by rape; my radio mentor Rich Buhler, who spoke of God's grace through trials, especially coping with his dying of cancer (he went to be with the Lord less than three months after the interview); Dr. Jacob Rodriguez, an old friend who spoke of the need for a biblical world view in education; Michelle and Eric Hensley, who counsel on issues of marriage and sexuality (Eric is now in the advanced stages of melanoma--please pray for him and his family); attorney Joe Infranco from the Alliance Defending Freedom talking about defending our religious freedoms; and Josh McDowell, discussing how to help young people survive in a sex-saturated society.

While much of America was engaged in the quadrennial Presidential election in 2012, life and ministry continued on in the rest of the world.

In April Laurie and I made our annual mission trip to Kenya where I taught at the Manna Bible Institute for five hours per day, and Laurie taught a worldview class at a children's ministry seminar hosted by Manna. It was a blessing for us to teach those who made the sacrifice to come and prepare for their ministries. Typical for Africa, many more than expected showed up for the children's ministry seminar, and Rolling Stone Ministries ended up purchasing three bunk bed sets to help accommodate the overflow. Even with the extra bedding RSM provided, many slept two to a bed. I can only image how we would react here in America if we went to a seminar and were told we'd have to double up in the beds!

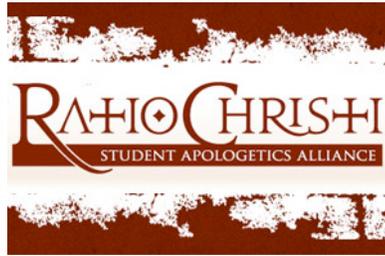
On a sad note, one of my Manna students, Julius Mukonzi, set to graduate in November 2012, was killed in October when al-Shabaab, the Somali branch of the Muslim terrorist group al-Qaida, bombed his church during a service. It was a

sobering reminder of the cost of discipleship that is a reality in many places in the world. Back in April, at the moment I was preaching at South B Gospel Church in Nairobi to around 700 people, two miles away a church was bombed, killing one and injuring a dozen. Being there to experience the dangers firsthand makes the spiritual warfare imagery in Scripture come alive. We are in a spiritual battle, and sometimes the battle manifests itself in the physical world.

Our trip to Kenya was our 6<sup>th</sup> to East Africa, and we have become friends with several pastors through the years. For the third consecutive year we were honored to spend time with former Kenya President Daniel Moi, this time again speaking at the chapel service at Kabarak University that President Moi founded in outside the town of Lake Nakuru, about four hours from Nairobi. We also spoke at a conference on evangelism in Rongai, the town near Manna Bible Institute. Pastor George Muguro hosted the conference at his church there, and at one point the rain came down so hard that even with large amplifiers the audience could not hear what we were saying due to the noise of the rain hitting the tin roof.



New Life for All - Nigerian class



## What are Others Saying?

Ratio Christi is unique among campus ministries because its focus is on a vibrant intellectual defense of Christianity. In an age where 75% of Christian kids leave the church in college, there could not be a more relevant and impactful mission to college students.

– **Frank Turek**, *President CrossExamined.org*,  
co-author *"I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist"*

## The Year In Review (continued)

By late summer Laurie and I took a step of faith and made efforts to move our ministry base from California to Iowa. Ending my eight-year run teaching the adult Bible class at our home church in California was very hard, since the class became like a family, and teaching the “Cutting Edge” class was the highlight of my week. When we said our “goodbyes” to the class, we acknowledged that for the first time there were no fixed plans on our calendar for the fall of 2012, but we hastened to add that the Lord is more than capable of opening the right doors at the right time. We were fine with believing that opportunities would arise at the appropriate time. As we’ve come to expect the unexpected, right after our farewell we were invited to go to Nigeria to teach. At that point I could not have found Nigeria on a map, as I only knew it was somewhere in Africa. Our mission trip to Jos, Nigeria is described elsewhere in this newsletter, but suffice to say here it was truly a blessing.

Finally, just when things seemed to be settling down, I heard about a new campus apologetics organization that

uses Christians trained in the evidence for the Christian faith to hold weekly meetings on university campuses. The vision is to provide a place for Christians whose faith is being intellectually challenged to have a place to learn the compelling evidence that supports Christianity, and a place for non-Christians to ask questions about the validity of Christianity in a non-threatening environment. I made the fateful move of contacting the two leaders of the organization, and within a week or so I was being asked to consider becoming the international director of the organization.

The organization is called *Ratio Christi*, Latin for “the reason of Christ.” In roughly two years the organization has established chapters on 100 campuses in America, some of them lead by trained apologists who devote full time to the ministry and are supported as missionaries on college campuses. The word got out about *Ratio Christi*, and now there are several countries that are ready to set up their own branch of the organization. The problem is that things have grown so fast that it has been impossible to keep up with the demand, and set up a structure (both

practical and legal) that would accommodate *Ratio Christi* in other countries. Thus, I am in the process of transitioning in to the role of International Director, with the mandate to create the international branch of *Ratio Christi*. This has put me in touch with several wonderful organizations that are currently engaged in international ministry, such as the Billy Graham Evangelistic Organization, Ravi Zacharias International Ministry, and others.

My involvement is a step of faith to fill a need in an area where I have the training and experience to make a difference. Please pray with me that this is the direction I should take. If it is, and I now believe it is, I will then have to trust that the Lord provides the resources through His people to allow me to pursue this opportunity, since those involved with *Ratio Christi* now must raise their own support.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
&  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

*John & Laurie*

# LAST RSM snail mail Newsletter!

*Sign up today to get on our email list!*

In an effort to be wise stewards, to save precious resources (time, money and trees), this will be our LAST newsletter from Rolling Stone Ministries that we will be mailing out. From now on we plan to use web-based communication such as email and FaceBook to stay in contact with our faithful supporters. Most of you have email, and it is much faster and costs nothing to send out email alerts and email newsletters. If you have not given us your email address and would like to receive our email alerts and e-newsletters, go to our website, [www.RollingStoneMinistries.org](http://www.RollingStoneMinistries.org), and follow the instructions to be put on our email list. Through our website you can also make donations, order materials, read our blogs, view past newsletters and photo albums, and contact us with comments and questions. If you are on FaceBook, find us and “Like” us.



Newsletter

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## YEAR END GIVING



We appreciate those who have been monthly supporters of Rolling Stone Ministries. Your partnership has enabled us to take time away from employment to bring the message of Christ to Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Now as the year is coming to an end, we ask you to consider a year-end gift to Rolling Stone Ministries to help us enter 2013 with the resources needed to pursue the opportunities that have been presented to us, including teaching in Kenya and Nigeria, directing the international arm of *Ratio Christi*, and other open doors. Your financial support and your prayers for our effectiveness and safety sustain us. Please do what you can to help us with the expenses of an international ministry.

We invite you to prayerfully consider becoming a Treasure Builder (a monthly partner with RSM), either via our automatic online donation service through our website, or by monthly check. Your regular monthly support will go a long way to provide for basic needs to help minister more effectively to fulfill the Great Commission: *Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matt. 28:19-20.*

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pray for RSM

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to be a Treasure Builder. I will contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ monthly to RSM (either by automatic online donation service or by check)

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to make a single contribution to RSM in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

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RSM is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Send your gifts to: **ROLLING STONE MINISTRIES, INC.**

P.O. Box 6271

Orange, CA 92863-6271

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