

We Still Have Hope: The Testimony of the Persecuted Church in Nigeria | Part Two

This is article two of a three-part series

Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) is in a tremendous time of trial. This Anabaptist denomination has been passing through a concentrated Boko Haram campaign of destruction, killing, kidnapping, and enslaving for five years. But the witness of EYN is Spirit-inspired and nothing short of phenomenal.

Reverend Dr. Musa Mambula, the Spiritual Director of EYN, asserts: “EYN members continue in their faith with vigor and vitality, praising God for what God is doing for them. We still have our life. Our goal and mission is Romans 12: love your enemies; pray for those who persecute us; give them food, water, and place to sleep. Our pastors are teaching the people that vengeance belongs to God.

“Boko Haram does not attack EYN because we are a pacifist church. They attack us because of our mission activity.”

EYN is resettling her people in central and southern Nigeria. Four thousand displaced Muslims are also in the four EYN camps in neighboring Cameroon. Of the 20,000 Christians there, 14,734 are EYN members. Eighteen EYN ministers also live in these camps, continuing their work of spreading the gospel. Hundreds of people have been baptized, 207 children born, and 60 children dedicated to God.

Boko Haram attacks shut down the EYN headquarters and Kulp Bible College in Mubi last fall. These have been relocated to Hillcrest, an EYN K–12 school in Jos. Food distributions, resettlement work, ministry and mission needs, and communications are coordinated here. It’s an enormous undertaking with little outside support except for the funds and workers coming from the Church of the Brethren in the US and a few other groups.

Mambula asks, “Do we have hope? Sure! EYN will rise again, because people are praying for us. Why do we have hope? Because you people have been praying. Our souls are still there. We will not take vengeance or fight back. We will serve the Lord with all that we can. We will worship the Lord under the trees every Sunday. We are not the only ones in this situation. If they persecuted Jesus, they will also go after us. We are prepared to die for the gospel, to serve the Lord will all our hearts, minds, and souls. The Scriptures speak to us directly. We are living 2 Corinthians 1:3-11. EYN will not give up. We will move on.”

To be continued...

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