

**1) Describe the main training activities of the last 3 months**

- Completed the third and final term of the one year full-time Preaching course based at the new Tubakuta residential campus, and running Monday through Thursday. Normal classes were stopped under the state of emergency declared at the end of March. We finished Term 2 off with assignments set for the students to complete, and started Term 3 with a simplified timetable based on WhatsApp for communication. Every day one student has posted a Devotions bible talk, two students have been scheduled to post practice sermons, and feedback has been given on everything posted. We have set worksheets and assignments on one class each day, either Psalms, Genesis, Galatians or Theology for Preachers. Each day the facilitator for that class has been using WhatsApp for a Q&A and review session.
- Completed third and final term of the two year part-time Preaching course based at the Fajara location, running on Saturdays plus Monday and Tuesday evenings. Most classes have been self-study followed by online review and Q&A sessions as at Tubakuta.
- Continued the Discipleship course based at Fajara running on Monday evenings, and the Missions course based at Fajara running on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. Again with students working separately and connecting for review and Q&A on WhatsApp.

**2. Describe any other activities of the last 3 months.**

- In addition to the regular training activities we have run a Sunday Afternoon online class on Psalms for SOW Alumni – this was to compensate for the loss of the monthly Preaching Club that has been suspended during the state of emergency.
- Development of the campus facilities has continued, the kitchen, laundry, and security buildings are roofed but not fully completed. We have fitted glass louvre windows to one of the three classrooms, an office and several of the dormitory rooms. Work has continued on one of the unfinished farm houses, with ceilings and electrical wiring installed, ready for floors to be laid.
- A proposal has been submitted to the Gambian Education Authority in response to their request for some assistance in developing a curriculum for training Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers. The Gambian government currently provides Islamic teachers for all schools in The Gambia, whether Islamic or Christian. The Gambia Christian Council recently approached and requested similar provision for CRE teachers, which is under review. Please pray that while this opportunity isn't within the usual remit of SOW, our assistance would result in the provision of CRE teachers for Gambian state schools.

### **3) Please share an encouraging story or feedback from students in the last 3 months.**

We have been studying Psalms on Mondays at Tubakuta. They are difficult to read in a second/third language, and the idioms and poetic descriptions take a while to explain and understand. But we have been praying that this course would impact the students' hearts as well as their heads.

At the end of May one student sent this unprompted message *"The scriptures are so amazing. I personally love these psalms so much, it is like I never come across them in the Bible. I really appreciate it. I love them!"*.

A second student is very creative, a painter and musician. He has struggled a bit with the linear logic of Romans, but preached on Psalm 100 with wonderful enthusiasm. We encouraged him that the psalms would be a wonderful way for him to introduce scripture when he leads praise and worship in church. The following Monday he came back and told us he had used Psalm 100 at church that Sunday, and it had been *"very powerful!"*

### **4) How many people have you trained in the last 3 months?**

- 8 full-time students based on the Tubakuta Preaching course
- 3 part-time students (year 2 of 2) on the Fajara Preaching course
- 6 students in a once-a-week Discipleship course
- 3 students taking the one year part-time Missions course

### **5) What are your top challenges for the next 6 months for which we can pray?**

- This week is the final week of term, school closes at Tubakuta on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>, and at Fajara on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July. Thank God that we got this far and that so many students were able to complete the course. Please pray that they would have opportunity use what they have learnt, and that God would use each one of them to strengthen the church.
- We have not been able to visit churches during the state of emergency, which would have launched our recruitment for next September. Thank God for the provision of our new website, and please pray that this would prove an effective tool for reaching potential future students. Join us as we pray for 20 full-time students at Tubakuta, and 20 part-time students at Fajara.
- The rainy season is just starting and building materials are hard to come by and getting more expensive as everyone rushes to complete work before it's too late. We have several small projects to finish before the full rains come. Thank God for the provision of the funds we need, please pray that we could get materials and workers to complete the essential items

