

*Lowell & Claudia Wertz
P.O. Box 1344
Kigoma, Tanzania*

March 2001

Dear Friends and Churches,

Our group was headed out to visit the refugee camp using two Land Rovers and our Cessna 182 airplane. The plan called for a day trip and we should all be back home that night.

The Land Rovers left at 5:00 AM but a storm made it impossible for me to take off in the airplane. Finally we got airborne in the afternoon, which meant our rendezvous with the Land Rovers was delayed. We would have to spend the night near the camp.

The next day in the refugee camp we had a wonderful worship service with over 1,500 refugees in our United Methodist Church. The joy they expressed in music stood in stark contrast to their living circumstances. These refugee Christians are living proof of the difference Christ makes in peoples' lives. After sharing a meal together of bread, bananas, and Cokes, we headed home.

A couple of days after returning from the camp, our daughter Kimberly developed a 104 degree fever. We gave her malaria medicine and called the missionary doctor who confirmed our course of action. As days passed Kimberly's condition grew worse. The doctor ran lab tests and the diagnosis was **malaria** and **typhoid fever**.

Kimberly was admitted to the hospital. The hospital facilities are crude and overcrowded. Claudia stayed with Kimberly who was soon receiving IV fluid and other medicines. My girls settled in for a long night of high fever, babies crying, power outages, and more medicine brought by African nurses carrying oil lamps.

The Baptist mission hospital in Kigoma has two American missionary doctors and they are my idea of missionary heroes. Self sacrificing and dedicated, they work under circumstances difficult to imagine. Now they were using their skills to treat my daughter.

With good medicine and prayer Kimberly was soon better. What could have been a tragedy was avoided. Another of the many successes for these doctors, yet no words can describe what it meant to us.

We are reminded how God uses people. We owe so much to these missionary doctors, their staff, and the Christians who support their work! As missionaries we know that these missionaries, too, are only able to serve because God's people faithfully support God's work. May God bless every person supporting missionaries committed to sharing and showing Christ's love.

Love,

*Lowell, Claudia
Kimberly & Luke*

Joy in the Harvest



MANY ATTEND CHURCH FOR FIRST TIME

New Church Building Opens

“The church is God’s most important institution on earth. The church is the social agent that most significantly shapes and forms the character of Christians. And the church is the primary vehicle of God’s grace and salvation for a waiting, desperate world...”

The church is a kind of ark — providing a place to stand, companionship with others of like mind and imagination, and a rudder to guide in a society that has otherwise lost direction.”

Rodney Clapp, *Families at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional and Modern Options*

Open for God’s business.

A year long construction project is now complete. The new church building for the Gungu United Methodist Church is finished!

Opening Sunday was preceded by four nights of “Cinema Evangelism.” Christian movies were shown to a packed church. Muslims, not allowed by their faith to enter the church, stood at the door to watch. Many people, especially children, made decisions to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The new church building can seat up to 500 — ten times the present size of the congregation. We are trusting God for an increase in numbers. The church has met in a school room until now.

On opening Sunday the church building was full with visiting choirs, government dignitaries, and guests from several nations. The service was broadcast on the State owned radio station. It was a joyous day. ✕

→ CHECKLIST →

☺ **Address:**

Joy in the Harvest
P.O. Box 496
Lansing, IL 60438

Africa e-mail Wertz@MAF.org
(valid only until July 1, 2001).

☹ **IMPORTANT CHANGE:**

Only **after** July 1, 2001
New Africa E-Mail Address:
Wertz@MAF.or.tz

☺ **Spring Women’s Retreat**

March 31, 2001. 9 to 3. To be held at *Marco’s* in Lynwood, IL

Theme will be, “He puts a song in our heart... gives us a heart to serve.”

For information & reservations contact Sandra Shelby at 708-895-2897 or Joan Weaver at 708-836-4121. Don’t miss it!



WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

In January we were thrilled to have 5 guests visiting from Indiana. It is such a blessing when folks come out to fellowship and help with the work.

Julie Jenkins, a DePaw University student from New Palestine UMC, incorporated her mission trip to Tanzania with university studies in Ghana. Rev. Glen Beck, a leader in missions interpretation for the Southern



Our visitors from Indiana in the Mutabila refugee camp.

Indiana Annual Conference, brought Larry Sweany from Good Shepard UMC, Dale Kitley and Timothy Gunn both from New Palestine UMC. By giving witness in the refugee and destitute camps, working on generators, teaching computer students, and helping open our new UM church, these visitors were a real blessing to us and our African Christians. Should you be planning a trip to Africa? ✕



IT FLOATS!

Our Boat — Named and Launched

And the winning name is —
SAFINA...

Safina is the Swahili word for *Noah's Ark*. It was suggested by our workers.

We liked so many of the suggested names, especially *The Life Boat*, submitted by the Kenora Bible Church Sunday School Class. The idea behind their suggestion was from John 14:6 where Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." We originally chose their name, but when it was announced here in Tanzania it became clear that the idea lost something in the translation. So we finally gave the boat a Swahili name.

The boat has been used on local fishing trips. When we know Lake Tanganyika better it will be used for evangelism trips as well.



Built in our yard, we loaded the boat on the trailer to haul it to the water.



Built strong for the world's longest lake and second deepest lake.

Just Some of the Suggested Names

The Good News Boat
The Dawn Treader
The Navigator
The Kit-Kat
Rahab
The Miss Kim I
The Life Boat
The Word
Logos
The Titanic Too
A Capital Ship
The Claudie Dawnie
The Shepherd
The Ark II

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



What is your favorite Scripture verse?

Q. Which scripture verse(s) have helped you the most? (from a church in PA)

A. Lowell: *Mark 4:41b* "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him." This is the most important question ever asked. Every time I focus on the answer the wind and waves diminish in importance.

Claudia: *Jer. 29:11* "'For I know the plans I have for you' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" I take comfort in the truth that God is in control.

Kimberly: *Lam. 3:40-41* "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens."

Seeking a deeper relationship with God leads to true heart-worship!

Luke: *Isa. 41:10a* "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God."

I know that whatever is going on, God is always with me and I'll never need to worry.