



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

December, 2001

Dear Friends, Family, and Churches,

Another tough decision. Terrorists had destroyed the twin towers in the name of Allah, and America was ready to start bombing. We were sitting in the midst of a Muslim community. Our relationships with our Muslim friends are good but it only takes one extremist enflamed with hatred for America and Christianity to pose real danger.

We didn't want to leave our home, our friends, our work. These fill our lives with happiness. Should we just stay put and see what happens? Memories of 1991 and another evacuation with the loss of all we owned haunted our decision.

I thought back ten years to when I was in a church basement in America. We showed our slides and then it was question and answer time. "How can you risk the lives of your children because you think you have a call from God?" Under gunfire we had just lost our mission station in Zaire. I must have sounded like a madman talking about returning to Africa.

In that church basement I made a promise. "Sometimes you get caught by something you can't foresee, but I will never knowingly risk the lives of my wife and children." I meant it. Today the "basement promise" would guide my decision. We would make a temporary, precautionary pullout from Kigoma and go to South Africa until we could better assess the risks. We packed our bags with no enthusiasm.

As we locked the door to leave, Claudia said to me, "Walk around the outside of the house, just to check everything." A "walk around inspection" -- I had made that kind of safety inspection of my airplane hundreds of times, before every flight. But this was different. This house is my home. These people and this place are my life's work. Each step I took probed my emotions. We are leaving for the safety of those who mean the most to me. God willing, we would be back soon.

The work in Kigoma goes forward in the hands of trusted African staff. We are in close contact with them. I am writing this letter from Johannesburg, South Africa. Like many people affected by these difficult times, we must take things one day at a time. Our prayer is that we will be home for Christmas in Kigoma.

We wish you a wonderful and blessed Christmas. May the peace of Jesus Christ, the Hope of the world, be yours this holiday season.

Merry Christmas!

*Lowell, Claudia  
Kimberly & Luke*

# Joy in the Harvest



JOY IN THE HARVEST CELEBRATES

## Nine Years of Blessings!

*Doth not He ride upon the wings of the wind, and make the clouds His chariots, and hold the ocean in the hollow of His hand?*

*How can He fail thee?*

C. H. Spruceon (1834—1892)

**This December marks the ninth anniversary of the founding of *Joy in the Harvest*.**

We are celebrating nine years of God working through this ministry in Africa. Rejoice with us! Here are some special points of praise.

### Evangelism and Soul Winning

The Gospel presented — dozens of evangelism events, sermons, and through personal witnessing. Many received Christ as Lord and Savior.

### Help for the church in Africa

Seminars for evangelists and pastors, construction of church facilities, financial assistance to churches and pastors, children's ministry, a variety of practical helps to churches and mission groups.

### Help for the Poor

Support for the Kigoma Destitute Camp, "Friday people" medical and emergency aid, refugee ministries, help for the elderly, vocational training for youth.

### Establishing a Christian Mission

Built house and office, acquired land to expand, purchased building for ministry work, aviation ministry, developed capable African staff, excellent office in the USA.

**God is doing great things through *Joy in the Harvest*. Thanks for being an important part of making it all happen!** ☩



## CHECKLIST



### \* Address:

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

### Africa E

Mail: wertz@africaonline.co.tz

### Web site:

www.joyintheharvest.com

(An envelope is enclosed as a convenience for those wishing to send a gift or note.)

### \* Hope for Peace in Burundi

Nelson Mandela's mediation has resulted in a new government in Burundi with hope of ending its civil war. Over 500,000 have been killed since 1993. Burundi is 30 miles north of Kigoma.



WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

***Joy in the Harvest* is pleased to have Pastor Rudo Kilatsa as one of our staff. Rudo brings his own special spiritual gifts and personal warmth to our ministry team.**

Rudo accepted the Lord as his personal Savior in 1992. We met Rudo when he did volunteer work at the Kigoma Destitute Camp. When we learned that he was looking to serve Christ full-time, we helped him financially so he



Pastor Rudo Kilatsa

could complete his training at Bigabiro Bible College. He works with our "Friday poor people" checking if their requests are legitimate and urgent. He also visits and prays for the sick in the hospital. Rudo married his wife, Elizafi, in 1992 and they have 4 children. They also care for 3 other children that were abandoned. Rudo serves as a leader in his church. ☩



HAVE YOU HEARD?

## News and Other Happenings

### 5H-JOY To Help With Search and Rescue

The government of Tanzania has asked if *Joy in the Harvest* would be willing to fly a search and rescue mission using our Cessna 182 if an emergency arises. Our airplane is the only plane based in Kigoma and one of the few airplanes in western Tanzania. We have agreed to their request.



5H-JOY at the Kigoma Airport

### Christmas Gifts for the Destitute Elderly

In what is becoming a tradition, the *Joy in the Harvest* Women's Retreat is providing small Christmas gifts for the destitute elderly in Johannesburg, South Africa. The *Aid to the Aged* ministry of Rev. and Mrs. Walter Maasch has been reaching out to these old folks with the Gospel and food. Our Women's Retreat ladies provide small Christmas gift packages that cheer these dear folks. This also means donated funds are conserved so more food assistance can be provided. *Joy in the Harvest* has been involved in this wonderful ministry for the past eight years.

### Needed: A Mission Office Manager

After nearly 10 years of dedicated service as the North American Executive Director for *Joy in the Harvest*, Darrell Rader has decided to step down from the task of running our USA office. We are seeking God's person to serve this critical role for our mission. The position requires a person who is organized and has a solid Christian commitment. The work load is part-time. If you would like to explore the possibility of serving as the USA office manager of *Joy in the Harvest*, please send us a letter or e-mail.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Are There Muslims in Tanzania?

**Q. Are there Muslims in the place where you do your mission work?** (question from North Carolina)

A. When we first came to Tanzania nine years ago we had no idea that about a third of the population of Tanzania was Muslim. Like most Americans we had very little knowledge of Islam or the Muslim people. We have been learning ever since.

The Kigoma region has a large

Muslim population. There are many mosques in our town, and five times a day they sound the Arabic call to prayer. The 5 AM call to prayer woke us up everyday for years. Friday is the Muslim holy day when they give alms to the poor. Many live by a strict moral code that forbids pork and alcohol.

During their holy month of Ramadan (mid-Nov. to mid-Dec.) they do not eat or drink during the daytime. The conclusion of Ramadan is a

festive time with family celebrations. Some friends bring us plates of cookies and other special treats. We have been guests in Muslim homes for meals and at wedding celebrations. After the Sept. 11th tragedy we received sympathy cards from Muslim friends who expressed their shock and sadness by the terrorist attack.

Friendship builds bridges that love can travel. As Christians we are to love Muslim people.

*"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light... they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest." Isaiah 9:2,3*