

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

September, 2006

Dear Friends, Churches, and Family,

Our quick trip to the USA is coming to an end. The amount of work needing to be accomplished dominates every waking hour. Claudia insisted that we have one enjoyable evening in downtown Chicago.

As we sat in the square by Chicago's famed Water Tower, a street evangelist was preaching to the crowd. Evangelism and the gospel of Jesus Christ are passions of mine so we stayed to listen for almost an hour.

The preacher was a handsome man who had no inhibitions about public speaking. As we listened it soon became clear that this man had troubling theology and some disturbing mental problems. His prophecies, interpretations of dreams, and ranting of non-sense sprinkled with references to Jesus, and his own supernatural experiences, created in me both sadness and sympathy for him.

Observing the crowd was fascinating. Many acted as if the man didn't exist and walked passed him without acknowledging his presence. Others made unkind comments. The "evangelist" was a sensitive man who heard every comment. Each verbal barb seemed to cut him but he was committed to his mission.

A clown was trying to work the same crowd. The "evangelist" was hurting business and after a couple of small discussions between the two of them, the clown decided to make a loud public proclamation of his own. "Man of God," he shouted, "you are breaking the law. I have a permit to work here and you don't!" The "evangelist" replied, "I am only speaking loud. I ask for nothing from anyone. I do not wish to contend with you."

Other people did stopped to listen. Mothers with strollers, old men, young teenagers, all sorts of folks. They were not hostile. They were hungry. This fearless man was willing to do hard things and risk shame for his beliefs. They were drawn by his courage. Was there something here for them? After a few moments, with a tinge of sadness, they would drift away. Just another demented man with a crazy message.

Christ's early disciples were not afraid to be perceived as "fools for Christ". They preached in open air. They did hard things in dangerous times. Their message was Christ, Himself. They went to where people gathered, won a hearing, and the hungry and thirsty found Righteousness. Those ancient methods still work. People will still listen. The message of a wonderful Savior needs to be proclaimed everywhere.

Love,

Lowell & Claudia

Our Daughter's Wedding



With the third fish caught, the bride price was paid and the wedding was a go!



"The moment I've dreaded since her birth." -- *Father of the Bride*



Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Harrison



People lined the roads to cheer the bride and groom.



Presentation of cloth: a typical wedding gift in Africa.



"So... where should we go for the honeymoon?"



Joy in the Harvest



A DAY TO REMEMBER FOREVER

An African Wedding

*"A wedding
is an event,
but a marriage
is an achievement."*

- from a wedding ceremony
conducted by the late Supreme Court
Justice Harry Blackmun

July 22 was the big day. After months of work and planning, the wedding of Kimberly Wertz and Daniel Harrison occurred in Kigoma.

It was the first time two Americans were married in Kigoma. The wedding combined American and African traditions. Our African friends found it all very fascinating.

Guests came from all over the world to attend the wedding.

From the U.S.A., U.K., Mexico, Mauritania, Bukeno Faso, and Tanzania, over 450 guests attended the service.

The bride and groom also invited street people and the residents of the destitute camp.

Gifts of new clothes were provided to these guests and their jubilant spirits added much to the celebration.

The fathers of the bride and groom officiated at the service.

A reception was held immediately after the ceremony and another reception was held in Naperville, Illinois on August 12. ☿

CHECKLIST

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☺ 25th Women's Retreat

Number twenty-five will be a very special women's retreat. Don't miss it! It will be held on Oct. 14 at *Benny's* in Lynwood, IL. Contact Joan Weaver at 1-219-836-4121 for more info.



WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

In June we were blessed by the visit of some long-time friends. Rev. Jeff Baer and his wife Judy lead a mission team from Faith United Methodist Church in Downers Grove, IL to Kigoma.

Twenty eight years ago the Baers took time to encourage a young couple who dreamed of becoming missionaries to Africa. Just weeks before their retirement from the pastorate, the Baers were able, for



Jeff Baer, Judy Baer, Eric Natividad,
Sally Dougall, Suzy Hayden,
Shirley Kendall, Roxanne Flesher

the first time, to visit the mission work they helped make a reality. Their African ministries included preaching, praying with people, helping the poor, bringing needed supplies from their church, and making decorative worship banners for our local church. This team was a blessing and an encouragement to us and to many others. Our thanks to all who helped make their trip, our dream, come true. ☿



VISITORS, NUPTIALS, MINISTRY

Summer 2006 in Africa!

JOY's Cessna Airplane Has Been Sold



Our Cessna 182 airplane (a four seat, single engine plane) was sold earlier this year. For 13 years, without accident or incident, this airplane made routine supply flights and mercy flights. Recently it was not being fully utilized as commercial air service to Kigoma has improved and because it has limited carrying capacity. A decision will be made later if a larger airplane is to be acquired.

Seminar in Congolese Refugee Camp

When *Joy in the Harvest* was asked to provide a seminar in a Congolese Refugee Camp, Daniel Harrison, and his two former roommates, Jeff Eckhardt and Ryan Bell, prepared for weeks and presented a study on the Biblical book of Zechariah. More than three hundred and fifty pastors and Christian workers attended the two day event.



Jeff & Ryan

Indiana Pastor Returns



With a heart for young people, Rev. Art Collins returned again this summer. Although he is usually leading a Scout troupe, this time he brought two students, Nikki Schmeltzer and Amber Bloom to experience the mission field and help Africans. It was Nikki's first trip and Amber's second trip to Kigoma. It was also the first trip to Tanzania for Deanna -- Art's wife. We enjoyed their visit very much!



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What are some African wedding customs?

Q. Was Kimberly's wedding African or American?

(asked via e-mail)

A. They combined customs from both cultures. Here are some things that reflected Tanzanian traditions:

- Their engagement announcement and an exchanging of rings had to be made in front of the church indicating their families' approval. It provides a time of wild celebrating for the church.
- All aspects of work for the wedding and reception, including issuing invita-

tions, was done by appointed committees of church people.

- An official notice was required to be posted on the church door and at the post office three weeks before the wedding to give people a chance to mount a legal challenge to the marriage. It declared if the union would be monogamous or polygamous.
- The bride price had to be paid by the groom. Kimberly's bride price was three Lake Tanganyika perch caught by Daniel -- but usually it is goats, cows, sewing machines, or cash.
- Days before the reception large tubs of

meat were delivered to Claudia's kitchen to be prepared for the reception meal. One hundred chickens were killed the morning of the wedding.

- All pastors attending the wedding came forward during the service to pray for the couple.
- A major part of the reception was a ceremony of presenting wedding gifts. Individuals and groups were called forward to present their gifts. These included Africa cloth, eggs, woven baskets, and custom made clothing including a traditional tribal suit made from tree bark for Daniel. ✕

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