

*Lowell & Claudia Wertz
P.O. Box 1344
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September, 2009

Dear Friends, Family, and Churches,

Luke and Kara's wedding is over and in a few days we are headed back to Africa. How blessed we have been to serve as a missionaries for thirty years.

Just what is a missionary? The dictionary says it is "a person sent on a religious mission to promote Christianity in a foreign country." The term missionary doesn't appear in the Bible. The closest word fitting this definition is "apostle" which means "a sent one". However, I will not be calling myself an apostle any time soon!

Popular sayings such as, "Everyone is either a missionary or a mission field," while making a point, broaden the meaning too much. The late Dr. J. H. Kane, professor of missions, put it this way, "When our country is at war, every citizen is involved in the war effort. But every citizen is not a soldier. Every Christian should be involved in missions. But the term missionary is reserved for those who go." I like to define a missionary as one who is sent across geographical, cultural, and/or language boundaries to share the Gospel.

Missionaries are both reviled and revered. Some serve in such difficult and hostile places for the Gospel, they dare not even use the word.

The greatest unpublished story of our day is that the work of the "Great Commission" is succeeding. Each day the percentage of the world's population following Christ is increasing. More people are becoming Christians every day than are being born. The sacrifices made by missionaries and their supporters are changing hearts, lives, and the world.

When my best friend and fellow missionary pilot, Stan Ridgway, was shot and killed by rebels in Zaire (Congo), the late Rev. Ken Enright preached the memorial service. He preached about the word, "missionary". He called it a treasured term -- one that has deep meaning for those identified by it. He reflected on the weight of the responsibility the position carries, the joy of serving God, and of personal sacrifice. He said among missionaries, no other title conveyed upon another carries more respect, or more honor. Then he concluded the service by simply saying, "Stan Ridgway was a missionary."

God calls missionaries. Christians send them. Thank you for enabling us to serve as missionaries in Africa.

Love,

Lowell + Claudia



Joy in the Harvest



VILLAGES WE NEVER VISITED BEFORE...

“Fishing Kit” Evangelism

“The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of that which is elusive but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope.”

John Buchan

1875-1940

Scottish historian, author, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada

Over 400 fishing kits were put together by members and Sunday school kids at the Wheatland Salem UMC in Naperville, IL. These kits were distributed to children living on the shore of Lake Tanganyika.

Bobbers, hooks, fishing line, and sinkers were put into small ziplock

bags. Also a Swahili gospel tract, “*Jesus loves Fishermen*,” was included.

We traveled in our boat to the remote, northern shore of Lake Tanganyika. The fishing kits were received with the greatest enthusiasm.

One village was over 85% Muslim. It was a fun way to be “fishers of men” for the Lord. ✂



CHECKLIST



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Mwenge visits Disney

Mwenge stood up in Luke’s wedding and then went to Disney World for a day. His reaction? “The haunted house needs a cleaning.”



WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

We were privileged to have an amazing young man volunteer for six weeks in Kigoma. Nick Rotondi is a man of many talents!

Nick is a fifth-year architectural student at Penn State and has studied in Italy. He volunteered to be on the team to design the new MCCA hospital. When the government reversed course concerning the land, Nick adapted



Nick Rotondi

to the situation. He did artwork, designing a mural for the guest house, drew designs for a future children’s project, participated in evangelism, Bible studies, compassion ministries, and gave architectural advice on the community center building, and more. He is amazing — I felt like I met a true renaissance man! Thanks, Nick, for all you did for us and for Africa. ✂



BAPTIZED AMONG THOSE WHOM GOD USED...

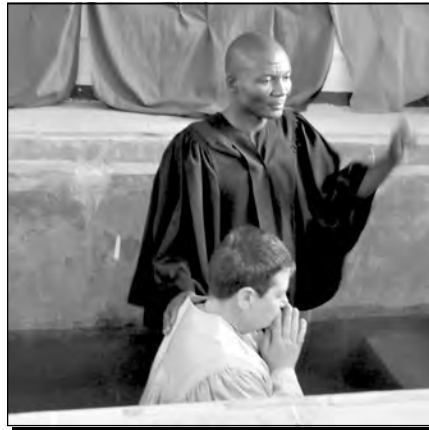
How Bonnie Came to Christ

Scott, a visitor from Illinois, was deeply touched by what he saw on his visit to Africa.

The poverty and need were overwhelming. But he got really excited about the ministries and help that *Joy in the Harvest* was providing to the Africans. It was a life changing experience for him to sit in on the Friday People program.

When Scott got home, he returned to the bar he use to frequent and shared his experiences with others.

Many at the bar weren't too interested. They would change the subject and make jokes. But one person, Bonnie, wanted to hear more. She was interested because she knew whatever



Bonnie Bradlee, baptized on July 5, 2009, in Kigoma, Tanzania

happened to Scott was something big. She could tell that she wasn't going to get the interesting details at the bar; when Scott said he was going to be telling about his trip at a church on Saturday night, she wanted to hear more. When she got there, she was stunned to find

out it was going to be a church service and not just a travel log speech. She REALLY DIDN'T want to go to a church service — it had been more than forty years. But Scott told her they were going to have free food afterward, and she would hear all about his trip. She very reluctantly agreed to go in.

That church service marked a new beginning for Bonnie. She found Jesus.

She told the members of the Gungu UM Church in Kigoma, "God used your love to touch Scott and bring me to Jesus. I want to be baptized here, among you, whose love reached out from Africa, all the way to the bar in the USA, and brought me to Christ." ✠



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Luke and Kara Got Married!

Q. "How was the wedding?"

— asked by almost everyone

A. The majestic old church was graced by a beautiful wedding on a perfect August day. Luke Wertz, born and raised in Africa, was wed to the love of his life, Kara McNeel, a Cincinnati girl. Luke met Kara at Asbury College. She is an educator and artist who loves working with children. Luke is a computer



Luke and Kara Wertz were married on August 8, 2009 in Cincinnati, Ohio

programmer and has been working at the University of Cincinnati designing the school's websites. The wedding reflected their values of commitment to Christ and love of family and friends. Mwenge, Luke's lifelong friend, came from Tanzania to America just to stand up in the wedding. Family recipes produced seventeen great wedding cakes. ✠

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