

*Lowell & Claudia Wertz
P.O. Box 496
Lansing, IL 60438*

March 2019

Dear Friends,

Our house is bustling with activities. Get the newsletter done, get the Tanzanian annual report done, get the IRS foreign bank accounts report done. Visitors are coming! Start packing for furlough! And so on...

In the middle of the work, there is a happiness that comes from knowing we have finished another term of missionary service strong. Our longest term ever – seven years. I wouldn't try to put a number on the lives saved, the suffering relieved, the hungry fed, the people that have come to Jesus. But the numbers are large.

But numbers don't tell the whole story. The smile of a child when given food, the mother who can't find words to express her gratefulness that her child lives because of a surgery, and the woman falling to her knees weeping because we helped her kids get into school. These moments, and there are many of them, make us rejoice that God has permitted us to be His missionaries.

My missionary mentor told me that the call to missions is a call to a life of sorrow. I know of the sadness he was talking about. There is a cross we are called to carry. But he didn't tell me the whole story. The joy that Jesus sets before us makes the cross seem lighter. And at times, so light it is almost not even there.

So where do you fit in?

Every joy I experience, you are in my heart. Every penny given, I am eternally grateful to you, the giver. Every day I know you care. Your partnership with the Lord is the foundation of all the good things happening here. You care about things beyond yourself.

You amaze me because you are faithful to the Lord even though you don't see those smiles, healed bodies, and the tears of a desperate woman – you don't see all those who received your love. You challenge my faith and commitment with your own. You make me want to work harder and longer, and do more for the Lord.

So we are headed back to the USA for a furlough. Claudia needs her shoulder operation, we need some rest, and most important, we need to come see you. We need to say "Thank You"!

Love,

Lowell + Claudia



Joy in the Harvest®



USA — Here We Come!

We have been chosen to serve in the season that we are in right now...

Remember, God has purposed us for a time and a season, and these different seasons and timings are not in vain.

Sara Rima

Furlough is coming up quickly now. Once back in the States, Claudia will begin the pre-surgery testing.

Several years ago Claudia hurt her shoulder unloading a container here in Kigoma. Arthritis has set

in and destroyed the joint. She is scheduled for full shoulder replacement surgery on April 10 in Rockford, IL.

Our plan is to allow time for recovery and to modify our new travel trailer for full time, all-weather living for the rest of furlough. We plan to begin church visits mid-August through the following June.

We want to visit as many of our friends and churches as we can. Claudia runs the calendar and it is a very difficult job. Please contact us soon via email: wertz@joyintheharvest.com

We miss you all and it has been way too long since we have seen you. Furlough will be a happy time for us of reunion and fellowship. ✕

CHECKLIST

USA Office Address

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

Phone: **219-365-7908**
usaoffice@joyintheharvest.com

Lowell & Claudia Wertz

Joy in the Harvest
P.O. Box 1344
Kigoma, Tanzania
wertz@joyintheharvest.com

Website & Facebook

www.joyintheharvest.com

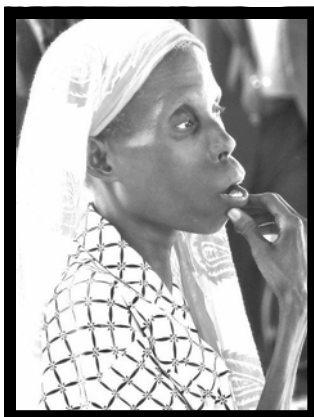
<https://web.facebook.com/JoyintheHarvestKigoma/>



WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

It is with sadness we report the death of Mama Amina Issa, a friend and sister in the Lord

Mama Amina struggled as a beggar, widowed, diabetic, blind, and a Muslim with young two children. She lived in terrible circumstances and thought she would be dead in a few months. That was more than a dozen years ago. She accepted Jesus as her



Mama Amina Issa
1974-2019

Savior. With medical treatments and eye surgery, she regained her sight. Always severely underweight, she grew strong in the Christian faith and became known to all for her spiritual wisdom. She became a trustee on the Tanzanian Board of Directors for *Joy in the Harvest*. She passed away in the hospital of complications of diabetes. Thank you for helping Mama Amina! ✕



African Drum Beats

Eva Becomes a Radio Announcer



When my granddaughter and her family were able to spend a few days at Christmas with us, Eva did a station ID for Radio JOY. *“Hi, my name is Eva and I am Lowell Wertz’ granddaughter. Thank you for listening to Radio JOY, 90.5 FM.”*

2018 Ends In the Black!

THANK YOU for your support that meant we ended 2018 (barely) in the black. Every supporter and every gift was so important. We started 2018 in the black but with no cushion. The giving in the first half of the year was stronger than normal. We were able to avoid red ink until the summer months. Then red ink started creeping up the second half of the year. By the end of December, ‘end of the year giving’ was again critical for our finances. **Our December newsletter (with our once a year gift envelope) was mailed from Tanzania at Thanksgiving. Many didn’t receive it until mid-January! Disaster.** Another cliff-hanger year. But God is faithful.

Briefs

- We wish to thank everyone for their expressed sympathy at the loss of Claudia’s Mom. We are very appreciative.
- Another great Christmas party at the Destitute Camp. Always a special time.
- We are winding down from the follow-up cases from our Free Medical Clinic. From over 200 follow-up cases, we have only 3 patients still in the hospital.
- The police called us into the police station. They just wanted to thank **Radio JOY** for the effect on the population and that we have made their job easier. Crime is down!



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How Will the UMC Crisis Affect JOY?

Q. How will the LBGTQ crisis in the United Methodist Church affect Joy in the Harvest? - asked by a friend

A. Everyone gets hurt in a church fight. Missions is usually not even considered at the time of a church crisis. It seems almost everyone is focused only on the controversies. On a personal level people may ask, “How will this affect my church, my

membership, my children, my denomination?” Not many ask, “How will this affect our missionaries?” Some, for sake of conscience, have pulled out of the church — but they don’t take JOY with them. One church now supporting LBGTQ has already given us notice that we are no longer welcome and their support is finished. Then another furlough speaking invitation

evaporated. This crisis will hurt JOY and all mission work unless those who do believe the Scriptures, believe in Jesus and His Great Commission, and love the poor and unreached become very intentional in their commitment. We have weathered other storms. We know the One Who can walk on water. With Jesus we could see greater things in the future, if we just trust and obey. Let’s keep the faith! ✠

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