

*Lowell & Claudia Wertz
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September 2025

Dear Friends,

It is time to go back to Africa. We have our tickets for September 20 to fly from Chicago to Amsterdam and after a three-hour layover, fly to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Then, the next day, a two-hour flight home to Kigoma.

This last couple of weeks in the USA are going to be a whirlwind. Not only are we getting this newsletter and thank you notes out, we have to close down and store the travel trailer and truck, have an in-person JOY Board of Directors meeting, receive our new passports, and finish purchasing and packing.

We are excited to get back. After 14 months in our travel trailer, every Saturday night in a different church parking lot ready to share the next day at a church, Claudia says the camper seemed to get smaller. But this furlough has been fantastic. We were so thrilled to see many of our old and dear friends. You are very near and dear to our hearts.

We didn't get to see everyone we need and want to see. Our plan right now is to be in Africa for a year and come back next fall for a few months to get to see more friends and churches.

Our church visits were so meaningful to us. Every church we visited made us feel so special and loved. We visited United Methodist Churches, Global Methodist Churches and also churches of other denominations. We are deeply grateful for the invitations we received and made an effort to accept as many as possible. It has been amazing to see God at work in unique and often miraculous ways in the churches. We are so encouraged.

We rejoice having churches that are serious about Christ's Great Commission. God loves everyone and all people need the Lord Jesus as their Savior. The opportunities for the work of the Gospel have never been greater in Africa. God is preparing His people in America for this work and the blessings that are ahead.

Rejoice with us that we have a God who cares and loves people all over the world. What an honor to share together in the work God calls us to do. We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us, often at great cost. We will not forget or fail them. Let us be faithful. Let us permit the Lord of the Great Commission to inspire us to bring His love and salvation to all of Africa and beyond.

Love,

Lowell + Claudia



Joy in the Harvest®



Hello Africa

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

Anne Frank

Famous for her diary published after her death at 15 in a German concentration camp

My first trip to Africa was in 1969. Claudia’s first trip to Africa was in 1980. I have lost track how many trips we have made. But this furlough has been our most wonderful time in the USA!

We are leaving America with a deep love for our home country. Living overseas has made me even more appreciative of the USA. I never get tired of seeing “Old Glory” waving in the breeze. The freedoms we enjoy, the fantastic people we meet, and shared call of God’s people living for others, has made America the most special place in the world for me.

We return to Africa with a renewed sense of purpose.

God has put a call upon our lives to serve Him in Africa. For 45 years we have been blessed to be able to do so. We know our ministry depends on the generosity, hard work, and love of others. To all of you serving the Lord and enabling us to continue being missionaries, please know we are so thankful. ✕

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WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

For many years Joy in the Harvest has had a 20 foot ocean shipping container we use for storage in the USA.

The container is located in what Claudia lovingly calls “the gravel pit”. Other public storage units are rented as needed, especially during furloughs. It was time to revamp, clean, and organize our storage. Not a glamorous job, but an important one. Our storage



There is nothing quite like spending time in the gravel pit.
(Claudia took the picture.)

supports the use of the travel trailer and shipping vital supplies to the field. This year my daughter, Kimberly, and her family spent a few weeks in the USA. They carved out time from a tight schedule to help out “Mom and Dad”. Bob and Cheryl Crosby and friend Lucas joined the effort. It was a huge job. We are able to return to Africa with everything in place for our next trip to America. ✕



While We Were On Furlough...

The work in Tanzania continued full speed ahead. Here is a small sample of what has been happening...



The annual soccer tournament always provides an opportunity to teach about AIDS prevention. You must attend if you want to play. Over 1,000 did.



An eight day open air evangelism campaign resulted in many coming to Christ.



The grass thatch roof at the Feeding Center was replaced with metal sheets. It was leaking and a fire hazard.



Regular maintenance and repairs for **Radio JOY** were completed by our staff. Transmitter issues required long distance troubleshooting by me.



Many new churches were started. Under tarps and bamboo, the Word of God is preached. Congregations are growing. We distributed Bibles to the new churches and others.



Final Exam for Computer Students. Hundreds received certificates.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Did You Get Any Family Time?

Were you able to see your family while on furlough?

--several have enquired

It is very rare for our family to be able to get together, or be on the same continent. But it did happen! Our daughter Kimberly and her family came to the USA from their field of service, to celebrate Daniel's parents 50th anniversary. We



Kimberly and Luke with their families and, of course, Mom & Dad in the middle.

jumped at the chance to have a reunion of our own. We rented an Airbnb in Nashville Indiana for four days. The farmhouse was called *Blessings Farmhouse*. The basement was full of games for the kids and the adults spent lots of time together giving and getting advice. An attempt to ride my e-bike showed my knee isn't ready for it yet. We had the best time ever! ☺

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