

Uganda Report (May 2013)

For those of you who could not be with us Sunday noon to hear the report of our trip, I'm writing a note to express our deep gratitude for your prayers and giving as well as to give you a brief review of what God did during that week.

We knew that you were with us in spirit and we knew that you were praying. We're so thankful that you remembered us and called on our merciful God to go before us and protect every aspect of our time. THANK YOU is inadequate! I hope to convey some of the fruit of your labor with us.

Some of the immediate things God did – where we expected no water, we had showers every night (even hot water 3 of those nights); where we expected no power, we had power every night except one; where we expected dangerous, primitive roads, we had a new paved road with guard rails; where we expected to have to ford rivers, God had built bridges; where we had brought enough dried food to last the whole 10 days, God gave us hot, good, local meals. We were SO grateful. In every area, God smoothed the way and provided beyond our expectations. Isn't that just like Him?!

It was a week of contrasts such as we've never seen before. The beauty of God's creation displayed in majestic glory in sky, earth and people vs. the devastating effects of sin set in circumstances that shocked the senses.

The people live in crushing poverty within some of the most majestic beauty you'll ever see. No electricity, no water, no bathrooms, no mail delivery, no windows or doors, no hope/thought of improvement. Most live in one room with a sheet for a door and cook outside over charcoal fires. Ovens are made by wrapping containers with banana leaves. You can see them smoldering across the landscape. But they are a strikingly attractive people! You see the indomitable human spirit, the image of God, in their beautiful faces. They're a friendly people with a ready smile. We were welcomed by the beautiful smiles and joyful waves of both adults and children.

The overwhelming thought I had was that their only hope is that they know Christ! No miracle is going to come along and transport them to a more prosperous life. And if it did, what good would that be without knowing Christ? The reality of their reality is staggering! Our culture hides the truth from our consciousness. Theirs reveals it!

Clinic days:

These people were invited by Bishop Hannington Bahemuka's churches. We were only able to give them a moment's love and relieve a few symptoms for a very short time. Each one was prayed for before they left. It occurred to me that one short encounter will make little to no difference to their lives – but if they were touched deeply enough by our love, they may respond to the invitation to the local churches. It is there that they'll find abundant life – living water!

Your prayers sustained and strengthened us day after day. The pastors, many of whom have never had a Bible, were so excited to receive the solar Bibles and be instructed in how they can begin small discipleship groups. This is where the real change, the fruit of what God

began through us, will take place. Bishop Hannington oversees 31 local churches, each of which received a solar Bible.

We were also blessed to be able to experience several amazing sightseeing events. We took a short safari in Queen Elizabeth State Park, snapped pictures on the equator, saw where the Nile originates from Lake Victoria and even got to witness baptisms there.

Our expectation is that we have not yet seen what God is going to do through Bishop Hannington's continued, faithful efforts as he encourages the local churches under his leadership.

Again, thank you so much for going with us to Uganda. We will never be the same and we pray, neither will Uganda!

Jan Fehlhaber
Kevin Houlihan
Tim Houlihan