

Thoughts From Dave

A Ugandan friend tells me that Americans have watches and Ugandans have time. Otherwise known as “African time”, one must constantly adjust to the ebb and flow of experiences and events that come your way each trip. Yet, it is beautiful to see how God uses these situations to give us a deeper sense of his providence in all things; especially in travel delays and in serendipitous meetings with people in unexpected places.

In April, I had a travel and teaching partner from Ithaca. Our trip was Mike Paris’ first international trip and God gave us a wonderful ministry partnership (see his comments on page 2). Three weeks of intense travel and teaching responsibilities allowed us to present Old and New Testament themes from a variety of biblical books. As you might imagine, we were kept on our toes and we loved every minute.

Spending time in Oyam, Kampala, and Masaka, Uganda bracketed the week we spent in Fimpulu, Zambia. Each setting required teaching to a different language group and cultural scene. We were grateful for the gifted interpreters and the desire of the learners to understand and apply God’s Word. New relationships were developed and plans are being made for the next steps for the training through our global partnerships. Thanks for your prayers and for your support!

Pictorial Update of Uganda and Zambia Trip



Pastor Andrew praying with pastors and church leaders in Oyam Uganda



Over 100 pastors and church leaders gathered for training at Choshen Farm in Fimpulu, Zambia



Teaching through the OT Prophets and their message for today



Emerging Leaders in Masaka



Visit with Pastor Alyos and his wife, who has pioneered church planting in Masaka and Kisoro areas since 1980's



Exciting travel adventures in Zambia



Thoughts From Mike Paris - These past three weeks have been a significant journey in the grace and sovereignty of God. Dave and I have journeyed into the lives of African people in three distinct and unique settings (Oyam, Mansa, Masaka). We have been welcomed with Christian hospitality and warmth in every place. I quickly formed quality relationships with believers who are eager to engage in honest, transparent and relevant conversations about living and growing as a follower of Jesus Christ. While most of the teaching sessions had to be relayed through an interpreter, the gospel and the Word of God were clearly and carefully communicated to eager believers.

It was refreshing to partner with men and women who desire to develop in their faith and walk by it. Their enthusiastic zeal for practical truth fueled my teaching efforts and blessed my spirit. One of the conference guests expressed his excitement in this way: "I feel like a seal has been opened on Hosea. I used to skip over that book. I won't do that anymore!" Praise be to God! There is nothing as exciting as presenting the whole counsel of God and entrusting it to faithful men and women. These African brothers and sisters have become knit with my heart and bound up in my prayers.



God designed our path through Africa to include a series of unexpected twists along the way. Yet through these situations, He has strengthened our trust in His gracious sovereignty. We have seen God work to bring about His glory in the universal Church in the majority world. This confidence is now an evident truth not just a theoretical concept. I believe that the personal investment in global mission has been absolutely worth it, especially in light of my own spiritual growth. I have learned lessons in patience, flexibility, and faith. I have come to more fully appreciate the ministry of Partnerships for Training Pastors, the challenges of the Christian life in Africa, and have thereby deepened my friendship with my brother and ministry partner, Dave Jones.



Please Pray for Dave's Upcoming Trip to Kupang, Indonesia May 11-29, 2016

May 11- 13 – Travel and arrive at 9:15 pm in Kupang

May 14 – 15 -Rest and prep on Saturday and Sunday

May 16 - Theology Faculty Seminar at (TBC)

May 17 & 18 - Spiritual Leadership Training with pastors and elders on Semau Island (overnight stay)

May 19 & 20 - Spiritual Leadership Training with East Kupang Presbytery (in Kupang)

May 21 - Rest and travel to Belu

May 22 & 23 - Spiritual Leadership Training with Belu Presbytery (near East Timo border, 2 nights in Belu)

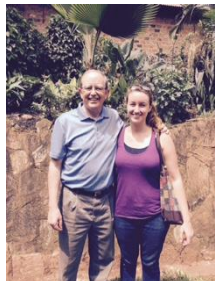
May 24 - Travel back to Kupang

May 25 & 26 - Spiritual leadership Training with East Amarasi Presbytery (day-trips from Kupang)

May 27 - Theology Faculty Seminar (TBC)

May 28 & 29 – Return trip to USA

This trip is the result of a long-term Bethel Grove connection with the Grimes family. Ben and Emma Grimes work with the Navigators in Indonesia and have a passion to disciple people using the Bibles translated by the SIL Translation Team led by Ben's mother and father. It is a privilege to return to Timor, work with the church leadership of the region, and offer seminars on Preaching and Pastoral Care at a Theological College in Kupang .



Short-Term Missions?

While in Kampala, I connected with Megan Wright, a short-term Bethel Grove Bible Church missionary serving one year with WorldVenture. Megan ministers at Kampala Baptist Church in a worship and discipleship position and always travels with us to Masaka, where she leads worship seminars. Just wondering - Have you ever considered serving God through a short-term mission's project?