

Thoughts from Dave: More than a month has passed since we last provided an Update and a lot has happened since then. The move of our stored goods from Ithaca and the process of settling into our new home began in mid-February. “Social distancing” has overtaken the world in March. Today, much of life is different and will continue to be so into the weeks and months ahead. Perhaps the best way to communicate our current thinking is to provide you with answers to questions people are asking us privately. So, here goes, starting with ministry questions first....

Has anything happened recently in the new ministry initiative in Eastern Uganda? If you remember, our 2020 Ugandan ministry strategy involves beginning to develop Emerging Leaders training across nine Ugandan regions. Starting in Eastern Uganda, our Kampala Baptist Church (KBC) partners offered two training opportunities in the Tororo region. (Eight seminars are planned for 2020 in Eastern and Central Uganda).



A February 5-7 trip was designed to meet with church leaders. This step was essential for building trust among a number of “key” pastors in the Tororo region. KBC’s Pastor Andrew Mwenge and Daudi Nkuggwa did the leg work of connecting, sharing the vision, and determining church hosts for future training. Building trust is a necessary component for future training and the trip accomplished that goal.

Last week’s March 18-20 Pastors Conference was shortened by President Museveni’s decree to limit large group gatherings in Uganda. Daudi Nkuggwa described what happened. We “arranged for some people who come from far to spend the night at church and those who come from near distances will come and return home in the evening. On the morning of 19 March, we had about 18 people who reported. We discussed and engaged them briefly about our intentions and by midday, we were done and had to leave to avoid being harassed by the State operatives.” In addition, Pastor Andrew reported that the participants were thrilled that Pastor Abel Segirinya, President of the Baptist Union of Uganda, traveled with the KBC team. Abel stressed the importance of training emerging leaders for the church’s future. After a morning of presentations, the group



disbanded in obedience to President Museveni’s decree. **Please thank the Lord for this humble beginning and pray for these leaders as they lead churches in the Tororo area.**

What are you and Joyce doing since there is a travel ban on international flights? In many ways, “ministry distancing” is something we do all the time. Presently, we are working from home keeping updated on our partners and their ministry related training. With our Ugandan partners, we continue to write and edit six Emerging Leaders training modules. They offer Old and New Testaments overviews, emphasize principles for biblical interpretation, as well as consider leadership themes, character development, and foundational ministry truths. **Pray for the development of the curriculum.**

Why not offer internet-based training? Most of our training ministry is directed to less-resourced pastors in villages. Cell phones are their main means of communication and access to computer technology is mostly non-existent. With the current ban on large group meetings across the globe, our partnerships have to be proactive in considering other methods that provide training in each cultural setting. **Please pray that we could discover an effective mobile training platform in the coming months.**

Contact Dave and Joyce Jones at dave@partnershipsfortraining.org and visit www.partnershipsfortraining.org for more information

We are grateful for your continued prayers and support for Partnerships for Training Pastors!

Did any scheduled March travel have to be postponed? Yes. Dave was ready to fly to West Timor, Indonesia for two weeks on March 18th. The trip was designed to work with Barbara Grimes in training young pastoral leaders. In addition, he was invited to teach at the Theological University on Old Testament interpretation. In early March, it became clear that we had to postpone the trip until April, but with the virus going global we cancelled that trip too. A fall visit is being considered.

Have Partnerships' 2020 ministry plans changed for Peru and Zambia? As with everything these days, we have to be very flexible in our plans. The governments of Peru and Zambia have prohibited public meetings with no clear timeline set for reopening large group teaching opportunities. From Peru, Dr. Diana Weber, of *Language, Literacy and Learning*, indicates that the next Quechua pastoral training seminar is tentatively scheduled for May. Whenever it happens, *Partnerships* is committed to provide financial resources to cover the cost of printing their seminar material. Recent word from Zambia indicates that the forbidding of large group meetings is impacting their ministry. Therefore, any future pastoral training at *Choshen Farm* will be determined in cooperation with Jeremy and Bethany Colvin.



Did you have to move your "stuff" from Ithaca during a snowstorm? No, but almost. On the day of our house closing in Mechanicsburg (February 7), Ithaca was hit hard by a massive snowstorm. We had to change our moving plans to the following weekend (February 14 -15), which yielded two frigid Central New York winter days. Yet, our friends stood with us and in three hours the 26-foot yellow Penske truck was packed to the brim. Many thanks to this Ithaca crew (a few others didn't make this picture), as well as the four people

that helped us unload the truck in Mechanicsburg. We could not have done it without their help.

Are you feeling at home in Mechanicsburg? After living so many years in Ithaca, it will take some time. Most house projects are getting wrapped up, but the development of new friendships will be much slower. We attend a good church and enjoy being near Matt's family. It is a wonderful privilege to care for our grandchildren one day a week and more if needed when we are in town. So, we are getting there slowly but surely.



What lesson is the Lord driving home to you these days? Never take for granted the Lord's care and provision each day. Part of that care is found when his people stand together through changing times. What was true for us over these "homeless" months is equally true in this time of immense global upheaval. Let's remember his promised presence in these days. He is the One in control, even when it seems like everything is in a free fall. (Read *Isaiah 40* for starters).

Do you need additional funding during this time? At the present, the Lord has provided what we need. With no immediate international travel, our accounts currently are adequate due to your generous 2019 year-end giving. Thank you! On the other hand, if you committed to provide financial support to *Partnerships* and have lost a job, or cannot sustain your commitment due to financial burdens, please let us know. We are grateful for your faithful support through the years.

Global Prayer Concerns

- *Pray for our partners as they exhibit God's grace in the face of the pandemic.*
- *Pray for world leaders as they make difficult decisions each day (1 Timothy 2:1-3).*
- *Ask the Lord to turn hearts and minds to him and his ways throughout this crisis.*
- *Pray for gospel ministry to flourish through our partners in these days of challenge and crisis.*
- *Give thanks with us that the LORD weaves all things together for his glory and our good.*

Our new address is 530 Brook Shire Court, Mechanicsburg, PA. 17055 - 607-342-1733 – dave@partnershipsfortraining.org

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