



Christian Veterinary Mission

Africa Vet

April 2006

Hi Everybody!

It's been so good to be back in the US now for my furlough time, enjoying being with family and friends. The transition times are always the most challenging, traveling from one universe to the other. This intergalactic travel from Africa to the US sometimes gets me a little disoriented, but eventually, I get my sea-legs and I'm able to cope in both worlds! While some of the adjustments are merely physical (when driving down the road, I sometimes get to a corner and want to make a turn, only to observe that I have once again have flipped on the windshield wipers rather than the blinker! Putting on what seem to be my bright lights at night also causes windshield wiper fluid to spray at my face!), other adjustments are psychological and spiritual.

Psychologically, I must adjust my point of view and learn to understand the socio-economic system of the Western World. Coming from my dusty, village community in Uganda, where poverty, drought, famine and disease are not theoretical abstracts, but are everyday realities, I step onto the shores of pristine, affluent America and have to drastically adjust my thoughts in order to maintain a semblance of composure and peace. It's surprisingly more difficult for me to adjust to a corn-fed America than a starving Africa at this point! God has been showing me more and more how to season my words with salt, to be full of grace towards others, as we all press on to follow after Jesus, and we all grow to be more like Him.

Spiritually, it has been a great adventure in growth over the last 3 year term. "I have learned **the Secret of Being Content** in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength". These words were first spoken by the apostle Paul during one of the times he was imprisoned (Philippians 4:12-13). The years with God deep in the villages have begun to sweep my soul clear of many of the longings of modern world. It would be impossible to live in the desert if I kept looking over my shoulder, longing for Egypt's delicacies. This has been a very difficult term, with the drought, tribal warfare, an invasion by rebel terrorists, famine and 1000s of refugees to deal with. Legions of people all around me were under intense suffering. Hunger, sickness, emotional trauma, hopelessness... Eyes of desperation, tracking me as I entered their lives. Whimpers of hope, almost inaudible, followed me each day. How could I respond?

I struggled with feeling completely inadequate. Slogging through my own feelings of hopelessness, sinking into the mire of the masses. Eventually, the Secret was revealed, and survival, even joy, became possible in the midst of the tragedies. The Secret I've learned is **Release and Surrender**. Surrendering desire, surrendering self, into the arms of God. Releasing all longings, up to the point of **Emptiness**. Not permanent emptiness, but willingness to be empty; willingness to be a conduit for blessing others, without anxiety over how much flows in or out. God has always provided for me, either through someone, or through a note or gift someone sends, or by quenching the thirst Himself. God's touch freed me to relax in the midst of the longings and pain of humanity that often surround me in Africa. Please pray for continued strength, in Him, and not in myself.

News from Africa is good. The drought and famine of last year is completely over, and the people harvested a good crop. The rains are now falling again and we hope they can plant their next crop shortly.

We have some new programs and staff members who are doing an excellent job for us. Victor, a bright, sophisticated African young man, is implementing a water project, trying to improve water quality and availability in the villages, for both people and livestock. Patrick, our newest hire, is an enthusiastic, friendly, creative young man, working on our veterinary agro-forestry program and ethno-vet development. He has a huge responsibility, as he oversees more than 1500 people working in the villages.

Two other staff members are at the university right now. Ali is studying social sciences, and Moses is in vet school. Moses will graduate in June, and come join us on the team. He adds spiritual depth to the team, and conflict resolution skills. Ali still has another year to go until he is back with us. He is growing in maturity and wisdom, as he trusts God more and more each year.

I've been traveling around, visiting family and friends and churches. It's been great to connect with everyone again, and to see what God is doing here in people's lives as well. I've enjoyed speaking at veterinary conventions and colleges as well, sharing about the work we are doing with herbal veterinary medicines. It's been exciting to see some budding interest in working with me on the research and development of these ethnvet products. I pray that we can have God's wisdom in developing and bringing these products to the market.



Thanks so much for all your prayers and love. God is sooo good! I'll be in the states until June 12. Hope to have time with all of you before that, if possible. In May, I hope to purchase my new vehicle for Africa. I'm still just a bit short of the goal. I'll be buying a Land Rover pick-up (1 year old, in order to economize). Due to high costs and taxes, it requires about \$50,000 to purchase it. I'm about \$7,000 short right now. If anybody would like to help, that would be great! Donations can go to the CVM Seattle office, designated for "**Dr. Val's Truck**". Thanks so much!

Have a great day. My phone number is 541 979-7652 in case you'd like to get a hold of me! More later...

Love, in the Lord's hands,

Dr. Val

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Back in 1985, they led a young man named N'tate Mosoang to the Lord. After going to Bible School, he began to pastor the Mokhotlong church and saw many new believers come up. Now with a church family of about 150, they are building a new church and are excited to be moving into it soon. His wife, Ma'tsolo, nicknamed after their firstborne child, Tsolo, is a science school teacher. We found her at their home pruning their peach trees! We couldn't believe they actually had peach trees thriving in Africa, but soon were treated with a jar of juicy, home-canned peaches!

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Standing in the large amphitheater of the cave, I enjoyed imaging the short-statured cave dwellers with their red and orange paint on the tip of a bristled stick, telling the stories of their lives in artistic images to one another. The historic past brings alive the present, as we pass on the traditions of previous generations. Often in our Westernizing World, we negate the past, striving only for the modern, that which is “in”, looking at the trends, while forgetting the womb of our birth.

The bushmen today are a disenfranchised people, misunderstood and disrespected because of their desire to maintain their previous livelihood. As hunter-gatherers, they find that today’s society relegates them to the margin, where they are excluded from both economic and political opportunities. They live in poverty and isolation from the rest of society. Please pray for the marginalized people of the world. Those who are forgotten; those exploited for others’ profit; those left behind in the race towards materialistic nirvana.

Pray for the San Bushmen.
Pray for the Karamojong Warrior Herdsmen.

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Africa Vet

Dear friends and all well-wishers,

Receive these warm greetings from BOZIDEP- Karamoja Diocese, as an office and the entire staff. We believe that God has been faithfully keeping you all in good and healthy conditions of life as we continue serving Him both Spiritually and Physically through the entire world that is full of sufferings.

I am Mrs. Ssemujju Pheby, married to my husband Mr. Ssemujju Wilson who is also a Pastor in Prayer Palace Christian Church in Kampala. We have 3 children that God has blessed us with. I am working with BOZIDEP as a zonal secretary and I am glad for the gifts God has deposited in me not only skills in that area but also Spiritually for the gift of singing and preaching too.

We as BOZIDEP, we thank God for enabling us to serve Him (God) in the communities to which we go to and for the people He has given into our hands. We are so much more grateful for all the support you have always sent: Spiritually through your daily prayers, materially and financially. May God indeed bless the work of your hands.

We are also thankful that Dr. Vaal; a CVM staff with BOZIDEP who has great interest to seeing that the communities she serves are well. Through her hard work we have been able to identify some few projects that need implementation and among them is the woodlot project, food for work project, livestock projects, micro-enterprise project, herbal medicine research and water projects, among others. It's our request that as we implement these projects we need your support through prayers, as we wait to see God's greatness in these communities full of such needy, impoverished people.

Bokora County, where our BOZIDEP program is ministering, covers 5 sub-counties in Moroto District. The main activity of the local people is nomadic pastoralism. There is limited agricultural activities and commerce due to the dryness and remoteness of the region. Karamoja Sub-region is the least developed part of Uganda. The road network in the District is all murrum (dirt). The district is not connected to the national television, however, there are telephone facilities connected to a certain extent.

There are numerous challenges that BOZIDEP has faced during the year. We experienced crop failure following inadequate rains. The government also launched the disarmament program which caused anxiety and fear amongst the communities. Insecurity has also been another major challenge where we need so much of your prayer support to enable us to run the activities planned. Among other challenges are the high illiteracy level, poor health, poor socio-economic infrastructure and dependency syndrome to mention but a few.

However, BOZIDEP has been able to achieve some of its objectives like:

To improve literacy levels in communities

To promote sustainability in livestock health care

Build capacity for income generating activities in herbal medicine production and grinding mills

Improve household food self-sufficiency

We appreciate all that you are doing to see that some of our project plans are implemented, with much hope that we have in the program of BOZIDEP for improving the lives of the people here. We believe by the help of God and your prayer support and by any other means and ways God is to bless the activities and projects the program wishes to implement. We need you to stand with us. The needs are great, therefore not all areas can be reached. Pray for our endurance and continued faith.

We wish you God's blessings in all you do. Thanks.

With lots of love from,

Mrs. Ssemujju Pheby

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«AddressBlock»

«Country»

Hi Everybody!

I hope your Christmas season is going well and that you have seen the work of God in your lives over this last year. It has been an exciting and wonderful year for me, as I have seen God provide for me and my community of friends here in Karamoja. I started off the year on furlough in the states, and found myself surrounded by bushels of loving-kindness as family, friends and multiple fellowships of believers poured out their love to me in so many ways, everything from new Birkenstocks, to cozy fireplaces, warm hospitality and yummy food! It was a great time to revive myself and stock up on my spiritual energy in order to meet the challenges of life in the Ugandan bush. Amazingly, people sacrificed greatly during this time to help me raise funds to purchase a new vehicle. Next year, we will be doing more regional work, as well as continuing some of our programs in Karamoja. We needed a strong and reliable vehicle to transport us to other regions which may need our consultancy services as well (Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, etc.)

July came around, and it was time to go purchase the vehicle. The best vehicle for bush driving is the rugged, old-fashioned, Land Rover. It can go anywhere, and come back successfully! The best prices were in South Africa, approximately 7,000 miles from Uganda. Full of energy and enthusiasm, myself and 2 college friends laid out the trekking route and “set our sails” for South Africa. See the attached August prayer letter for some of the details. (This prayer letter didn’t get sent out.) More details were put in our travel log, which is available at www.africavet.blogspot.com.

Upon return to Uganda, we were greeted enthusiastically by our friends in Karamoja and Soroti, who were sooo excited to see the new Truck! It is really quite a rugged beast; it even seems to GROWL as it climbs some of those craggy hills! It was great to be back with the team and to see how God had used them to help the people while I was out. (See the other prayer letter attached from one of my staff, Phebbey.)

My major efforts since my return have been 1). working on the ethno-vet woodlots (herbal veterinary medicinal gardens) and testing the commercial herbal medicines which we have developed. 2). Encouraging the many new believers in the local church. There has been a very significant spiritual upsurging here in the last 6 months, so much that we can’t keep up with the new members! We try to spend at least 4 months of discipleship with them, to help them to grow and cultivate their life in Christ, weeding as necessary, pruning as necessary, and helping them to receive water and nourishment from others.

I was so excited when two of my best friends here, Lokwii Lucy and Aguma Joyce, both accepted Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and committed themselves to living lives to glorify Him! It’s been great to share in their newborn enthusiasm and vitality, and to encourage them to walk in the footprints of Jesus. We often meet together and go on outreaches to the villages, or test out various income generating ideas. These income generating projects can encourage new believers to turn away from ungodly practices (drunkenness, cattle rustling and thievery) and to work hard with their hands to trust the Lord to bring a harvest that He has for them. Some of the ones we are working on include food preservation and packaging techniques, bread making, and now we have started knitting! (thanks to some sweet Tillamook ladies!!!) We don’t quite have the knitting down completely...we can make a very long scarf-like thing, but haven’t been able to get it off of the knitting needles successfully yet! I’ll have to get that knitting book out and read up a little more I guess!!

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We are looking at expanding our program this next year and have been dreaming of the possibilities, trying to see how they could work out into realities. Many of the programs and projects that we have been doing have now been turned over to the local church and the communities, which allows them sustainable without continued support and monitoring by myself and my team. These include 27 Community Animal Health Workers who treat an average of 1000 animals each month for the local people (paid by the livestock owners), 34 Women's leaders who have set up grinding mills and other income generating projects, 52 Traditional Healers who use herbal veterinary medicines to treat their livestock, 16 adult literacy teachers, who hold classes for over 500 villagers, helping them to read and write so that they can become more productive members of their society. The spiritual side of the church has really blossomed as well, with weekly outreaches to the villages, daily discipleship classes and morning glory (6am) and evening glory (7pm) fellowships daily!

In such a socially oriented community, fellowship gatherings are critical to develop a sense of group identity, in order to help people transition out of some of the negative cultural practices which have hindered their spiritual and physical development in the past. These include wife beating, engagement rape, witchcraft and sorcery, and armed banditry. Developing new relationship networks gets people out of the vicious circle of conflict, hatred and revenge, and helps them have edifying friendships based upon mutual love and fellowship. It has been soooo good to see some progress here, after many years of continual conflict and fear imbedded in the hearts of the people!

Please pray for:

1. Aguma Joyce, my friend, her husband beat her severely after learning that she had become a new believer, cutting open her neck and pulling out her hair. She fled from the home and is now taking refuge in a relative's home.
 2. The people in the Kotido villages. They resisted the Ugandan army's disarmament program, and were punished with village bombings and their huts were driven over by the tanks. More than a thousand people fled into the bush. Hundreds of cattle were bombed, which made the meat of the dead animals toxic. The cattle are the primary source of income and food for the people. Desperate, impoverished and homeless, the hungry, people ate the meat. Some got sick, some died.
 3. Christmas celebrations in Uganda. Pray for those who will join together to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus, and to fix their hope in Him and in God's purposes for their lives. Pray that the Prince of Peace instills His Peace in the Hearts and Souls of those who trust in Him.
- God bless you and your family this Christmas Season,

Love, Val

Val



Dr. Val with Longok

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Africa Vet

Sounds of Uganda....

The skin-covered drumbeat began slowly, resounding softly off of my living room walls. The homemade, handheld harp picked up a melody as clapping hands joined in. Melody and Harmony converged, making me smile. Another team meeting has begun with communal rejoicing and worship! I love being here in Africa: living in community, creating a caring “family”, sharing our daily bread, and our hearts and souls. The tune, “We are Together Again”, brings out our joy of being One. As I look around the room, I can see the living, breathing, smiling Body of Christ, with all its joints and limbs and organs and other body parts reaching out to express themselves within the context of Team.

Over the last 15 years here in Uganda, I have been developing and mentoring this team and am so excited to see the Lord’s hand of Power and Love at work in our lives and our ministries. This year, we have felt the Lord leading us to extend the tent pegs (expand our programmes) to become available for partnership ministries through out the Karamoja Region, as well as in the surrounding tribes and countries. We will be serving as consultants to empower churches, community groups and organizations to serve the Lord, multiplying ourselves and our impact. It’s an exciting time to stretch ourselves and to expand our faith as well as our hearts to encompass that which the Lord has put before us to do. We welcome you to join us in the rejoicing at our Team Meeting:

Welcome, please meet the members and join in the tune...

As **Pastor Girifansio** (“Giri”) beats the drum with steady determination, I see the deep integrity of His Walk with the Lord and his commitment to right living and holiness.

Dr. Moses leads the chorus, with his hands firmly clasping the hands of his immediate neighbors, swinging back and forth to the tune. He brings humble, spiritual leadership and models a heart of servant-hood to our team.

Lodim plucks the homemade harp with thumbs and index fingers, tilting his head to simultaneously catch both the melody and harmony of the members. Lodim brings cohesion, commitment and community to our team. He’s always ready to join in with all his efforts, working in synergy with all his energy!

Victor’s tenor rises above the others, matching his ambition and his desire for excellence, striving to be the best he can be.

Anyakun’s tentative, soft tenor responsively echoes Victor. Bringing a yearning for learning to the team, Anyakun happily shadows whoever is willing to mentor him in a new skill.

Anne and Christine pass a grin to one another as their sparkling sopranos burst into the next stanza. Tenderness with confidence, service with a touch of the Saviour’s love.

Tracey’s bright eyes twinkle as she joins into the chorus, happy for team, for unity, for a meaningful place in the Lord’s service.

Pastor James bellows his potent bass, complementing the drummer, with the depth of both his heart and voice resounding the call for holiness and accountability.

Rex isn’t here right now. He’s been sick quite a bit recently. We’ll take some time to pray for him in a bit.

Judith’s years of grace and surrender to the Lord glow through her melodious refrain. A woman at peace, with her hope in the Rock.

This is my team, growing and thriving! I’m their Team Leader, with fear and trembling! Leading such a group of mature, spiritually growing, highly motivated, capable people, humbles my heart. Somehow, the Lord has put me here, for such a time as this... We have always had a wholistic ministry, helping the whole person to live to glorify God, but this year, we are delving more deeply and developing a more comprehensive approach. To give you an idea of the diversity of our ministries, here are the various members’ responsibilities and specialties:

1. Pastor Girifansio – Organic Agriculture (Asst. Pastor, Rockview Baptist Church)
2. Dr. Moses – Veterinary Research and Development (Veterinarian)

1. Lodim – EthnoVet Medicine (Youth Leader, St. Mark’s Anglican Church)
2. Victor – Projects Coordinator (Social Worker)
3. Anyakun - Projects Officer (Business Administration)
4. Anne – Spiritual Coordinator (Discipler, Deaconess, Rockview Baptist Church)
5. Christine – Education and Orphan Care (Teacher)
6. Tracey – HIV/AIDS Coordinator (Nurse Practitioner missionary)
7. Pastor Akoko – Accountant (Pastor of Living Hope Ministries)
8. Rex – Veterinary Officer
9. Judith – HIV/AIDS Assistant (YWAM trainer)
10. Dr. Val – Team Leader (Veterinary missionary)



Dr. Moses on beat

This team is a gift of God to me. As they have grown, I have grown, and today they are prepared for stepping out into the full region of NE Uganda, serving the Lord with me in all these ways through the local churches and the communities. I’ll be sending you their prayer letters as well, so that you can begin to get to know them and see how God can work through them, indigenous (Ugandan national) missionaries, to reach their own people for Jesus! **Please pray for our expansion and our growth as a team.** We are the CLIDE Consultancy Team, “Community Livestock Integrated Consultancy Team”.

I’m looking forward to a summer of US visitors! We have a group from Rolling Hills in Portland, as well as several vet students from OSU and elsewhere. **Please pray for the students’ visits with us.** I love to mentor these upcoming Christian leaders, and I know that the Lord’s hands are already active in their lives. Let me speak His words and demonstrate His love into their lives.

Pray also for our upcoming Peace meetings and animal health trainings with the enemy sub-tribe. For decades, the Bokora sub-tribe and Pian sub-tribe have fought bloody battles over cattle. Hundreds of people have died because of the Cow. God has now opened a door for us to share the Love of Christ practically across this divide of hatred. Pray for wisdom, compassion and discernment. Thanks.

God bless you.

Yours in Jesus peace and grace,

Dr. Val



Anne and Christine Harmonizing



Team Photo



CLIDE Team

Greetings to you all in the name of our risen Lord and Saviour! I am Victor Pulkol, one of Dr. Val's staff here in Uganda. I call you friends, and praying that this prayer letter finds you all in good health.

It was the inaugural Uganda Pastoralist week in Kampala, late last year. I and Dr. Val together with other partners in Development hailing from Karamoja happened to participate. Pastoralists are those tribes and cultures such as mine, that traditionally herd animals and survive by them. The time was clocking 10.00AM East African time as all the pastoralists assembled to the Golf Course ground and the pastoralist walk started through Jinja road, city square and terminated in the cultural centre opposite the Ugandan Parliament, where the official opening and launching was done. Right from the onset of the walk, I observed some pastoralists of non-Karamoja origin being puzzled by the presence of some shabby looking and seemingly starved persons following the walk, these were mainly women and children who kept begging all the way during the walk. To my surprise these were my own tribe mates, the Karamojong. How they got to Kampala and what they were doing in Kampala no one knows but the history would be traced back at home in the coming days.

As the walk ended, I, Dr. Val and two ladies from a sister organizations in Moroto got concern and thought of meeting these Karamojong women and street kids. We left the cultural centre to meet them, but to our dismay we were told at the gate that they have been chased away because of their filthy appearance. We persisted in looking for them till we located three of the women, both with children and one female teenager. Here we tried to conduct some mini informal interviews with them, but what came from the brief testimonies about life in Kampala streets was so sad.

We pledged to pray for them to find a way to return home to Karamoja and for God to give them strength to persevere in the sufferings that all other Karamojongs at home are enduring: under harsh climatic conditions, a violent environment and the social marginalization we have all endured since time immemorial.

The four day inaugural pastoralist week came to an end and we went back to Moroto, sharing the Kampala testimonies with other friends and reminding them as well to pray for those in the streets in Kampala. Three months down the road, stakeholders meetings were conducted in Kampala and Moroto under the auspices of UNICEF to discuss the issue of Karamojong street children and women in Kampala streets. Within a month, we saw our prayers and dreams answered, as UNICEF and other stakeholders agreed to intervene and provide funding and resources for us to help the street kids and women.

William Cowper put it that: **“Man may dismiss Compassion from his heart, but God will never!”**

Psalms: 10:17 – 18 reads:

You hear O Lord the desire of the afflicted;
You encourage them and you listen to their cry,
Defending the fatherless and the oppressed
in order that man, who is of the earth may terrify no more.

Following our visit to the capital, an estimated 700 Karamojong women and children were abruptly rounded up by police in Kampala city streets and moved to a makeshift detention center outside Kampala.

From here they were indiscriminately transported to Kobulin transit site in Karamoja, a former orphanage Centre, where we received them, albeit in their confused state, with love. Sending the Karamojong off from Kampala streets was a move intended to clean the city of street beggars in preparation for the Common Wealth Heads of State Meeting (CHOGM) due to take place in Kampala by November 2007.

So far $\frac{3}{4}$ of these returnees have been resettled in a camp at Lomaratoit in Irriri and some have returned home with a resettlement package. They have planted their crops and are hoping for a good harvest on their new land. The most amazing part for us is that we, as CVM, (CLIDE Team) and the Church of Uganda, have been able to help their children (a total of 230) to begin boarding schools with the help of UNICEF funding and help from churches in Oregon. We praise God that His Compassion never ends and that you all have joined hands with us in extending a smile and a nod of hope to the Children of Hopelessness. We will send you a report on some of the actual children shortly.

Prayer requests:

- Pray with us that these children continue with school and that God may provide for their needs both in school and as they join their parents during holidays.
- Pray for additional orphans and the destitute in Karamoja that they may have hope for a future and those around them will be their comforters.
- Also commit unto God through prayers those who have been resettled and those that have returned to the villages that their basic needs be met so that they lead a settled life and not return to the streets.
- Pray for disarmament exercise in Karamoja to go on successfully for the sake of development in Karamoja. So far more than 10,000 machine guns have been surrendered to the government, either voluntarily, or forcefully.
- Pray for us in CLIDE Team (Community Livestock Integrated Development Team) that we get our government registration soon.

We too are praying for you all and may God bless the Christian Veterinary Mission and its partners in the USA and around the Globe. Thanks.

Yours in Service to Humanity.

VICTOR PULKOL, Projects Officer

Email: vectorinyanga@yahoo.com



Africa Vet

Peace on Earth, Peace in Karamoja, Peace in Me.

As Christmas is coming, the Spirit of the Lord is at work in the hearts of Man. The Prince of Peace, as foretold in the book of Isaiah (ch.9), has come: promising to take our fears away, to remove our trepidation, to wipe away our sorrow and calm our anxious thoughts. How does this work? Fears and tears often rule our lives. Are we to just imagine happy thoughts, think positively or repeat some magical mantra that will transform us into calm, confident, vessels of tranquility? I once, in a mood of rascality, taught one of my roommates an ancient Siamese chant that was to “bring peace and harmonic convergence of the soul to the universe”: repeating the phrase “Waa taguu Siam”. After she repeated for some time, she realized that the phrase was actually “What a Goose I am”! Formulas and fantasies are not the answer.

I live in Karamoja: a place of violence, anger, hatred, betrayal and blood shed. Peace, at times, seems to be only a fairy tale story, an ephemeral dream which evaporates each day when the sun shines on this harsh land. After many years of prayer, however, the Lord is doing something new. He has revealed a portion of His plan, and we are struggling to keep up with His amazing work! Here’s what happened...

A few people prayed. Then more people prayed. Then we met together and prayed. Then we asked the Lord for direction, to find His way to bring Peace in this hostile territory. Most societies these days are broken. They don’t work right. Generational and cultural differences have resulted in significant values disparity both here in Africa as well as in the Western World. As we prayed, we saw that the society of Karamoja was broken because it no longer had any respected community leaders. They were sheep without a shepherd. There was no one to follow, no one to truly trust. We decided then that we would seek to work with the local elders, to empower them and guide them in being Godly, righteous and respected people, who have both the capacity and the will to hold the standard high. We developed a plan to share the truths of the Scriptures concerning peace and Godly conflict resolution with the communities, especially the traditional elders and church elders. More people prayed. A group of courageous, seasoned men from Portland (Rolling Hills Community Church and Good Shepherd Community Church) then volunteered to join us in reaching out to these elders through a series of 2 workshops on the Godly Approach to Peace Building. We based our teaching on a book called “The PeaceMaker” by Ken Sande and invited representatives from both the Bokora sub-tribe and the Pian sub-tribe. These people were once like brothers, but through continuous cattle raiding, they violated their trust of one another, becoming discordant enemies locked in a violent struggle for dominance and advantage.

The time of the workshops arrived, and the People came, and God did His work in the workshops. He touched the hearts of those who needed a touch, and shook the shoulders of those who needed to be shaken. The US elders, bathed in prayer and humility, personally demonstrated the way of the Cross to the participants. They taught on Seeking to Honour God, Humble Confession and Transformational Repentance, Gentle Confrontation and Restoring Your Brother to Relationship. The 50 participants understood what was necessary for Peace, and went back to their villages excited to see what the new ideas would bring in the hearts of the communities. We followed up with a series of community meetings, both with the Bokora people, and their enemies the Pian. Ultimately, they began to talk of Unity. Transforming Hostility into Harmony, Enmity into Amity, Divergence into Convergence. They wanted to meet together, work together and live together, making a new joint community called “Naryamiryam” or the “Town of Togetherness”. There is a site called Nabwal, deep in the fertile No-Man’s Land between the two enemies. This is a place no one dared to live or farm, a place where even the bravest Karamojong fear to go because of the years of conflict and bloodshed on that land. They chose that as the meeting place. Enclosed in deep, overgrown bush and 6’ tall grass, 20 kilometers from the Bokora and 25 kilometers from the Pian, the place was challenging to get to. Cattle raiders had been using the area as a hideout, as even the army could not penetrate the dense undergrowth in search of thieves. In order to ensure that the people were serious about peace and reconciliation, we insisted that they would have to find their way to the location, and we would meet them there.

After sending a contingent of Ugandan army men a week ahead to secure the area, we traveled deep into the heart of No-Man's Land. Pressing through the bush with the front end of my Landy ("Brutus" to those who know our Land Rover well), we hacked and slashed a trail up to the meeting place and set up camp, waiting to see if anyone would come to our peace meeting in the wilderness. We had 2 cows herded to the camp, intended for roasting for the participants.

The next day, they started arriving,... and arriving and arriving!!! We had hope for about 500-700 people to make the long trek through the brush, but as the day went on, we realized God had much bigger plans! In the end over 2060 people showed up (not counting children)! Despite being tired and hungry from the long journey, they immediately welcomed each other, embracing their former enemies, and their future destiny. Sitting under trees, groups sat telling tales of long ago when they were together as brothers. The massive response shocked us all; even those among us with large measures of faith were overwhelmed with the work of God's hand. For 3 days we had a prayer and peace meeting together, envisioning what God could do with a people united in this fertile, untouched valley. The last day, the Bishop of Karamoja led the people in committing themselves to a Covenant of Peace with one another. You should have seen the former Karamojong enemies in a Group Hug!! We all cried!!! The paralyzing Fear they had lived with for so long had finally evaporated from their hearts and newness of hope began to invigorate them into action. Looking out at the huge expanse of fertile No-Man's Land, they made a joint plan to open it all up for agriculture. Staying together and protecting one another from thieves, they would cultivate this 10,000 acres of land, clearing the bush so that cattle rustlers could no longer hide there, and people could benefit from the harvests of the land. How many years had they lived in poverty and hunger because this productive land was inaccessible? TOO MANY. They left the place three days later with the pledge to come back soon, with their hoes and their wives, to settle together and live in Peace, with God as their guide.

Now, 2 weeks later, it is time to come back together. The excitement in the air is palpable, with people in every town talking of the joint villages and the agricultural potential of Nabwal and Naryamiryam. Each person who came earlier has promised to bring another 2-3 people! We expect there could be 3000-4000 people planning to make the wilderness trek this time! Oh, for a few Fish and loaves of Bread!!! So, what next? PRAYER!! God is at work in the hearts of these people. We pray that this kernel of hope and opportunity will not be snatched away! If you've never prayed for Peace in Karamoja, please do it now! We need the courage to walk with these brave people as they surrender themselves to seeking to live in Justice and Truth and Harmony. Living God's way and trusting Him for the outcome.

Thanks. Have a great Christmas. I miss you all and hope to come there soon. May the Peace of Christ transform us all.

Yours In Him, Through Him, and For Him,



"Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For unto us a child is born, ...He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:5-6.

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