



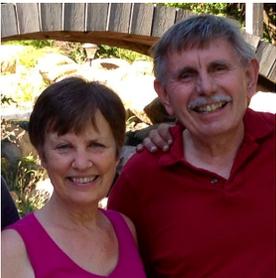
February eNewsletter



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Bidi Bidi Uganda Mission

“I wish you could stay with us forever”

A tall, bearded Norwegian strode up to us at the dirt air-strip, extended his hand and introduced himself as Evan, pilot of the four-seater airplane that would carry us across the Rwenzoris, also known as Africa’s legendary Mountains of the Moon. There was no road through the mountains to Arua, but Evan would get us to a driver who would meet us and take us to Bidi Bidi refugee camp in Uganda at the border of the Congo and South Sudan.

Evan flies for Missionary Alliance Fellowship. We climbed aboard, buckled into a harness-type seat

belt, and Evan pointed out our route on his iPad. “We’ll fly over the Congo and pass Lake Albert on our way to Arua Aerodrome. Can be bumpy over the mountains, but I’ll do my best. Okay if we pray?” “Absolutely,” Ed replied. We joined hands in a circle as he prayed. He concluded, “Father, may all those who work in Bridge for Peace continue to spread the Good News. And I pray that You will guide the Eckarts and give them wisdom as they carry out the work You give them on this journey.” “Amen”. An unexpected and stirring beginning.

I thought, “*These are the things that separate believers from unbelievers. As Christians, we are excited to pray with the pilot, but an unbeliever would be really nervous if the pilot suggested prayer before takeoff!*” Headsets on, we took off into azure sky. We had an eagle’s eye view of green mountainous slopes, plots of crops that looked like patchwork quilts on farms below, lakes, rivers, a few bumps thrown in and two hours later, touchdown on the brown soil of Arua. An attendant heaved

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our luggage into a handcart, tied it onto his motorcycle, and pointed out a dirt path. We took a seven minute walk to a thick-trunked tree where two men sat to carry-out the Ebola screening protocol. There is currently an outbreak of life-threatening Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. To guard against the further spread of the disease, a blue five gallon drum filled with water sat in a typical Uganda iron framed hand wash stand. “Wash your hands,” one man said. I noticed the water catch bowl was missing, the soap was missing, and anything to dry your hands with was missing. I hesitated to touch the spigot, found a tissue, and we let the water pour over our hands and onto the ground. We were pronounced to be Ebola-free.

Fortified with two bags of local potato chips packaged in clear cellophane and “Mama Blessing” sesame bars, we took our seats in the Land Rover behind our driver Amos. The tarmac ran out after an hour. The occasional passing vehicle kicked up a brown dust cloud and disappeared into it. The problem was goats and chickens that shared the road also became

invisible! We raced to roll up the windows to keep out the dust and the temperature soared. Amos thumped the air conditioning dials occasionally, hoping to get some cool air, but as Ugandan’s say, they were “rebellious”.

We passed several once-white tarps tied at their four corners to tree trunks planted upright in the dirt. Teenage girls seemed to be jumping rope underneath them, but they were pumping water. They gripped the long pump handle and jumped up and down while friends filled their yellow jerry-cans that look like plastic gasoline containers. Along the road, single solar panels, mostly 2x3 feet, lay in the dirt tipped toward the sun before corrugated iron “shops”. For thirty cents one can plug in and recharge their cell phone. (Actually, a big outlay for people in this region of no electricity.)

Amos took the left fork and passed a sign displaying the flags of many nations participating in the support of the 280,000 refugees from South Sudan in the settlement. Dry, dusty, flat land, dirt in the air limiting visibility, grass roofed huts in long rows. Amos wound through the settlement and we were told the UN created the dirt

roads. He parked the Land Rover and we piled out and started toward the church—a partially walled cement structure, roof framed with tree trunks, and covered over in white plastic with UN insignias.

A crowd of Africans greeted us and then the unexpected happened. A large white man with a crew cut, a crooked smile, and bulging biceps under his clerical shirt stepped quickly toward us and gripped my hand in a welcome. Behind him a young Asian nun stood on tiptoe and snapped photos of us. Another nun with fair coloring smiled at me while continuously cooling herself with a paper fan. Roti, a short dark-haired Indonesian waved, and Frances from India introduced himself. We learned these were missionaries from Servants of the Divine Word community. They had lived with the people of South Sudan and escaped the war with the people to Uganda. They welcomed us like royalty, when they are the ones we most highly honor. These men and women are the heroes of today. And then to our joy, we were reunited with Bishop Sabino, our beloved and gracious host who invited us to Bidi Bidi.

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New Territory: India

The January mission to India was a 'watershed mission' for B4P. It was the first time 2 separate missions were under way at the same time—Ed and Annette were in Uganda while the India mission was on. It has been prophesied that we will have 4 mission teams out in the North, South, East and West at the same time, so more amazing times ahead for Bridge for Peace. We thank Jesus for the expansion.

We (Sally and Tim Worner, B4P Australia leaders) responded to an invitation to "come to India". The mission took us to 5 separate towns in Southern India: Kolar Gold Fields, Bangalore, Chennai, Chittoor, and Amalapuram. We ministered in large churches, tiny house churches, clinics, leper colonies, AIDS Homes, "slums", houses, on the streets, and more. We met with and ministered to Pastor Fellowships as well.

Some excerpts of the ministry:

Jan. 22: Breakfast and briefing with one of the host pastors and his family in Chittoor. Firsthand stories of hardships Christians must endure in this part of the country. It may be worse in more rural areas. Chittoor is said to be one of the largest idol worship places in the world. Every house, shop, building, car has some

sort of shrine. There are many temples with many types of gods. The pastor and his family told us some of the things they deal with, like being beaten regularly, constantly having their lives threatened, threatened body mutilation, property confiscated, burnt, stolen, no legal protection in the courts, loss of livelihood... Yet the pastors and small pockets of believers are standing firm in the face of this persecution. They sacrifice everything for the Gospel. They are willing to die for Jesus. Their needs are so huge yet their faith so strong. It is truly humbling. They are so encouraged by us coming.

First stop this morning, a children's AIDS home. All the kids here are infected by HIV. There were a number of HIV impacted parents in attendance also. We released the message that Jesus loves them, anointed them with oil and prayed for their healing. All gave testimony they were "feeling better" or "feeling happy".

Home visit in a remote village: When we arrived this woman (see photo above) was wracked with pain, unable to stand, certainly unable to walk and virtually without hope. When we left she stood without pain and waved us off from the front of her home! We also prayed for her moth-

er (a Hindu) and all her pain left, similarly for another Hindu lady there who was also totally healed.

Jan. 24: Conference with about 60 pastors and leaders. Pastor Robert is building a prayer house on the first floor of his home where we met. We were inspired by his vision and how he is following the lead of the Holy Spirit to get established here where opposition is intense. Please keep him, his family and their vision in your prayers. The meeting was very encouraging for the leaders with Sal releasing a powerful word about forgiveness and unity. Sal got to speak just with the ladies after the meeting. This time was orchestrated by Holy Spirit. Wives (women) are in the background here so even having a female speaker is breaking new ground. The Pastor's daughter, Shiney, really connected with us and asked if we might pray for 3 of her friends (all Hindu). They were very open to prayer and all felt the power of the Holy Spirit. Praise God!

We were privileged to see God in action everywhere we went. We thank God for every life impacted and for every inch of territory taken. Amen.

—Tim

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In church, the youth played amazing instruments similar to guitars and harps crafted from unfinished wood. Girls danced barefooted on the dirt floor in a beautiful welcome. The two youngest wore green plastic cups entwined in their cloth belts. Unusual. They looked at me with big brown eyes, smiling shyly as they stuck their small hands in the cups. *Whoosh*, they tossed cut up bits of confetti-like paper at me and Ed!

A simple summation of our rich and complex experience in Bidi Bidi: **In the midst of hardship, the joy of worship. In the midst of pain, the comfort of God. In the midst of trauma, the presence of Jesus Christ our Bridge for Peace. A young woman with braided hair said, "I wish you could stay with us forever."** And forever the people of Bidi Bidi will stay in my heart and remain in my prayers.

—Annette



March

Rome Prayer Walk through March 3
26-29 Nat'l Religious Broadcasters
Conference, Anaheim CA

April

6-13 B4P RaphaEl **Zambia** Mission
6 Lord is it I? 7pm @ St John's
Ctr Moriches
7 Lord is it I? 3pm @ St Anselm's
Shoreham

Annette's Blog

www.annetteeckart.blogspot.com

Facebook Pages

Bridge for Peace
Bridge for Peace: Uganda
Children's Villages
Bridge for Peace, RaphaEl
Medical Missions



Event Details

www.bridgeforpeace.org/

TV Times

All Nassau and Suffolk Counties:
Mon. 10 a.m. Channel 115
Tues 7:30 a.m. Channel 20
Wed. 8:60 a.m. Channel 115
Manhattan MNN 3p.m:
Alternating Mondays starting Nov 26

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