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## A Bowl of Potato Chips

*“...keeping our focus on what is important to Jesus...”*

“I’ll send you photos of our Christmas!” Peter promised, his voice traveling from the Bridge for Peace Children’s Village in Uganda to arrive a bit frayed around the edges over our speaker phone in New York. “We have had a day of preparations. The children are all in bed now.” As I listen to Peter—our nurse who received Bridge for Peace support for his education and our administrator of B4PCV—I picture a normal day at the B4PCV compound where our 43 children find security and love.

Typically at B4PCV, small feet pound across the grass, boys shout while

tossing a ball, and little girls dance holding hands in a circle. In Peace house (one of three homes on the B4PCV property) a volunteer produces an oversized blue plastic bucket overflowing with Legos. She spills the plastic shapes out onto the floor, children dive for the pieces, and construction is underway. Their imaginations produce miniature houses and shapes never seen before on the planet. On the very few occasions I have seen B4PCV at rest, I describe it as contentment.

B4PCV can be so silent at night that I feel I can hear the cabbage leaves

growing in our B4P kitchen garden. Tomorrow will be Christmas at B4PCV and our conversation with Peter tonight is just a brief pause in the action. “Yes, Peter,” I clap with happiness, “Send us pictures!”

Peter speaks, but the sound distorts. An echo reverberates. His voice vanishes midsentence. “Lost him,” Ed said. “It is after one in the morning Africa time, best they get some rest.”

On December 26, pictures arrive! Stella, our mother-in-charge, wears a festive white bow in her hair as she

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"Mary" with baby Jesus cuts the cake



Patty smiles reading her sponsor letter



Stella reads words from Mariam's sponsor

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reads to Devis, one of our boys. They smile at the email letter sent by a sponsor. Volunteers in Wading River brainstormed the festive Christmas tree letterhead and designed the program to connect children and caretakers in Uganda with sponsors on the feast day. Devis's happy face shows our loving volunteers succeeded in their goal to bring joy to the children.

A three foot evergreen tree appears in the pictures, festively decorated with pink, yellow, and blue balloons and wrapped candies that rest on the artificial boughs. Our excited children will choose a balloon and a candy after their meal.

Blue plastic child-sized tables have been moved outside for the celebration. Plates loaded with mashed bananas, bean stew, and a freshly harvested boiled egg appear in many of the photos.

I am puzzled by the short veiled woman who appears in several pictures, until I realize it is one of our children dressed up like Mary the Mother of Jesus. She clutches her "baby Jesus." I recognize our boy Haggai, his two front teeth missing,

playing the role of Joseph. Certainly, there will be prayer and the singing of Christmas carols.

Next is a photo of a solemn moment. The children stand with Mary and Joseph in a circle around the short table and look intently at the tabletop. Joseph stands close to Mary as she holds the "baby" in her left arm. I look closely to see what has captured their attention and note that Mary is making the first slice in the Christmas cake! Cake is a rare treat in the Kasese area.

And then there is a close-up of a tin bowl filled with ruffled potato chips. (Called *crisps* in Uganda. Chips are French fries.)

I thought about the twenty-two photos Peter sent and the close-up of the potato chips. We photograph what is important to us. Peter must have felt it was important for us to see that the children had the special treat of potato chips. With remnants of our Christmas celebration all around me, I knew I did not photograph the Christmas snacks. Peter's photograph made me think about abundance and lack, appreciation and expectation, honorable and unjustifiable. Looking at the potato chips photo caused me to think about what is important. It led

me to wonder if, "*Maybe, we can do more.*"

What do you think would have been important to Jesus Christ if He photographed your Christmas celebration this year? Where would He point the lens? What would He want to memorialize in the events of the day? What photo would He post on His Facebook page? Let's do more of what is important to Jesus. Let's do more love, more caring, and more providing for those who don't own cameras or smart phones. My prayer is that B4P can provide more "potato chips" in the Name of Jesus, keeping our focus on what is important to Jesus as we serve Him and others.

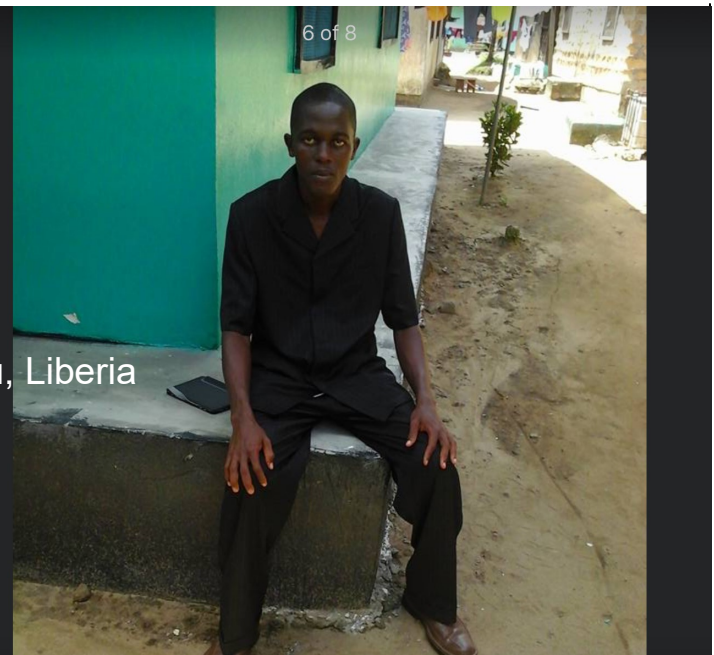
In January, B4P mission Uganda will launch the B4P International School. For over five years our school has inspired many photographs from the architectural drawings to the construction update photo we received today. The school is also a spirituality center. The important work of education, mentoring, and empowerment will continue at B4P International School. Thank you supporters. God bless you. If you think it is important to contribute to B4P Uganda, contact us at [info@bridgeforpeace.org](mailto:info@bridgeforpeace.org).

—Annette





Melvin Kiazolu, Liberia



## Breaking News from Liberia

Six months ago, this message arrived from Melvin Kiazolu in West Africa:

*June 23 I am so inspired by the work Bridge for Peace is doing to bring transformation into the lives of people around the world. Even though you don't know me, I am touched by the pictures I see on Facebook of B4P sharing the gospel with people. People are hungry for the gospel message over here. Many of our brothers and sisters are dying slowly each day. It is my prayer and hope that the Holy Spirit will lead B4P team members to visit Liberia. We need only the gospel of Jesus Christ for the life of people here to transform. And the Lord is going to do this soon through the Holy Spirit.*

Ed and Melvin spoke often over the next months. In September, Ed sent him the B4P Foundation for Healing Bible Course and DVD. Finally, the materials arrived in Africa in November.

*Nov.10 I received the Foundation for Healing training materials. They are very educative and spiritually enriching. My pastor is in control of the materials right now. Thank you.*

*Nov.29 My pastor and I have begun to invite people in the congregation and the community to come to the church and study B4P Foundation for Healing and view the DVD.*

*Dec. 11 Our warmest gratitude to the B4P family for the word of comfort that is transforming and changing life as we are going through the B4P FfH Training Manual here. We are thankful to the Lord for the B4P family worldwide who are thousands of kilometers away and are lifting us in prayer. Pastor Shaphat Kamara and every one of us that is going through the training say we wish you all a blessed and beautiful Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.*

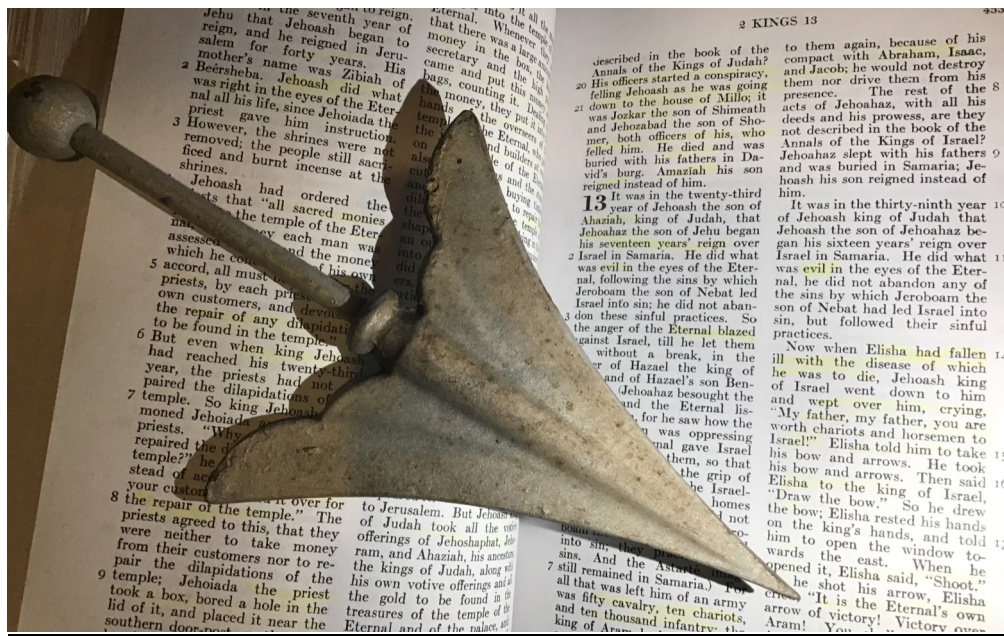
*Dec.18 Merry Christmas and a Prosperous Happy New Year to the Bridge for Peace Community around the world. Thank you so very, very much. It is a special honor and privilege for me to be part of such a family that's helping to transform the life of people through the Word of God. It will be a blessing the day we are going to receive a team from Bridge for Peace. The Foundation for Healing Study lessons are so rewarding and inspiring to every one of us. We are sincerely grateful for the Founda-*

*tion for Healing training manual. It is my fervent prayer that God continues to bless you and even bring B4P to Liberia this coming New Year to share with us some of the things He is doing through your hands.*

*Dec. 28 a.m. I am so thankful that the Lord was able to lead me to the B4P family. I still can't imagine that I would ever get teaching like what we are going through now. Most especially about covenant, because I used to hear people using this word, but I didn't know that it was all centered on God. The B4P FfH course is thoroughly an eye opener for me and many others who are going through the study. I'm praying that God will continue to use B4P to bless more people with His Word and good teaching. God bless you all!*

*December 28 p.m. It is a special honor and privilege for me to be part of such a unique organization that is changing people's lives all across the world. We are going to make history in Liberia with B4P by the grace of God in the shortest possible time, God willing. Please continue to pray for us.*

—Melvin Kiazolu



## Strike!

The winter ground on our northern property line was a bit squishy underfoot as Ed and I walked and prayed our land. At the same moment, we saw a large metal arrowhead on the ground. Immediately, we both shouted, "Strike!" Strike was a keyword in 2Kings 13, the scripture God led B4P to study.

Elisha the prophet instructs the King to pick up arrows and strike the ground. The king struck three times and quit. Elisha became angry. He asked, "Why didn't you hit the ground five or six times?" If the king had struck the ground five times Israel would have totally defeated enemy forces.

I remember the B4P Rome mission in 1998 and again in 1999 under the Lord's direction. When we returned He said, "Keep going back, I'll tell you when to stop." Soon after, a woman approached me at a prayer meeting concerning the Rome Mission. She said, "God says keep going back. He'll tell you when to stop." A confirmation of God's Word spoken to us.

God likes persistence. He likes courage. He likes it when we resolve to follow Him. God likes gumption when we demonstrate it in response to His Word.

Last week, I was watching a Christian movie. One of the characters said, "God helps those who help themselves." That is a familiar saying, but it is not a quote from scripture. Despite what people think, Jesus did not say that. Actually, God's message is all about our neediness and the help we have in Jesus Christ. He counsels us to rely on Him in everything.

He spent centuries outlining a plan for our victory. He includes outrageous strategies and brilliant triumphs. He details the overwhelming odds against success and then shows us His miracle working power that secured the prize! God wants us to be victorious. He wants us to have the prize.

I think God gets mad when we let the devil rob us. Sometimes, the enemy struts off with what belongs to us. We can never forget that God's Son paid the price for our victory. The price was Jesus Christ bleeding out on the cross.

Ed and I brought the arrowhead inside, cleaned it up, and hung it on our Christmas tree with the scripture verse attached to it. A reminder to strike. May you also strike. Never stop until God tells you to quit. Persevere and receive the victory.

—Annette



### January

7-25 Uganda Mission  
13-15 Holy Convocation Uganda  
19 B4P CV School Launch

### February

15-22 Rome Prayer Walk  
22 Rome Pizza and Prayer

### March

7-14 Medical Mission Guyana  
22 St. Sylvesters Religious Ed.  
Int'l Luncheon, Medford  
28-29 *Lord is it I?* Live Drama

### Facebook Pages

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



### Event Details

[www.bridgeforpeace.org/](http://www.bridgeforpeace.org/)

### TV Times

All Nassau and Suffolk Counties:  
Sunday 3 a.m. Channel 20  
Monday 7 a.m. Channel 115  
Tuesday 12 a.m. Channel 20

Manhattan MNN 3p.m:  
Alternating Mondays starting Oct 28

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