

January 20, 2013

Dear Susan,

Friday we drove to Kiola church where Rashid is the Pastor. It was a day of fellowship which means that they dug new latrines, they cut weeds, they harvested coffee, they worshipped, Randy preached, I gave a New Years challenge which was a sermon on hope then we ate a huge meal cooked by the women and served by the men. After that we drove home. It is two and a half hours each way, over bad road, we were exhausted when finally got to go to bed. It was thrilling to watch Randy step up to preach. He just gave a wonderful message on work.

Saturday was rest and recuperation. Randy went to see the orphanage and I slept. Dinner was on the shores of Lake Victoria. I had a large tasty whole Talapia. The breeze was cool the Lake gorgeous as the sun set off to our right. We both had sermons to develop for Sunday which meant that the calm and beauty had to give way all too soon for the labors of the rapidly approaching day. I can tell you honestly I didn't feel like preaching again and was falling into a pretty good funk when I called you because Rashid told me at dinner that I was going to Dr. Kefa's new church on the lake and I was teaching Sunday School as well as Preaching. So after our call I pulled out one of the messages I brought and worked it over, thought about a lesson I could wing and went to bed. I awoke at 4:00a.m. mad and discouraged. Several times on this trip I have realized demonic activity. As I thought about these two emotions I realized I was neither angry nor had anything but blessings to count so once again I asked the LORD for peace and help with these pesky critters and he obliged. Back to sleep and up at 6:30 the power was on and I had a great shower. By 7:30 we were on that same bad road again but my attitude had changed.

We had 10 people in the van as we drove through Kampala and out to Mukono. Squashed but happy in Mukono we picked up 5 more and off to church we went. Even without traffic the trip was still two hours to Kiola. There we dropped off Randy, Rashid, the drummer, the Pastor and the kids with us. Now with Kefa his wife Olivia a translator that we pick up along the road, I guess he knew we were going that way, Kamanda and I took off on a one hour bush trip to the Lake shore.

On the way Olivia and I had great time. We talked of children, her chicken business and living with Kefa. She asked me how old I thought she was and when I acted out the gentleman and said 28 she was just thrilled. (She is 37 quite beautiful born to wealth and politics she is the perfect companion to Kefa and a delight to talk to). Later she wanted me to see her notes taken during the SS and sermon on the way back which of course delighted me.

As we arrived at the Mpang church which at the moment is a school building, meeting hall and kitchen a rather large woman named Resty came out laughing and talking all the way to greet us. As I got out of the van she came up to me and grabbed me and lifted me off the ground giggling as she gushed something about my coming.

She has rather large bosoms so I felt trapped between the mounds of life. She is the first Christian in this congregation and is just full of joy. She is the mother of twins (Nalongo) and I met her husband and the kids. It was quite a greeting! She had prepared a tea for us which was wonderful provision after the long journey. Mpang is a fishing village with men gone for long periods. It is very poor and when Kefa first went out there they told him "we are dead" but now the LORD has brought life.

We met in a school room because the floor of the Hall was poured yesterday and still had not hardened. 100 counting the children, crammed so tightly my translator and I had to just stand in place. We got started about 11:30 and finished SS about 12:30. It was hot in there but was amazingly quite. I didn't think they could endure another service. I wasn't sure about me! But oh what a service. With out a break we started again singing, testimonies and preaching made up the main fare, alter call with one coming to present herself to Christ, healing prayers, pastoral prayers, announcements - next week in the Hall on a solid floor, a new pair of shoes for a little barefoot girl going to school next week. The benediction at 2:00.

There was little time to greet we had a long reverse journey ahead. I had no water with me so I was tired thirsty and very grateful for Resty's small tea.

Your loving husband,
John