

Burundi Report – June 5 to June 18

First, I will fill in some details in the next few paragraphs but let me begin by saying that my heart and spirit are even more confidently settled into the reality that the Lord has a call for US (that's 'all of us') to this great nation of Burundi. And I believe you will sense this as well when you hear the details of what has happened so far and what is planned over the next few weeks.

Things got started with a wild turn when my flight out of Pgh on June 3rd was canceled due to severe weather in DC and the trip had to be rescheduled for the 4th. We actually sat on the runway in Pgh for an hour before they just brought the plane back to the terminal. After some long layovers in London and Nairobi, I arrived in Bujumbura tired but in decent shape on Saturday June 6th. Sylvain picked me up and the drive with him from the airport to the house was filled with 'the witness of the spirit' that this outreach is from the Lord and that this vision for Burundi is His!

Olivier and Alberic were waiting at the house and we shared warm greetings and laughed over wonderful remembrances of 2008. There is a real sense of expectation among the people here. They have seen the rumblings of war come to an end here and they are filled with the hope of a future without war. As Americans we cannot imagine all they have suffered and it is hard to appreciate their level of hope and expectation as well. The nation has seen some progress, as roads were improved and the overall atmosphere was much more positive than last year. Praise the Lord for His favor!

The house I am living in is more than I need but comes at a very reasonable price. It has four bedrooms, two baths, a kitchen, office, garage, living room, dining room, screened porch and lovely yard. So if any of you are bored this summer and need a new vacation spot, the rent is already paid and there are plenty of beds! Since there has not been a sufficient amount of rain by normal standards they ration electrical use because it comes from a power plant based at a great water reservoir in the mountains near here. The rationing means the power goes out about midnight and comes back on around 7am. I have a precious brother who cooks and cleans and some young men to work security for the property. God has supplied in the best way. At present some brothers are supplying some of the transportation. I also purchase an occasional taxi ride.

These first two weeks have been mostly about getting settled into the accommodations and working on a 'communication' plan with the workers at the home. All things have to be carefully planned; like shopping for food, cleaning schedules etc. Once again I marvel at the mystery of multi-tasking housewives! They are truly one of the 'wonders of the world'.

There has been a lot of networking; meeting with contacts from last year and starting some schedules for meetings as well as meeting some really great new contacts. In fact here the Lord has really worked. I believe that God has put us in contact with a great group of co-laborers. Simon (a British citizen; isn't there some holy 'goo' coming from there too) works with some truly dedicated Burundians who are committed to

evangelism, church planting and discipleship and the training of young adults for Christian ministry. Does all this sound familiar?! I met Onesfore, a wonderful Burundian brother who heads up this work in Burundi. He sat with his mouth opened wide in astonishment when I told him that people from the US were praying for Burundi and that I had come to help raise up a generation of young adults who can impact the nation. Their ministry, Harvest for Christ, holds blitz evangelism during the summer with hundreds of young adults going into the villages throughout the whole nation sharing the gospel one on one with villagers. They have seen tens of thousands come to Christ in just the last four years doing this; including 140 witchdoctors and many many Muslims. Can you imagine this!!

He has asked me to participate in the training session of this “Army” over the next several weeks before they make their big blitz later this summer. Can you see this?! I am telling you this will be powerful. May God give me life-giving, anointed Word for these young people that help empower them for this great outreach. By the way, one of the topics he has asked me to speak to them on is ‘casting out devils’. Oh Yeah!! We get to route the camp of our God’s enemy and take back what belongs to Jesus!!

Continue to pray for my language acquisition. I need to speak some French as well as Kirundi. The Lord has also supplied a new translator for me this year as Olivier is very busy getting ready to get married in August and he has just recently received a new job which has him occupied 40+ a week. He will help on some evenings and weekends, but Chris will be working with me over these next few months as my main translator. Please pray for him that the Lord will use us both to minister his grace and power. He is a seasoned translator having worked extensively with the Assembly of God missionaries over the last 5 years.

Although I had several meetings and networking opportunities the first several days it was on Sat June 13 that I had the first opportunity to preach in a meeting. This was a house meeting held at Sylvain’s home. Last year they did not have more than 10 people attending. Now there are over 60. They were packed into a small outdoor spot next to his home. And while there was barely room for 60 plus me, that did not hinder them from singing and dancing and praising God. The young people were amazing and even Sylvain and I got in on the dancing and holy jump as well! We shared God’s word and the Holy Spirit moved upon the people. There were words of knowledge; people received healings, spiritual encouragement. God was moving. Then they came! Oh yeah, the angels showed up. It was almost like a breeze. And in this same moment as I witnessed their presence among the people, a middle-aged woman fell down under the power of God and the Lord delivered her from a demonic spirit. You should have seen her face of joy after the meeting. She was truly changed!

The next day we preached in Chris’ home church and again God moved mightily and people were touched by the Spirit. Following this meeting I became very sick and only began to recover by Tuesday afternoon. The devil doesn’t like it when you mess with his stuff. But Praise the Lord. Today I am fine and the Lord has truly restored me.

Today we had our initial meeting with the government office that coordinates the establishment of outside agencies that want to register with the government to provide Christian outreach and humanitarian projects. The officer was very helpful and encouraging. The door is open for us and all we need to do is accept the challenge of the Holy Spirit to move in.

One area that Harvest for Christ is involved in that may prove to be a great humanitarian project for For His Glory is the construction of housing throughout the nation for the Twa. The Twa are the disenfranchised pigmies of Burundi. Amy will remember that the Lord laid these people on our heart even before we came to Burundi last year. And you may remember that one of the contacts we made last year was with a wonderful Christian sister who sits in Parliament who is Twa. In fact, I will be ministering at her home next Friday.

Let us pray about this opportunity. It may be that God will open up this door so that we may show the people of the Twa the Love of Jesus and also see a host of them come to know Him. Remember the book of Revelation says that He will have a people for His Name from every tribe and tongue. Oh may the Twa know our precious Lord Jesus!

Continue to pray for clarity of vision, the outpouring of God's Spirit on all future ministry meetings and for more Divine appointments as we network with the brothers here. It is obvious that God is working and we will see His blessing in the days to come. I am trusting that He will also show us that clear open door for how we can unite with Burundian brothers and sisters who are on fire for God here and want to reach their nation for Him.

Blessings to you all,
Your brother Andy