

Dear Friends and family:

Attached is a long letter describing the wonderful way God has worked to open a way for me to return to Uganda for a month of ministry in May. Please call me with any questions at (616)460-5462. Thank you for your prayers and financial support toward this ministry opportunity. I hope to be back in touch shortly before departure, at least once from Uganda in mid-May and shortly after my return, to let you know what you have helped accomplish.

In His love,

Bob

UGANDA 2007

Bob Schuyler
18 Home Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

April 2, 2007

Dear Friends and family, greetings in Christ:

I am excited to tell you that God has called me to return to Uganda. Brenda and I were last there in 2001, when we led a Habitat for Humanity team to build houses in Hoima, a city of about 25,000 in the western region of the country. Some of you know that I had previously been in Uganda in 1983 and 1999, so I am continuing in a long-standing and affectionate relationship with this remarkable and yet needy and politically troubled nation. Thankfully, Ugandan Christians are a people of deep and resilient faith, so there is good soil for ministry.

This call was sudden and totally unexpected. Mike Marshall, my partner in ministry with the Grand Rapids Area Service Project emailed his friend Kathi Hammersley, in Greensboro, NC, last Wednesday, to inquire about her health. After thanking him for his timely concern (the cancer she has been battling for the past couple of years has returned and she is on a debilitating chemo regimen), Kathi told Mike that her most pressing concern at the moment was not the cancer, but difficulties with her ministry.

As missions trip coordinator for her church, she had been organizing a trip to Uganda for early May and two key members of her team had suddenly withdrawn (health crisis and family death), with the deadline for air ticket reservations just two days away (last Friday). She had found one replacement but was still short the second. Did Mike know anyone skilled in carpentry who might be interested and available in early May?

Knowing of my love for Uganda, my skills as a carpenter and volunteer leader and my previous trips to that country, Mike immediately called and asked if I was interested. I asked for more information, which he had Kathi email to me that same evening. I shared the information with Brenda, then looked at my calendar and found, to my surprise, that I did not have a single appointment for the entire month of May.

I then placed calls to the CRWRC Disaster Response Services to determine whether my responsibilities as Area Manager would prevent my going; to Andy Ryskamp, Exec. Director for the CRWRC, who had spoken to me two weeks ago of a need for some work to be done in Kampala; and to Eileen Hodgetts, Director of ENCOUNTER UGANDA, with whom I had served in the 1999 trip.

What has evolved in a very short time is an open door to an exciting five week ministry: I will be serving in at least four cities, including Jinja, Kampala, Hoima and Masindi. In Jinja I will work with a construction team at the Good Shepherd's Fold orphanage and help with music ministry for the team and to the children there. In Kampala, Hoima and Masindi, I will be working with the CRWRC and ENCOUNTER UGANDA teams that are offering pastors' conferences through the Anglican Church of Uganda. In that context I will be helping with worship leadership and sharing some of the *Freedom in Christ* discipleship materials that Madison has been blessed by during the past few years. God-incidentally, the CRWRC has just moved a staff member, Arianne Folkema, to Hoima, the same city where ENCOUNTER UGANDA has been working to build up the church for the past decade. Hopefully, I will be able to help her develop some new and valuable relationships with my many friends in the Church of Uganda there. This was a real confirmation as I considered taking the call.

Additionally, I will have the blessing of reuniting with and encouraging many dear Ugandan friends, including retired Bishop Wilson and Sayuni Turumanya, our son Jim's Godparents (who visited Madison back in 1999) and Bishop Nathan (and Peace) Kyamanywa. We have known the Turumanya's for more than twenty years and love them dearly. Finally, I hope to serve everywhere I go in the ministry of worship leadership and encouragement through song. I will be taking many copies of *In His Love*, the CD I just produced last winter, along with some new songs from *SPECIAL CARE*, the CD I hope to make and release this coming Fall.

God has blessed financially, but I am still in need of funds. The cost of the trip will be just over \$4,000. Grace Community Church in Greensboro has offered \$1,000 toward my participation and our IRS return has enabled Brenda and me to match that amount. I have applied for short-term support from Madison Square CRC and will meet with the Missions Committee on April 17th. Please pray God's favor for that meeting - for ALL who apply (there are a number of us!). I am anticipating the need for about \$1,500 from individuals who would like to invest \$15-50 in this ministry.

Last night's evening service at Madison brought a number of encouragements to me as I consider what lies ahead. Paul's letter to the Colossians emphasizes prayer, encouragement and the bringing of greetings. He specifically asked for prayer that "God may open a door for our message" and of his desire that all the brethren would "make the most of every opportunity". It was as though Paul's admonitions and encouragements were written specifically for me (as is so often true of God's Word, when we face challenges and new opportunities).

The work in Uganda will be taxing, both mentally and spiritually. Please pray for me and the teams with whom I will work. We must anticipate spiritual warfare and the possibility of physical difficulties (my son contracted malaria shortly after arriving in Uganda, in spite of his prophylactic medication). I depart Grand Rapids on May 2, arrive in Kampala the 4th, travel to Jinja the 5th, return to Kampala the 13th or 14th, travel to Hoima the 17th, return to Kampala and Entebbe airport on June 3rd and arrive in Grand Rapids on the night of the 4th.

Also, please uphold Brenda in prayer as she cares for Amir, our remaining foster daughter, and continues her volunteer work at Inner City Christian Federation, the Seniors' Cooperative and Madison Square's Anti-Racism Team.

If you wish to help financially, **please make your check out to CRWRC (Christian Reformed World Relief Committee) with an accompanying note indicating "For Bob Schuyler - Uganda 2007"** and send it to **Ruth Buntin, Program Administrator, Christian Reformed Church in America, 2850 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49560**. Your gift is tax-deductible. If gifts exceed expenses, the overage will be distributed to ongoing ministries in Uganda at the discretion of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee.

If you have questions or encouragements please feel free to call me on my cell phone: (616) 460-5462 or email me at bnbschuyler@gmail.com. Thank you for your gift and prayers. Brenda sends greetings.

In His love and service,

Bob