



Buyamba News

Learn to do good. Seek justice... Defend the orphan...
-Isaiah 1:17

Write your child at:
God Cares School
P.O. Box 26977
Kampala
Uganda
East Africa



Supporting God Cares School, Kampala, Uganda

September 2011

Called to Bible Camp

I am so thankful. Those words have resounded in my mind over the past week as I have experienced Uganda for the first time. I came from Crosstimbers Community Church in Texas with a group including my daughter, Cara. I had never left North America and really never dreamed I would be in Africa. Yet, as I helped to prepare Cara to go, heard the testimonies of those who had gone before, and heard from Pastor Dongo, I realized that God had a place for me to be used by Him in service of His precious children in Uganda. I joined the team and immediately began to see God's hand at work. As we spent months preparing, needs would arise but almost before they could be recognized, they would be filled. I found myself feeling so thankful for God's provision.

The travel day finally arrived and we left our comfort zone to arrive in Uganda. I had built images in my mind of what it would be like, but those images fell far short of the reality. The land is beautiful. The food is delicious, and the people are welcoming and friendly. I felt thankful as I embraced this new adventure. After a short stay in a hotel in Kampala, we left for Buyamba God Cares Children's Camp in Janda, Uganda. Then there were the children...there is so much to be thankful for my time with them. The camp was filled with 500 precious children, mostly ages 8

“ Thank you for allowing me to be part of such an amazing journey with each of you. This truly was a “trip of a lifetime” as so many young life's were touched by not only the love we showed; but more importantly the love of the Father, who was there in abundance. ” -Michael Vickery

through 12 years. There were also over 50 Ugandan youth acting as facilitators. There were over 550 unique hearts with individual hopes and dreams, as well as fears and needs. The opportunity to be “Jesus with skin on” was abundant and clear. Each member of the team came with unique

skills, talents, and offerings. Together, we became “The Church” in a way beyond anything I have ever experienced. My heart was filled with thankfulness. We started each camp day with a time of devotions at our “muzungu” cabins, sharing needs and encouraging each other before we started the day with the children. We then joined in with the Ugandan kitchen staff and a small group of facilitators to serve breakfast out of a rustic camp kitchen. The smiles and laughter



flowed freely as we raced through the process of collecting the children's plates, filling them with an egg, banana, roll and steaming cup of tea. Serving the plates to the eagerly waiting children was exhausting and delightful. It was an incredible process that I will never forget. My most memorable kitchen moment was when my vegetarian daughter served the evening dish which contained goat intestines! Her willingness to put herself so far out of her comfort zone was amazing. I would never have imagined that kitchen service could be so joyous. And I found myself so thankful.

Each morning, we joined together in a time of worship in a large central building. Maria, the worship leader for the Kabalagala Pentecostal Church, first led the children in lively songs familiar to the children. It was a joyous time as the children lost themselves in praise, using their entire body to express their joy. Our puppet show followed. We brought puppets, props, and a portable stage along with scripts tied to each day's lessons. The children's reactions were wonderful.

Then, our worship leader, Barrett, led the children in American songs of praise. The sweet spirit of God filled the place as the children raised their voices to Him. We were able to make and bring a song book for each child containing the words along with pictures of our team members. Those books became treasures to the children who delighted in finding the songs and in matching our pictures to our faces. The worship music was powerful and as I stood with my hands raised, jumping in the air along with the children, delighting in their praise, I found myself again, so thankful.

Thank you Cross Timbers Church

Thanks to all at Cross Timbers Church, TX for a job well done! We appreciate what you have done. Lives have been changed! We also thank all those who sponsored this event through donations and prayer especially Cross Timbers Church and Calvary Community Church, CA. Blessings,

Pastor Bethuel Dongo

After worship music, it was time for lessons. Five of us taught lessons, each to a class of one age with class size ranging from 75 - 125. We were joined by a team member assistant as well as a Ugandan teacher/translator and the facilitators responsible for the children in our class. The lessons were provided by Irene and were perfectly tailored to meet the spiritual needs of these children covering the basic tenets of faith, leading the children to Christ and baptism in the Holy Spirit. I am thankful for the way we were able to share God's word with the children and lead many to Christ.

The lessons were solidified by cell time where the facilitators separated the class into small groups and led the children through questions about the lesson topic. We even brought craft materials that echoed the lesson's theme. My favorite was the "salvation bracelets" with different colored beads representing sin, the blood of Christ, forgiveness, growth, baptism, and heaven. The children wore them with pride and many could easily recite the meaning of each bead. The rest of the day zoomed by with lunch, games, and an evening talent show where the children showcased their singing, dancing, and scripture recitation. All of this was punctuated by interactions with the children. Their desire for attention and love was apparent as they eagerly held our hands, helped us carry our lesson bags, and even sought a simple smile of approval. I am thankful for the opportunities I had to speak truth over them and bless them throughout the day.

For two days, we set up a distribution center to provide shoes and clothing we had brought from America to the neediest of the children. The delight on their faces was amazing to behold and I am tremendously honored to have been able to participate. As I see the children running around the camp with their bright new clothes, I am again filled with gratitude and joy. Again, I am thankful.

With each day, our ability to communicate increased and we heard more from their hearts. We were amazed and delighted by the many children and facilitators



“ The best part was seeing how the kids which I loved four years ago on my last trip have grown into amazing cell leaders. They cared for the little kids, lead discussions and kept the classroom time very productive. It was also great to see Dongo as a grandfather and new Dad. He could not do it without his wonderful Queen Florence. God is good all the time. ” –Kirk Roller

who knew scripture by chapter and verse and could recite it so readily and passionately. I delighted in the intelligence of the children in my class and also found myself drawn to several of the facilitators. Though they are very young, they exude such fervor for following Christ that I was truly humbled. I am confident that the future leaders of Uganda's spiritual community were present at this camp...Both the young facilitators who exemplified serving others, placing themselves last so that the children were fed and cared for even at their own sacrifice, and the young campers, many of whom gave their hearts to Jesus this week. I have no doubt that this experience has enriched them and better prepared them for their walk with Jesus. To have played any part in this is an honor to me. And again, I am thankful.

While we were at camp, a medical team made up of Dr. Randy Martz and his wife, Jennifer Martz, a nurse provided a clinic in Kampala. The thought of the lives they touched fills my heart with thankfulness as these talented individuals gave so freely of themselves.

As I return home, I will carry with me memories that will most certainly last a lifetime. I will also take with me a faith that has been strengthened by the faith of the people I have met here. Uganda is a beautiful country with wonderful people and many challenges. The church is making a difference in lives here and glorifying God in the process. I am truly thankful for all God has done, what He is doing, and what He will

do in Uganda as God's people make themselves available to be used in His service. All glory to God!

I am thankful for our wonderful team: Dave Schmilke, Michael Vickery, Hannah Thurlow, Bill Thurlow, Jennifer Martz, Randy Martz, Jenna Boyd, Beth Roller, Kirk Roller, Ken Macalik, Barrett Snare, Brad Maughan, Todd Helgesen, Tanner Schroeder, and Cara Hayward.

Eva Hayward

