



THE IRVIN FAMILY

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST: UGANDA, AFRICA

September 2022

Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.
James 4:13-15

Brethren, we salute in the name of the Lord Jesus.

In preparation for our monthly prayer letter, I desire to encourage you in some way regarding Jesus Christ and the word of God. We cannot be reawakened enough, reminded steadfastly to press toward the mark. Our service to Christ is nothing more than reasonable, especially considering our insensible and relentless trek toward eternity. The vaporous passing of life should be spent in dutiful service to Christ before evaporation arrives. And yet, the evaporative nature of life is evident as we look back on the years and wonder where it all went.

We should be full to the fill of the fear and loathing of this present evil world and that well tempered by our refuge in the Lord. Time is a twofold judge, delivering both the reward and consequence of our choices. Time is also a dominant measure of life's landmarks and accomplishments. For example, as of September 1st, Kristin and I have enjoyed eight years of marriage. We are approaching a notable milestone, for which we thank the Lord. The time I spend with my family daily is yet another reminder of God's continual goodness shone upon me. Thank you for praying for our marriage; I am overwhelmed by my wife's delightfully complimentary presence in life.

Time was also at play concerning the laptops we ordered. Uganda is not filled with large and stocked department stores. To find all that we need, countless trips around multiple towns searching through tattered and confused storefronts are required. Ultimately, this work often verifies that the desired goods are unavailable or exorbitantly priced. In the case of the needed laptops for translation work, we found it substantially cheaper to order them from the United States than to buy them in country. Certain Israeli-owned shipping service was opened here in Uganda; they allow us to ship things in country without the need of the highly incompetent Uganda mail system. Their prices are reasonable, and they typically have orders in three weeks to one month.

Of course, the shipment with the laptops we so desperately needed was considerably delayed. Due to certain issues in the U.S., they left two weeks later than usual. When they finally arrived in Entebbe, they landed in the hands of Ugandan customs, who just happened to be on strike that week. They returned to work just in time to haphazardly enforce an arbitrary new law when the strike was over. This new law, which went into effect the same week of their return, will no longer allow second-hand laptops to be shipped into Uganda. This was significant; not only were our laptops second-hand, but another individual shipped in twenty-one used laptops at the same time.

Customs delayed all shipments at the airport until the necessary corrupt agents could be paid off by the shipping companies. Once paid, they verbally agreed to release but did not actually release them for another two weeks. Hundreds of people were affected; we just happened to be among them. But praise the Lord, they were finally released, and the translators immediately put them to good use. The translators are working diligently; they face complex challenges; please pray for them. They have made their way to Genesis Chapter 37.

Time also takes us a few months back; you may remember our street preaching event in Matete. This event helped encourage my interest in taking our practice of street preaching on the road to assist and encourage churches associated with Masaka Independent Baptist Church and brother Keith Stensaas' various ministries. The report from our time in Matete greatly blessed my heart and has encouraged me to speed things up. My hope was to get a specific budget together for this ministry, which would take some time to prepare. Still, after hearing the good news, I believe it is necessary to move forward, even if we may have to do without particular needs for now.

Pastor Kakooza Bonny, in Matete, reports the result of that one-day meeting was six families now faithfully attending. Some have been saved, baptized, and for months, they have faithfully attended every Sunday and Wednesday. For this new church plant, with a humble and faithful pastor, this is a considerable development and one we pray we can duplicate for other national pastors. This news greatly encouraged me to get this ministry going sooner rather than later. Please pray with us as we get things up and working.



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Time can bring the unexpected. We praise God our children have maintained excellent health. But, in September, Bethany developed a cough that became concerning. This time of year in Masaka, it is cold and rainy. Our homes are somewhat open to the elements and often have a draught. Bethany's cough reached a point where she struggled to recover her breath after an extended event. We took her to Kampala to see a doctor. He believed it could have been an allergenic cough, though he wasn't sure. She had no other symptoms, so he gave her allergy medicine and a cough suppressant. Over time it appeared the allergy medicine was unnecessary, but the cough medicine was. It lasted over two weeks, and we fought it with the cough suppressant and regular doses of warm lemon with honey. Eventually, we removed the cough suppressant and continued with the lemon and honey until the cough finally passed. Please continue to pray for the health of our children.



Much time has passed, and as it does so, we learn more and more about the incompetence of government. We look forward to the day it is on the Lord's shoulders. Adrian is now five months old, and he has no passport. For several weeks I have tried to get an appointment with the U.S. Embassy in Kampala to register his birth and process his passport, social security card, and birth certificate. After several calls and emails, I learned the embassy decided they would no longer take any appointments from U.S. citizens in country. I have asked for a timeline for when this will no longer be in effect, but I have received no response. This is a wonderful example of our tax dollars hard at work. For now, Adrian has no passport and cannot travel. We do not have plans to travel anytime soon, but this is Uganda, and it can be a volatile country. The need to travel spontaneously for safety reasons could arise at any time. Please pray the embassy will work with us to get his necessary documents.

Speaking of the volatility of Uganda, it appears there has been another outbreak of Ebola. Uganda has had a history of epidemics, though they tend to be very small in nature and end reasonably quickly. Please pray this outbreak will do the same. For now, it remains relatively contained and in small numbers.

Finally, September ends with a goodly number of professions of faith. Between the street preaching and the door knocking, God's people here in Masaka have done a great job preaching the gospel. On the last Friday of the month, a young lady approached me while preaching at the market and received a gospel tract. The tract I gave her was in Luganda; she informed me she does not speak or read Luganda. I gave her an English tract in its stead; she stood there and read the entire tract. Then she asked if we could talk, but I soon learned her English was not strong enough, and she does not speak Luganda. Uganda, as a country, is a scattered collection of different tribal languages. Many individuals within those groups have moved to other parts of the country for work or school. This lady was in town for work, but praise the Lord, we just happened to have a young lady with us who could loosely speak her language. They talked for a while, and the young lady made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. What a great way to end the month. Her name, which will not try to spell here, means Peace. Now, it appears she belongs to the Prince of Peace.



Thank you so much for your support and your prayers! Your faithfulness is humbling and enabling.

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