



THE IRVIN FAMILY

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST: UGANDA, AFRICA

November 2022

Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:
Isaiah 46:8-10

Brethren,

We are gratefully associated with scores of God's faithful people who are dutifully loyal to their mission commitments. This realization is all the more incredible as we consider the world's current economic turmoil, and yet you falter not. As the course of this world continues in its deep repine of God's will, it is refreshing to know so many are committed to the Lord's pleasure.

In obedience to faith and submission to the Lord, we give what he would have - time, effort, energy, money - every part of man is expected and only reasonable. Our desire: "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven". As we labor together to this effect, our consolation is grounded in the Lord's good pleasure. But as we continue in difficult times, with our joy in the Lord, let us wrestle, fight, holdfast, watch, pray, fear, and believe as a demonstration that we belong to and serve the Living God.

November was filled with excitement, beginning with a woman and her axe. As the brethren from Masaka Independent Baptist Church continued faithfully in door-knocking, they were met by a woman who informed them she was medicated due to mental instability. She threatened to attack them, and as they did not take her threats seriously, that changed when she merged with an ax. I find people of this sort interesting; she announced her mental disorder as a warning to be considered. Secondly, she informed them that she was also medicated due to her apparent mental illness. The problem I tend to have is that she was perfectly normal until she made the announcement. When she realized our brethren were not deterred, she was then required to act on the announcement she made lest her claims of mental instability were believed to be unfounded. It is unclear in such cases which came first, the mental issues or the diagnosis. Praise the Lord, no one was hurt, and our brethren moved on to the next home, the gospel of Jesus Christ in hand and mind.

Concerning the door-knocking ministry, brother Gross is doing an excellent job leading this ministry. On the first Sunday of November, he informed the church of his recorded stats regarding the house-to-house ministry. He knew how many homes he had visited, how many received and rejected them, and how many were not home. In these numbers, he included the number of people who were saved and had actually attended church. He also noted that when a home rejects him, he stands at their gate and preaches the gospel in the open air for their listening pleasure. He is a soul-winning machine; please continue to pray for him. His leadership over the door-knocking ministry is invaluable. It is difficult for the Western mind to understand the physical layout of homes in Ugandan cities; it's an organizational disaster. But he understands it. Furthermore, communication between a Muzungu (white person) and a Ugandan is skewed from the start, they have immediate preconceived ideas about us, and we about them the moment we see each other. But when Ugandans witness to Ugandans, it brings a level of authenticity that is hard to escape.



Many of you have asked me about the Ebola situation in Uganda, as this term raises fears. The virus has been well-contained and has had a small impact on the country (at least practically, the media would make it seem otherwise). That said, we heard some interesting news recently regarding Grasshoppers. Ugandans greatly enjoy grasshoppers, and the source of that enjoyment comes from eating them. To assist in the spread of Ebola, the Ugandan government regulated where each region is permitted to sell grasshoppers. In the hope that limiting the sales of grasshoppers will somehow also limit the spread of Ebola. This is a true story; I can verify it - though I cannot verify the medical/scientific validity of restricting the sale of Grasshoppers to limit the spread of Ebola. Though the spread of Ebola has been relatively limited, I will leave you to decide if the grasshopper strategy is the reason.

The Luganda Bible Translation Project is moving on well. The first eleven chapters of Genesis have gone through the second level of review and will soon go through the third level of review. In the second level of review, Pastor Paul Sseronjogi and Pastor Ssebanja Henry review the work produced by our translators - Michale and Gross. The primary purpose of this second-level review is to consider word choices, grammatical structure, and readability from the Luganda perspective. Pastor Paul has a good relationship with the King James Bible and the Luganda Bible. But Pastor Ssebanja has no relationship to the English Bible. This is very important; if he can read and understand the work we have produced, then there is good reason to believe the man deep in the village, with no relationship to English, can do the same. It is essential that the wording be correct and in accord with the King James Bible, but it also must be readable to the Luganda speaker. This combination is of the utmost importance, we want to maintain the wording, but it must read in line with Luganda's thought and terminology. Our translators and the men reviewing are working with these principles in mind.

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In the first or second week of December, we hope to have Genesis 1-11 ready for the third level of review. In this case, missionaries Keith Stensaas and Marlin Petersen will receive the second-level materials. Their purpose is to review the passages and consider if the idea in the English Bible and the right words (every word of God is pure) made it into the Luganda effectively. Our Ugandan brethren sometimes misunderstand English terminology, which can carry over into the Luganda wording. These ideas can be confirmed and verified with this third level of review. We hope to have several chapters ready to read to the men attending our next Tri-Annual Bible Institute. These men patiently await an accurate Bible to assist them in gaining a more perfect understanding of “the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him”.

We spent time in November preparing for the Village Public Ministry Project. We needed a few items to be as effective as possible. Among those needs was a source of power. There is little to no access to power in the villages where we will preach. Thus I attempted to purchase an Anker Powerstation, but the shop in Kampala ran into numerous troubles importing them from Dubai to Uganda. With no other option, I put brother Gross' electrician skills to work. We purchased all the necessary parts, then built our own Powerstation into a large cooler with two wheels. It would provide enough power to last several days, considering our usage in the village (charging phones, laptops, speakers, lights, etc.). We already had a large tent, though it would only hold up for a short time under the conditions we would be camping in. But it will do for now. We purchased a few foam mattresses, blankets, pillows, and jerrycans for filtered water, and then we were set for our upcoming trip to the village of Kyazanga. Please pray for this trip; we are excited to labor with them.

I will take three men with me (Nyanzi, Waibi, and Gross). This trip will be an excellent opportunity to share what they have learned over the last two years. I have spent extensive time with these three and see great potential for their future. My aim in bringing them is to allow them to demonstrate to the men we work with in the village how to preach the gospel in a public forum and present the gospel house-to-house. Please pray for these three as the Lord continues to mold them into the men he would have them to be.

When taking these trips to the village, I will be teaching through the book of Jonah. We will take the first five hours for this trip and teach through Jonah chapter one. The book of Jonah majors on missiological and evangelistic ideas. Along with those are major topics regarding character and obedience to the Lord. I am praying it will tremendously impact the men who attend. They will receive the conceptual and practical teaching needed, and then they will put it into practice immediately after. Please pray for this trip as we prepare!

In November, my wife taught her first class in our home on “Biblical Motherhood”. The first class went great; the ladies involved were attentive and asked great questions. Kristin's teaching is very practical and provides great real-world examples. The ladies are encouraged to bring their children so that they can practice teaching their children hymns and memory verses. Then they take what they have learned home and teach it to their children for the rest of the month. The following month, they will demonstrate what their children have learned. Kristin also continues teaching the lady's Sunday School class at church. She is averaging about thirteen ladies in Sunday School each week. Please pray for these ladies as they learn and grow in the admonition of the Lord.

Finally, my family and I closed the month out with friends in the ministry. Working with brother Keith, we have met some wonderful people who serve in the Masaka area. Brother Jim Telman runs a large Christians School near Masaka. For the past two Thanksgivings, they have invited us over, along with several other people worldwide. Though I am not big on social gatherings, it would help my children to interact socially on Thanksgiving. We had a wonderful time; we ate good food, sang hymns, and testified of the Lord's goodness.



Please continue praying about our upcoming meeting in January for Adrian's paperwork. This is critical, and I need all the support we can muster to get it right the first time. Also, pray for the upcoming year; things will be very busy right off the bat. David and Lauren Brown (The Bible Baptist Church of Deland) will visit at the end of December, and then brother David will teach the upcoming TBI the first week of January. A few weeks later, in January, Eric and Lori Bohman (Africa Director for BIMU) will be staying with us in Masaka. Then towards the end of January, we will have our yearly BIMU - NGO meeting in Kampala. Also, in February, I will teach through the book of Daniel in the Masaka Bible College; please pray as I prepare for this daunting but exciting task. And yet, it pleases the Lord.

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