

Greetings from the Applegates in Uganda

December 2008



Dear Partners in Ministry,

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” ~ Isaiah 9:6

Oh, the intrinsic beauty portrayed in the fact that a Child was born for us! Jesus was born so we might have salvation, and through salvation, true peace. “What?” one might ask. “How can we have peace during a global war on terror, global economic crisis and through the escalating tensions with Russia and Venezuela?” The answer has become so much more real to me this year. Peace is not dependent on physical circumstances or personal conflict, but rather it is obtainable through a personal knowledge of God. The Apostle Paul made the statement, “That I may know Him . . .”(Philippians 3:10). It is only through knowing Him, the Christ that was born so many years ago, that we can find such peace.

Looking Back

Many firsts happened this year. We opened GRACE Christian School, Day and Orphan Boarding in *Masaka* with 33 energized K-5 and 1st graders (30 orphans and 3 children from our church). We also opened GRACE Christian School, Day and Orphan Boarding in *Kyotera* with 36 students. (The school in *Kyotera* will not officially begin until February 2009, but Pastor Diton wanted a couple of months for the children—all orphans—to get adjusted before school starts.) We witnessed a preaching point being started in a town called *Lukaya*. (We have been praying for this town for several years.) The GRACE Street Children’s ministry has seen 10 young men saved and going through discipleship. Most of these young men are now being taught to read and write English. Two of them, Frank and Joseph, have proven themselves in such a way that JJ, our Deacon and Orphan Manager, has been using Frank as a guard at night, and both Frank and Joseph are being utilized to run errands during the day.

Praise the Lord, all 30 orphans in *Masaka* have professed Christ as their Saviour. They have changed so much—physically and spiritually—in 2008. *Ayida*, one of our 5-year-old orphan girls, while back at her home for Christmas break, decided it was not right for her as a new Christian to dress up in the Muslim garb and go to the mosque with her family to celebrate the Muslim holiday called “*Iddi Day*.” The family became furious and forced her into the clothes and physically put her in the back of the truck to travel to the Mosque. On the way, when the truck slowed down, *Ayida* jumped off and ran into a garden of banana trees. She ran crying to the Baptist Church in *Kalisizo* where she waited until evening for her guardians to come and get her. After Pastor Diton, the pastor of *Kalisizo* Independent Baptist Church, talked humbly and lovingly to the guardians, they consented to not force *Ayida* to go the Mosque or say the memorized prayers 5 times a day. Pastor Diton spent some serious time talking to *Ayida* about the importance of respecting her guardians, but he also praised the Lord for the stand *Ayida* took for the name of Christ. There were several other stories of orphan children who refused to worship Allah on the Muslim Holiday.

Looking Forward

2009 holds so many possibilities for expansion in the kingdom of God. Not just expansion numerically, but individual spiritual expansion, causing an army of servants of God to begin doing as Jude 22-23 states, “And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”

We are looking forward to the return of the 30 orphans in *Masaka* on January 5th. Lord willing, in February, we will be starting up GRACE Christian School in *Masaka*, and Pastor Diton will be starting up his two Christian schools in *Kalisizo* and *Kyotera*. Several groups from the States are making plans to come to Uganda in 2009 to work with the orphans, help in youth retreats, and run vacation Bible clubs. A new church is also scheduled to be chartered in *Mutukula* on the Uganda/Tanzania border. Plus, we will be planning for our 2010 furlough.

Family Update

Well, we are expecting our fourth child. It is amazing to think that just over 5 years ago we were wondering if God was going to allow us to have any children at all. Once our first little miracle, Eliana, came, there has been no slowing down. We are praying that Kristy will have a safe delivery in June.

What joy fills my heart each day as I come from the school and see our three beautiful children come running out the front door, screaming, "Daddy's home! Daddy's home!!" Then come the slobbery kisses and telling of all the day's events. Eliana is now 4 and talks like an adult. We call Elijah the "Energizer Bunny" because he does not sit still unless it is time for bed. He is a constant source of laughter as he changes facial expressions and dramatically reenacts everything that happens. Elexis, being the baby for now, is the most mild mannered; yet, she seems to think there will be no problems as long as she can flash her charming smile. All in all, there is never a dull moment in the Applegate home.

Living the Christian life is an exciting adventure. We praise the Lord for the birth of His Son Jesus who gives us the power and wisdom to navigate through the changes in life. We wish you all a blessed Christmas season and encourage you to ponder Philippians 4:13—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

For His Glory,
Tony & Kristy Applegate, Eliana, Elijah, Elexis



Eliana, Elijah,
& Elexis
enjoy tackling
Daddy.
(Elexis seems
to be "going
along for the
ride.")

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"Basin
Buddies" ~
Elijah &
Elexis spend
many happy
moments
"reading"
while sitting
in their
"basins."