

A decorative border of globes surrounds the text. The globes are arranged in a rectangular frame, with some globes showing different continents and colors (blue, green, yellow).

Messiah Lutheran Church of Camrose

WORLD MISSION MONTH, January, 2022

The words of Peter to Jesus (John 6:59) NRSV:

"Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life."

How do those words get shared around the world?

Each week in January, 2022, a different organization
and person or persons serving with that organization will be featured.
Here is the focus for the third week:

**Last year at this time, we were following the ministry of
George Watts and family in Kibuye, Burundi.**

**However, since then they have been moved to Kigali in Rwanda
with entirely different circumstances and ministry.**

**Full details are on the next pages!!
You may recall that George is the son of Cece Watts,
a member of Messiah Lutheran Church.
In fact, George was confirmed at Messiah.**

If you are inclined to support through prayer the person or organization which is
featured, of course, that would be great.


Money is also always needed for personnel and organizational support.
World Mission Month is organized by the World Mission Group
which reports to the Witnessing Committee.

The World Mission Group acknowledges with appreciation the full support of
Pastor Bev Swanson, Music Ministry Coordinator Tova Olson,
the Messiah Office Staff, and the Technical Broadcast personnel.

Questions or Comments may be directed to
Ray Blacklock, Chairperson, World Mission Group, or its members:
Nora Gilbertson, Vincent and Mary Ellen Eriksson,
Connie Landstrom, Erhard Pinno, Cece Watts,
Advisor Pastor Bev Swanson

To God be the Glory!

January, 2022

An illustration at the bottom left shows several black silhouettes of people running in a circular path around a large globe. The globe is light blue and green, matching the theme of the page.

Greetings from Kigali, Rwanda!

Last September our family left the rural mission hospital in Kibuye where we had lived and worked. In many ways our time in Burundi feels like much more than the 6 ½ years the dates would indicate. We landed in Burundi in 2015 and experienced so much there: both shockingly good, and heartbreakingly bad. Last September we moved from rural Burundi to Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda.



The more we meet people from North America or Europe we realize that our experience prior to arriving in Kigali gives us a vastly different experience. While others may see a lack of development, we are shocked at how advanced, safe, clean, and efficient things are here compared to rural Burundi. Of course we still deal with massive cultural differences, and the stresses that come from living in a place that will never truly feel like home. Rwanda has made amazing progress since the unspeakable horror of the events of 1994. Yet there are still scars on the bodies, of the soul, and spirit of the people of this country. The Genocide Against the Tutsis was such a horrific time in human history that full healing will likely require generations, rather than years. However, the progress made so far, and the path this country is on is so hopeful that it is a joy to be able to play some tiny part in its development.

Our family has adjusted very well to our new life here, despite how different so many things feel. Moving from rural Burundi to the capital of Rwanda has been a drastic change in so many ways. Alma now attends a ‘real school’ for the first time in her life. She is in grade 5 at a Christian, international school that she loves. She has a fantastic teacher, and has made the adjustment from having the same 3-4 classmates in her class for years to a class full of other 5th grade kids, which are NOT her neighbours!

Matea (grade 12) and Micah (10) continue at Rift Valley Academy in Kenya, so for them the adjustment didn’t actually feel real until they came “home” for their Christmas break. Jonah is now half done his second year of a computing science degree at King’s University in Edmonton, but was able to come to Rwanda so we could have a family Christmas together.

George’s work has been a huge answer to prayer. Over our time in Burundi much of work he did kept moving farther away from what he loved doing, and what he feels he has been made to do. The work here in Kigali is a combination of coaching business leaders, working with young Rwandans, all inside an organization that is founded itself on the belief that Christ calls us to use our best where the need is greatest. So far, he has taken part in projects to help launch a pharmaceutical company, worked to help attract tourism back to the country, work with a flower farm with hundreds of employees and much more. It’s also great to be in a place where he can network, and learn from other Christian business people.

Susan's role has been slower to be clarified. Since this move required so much logistical changing (finding a car, a house, a school, etc etc etc) and getting settled in a new country, and set up our house, a lot of her time has been taken up just with keeping us functioning as a family! She has made some good contacts, and hopefully very soon she will find a place where her talents can be used to meet real and pressing needs.

We are so incredibly thankful to be living in a country that has shown so much leadership in the fight against COVID. Within weeks of arriving here in September, we received our first COVID shot, as there were still no vaccines available in Burundi at all. Our kids have been vaccinated since arriving back home from Kenya. Even though the worlds wealthiest nations took essentially all the available vaccines until just this spring, Rwanda has an incredible vaccination rate.

Back in Burundi, our team engineer returned to Kibuye just before we left, so George felt much better about leaving knowing that construction projects were in very capable hands. Our engineer's wife is a nurse, and she took over from Susan with working at the feeding program, so Susan had a sense of relief knowing that the work she poured her heart into with those women and children who were so dear to her heart will continue in her absence

We still feel we are in a time of transition. Having lived with such a tight-knit community in Burundi for so long, the adjustments have been many, and have been hard. However, we are confident that God has called our family here at this time. The work that we have already been able to be a part of is a clear answer to prayer. The ability to worship in English is so refreshing. The chance to see what God is doing in a different place gives our faith a huge boost.

We are truly thankful for your continued support of what God is doing with and through our family. Please do continue to pray for our interactions here. That we would be encouragement to believers, friends to the lonely, and Christ's hands and feet to those less fortunate. And do continue to pray for the work that continues in Burundi with our team there.

Updates on our ministry can be found at: www.wattsinafrica.com

Our family blog is: www.pardonourfrench.com

Thanks!

George & Susan

Jonah, Matea, Micah & Alma Watts