

Graham and Alexis Barker December 2012

Dear NBC friends,

Imagine this..... Seventeen **very** pregnant young girls dancing to African drums and concluding with a conga line! Those of us who were the recipient of this unique form of entertainment were expecting seventeen premature births at any moment! Thankfully all in attendance survived the experience.

This performance was the precursor to several amazing testimonies by the girls to their gratitude to the Wakisa Ministries and Vivian Kityo, the director, in particular for rescuing them and providing for their confinement and wellbeing. This celebration was a Thanksgiving/Christmas afternoon that the girls arranged and it concluded with yours truly providing an illustrated talk to the fifty invited dignitaries. This event concluded a sixteen day ministry time that began at the Youth For Christ staff training conference in South Africa and ended with trauma response training for 120 trainee nurses in Uganda. But let me back up a little....

After a week of preparation time in Denver USA where I worked in the Youth for Christ International office, Alexis and I flew to Frankfurt and on to Venice and spent two relaxing weeks in Southern Europe prior to my flight to Johannesburg and Alexis' flight home. By the time I returned she had pretty much recovered and was making plans for Christmas that we spent at home this year for a change. It was good to preach at the Christmas Eve service after several years' absence.

But let me return to Africa.....

At the Youth For Christ conference in Megaliesburg, I met the most amazing and wonderful young leaders in Christ's global Kingdom. Many had survived persecution and family ostracism to take Jesus as their Lord and now were devoting their lives to reach young people in their homelands. Many recognise that for their nation to survive the Islamist push south their young people need to be introduced to Christ.

The music was amazing and the testimonies inspirational. I felt our seminars on leadership development were superfluous but they assured me that their faith and enthusiasm needed to be matched by sound personal and strategic development.

At the conclusion of the conference the Training team flew to Uganda where I met up with Julie and Val from Wesley Institute. My plans were to leave Craig and Rob in Kampala to deliver leadership seminars while Val, Julie and I went to Kisiizi to work with nurses and the medical staff in the remote hospital. However, the Kisiizi region was quarantined due to an outbreak of the fatal Marburg virus and we were confined to working in Mengo Christian Hospital in Kampala (much to the delight of that hospital's administration). As it turned out we were able to train the 120 trainee nurses mentioned above. God's plans are far more productive than ours!

It never fails to amaze me that the level of commitment of these nurses seems to be the inverse to the level of available resources. I know I would not want to become ill and taken to a Ugandan hospital where relatives or friends have to supply food and bedding and often medications. In spite of this the personal care these nurses minister Christ's love to all the patients. They are the often the first and only medical assistance available to the victims of terrorist atrocities and inter tribal conflict.

After 5 and a half weeks away it was time to fly home and God provided for me in that flight. At Entebbe airport the officials could not book me beyond Johannesburg so I had to check in when I landed in South Africa. There I was told I was both waitlisted and seat –allocated on the trip to Sydney and I should accept the waitlisted allocation. I am very glad I did! When I was boarding I was shown a seat in the “first class” cabin (although Qantas no longer has a first class). It seems I had racked up so many miles that I warranted an upgrade and there I was in 4A with my own PJ's, flatbed and extra comfortable, formerly first class, seat☺ God is soooo good!

Thank you to all those who contributed financially to the African ministry and those who prayed us through it. Please continue to pray for the YFC staff, the Wakisa Ministry and the nurses in the war ravaged areas of Uganda. The picture shows “Mac” Collins from Malawi and me at the YFC conference in South Africa.



Thanks again Graham and Alexis