

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” - Ephesians 4:32

9 November 2022

Dear Friends,

I recently returned from Kigali, Rwanda where our leaders from all over Africa met face to face for the first time in twenty-three years! I don't think any of us thought it had been that long and very few of the leaders were old enough to have been at that last meeting. I sat with some younger staff who said that was the year they were born! It kind of makes you feel a little ... let's just say seasoned ☺.

While I was in Kigali I had the opportunity to visit the Kigali Genocide Memorial. Many of you may remember in 1994 there was a massacre that lasted 100 days in which as many as a million people were killed, many by their own neighbors. Over 250 thousand are buried right there at the memorial and there is one open grave for remains that continue to be found. The events were horrible and humbling to everyone in the world at the time. The visit was difficult for me and I wondered how a nation could survive something like that and not be extremely bitter. At the end of the 100 days, the leaders of Rwanda brought the murderers to justice mostly through prison terms but the important part of rebuilding was reconciliation. People who lost their entire families were encouraged to forgive the ones who hurt them. And, they did. Many people shared testimonies of how they had forgiven their neighbors. Today Rwanda has recovered and the people are smiling again but they remember what happened, and tell their children about it. These people know the power of forgiveness. It was a great reminder to me as well regarding the forgiveness Jesus has shown me.



African Leadership in Rwanda (and you thought getting your family to all smile at the same time was hard ☺)

As I met with our African leaders, I was so impressed with their love for Africans and their commitment to taking the gospel to everyone. I also saw how smart and bold they are. They know the challenges they face and are wise and faith-filled as they make plans to being the best stewards of the resources God has provided. Please pray for them to stay faithful and wise in reaching Africa and the world with the good news of God's forgiveness.

On the home front, we are bracing today for hopefully the last hurricane of the season. It is supposed to come right through us in the next 24 hours. School is open today but closed Thursday and Friday. By the time you get this, hopefully it is past and we will not have too much to clean up. Like when Ian arrived last month, the ground is already saturated with rain. Pray especially for those on the eastern shore (about 30 miles east of us). The reality is that some areas in Orlando are still not completely drained from hurricane Ian.

Thank you so much for journeying with us in serving Jesus!

Mark & Elaine