



Lowell & Claudia Wertz
P.O. Box 1344
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Christmas 2018

Dear Friends,

Jesus came.

In graduate school, they taught those studying for the ministry that when there is a death or illness -- just go. You don't need to know what to say, or how you can help -- just go. Your presence is needed. It speaks for you.

In a tiny animal stall, on the first Christmas, eternity was split into two -- before Jesus came, and after. Christians often experience the same split in their lives -- the way it was before Jesus, and now.

What caused me to want to be a missionary? I wanted to know God and have a clear reality of Him in my life. I wanted to know His presence, power, and to see Him work. I wanted to experience God. If it was easier in some distance and difficult place, I'd go.

A lifetime later I can say God did not disappoint. He has done everything I wanted and much more. This intensely personal God of the Bible has shown me Himself. I don't struggle with the meaning of life.

But I still want more of God. The infinite God has more for me to experience. The personal Jesus of the Bible, is the grand God of creation. His magnificence is displayed in the stars and in spectacular vistas of earth. I keep growing in my love and appreciation for Him.

Jesus came to me. And stayed.

The All Powerful One can be subtle. The Majestic One knows how to whisper. It happens at Christmas time. What is this good feeling that bubbles in us at Christmas? What is this "Christmas Spirit" that makes us better people, if even for a short time? Do the world's stores and shops, music and movies, pine trees and tinsel, church bells and decorated streets quietly echo the Father's celebration?

Jesus came. His love brought Him. Now He is ours.

Love,

Lowell + Claudia



(Excerpts of a tribute by Claudia read at her Mother's funeral).

Celebrating Mom's Life

From my earliest memories Mom was a hard worker. She liked her job and everyday was up before dawn to be at work in the cafeteria. She taught me by example the value of working hard, trusting God, and loving family.

Mom loved unconditionally. She would let you know if she didn't approve of what you were up to and there were consequences but she always loved you.

It wasn't easy for Mom to let her only daughter go off to Africa but she was supportive. Mom was always up for an adventure and made over 20 trips to Africa. She was "Grandma" to all our Africans and to the other missionaries here in Kigoma.

When we received word that Mom had passed, the African customs went into full force. Black cloth went up on the gate of our home. Word spread quickly as friends walked far distances bringing eggs and gifts from their gardens. Almost 200 people came over two days. The African songs "The Gates of Heaven are Open" and "When Our Work on Earth is Over" filled our home — it was beautiful! People were given an opportunity to tell what Mom meant to them. One Muslim man said Mom was the most caring person he knew.

We will miss Mom but we take comfort that she told us many times she was ready for heaven and all the joys and adventures that await her there.



Joy in the Harvest®

CAUTION

CALENDAR NOW OPEN FOR BOOKINGS

**FUN
AHEAD**

Furlough Is Coming — Fall of 2019!

The way forward is always the way to the foot of the cross. At the cross we are convicted of sin, repent, and find forgiveness. The Christ of the cross makes us whole. The mandate, message, and power of the cross propels us toward a lost world with Good News.

Lowell Wertz
Missionary to Africa

It has been too long since we last visited our churches and friends!

Normally, we try to come to the USA on furlough to visit churches every fifth year. But this past fifth year was

a critical time for *Radio JOY*. We had to postpone furlough until 2019. It will have been **7 years** since our last visit to most of you.

Last furlough we drove over 53,000 miles speaking— over a 1,000 miles per week.

Claudia and I purchased a new travel trailer and expect to hit the road in August. Can't wait to see you!

We are committed to visit all who have been vital to this ministry and all who want to take the Great Commission seriously.

Please get your date choices to us soon by email. We expect to start in PA and NJ in September and October. Other areas will be November through mid-June. ☩



CHECKLIST

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 **Christmas Envelope**

A remittance envelope is included. Please prayerfully consider a special gift to help us end this year in the black.



WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

On August 28 the Lord Jesus called our wonderful mother and prayer partner, Pat Wiesner, home to glory.

She passed away a few days short of her 91st birthday. She lived life to the fullest. Mom made over 20 trips to Africa, even this year spending several months in South Africa and Tanzania. Mom died



Mrs. Patricia Wiesner
1927 - 2018

peacefully, as a result of dementia, in Oregon, Illinois. She had two children, Claudia and Rich, five grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

All her family and friends in the USA and Africa, will miss her dearly. She knew Jesus as her Lord and personal Savior. She had lived her life with His love expressed to all. ☩



The News Is Good!

A Few Highlights of 2018

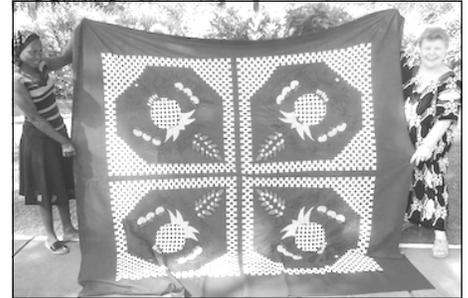
- Radio JOY on the air 24/7 and starts some "live" programming.
- Monthly support for refugee pastors continued.
- Computer School — over 3,000 grads and taught Excel & PowerPoint classes.
- Weekly Youth Meetings now meeting in JOY's Youth Center.
- Weekly Widows Meetings continued.
- Destitute Camp continued to receive food, medical, and workers from JOY.
- Feeding Center remained open — 58,000 meals served, everyone also receives medical care.
- Friday People in Crisis Program saved many lives and much suffering relieved. Epileptics provided meds.
- Guest House Ministry in constant use.
- HIV/AIDS Prevention Sports a great success. Another 1,000 young men learn about the virus.
- First ever school girls soccer tournament.
- Open air evangelism sees many come to Christ.
- Lowell taught a preaching course at Bible College.

Acting American Ambassador Visits JOY

Dr. Inmi Patterson, the US Charge d' Affaires, visited the Kigoma in November. She made many stops, but one of them was to *Joy in the Harvest* and *Radio JOY*. After a 30 minutes radio interview, she toured our ministry site and learned about our work. Her comment was, "You are doing God's work." She is a very nice person.



A Christmas Story



A young lady stopped by just to bring us a present. She explained that she had grown up in the destitute camp. We had provided for her schooling and other needs. Every Christmas we held a party and she received a present from us. Now she is grown, married, and has children of her own. She has an embroidery business making bedspreads and she made this beautiful one for us to say "Thank-you".



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How Long Do Shipments Take?

Q. When things are shipped to Tanzania from the USA, how long does it take?

A. Basically we send the things that cannot come as airline baggage two ways: containers and pallets. Both are ocean shipments and usually take from five months to almost a year.

Our pallet, that shipped in May 2018, just arrived. It contained supplies for *Radio JOY* and 250 girls' dresses that were hand made



by the women of Faith UMC of Downers Grove IL. Every girl at our feeding center, as well as

many others, received a dress. Each dress had a note that contained the verse John 3:16. ✕

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light... they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest." Isaiah 9:2,3