

COME AND SEE AFRICA MISSION TO RWANDA – 2017

Mission Journal – Dr. Frank Foreman

October 1, 2017

On Tuesday, October 3rd, I will be boarding a plane in Portland, Oregon with my great-grand niece Shae Sobottke. We will meet my brother, Chris, in Oakland and he will drive us to the San Francisco airport. Shae and I will be flying out on Dutch Airlines to Amsterdam and onto Kigali, Rwanda. Chris will be flying out later that evening. In the Amsterdam airport, Shae and I will meet up with Mavis Crispin. She is an Anglican pastor in London who has worked with us on the Come and See Africa Annual East Africa International University Student Christian Apologetics Conference for the past two years.

We will arrive in Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda, late Wednesday evening. Our executive director of Come and See Rwanda, Franc Murenzi, will meet us and we will spend the night in Kigali. On Thursday, we will lunch with Garry Friesen and former professor at Multnomah School of the Bible. He is an old friend and now ministers with Africa New Life at their seminary in Kigali. He is also leading a pastor's training outreach around the country. We will share our ministries and pray for each other. We may also meet with a banker and discuss the financial situation of the Lighthouse. We will then pick Chris up at the airport and drive three hours south to our headquarters at the Lighthouse in Butare in south Rwanda.

Friday and Saturday, we will meet up with the five-person team from Chris' church, Western Hill Church in San Mateo, Ca. This will be the third year that Ken and Shirley Hardy have led their teams to minister to the poor and encourage the churches in Butare. They will be in the second week of their ministry and we will join them in their compassion ministries to the widows and poor in Butare led by CASR president, David Nahayo.

Saturday evening, we will be meeting with the CASR board for the monthly meeting. Shirley has agreed to join the CASA board as our treasurer. So, Chris and Shirley and I will sit in on the meeting and discuss the accomplishments and challenges of their ministry. Pray that our Lord will provide us a unified vision of His plans for this ministry to the University students and the local churches.

Sunday morning Mavis, Chris, and I will be preaching at local churches. Then in the afternoon we will be meeting up with two Ugandan ministers. Early this year we were contacted by the director of the International Centers for Apologetics Research (CFAR). He connected us with their East African division. We then arranged for two of their ministers to come and see our apologetics ministries to university students and pastors. Nehemiah Kithathutha is the Ugandan Students Outreach Coordinator for the African Centre for Apologetics Research (ACFAR). He will be bringing with him their coordinator to pastors' outreach. Pray that this connection will bear fruit this year and for years to come.

Monday morning, CASR will host a Pastors' and Pastor Wives' Conference. About forty local pastors and their wives are scheduled to attend. Mavis will lead the wives' conference. I and the representative from ACFAR will minister to the Pastors about the defense of the faith. University students from the countries of Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, and the Congo will be arriving in the afternoon and evening.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday Mavis, Chris and I will be hosting the Fifth Annual Come and See Africa East Africa International University Student Christian Apologetics Conference. Over the two and a half days we will be teaching on "Positive Apologetics" from the Gospel of John. We will be looking at the seven "I AM" sayings of Jesus and how they show the truth of the faith. I will be teaching on "I AM" before Abraham, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of Jews, the Light of the World, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and the Resurrection and Life. I will be attempting to show how the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation and reality of the Person of Christ meet and defeat the attacks on the faith by modern materialism, relativism, and nihilism. Please lift it all up in prayer. That God will be picking out the right students to attend. That He be giving us the right words to say and giving them ears to hear. That the spiritual reality of the great I AM will be buried deep in the heart of all of the university students. That as the grow in Christ and graduate and go on out to become the leaders in East Africa, God would be glorified.

Friday and Saturday, we will be going out with Pastor David to visit the compassion ministries of CASR and seeing the continuing and new needs of the poor and of the churches in south Rwanda. Sunday Mavis, Chris, and I will preach again at a church in Butare. Sunday afternoon we will drive up to Kigali and board our planes to return. We'll arrive in San Francisco on Monday afternoon and in Portland at 6:30 pm.

Below is a suggested prayer schedule for the mission. If we are to accomplish anything that has eternal value to the church in Africa, we will need your prayer covering. Please lift us up and pray that our plans would submit wholly to His plans.

Prayer Schedule for Chris and Frank and Shae in Rwanda

Tuesday, October 3 – Traveling safety and health

Wednesday, October 4 – God leading right Students and Pastors to conferences

Thursday, October 5 – Meeting with Garry Friesen of Africa New Life,

Blessing over his ministry of Pastor Training

Meeting Banker – wisdom with financial decisions

Friday, October 6 – Meeting team from Western Hills Church

Blessing over their two weeks of ministry

Saturday, October 7 – Come and See Rwanda Board meeting

Wisdom is all decision about their ministry

Sunday, October 8 – Frank and Chris preaching at Church services

Monday, October 9 – Pastor's Conference – great blessing upon each pastor's church

Wisdom for each pastor in leading his flock

Safe travel for international students

Tuesday, October 10 – Student's Conference – Blessing of each student for each country

Wisdom for speakers and ears to hear

Wednesday, October 11 – Student’s Conference– Blessing of each student for each country

Wisdom for speakers and ears to hear

Thursday, October 12– Student’s Conference - - Blessing of each student for each country

Wisdom for speakers and ears to hear

Friday, October 13 – Blessing for Compassion ministries,

Blessings over each widow and their families

Saturday, October 14 – Wisdom in understanding all that the Father is speaking into us

Sunday, October 15 - Frank and Chris preaching at Church services

Monday, October 16 – Traveling safety and health

October 8, 2017

It is Sunday afternoon and I’m hot. It’s probably not more than 80 degrees, but thunderstorms flew through yesterday evening and left it muggy. And I just got done preaching at the packed Eden Temple church just down the road from the Lighthouse. The tin roof and 500 some African bodies warmed it up. But it’s mostly me. This Sunday and the next are the only times during the year that I don a suit and tie to preach. I spoke on the birth of the African church. From Acts chapter 8 when Phillip met the Ethiopian eunuch on the road to Gaza. I said that he was like us Americans, but looked you’re your Africans. This treasurer of the royal court of Queen Candace was rich and powerful on the outside, but poor and broken on the inside. I told them that much of America is like that, because we abandoned the God of our Fathers. But when Phillip explained Isaiah 53 to him about the Messiah who was slain for our sin and had no natural descendants. With his inability to ever be a husband or a father, the eunuch identified with the suffering Messiah. He accepted Christ was baptized and became the father of the African church and the very first gentile convert. I then told them that I found the people of Rwanda on the whole happier than Americans. Especially the Christians in Rwanda were poor on the outside, but rich on the inside. In the book of Revelation, Christ sends messages to seven churches. The church in Europe is like the Sardis church; it has a name that it is alive, but is dead. The American church is the Laodicean church; some hot and some cold and so compromised in lukewarmness. But the African church is like the Philadelphia Church; poor on the outside, but rich in faith and given an open door. It was a blessed time to see the face of Jesus in the smiles of these people with so little.

Well, let me back up. My great-grand-niece, Shae Sobottke, made it to the airport at 6 am on Tuesday and to Oakland by 8:30. Brother Chris Foreman, picked us up for breakfast in the Black Bear Café and drive to the Golden Gate. And then dropped us off at the San Francisco airport for the long flight to Amsterdam. There we met up with Mavis, our London partner in ministry. She is Anglican pastor and helped us on the past two Student Conferences. I switched seats with Mavis so she and Shae could get to know each other on the nearly as long flight to Kigali. It worked out great for me. I had a

row of four middle seats to myself. I actually got to stretch my legs out and sleep a little before our 31 hours of travel was completed.

Franc and David met us at the airport and loaded our luggage. David needed to get back to Butare to minister with the team from Western Hills Church in San Mateo. They had already been in Rwanda for a week helping with the widows' cooperative by building a house, planting beans, and buying 6 goats and 2 cows. Thursday they were scheduled to again work with the widows and do children's ministry on Friday. So Shae and Mavis drove directly to Butare with David to join them in their ministry. I spent the night in Kigali and got to rest a bit. Franc and I then did some banking business the following morning and met with Garry Friesen for lunch. Garry was the Bible professor at Multnomah University for decades before retiring and restarting in Rwanda. This is his fourth year and he is throwing in more and more in Pastor training. It is much needed in the baby African church. We prayed and discussed how we might partner with him. Later in the afternoon, we swung by the airport and picked up Chris. It was just getting dark as we stopped half way to Butare at the site where Chris' first wife died in 2010 in an auto accident. Kim's roadside memorial being kept well. The man who helped Chris out of the upside down car by cutting the seat belt met with us again.

Friday morning, Shae reported that she was blessed by purchasing the goats with the Compassion team and giving them to the widows. Then she left with them again as they did children's ministry at Eden Temple church. That afternoon she spent with Mavis sharing lattes at Nehemiah's coffee shop down the street and preparing to assist her with the Pastor's wives' conference. I spent most of Friday resting and finishing my preparations for the conferences next week.

On Saturday, Shae accompanied the Western Hills team as they toured the Canopy Rain Forest. Chris, Mavis, and I visited the site last year and greatly enjoyed the beauty of the African forest. While they were gone, Come and See Rwanda (CASR) hosted their first Alumni lunch. This is something that Chris requested last year. CASR has hosted an intensive 180 hour discipleship program for the Christian University Students since 2006. Each year we would officiate at the graduation of these students. It is a very challenging course to complete while they are completing their degrees at the University of Rwanda. We had heard good reports of some of the graduates and wanted to try to connect with the 300 some graduates. This first meeting was small but very encouraging. Each of the 12 alumni that attended introduced themselves and told us how the diploma from our Joy of God Bible Institute affected them and their careers. The ten men and two women included three pastors who also held degrees in law and business. One said that his diploma helped him get his job at Compassion International. One was an accountant for the national tax agency. One was a prison guard. One worked at national business administration. Each said that their discipleship training helped them to navigate their career directions and minister to those around them. One woman told how she led evangelism at her church and another as teaching the woman's group. We then officially organized the new CASR Alumni group and elected officers, arranged contacts for other alumni, and set up another meeting. Chris and I were both greatly blessed to hear and see the fruit of the seeds that were planted.

October 9, 2017

Monday morning, CASR hosted our local Pastors' and Pastors' Wives' conferences. After dropping off the mission team from Western Hills Church at the airport, Franc had succeeded in

connecting with our new partner at the bus terminal in Kigali. Nehemiah Kithathutha is the young man that the Center for Apologetics Research (CFAR) referred me to in the spring. He has served as their Africa Centre for Apologetics Research (ACFAR) student representative for five years. We met up for breakfast and devotional Monday morning. He told us that he was from west Uganda and that his mother was Congolese. He went to the university in Kampala and then was hired to the pastoral staff at a large Calvary Chapel church there. He ministered to the university students there when he was recruited by CFAR. He told us that he had one 20 month old baby and another due in a month. He proved to be a good fit at the Pastor's Conference.

The conferences were scheduled for 9 to 1 o'clock. Some pastors were early, but most arrived at African time; a half to an hour late. It's always discouraging at first, but then they keep trickling in and it ends up pretty full. This was even more true of the Wives' conference. At 9 am Mavis and Shae had an empty room. But eventually 26 wives showed up and 30 pastors for us. Mavis told us of her material on Inspirational Women that she presented at the conference; four Old Testament, four New Testament, and four Church women. They included Deborah the prophetess, Lydia of Phillipi, and Herriot Tubman. Shae helped her prepare and even did some role playing with Mavis to illustrate a point.

The pastors introduced themselves before our conference. There was a few Anglican, about seven Methodists, several Baptist, and even one Seventh Day Adventist. But most were pastors of independent churches and of these most Pentecostal. Chris spoke first from the Statements of Faith of CASA and CASR on the website. Most of the statements define standard Christian orthodoxy. But he emphasized the more recently added statements concerning the sanctity of life, marriage between a man and woman, and the sovereignty of God concerning healing and prosperity. There was the most discussion concerning the last statement. Extreme "Name-it-and-Claim-it" pastors and charlatans are the bane of the African church and Satan's most effective means of attack to discredit the church. CASA believes in God's power to heal and His desire to see His children prosper. But He is our sovereign Lord. He determines how He will provide those blessings. We never demand or manipulate the Lord of the universe into meeting our desires. Nehemiah pitched in here and told us of much of the abuse of this doctrine in Uganda.

I then spoke on 500th Anniversary of Martin Luthor and his nailing his 95 Theses on the Wittenberg door on October 31, 1517. But it was really on the history of the church that Christ established on the Rock that the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against. I quickly surveyed the spread of the church across the Roman Empire, the persecutions, Constantine, and the rise of Islam confining the church primarily to Europe. Then I discussed the corruption of the church, its oppression of the common man, and the loss of access to the Bible and the gospel for the common man. Then came the Wittenberg door that changed the church and the world. I also told them of the Renaissance and Enlightenment and the Greek influence on Europe. The two concurrent streams of Jerusalem and Athens flowed through Europe in the last 500 years and transformed the world. The scientific and industrial revolution and continuous flow toward liberty and prosperity of the common man flowed through the mingled waters of Jerusalem and Athens.

But then I came to my primary point. The majority of the positive aspects of these movements were the fruits of the slow growth of the mustard seed of Christ's church to fulfill its potential that Christ intended. It was slow and often ugly. But I am convinced that Greek influenced Enlightenment

philosophy, without the leaven of Christ, would never have led to the best fruit of the advances of humanity. The type of individual freedom that led to the beginnings of true scientific inquiry originated with free Christian natural philosophers. Free enterprise and technological advances originated in the environment of Protestant reformers. I don't believe that slaves or women would have been emancipated without the individual grass-roots dynamism of the organized believers in Jesus. The Enlightenment, that despises the church, has claimed credit for all of these. "All this progress is a result of the West shaking off the chains of the church". I disagree. The oppression of communism and the horrors of the last century, that bloodiest of centuries, lay at the feet of the Enlightenment. They took the liberty that the church slowly and persistently persuaded the West to accept and pushed into unbridled license. The wisdom of liberty under God was perverted in a senseless liberty from God.

I ended with trying to communicate to these common-sense African pastors the insanity of the West in the throes of its cultural collapse into barbarity and perversity. I encouraged them that although the church is dead in Europe and dying in America, the Gates of Hell will not prevail. The future of Christ's church lay in Africa, Latin America, and East Asia. The season of white faces steering Christ's ship is coming to a close. When God's well-deserved judgement falls upon the West, His Spirit will continue to blow freshly in these new locations of His Church Universal. The pastors were blessed. As was I when they wanted the PowerPoint and notes to take with them.

Our new partner Nehemiah then spoke to the pastors about his ministry and gave recommendations of how to handle the evangelists of the Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons. He handed out some very good material in French to the pastors that was taken appreciatively. Then a greatly appreciated lunch was provided for these faithful couples who are plowing the fertile spiritual soil of Rwanda.

That evening the international students starting arriving for Burundi. But many had been delayed. We pushed our Student Apologetics conference back half a day. There are many challenges in traveling in this continent. So both arriving late and staying late are taken as an assumption. They are happily oblivious to the tyranny of the clock that we slave under.

10/12/17

Wow! What a rollercoaster. We have about wrapped up our 5th Annual East Africa Christian Apologetics Conference. What a blessing! About 70 intelligent, committed young university students hungry to learn more of Christ. For one like me, who loves to teach God's word, this is paradise. Flexibility is a key to ministry in Africa. We were scheduled to start first thing Tuesday morning. The conference was to run all day Tuesday and Wednesday; with three-hour sessions in the morning and afternoon and a less formal evening session. Then we would hold a morning session on Thursday, an informal session in the afternoon, and wrap things up with loud energetic African worship this evening.

Well, man proposes and God disposes. Only the eight students from Burundi arrived on Monday evening. Half the Ugandans didn't arrive until Tuesday afternoon. The Kenyans, Tanzanians, Sudanese, and Congolese wouldn't arrive until the evening. Worse the University of Rwanda delayed its scheduled start of the semester to this week. The Rwandan students were checking into the first week of classes. They couldn't attend the conference until Wednesday. So, we were in scramble mode.

Our new partner, Nehemiah from Uganda, met with about 20 some students from Burundi and Uganda who were available on Tuesday afternoon. You could certainly tell that he is a professional college campus apologetics minister. He connected with the students immediately and addressed the African church issues at a level that Chris and I could not. By the evening we were about half full and Chris went ahead and presented his introduction from Exodus. He spoke of the how God chose to be referred to as I AM and how this refers to God's aseity. This word was new to me and is defined as "self-existent"; the foundational attribute of God.

Wednesday morning's first session was my turn and we had our full contingent of about 70 students. The format of the conference was to show how the seven "I AM" sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of John show His aseity. So, I started off with I AM – "Jesus of Nazareth" – a common man, "the King of the Jews" – an extraordinary man, and "before Abraham was I AM" – the Son of God. I used these topics to address the attacks on the reasonableness of the faith by defending the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Theodicy. God blessed.

Wednesday afternoon our London Anglican Pastor, Mavis, amplified the meanings of I AM "the bread of life", "the gate", "the good shepherd", and "the true vine". She has a wonderfully engaging and gentle style of teaching that balances my flamboyance. She was an elementary school teacher as she was raising her three sons with her nuclear physicist husband. Our Rwandan Pastor David became a member of their church when he went to seminary in London in the mid-eighties. They became fast friends and their church has supported David ever since. Mavis became a widow twenty years ago and she decided to return to college and become a minister. After finishing her education at an evangelical college, she went out into the mission field. She served briefly in Pakistan before spending five years in Peru where she served with the Anglican Church there. They then asked her to become a pastor at her old church in London. She has been serving there ever since, but returns to Africa annually. This is her third time helping us with our conference. She is one of the most interesting human beings that I have ever met.

Wednesday evening, Nehemiah met informally with the students and answered many of their questions. Mavis met with the women students and presented her teaching on inspirational women, as she had with the Pastor's wives' conference on Monday.

Thursday morning, I presented session three about I AM the "Light of the World", "The Way, Truth, and Life", and the "Resurrection and Life". In the process I addressed the post-modern attacks on the faith: Relativism and Nihilism. So, I walked the students through Buddha's illusory world and through Plato's cave of subjective reality. I followed out the repercussions of how denying objective reality leads to Buddha's abdication of desire for life and Plato's pessimism of ever finding true truth. I then attempted to illustrate how Jesus' claim to be the Light can lead us out of Plato's cave. Jesus sends His Holy Spirit to take us by the hand and show us the Way through that dark labyrinth of subjectivism and into the Life of His completely objective Truth.

I then traced the roots of Nihilism to Nietzsche's assertion that "God is Dead". This "post-modern" flight from the Enlightenment's worship of Reason naturally flowed into a denial of all meaning to Life. The slow infection of this "radical relativistic individualism" (which is "post-modernity") has metastasized to every level of western culture. From Nietzsche to "Life Sucks and you Die"; through our art, our music, our movies, and literature; from our college professors to our construction workers, we have given up on finding any meaning in our insane existences. Nihilism is now sweeping western

cultures into a flood of absurdity, hopelessness, aimlessness, and perversity. Without a “God who is There” every individual becomes their own deity, fully capable of creating its own reality as it decides on any given day.

Christ’s claim to be the Resurrection and the Life is the only answer to the deadly power of Nihilism. The empty grave, the resurrection of the just, the redemption of this groaning, travailing creation are the foundations of hope; a hope that makes life worth living. Nihilism sucks out of life its beauty, grace, hope, idealism, love, respect, consideration and manners. It breeds numbness, drifting, apathy, despair, suicide, anger, hatred, violence, and cruelty. The promise of beauty and life after our death brings a hope that is required to bring joy and peace into this life. The knowledge that there is a loving heavenly Father who knows us intimately, but still loves us immeasurably, shoots eternal rays of light into our lives. A God who knows the number of hairs on our head, who sees every sparrow that falls, and remembers every cup of water given to one of little ones in His name brings great meaning to every moment in our life. Because He lives, we can face tomorrow.

This afternoon, Chris wrapped up the conference by presenting the Book of Revelation I AM “the Alpha and Omega”. We attempted to conclude the conference by opening up a question and answer session with the panel of teachers. But I guess the Father had other plans. Just as Chris was finishing his session, a furious thunder storm drove into the Lighthouse. The electricity went out and the thunder from the lightning was overwhelmed by the pounding of the downpour on the steel roof. It made hearing impossible. After an hour’s break, the storm let up and the electricity came back on. So, I read from Psalm 29. “The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: the God of glory thunders: the LORD *is* upon many waters. The voice of the LORD *is* powerful; the voice of the LORD *is* full of majesty. The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; yea, the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon. The voice of the LORD divides the flames of fire. The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; and in his temple doth everyone speak of *his* glory.” So, all the students shouted “Glory” and we dismissed to take pictures and fellowship. God is good.

10/14/17

Friday was a more relaxing day of seeing than doing. It is such a blessing to see all the lives and hearts that Come and See Rwanda touches. Franc always tries to raise the profile of CASR and the Lighthouse in the region. So Friday morning the vice-mayor of Huye and the district police chief attended the graduating students of the conference. The local government is supportive to the ministry and grateful to the ministry to the university and the poor. First Pastor Gordon and his Ugandan students entertained the assembled with a display of the national dances of Uganda. Then an international student from several countries came forward to tell of the influence of the conference on them. I thought that I had recognized several familiar faces among the student. It was most gratifying to hear the students from the Congo and Burundi tell how they had shared the material from last year’s conference covering “Ten Reasons Why I am a Christian” based on John Stott’s book. God had used them to bless others on their campuses with their confidence in Christ. We then handed out diplomas and had many, many pictures taken and the international students exited for their bus to their homes.

We then went to downstairs classroom with our city officials and met with our widow’s cooperative. CASR has been working with this government sponsored cooperative for over a decade.

These 31 single women with an average of about four kids in tow filled the room. The vice-mayor expressed the city's gratitude to the CASR team for the continuing commitment. The women were very happy and grateful for CASR's gift of corn meal and the donation that covered their health insurance. There was much singing, dancing, and loud Halleluiahs. When asked what they were most in need of, they consistently requested help with the health insurance. Health care in Rwanda is very rudimentary. The cost of the insurance is only about \$4 a year or \$20 for a family of five. But it is beyond the reach of most of these marginalized women and children. Without it, they are charged for every appointment and medicine. So, they allow themselves and their children to sicken for weeks until they become frightened enough to rush in as an emergency. With the insurance, they go in before the symptoms keep them out of work or school for long periods or permanently effect their health.

It was a blessing when Chris looked through his pictures of past missions on his pad. We recognized the "loud Halleluiah" widow hugging Kim in 2008. And the widow that came forward to speak for the group was the same spokeswoman who spoke at Kim's funeral two years later. It was so encouraging to see the transformation in the cooperative from last year. The cooperative was almost non-functional last September. And it is a good example of damage that one-time donations with no follow-up can do. About two years ago a grant to the cooperative came through the government embassy. It allowed them to buy land. However, the woman were encouraged to move out on their own without the assistant of a religious organization, like CASR. The cooperative very quickly went into a downward spiral. These marginalized, illiterate, often sick single woman find cooperative direction impossible to maintain without help to direct their meetings. Within a year of the grant, most of the money was gone and the women had voted to sell the land and split it up. At this point the city stepped in and asked CASR to step in and save the cooperative. Pastor David was really too busy to work through the personalities and bickering and bring back a unity of direction. But a volunteer intern, Jerome, had started working with them. He had graduated from the University of Rwanda in Social and agricultural science and from CASR's Bible institute training. We met him last year, witnessed his desire and heart and the strong recommendations from David and Franc. So CASA agreed to provide a minimal income of \$200 a month for him to work in our compassion ministries. It was a great investment.

After our meeting with the cooperative, Pastor David took us down the road to visit the fully functioning mushroom shed that was broken down and neglected last year. My wife, Lelia, helped David research this operation ten years ago. It became profitable in 2012 when it was supplementing the incomes of the widows by 50%. However, as with all projects in developing countries, building projects are much easier to create than to maintain over the long haul. Twice in five years, the mushroom business stopped due to lack of roof maintenance and termite infestations. But with just a little bit of additional funding and a little oversight, the business is running smoothly again. Jerome had also helped the cooperative plant a large stand of banana trees and obtained a pump to bring the water up from the valley floor to the rim and keep the trees producing. At the CASR board meeting they decided to hire Jerome and give him a contract so that he can build a house across the road from the widow's project. God is good.

It is also a blessing to see the widow give her mite. Pastor David heard of a poor woman who took in a baby abandoned by her mother who is a prostitute. Shae had raised money to give during her mission. David, Franc, and Shae agreed to use those funds to purchase a cow for her to help support the baby. So after meeting with the widows, we and the officials went out back to meet the woman and

baby. Franc had dubbed the young cow "Shae". We had heard her loudly lowing all morning. When I told them that the meaning of the name "Shae" is "gift", they were all delighted.

David then drove us out several miles to a village to visit a widow whose house is being rebuilt. This woman is in her late 60's and walks those long miles several times a week to Franc's church. She is a dynamic leader among the women. Her mud house was falling apart and getting uninhabitable. The team from Western Hills Church donated the funds and helped to begin building her a new house in front of her old one. Her joy in Christ was evident on her face at this blessing. We all gave God the glory.

10/18/17

Missions are adventures. And adventures wouldn't be adventures if everything went like clockwork. Nevertheless, I was "that close" from telling Shae that this was my first mission to Rwanda without a single "Murphey". But then.... after over 30 hours of travel, we had landed in the San Francisco airport. We got through customs, picked up the luggage, and loaded it onto the BART train for our trip to the Oakland airport and the final leg of our long journey home. But, while waiting for the train to start I looked for my smart phone in my bag. It wasn't there! I searched three times! We quick jumped off the train. We had about an hour to spare, so I left Shae with the luggage and ran to an information booth. The Dutch airline was called, a report was filed, and I was totally discombobulated.

Soooo.... It took me an extra day to get my final mission report out. Getting an upgraded at T-Mobile phone and catching up on the house construction while jetlagged was tough. Better late than never. So now here's how things wrapped up for us in Rwanda.

Saturday was the graduation ceremony for our Joy of God Bible Institute students. We do this on every visit that we make to the Lighthouse. It is a special recognition for of the students' extraordinary commitment in finishing their university courses while also studying evenings and weekends to complete their 180 hours of 32 courses. These are challenging courses; including: Life of Christ, Hermeneutics, Major and Minor Prophets, God and Angles, World Religions, Hebrews, etc. with tests after each course. It is an amazing commitment and accomplishment. We were used to seeing 30-40 graduates at these celebrations. But in the last few years the numbers have been declining. This was the smallest graduating class and attendance that I can remember. 17 were graduating and only six were able to attend the ceremony. Again, this is a reflection of the challenges facing CASR's university outreach. They are very proud that their curriculum and teachers meet Rwandan standards for a seminary diploma. But the continuing shift of university courses from Huye to Kigali is making it nearly impossible for the students to complete the entire three-year course. The entire nation is being concentrated increasingly into the capital. So a large majority of those who succeed in completing the curriculum quickly move to Kigali to get jobs. Hence the smaller turn-out. And a reappraisal of how to adapt the ministry to changing circumstances.

So the ceremony was small, but profound. The five men and one woman had invited their parents and pastors and all shared a testimony. The Presbyterian pastor and his daughter were especially precious. Chris then blessed them all greatly with a new application from Daniel chapter one. Like Daniel, Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego after their three years of study in Babylon, our students after their three years of study are "well favored and skillful in all wisdom and knowledge and

understanding science and have the ability to stand in the king's palace". The purpose of institute create future leaders in Rwanda's governmental and business sectors who are deeply rooted in Christ and His calling. I then spoke of Kim Foreman and her life. How at their ages, she was a new university graduate moving to new county with a new husband. How her intense ambition helped her raise her sons while also completing a Master's and Doctorate degree, becoming a university professor and achieving tenure. Then it seemed to me, that after achieving all her goals, she looked for something deeper. She found it in 1999 in the vibrant church in Rwanda on her first mission. Her rediscovery of a higher purpose, pulled Chris out of his spiritual lethargy and into seminary and a new profession as a pastor. So the seeds was planted in Rwanda by her "Joy of God". With her death in an automobile accident in 2010 the seed died and fruit is multiplied. I said that I saw Kim smile often over the years during her happy years of accomplishment. But it was the powerful, contagious Spirit of the African church, that brought her the deep joy that would light up her face. It was a joy for us to witness that fruit. But it was the African church that blessed our lives more than we can ever bless it.

Saturday afternoon, we walked to "Nehemiah's Best Coffee" and just made it before another thunderstorm rolled in. We sipped our smoothies as the rain pounded down. Once it stopped, it was a cooler walk back. That evening we packed and met up with Franc and David's families for our final good-byes. Franc's youngest, named after Chris, isn't a baby anymore. The three year old wanted to explore any and every smart phone or computer that he encountered.

The return odyssey began at 6 am Sunday. The three-hour drive got us to a large Assembly of God church in Kigali. It was planted in a predominantly Muslim community and has had a major impact. I taught the first hour Sunday school to the entire congregation on the Birth of the African Church and the Ethiopian eunuch. Chris then preached on the parables of the Pearl of Great Price and the Hidden Treasure. Before the service he taped an envelope with a necklace in it to the underside of a seat. A lovely lady sat in the seat. After the sermon he told all the women to check under the seats for hidden treasure. The woman found the "treasure". The spontaneous joy was exuberant and the point was made. Lunch, some final shopping, and a meeting with our old friend and CASR board member, Jane, and then the mission was complete.

The flights back were long and tiring. But there was never a complaint from our 18 year old super-niece Shae. Her spirit never wavered. She "came and saw Africa" and is more committed than ever to her ambition to minister overseas. Her experiences shadowing a veteran missionary and minister such as Mavis could not have been more valuable in confirming her calling. God indeed works all things together for good.