

The Applegate Family

Tony, Kristy, Eliana, Elijah, Elexis, Elysse, Ellora

Missionaries to Uganda, East Africa

December 2023 – February 2024

Dear Friends,

Now that the year 2023 is over, questions such as these might enter our minds: Did I reach the goals I set for 2023? What did God teach me in 2023? What physical and spiritual improvements need to be made in 2024?

For some reminiscences of 2023, I claim Philippians 3:13-14, "...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." For thoughts about 2024, I claim Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Until we receive our glorified bodies, the battle between the flesh and the Spirit will continue, but "thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57). God is and will always be good, righteous, and holy.

Family Update: Christmas is an important family event, and we were blessed to have Eliana with us in Uganda during her Christmas break. She brought joy and laughter to all of us during her visit. She enjoyed serving again at FBC.



Elexis and Elijah are continuing to improve their skills in violin and guitar. We are grateful for their desire to use their talents in service for the Lord. This Spring, another one of our children will be leaving the nest. Kristy and I are praying for and with Elijah as he graduates high school and enters his next exciting God-led journey. FBC teens played "Silent Night" during our Christmas Day service.



In January we had an opportunity to go to the village and visit Mbira Baptist Church (MBC). This ministry has a special place in our hearts since I had the privilege of helping start Mbira Baptist Church, and I am still on the board of directors of the Grace Project (which includes the Christian school and orphan boarding). Our kids enjoyed seeing their names which they etched into the cement driveway from when we lived in Mbira in 2014.

BIMU Conference: The Lord wonderfully blessed during the annual Baptist International Missions (BIMU) Conference in January. All of the BIMU missionaries in Uganda and a few from Kenya came together to fellowship and encourage one another. This year marked the 30th anniversary of BIMU being in Uganda. What a joy and privilege to have evangelist Dr. Tom Williams teach us on prayer! The two ladies who came with Dr. and Mrs. Williams were also a blessing.



Faith Baptist Church: During the holidays, we had the wonderful privilege of giving food to 25 needy families who live near our new church property. The LC 1 (Local Chief) has been a big help to our church in connecting with the community. A member of Faith Baptist gave a Gospel presentation, and several other people who received the food showed interest in learning more about Jesus. One lady accepted Christ as Savior.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Solid spiritual growth in our FBC membership
- That we can begin construction on our church soon

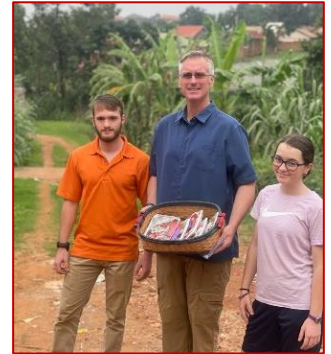
PRAISES

- Eliana's safe arrival back to the States for college after spending Christmas break with us
- God's provision for our family and ministry in 2023
- Blessings during our BIMU Conference

We have paid the required fees for final approval for constructing the church building, but we have not yet received the certificate with the signature that will give us the go-ahead to build. We remain hopeful that ground-breaking will take place in early 2024.

Several pastors came together at Faith Baptist Church for a pastor's fellowship. I enjoyed the insight of the pastors as we discussed topics about cultural ministry expectations, finances, marriage, and how to better strengthen local church members. Some of these Ugandan pastors very young, but their faith in God is astounding as they have grown through so many trials.

Update on Special Giving Opportunity: The Grace Project is still going strong. The meter on the fund-raising progress has not moved since our last update. The amount given remains around 45% of the total needed. I believe God will supply the rest of the \$75,000 in His timing. Please continue to pray about how God might use you to help meet this need for Grace Project to have two new facilities for their nursery and primary school.



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Row 1: Dr. Tom Williams praying for Elysse. Elysse with missionary's daughter. Couples Conference Attendees. Tony, Elijah, and Ellora handing out tracts and Christmas cookies to neighbors.

Row 2: Learning to make balloon shapes...then handing out the balloons. Man saved during "Tabernacle Tuesday" service. (We set up a tent at our new church property and have a service there the last Tuesday of every month.) Elijah playing with kids at New Year's Eve fellowship.

Row 3: Friends at Mbira. Elijah with friends at Mbira Baptist Church's new auditorium. Widow lady who lives