

Dear friend,

Good Friday - April 15, 2022

A devotional App (Lectio 365—which I highly recommend!) that I (Jon) have been using has been referring to Lent as a “bright-sad season.” I’ve come to appreciate the depth of meaning in that descriptive phrase, not only for the Lenten season, but for this season of our lives as well.

2022 started out bright with the opportunity to be in the States spending time with our children and grandchildren during the month of January, though also sad as COVID kept us apart for a large portion of that month. The month ended on a sad note as we said goodbye to all of them once again to return to Kenya, yet with a hint of brightness at the opportunities that lay in the new year ahead.

Sadness soon struck again when Vera received a phone call from her sister, just one week after arriving back in Nairobi, informing her that her mother had been moved to a hospice care facility—and then, less than twenty-four hours later, another call to inform her that her mom had passed away! This was the third loss within Vera’s family within a two-year period. We were grateful that we had been to visit her mom in December. We realized then that it was likely the last time we would see her and were able to say goodbye.



Less than three weeks after returning to Kenya, we made a three-week trip to Uganda! It had been nearly two years since our last visit there, due to the pandemic related travel restrictions, so we decided to spend some extended time there. How good it felt to meet with our Uganda team again face to face!

We had a number of meaningful and important meetings with our WGM global workers serving in Uganda as well as the Africa Gospel Church (AGC) Uganda leaders, and other ministry partners. Both WGM Uganda and AGC Uganda were facing some significant and sad challenges right at the time of our visit, so it was good for us to be there in person rather than trying to respond virtually. Our time there was characterized by the juxtaposition of beautiful brightness and sincere sadness.

March 11th found us returning to Kenya for another month, which was filled with the brightness of settling back into our routine of living in Nairobi and hosting guests in our home



once again. Even that was intermingled with some sadness as we faced into the burden of greater responsibilities due to some significant leadership role vacancies in our region with no obvious candidates available to fill them.

The BRIGHT returned at the end of March when we were able to join the WGM Kenya Field for its annual retreat on the Kenya coast! This was the first in-person retreat for the WGM Kenya team since the onset of the pandemic and, therefore, much anticipated and needed! A close friend of ours from Nairobi was invited to be the main speaker, which made it extra special.



The Monday after Retreat brought new sadness, darkness, and discouragement as another round of internal issues shook AGC Uganda and I was drawn into the communication surrounding it. Fortunately, we had planned a second trip to Uganda the very next week—from the evening of Palm Sunday through the evening of Easter Sunday. However, the day before we flew, a confluence of events brought sadness to the surface again as we struggled to participate in Vera’s mom’s memorial gathering in Florida via Zoom with a less-than-ideal connection the very same hour that all our children were gathered in Kentucky celebrating our youngest grandson’s 7th birthday. It was especially hard to miss those important events!

Which brings us to Holy Week, back in Uganda... Earlier this week, I (Jon) met with the AGC Uganda leaders in meetings that addressed the issues in a godly, organized fashion which put the church on the path toward healing and restoration, with the help of the Holy Spirit! Please pray for AGC Uganda that God will bless and prosper it for the sake of His Kingdom!

By far, the brightest day in recent weeks was yesterday when we had the joy and privilege of welcoming a new family to serve with WGM Uganda! We praise the Lord for bringing Matthew and Ally Cable and their children Asher and Hannah to serve in Uganda through University Discipleship Movement (UDM) ministries.



Speaking of UDM... I had the pleasure of meeting with the ministry director, Rev. Kennedy Kirui, on Wednesday and hearing a great report of how God is working through the various ministries. In a women’s hostel run by UDM, called Safe Haven, five of the twelve university student residents who moved in when it opened have since given their lives to Jesus—the brightest hope of all!

As I write this letter to you today, it is Good Friday, the climax of this “bright-sad season” of Lent. Isn’t that an interesting name for a day that commemorates perhaps the biggest travesty of justice in history—the crucifixion of Jesus, the innocent Son of God? Yet, as only God could do, that great tragedy led to the greatest gift ever given to mankind—free salvation from sin, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ!

As I consider the sadness we’ve faced in recent weeks and months, nothing compares to the suffering and sadness experienced by Jesus in his final days on earth, or by the heart of his Father who had to reject his own son due to our sin resting upon him. As the writer of Hebrews reminds us, “Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.” (Heb. 12:3-4, ESV) What a reality check!

Finally, I take encouragement in Paul’s words found in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (ESV).

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light and momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

This “bright-sad season” is just that—a season, but the “glory beyond all comparison” is eternal!

Happy Easter!
The Lord is risen!
He is risen indeed!

Jon & Vera Steury

WGM Africa Regional Directors

Email addresses: jon.steury@wgm.org vera.steury@wgm.org

Cell phones: Jon +254-711-110109 Vera +254-711-819849

Giving Link: www.wgm.org/steury

World Gospel Mission • P.O. Box 948 • Marion, IN • 46952 • U.S.A.



WGM | Africa Region

P.O. Box 198-00502 • Karen, Nairobi • Kenya