

Update from Brenda Buell

Journal Number 1 October 24, 2013

So much to do in so little time!

It seems I have lost track of where I left off on numbering my journals I sent to you. I decided to begin again and start with number 1. I think this will help you identify a new one when it comes to you.

What;s UP?

Several people have asked me to explain what life is like here now that I am back. It is a bit different since Ed is not here. Many of the people that usually come to see him shortly after we get back are now coming to see me. They come to say they are sorry about Ed's death and to say they are very happy that I came back anyway.

Today was a small gathering of people who came to encourage me and to bring a little joy into my life. I think we ended up with 48 people in my living room/ dining room and it is a small space. It was bittersweet. I was thanked for coming back under these difficult circumstances. I was given a gift of \$100 from the churches. My guest, Mary Medsker, and I baked 4 chocolate whacky cakes. Some ladies helped me make beans and rice and we also served peanuts. All that cost me \$250 so I was glad for the special gift. It was a beautiful service. We spoke of Ed and his life and the example he was to us all. I cried a bit but I also laughed. We sang, prayed, and heard 3 speakers besides myself. It was actually very encouraging and I am thankful to have had the time to celebrate Ed's life and work among the Congolese in Democratic Republic of Congo.

We arrived in Bukavu on Saturday. There were several people at the border to greet us. They came to my house for a time of prayer and singing, thanking God for our safe arrival. On Sunday afternoon we had about 20 more people stop by. On Monday we spent time just trying to get things set up again here at the house. About 10 people stopped by that day. On Tuesday Mary and I went to Tracy's Heart to work. Things are very busy there with everyone getting ready for Saturday's Graduation Ceremony. We are expecting around 100 people and it is a very big deal! All the ladies tie dyed purple material the way they wanted and are making new Kikwembes, a traditional outfit for the Congolese women. The money for these new outfits came from some supporters in the Greencastle, IN church. What a blessing to see the excited and grateful looks on the faces of the ladies. I will send out another update next week and will hopefully include some pictures of the memorial service today and the graduation ceremony on Saturday. It has been a very, very, busy week. Mary and I have hardly had time to get over the jet lag. We are scheduling a day of rest on Monday. We are hoping we last that long. It seems that I hit the ground running and there has been no down time at all. We both are short on sleep but are happy to be among the people and working.

Watch for more Journal Updates. There is so much yet to be done and I am feeling blessed by the opportunity to get some of it done. It is great having Mary here at the house with me. God is good. I appreciate each of you. May you be blessed as you bless the people in DR Congo.

Love, Brenda Buell