



Eldrbarry's Globe-Trotting Adventures

There is no better way to develop an interest in missions than to actually get involved in one. This past March, My wife and I did just that – both of us traveling to Hungary, then by myself,

to Uganda – a mission to both the Old World – Eastern Europe – and the Third World – East Africa. The first was motivated by Sarah, our daughter, who is living there – serving with **International Messengers** in Kaposvar, Hungary. The second came as an invitation in October from Dr. Henry Krabbendam, accompanied by the encouragements of an elder in my church who has gone twice, Tom Graham – both are a part of the **Africa Christian Training Institute** Board.

Increasing numbers of people are getting involved in short term missions. Career missionaries are still very much needed – but people who can give just a couple of weeks as a part of a missions team can make a significant contribution to the spread of the Gospel overseas. Both **International Messengers** and **African Christian Training Institute** enable people to do just that – **IM** conducts Evangelistic English Second Language Camps all over Eastern Europe, staffed by teams from the States. **IM** had 44 outreach camps in Eastern Europe this past year with 272 short-term missionary participants. A short term **IM** Missions trip to Eastern Europe costs about \$1200 each and is about a week and a half long. **ACTI** enables evangelists, disciplers, and teachers to serve Ugandan churches and has facilitated the travel and in-country needs of hundreds of pastors, elders and Christians making ministry trips to Uganda since 1989. They have helped the Presbyterian Church in Uganda plant thirty some churches and have ministered as a servant organization to whom ever asks for help. Anglicans, Pentecostals and Presbyterians. A short-term trip to Uganda with **ACTI** costs about \$3500.00 each and usually runs several weeks, with the participants going in as teams. These dollar amounts include travel and ministry costs, but there will be other significant expenses.

We under-estimated the cost of our trip – tickets were \$1930.00 (we got a great deal from British Airways!). Passports cost us about \$250 (including pictures and sending away for certified birth certificates). Uganda required about \$400 in immunizations, some of which I got in Canada. Ministry expenses for Uganda required about \$1500 to cover in-country expenses – lodging, food, transportation, in-country staff, etc. And overall we probably spent about \$1,000 additional for such varied things as luggage, travel “stuff”, thirty home-made Raggedy Ann kits, various souvenirs and our expenses in en route and in Hungary.



Barry and Marianne McWilliams

Vacations were arranged with our employers. We saved and Barry set aside his preaching income. Windfalls came in. And despite what was probably an insufficient effort in raising support, The Lord provided significantly for us through the support and love offerings of our own Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church congregation and a generous gift by Liberty bay Presbyterian Church, another church in the Pacific Northwest Presbytery and

we had sufficient funds for the trip. The planning and getting ready began. Travel books are helpful in preparing and packing to travel light. The internet is a tremendous source for researching information. Lists of what to take were available online. Barry had already built a page of links on Hungary, and now he built one of Uganda as well. (See the URL's at the end of this article.)



One challenge was preparing and packing for two different climates. Another was accommodating the extra bags of ministry materials and things being sent along for people on the field. Most short term missionaries ferry additional ministry materials to the field. You can figure on at least one bag each within your luggage allowance, and every bag nearly up the limit (70 lbs. for British Airways) in weight. We had 30 Raggedy Ann Kits and toys for Romania, stuff for Chrissy Graham, and for Sarah, “gift items” for our hosts; and bags of candy and NW tea samples and books for Africa. I also took twenty copies of the **Christian Classic Ethereal Library CDRom** to pass out along the way. Most travelers carry on at least a change of clothing, but the bag I intended to carry on was too heavy and it got checked instead. Overseas allowances are often different than domestic – so check with the airlines ahead of time or some items may

have to be taken out at the airport. Fortunately my bag made it through, but one of Marianne's bags with most of her clothing didn't arrive with us – it was delivered late



the next afternoon. The rest of the my Uganda team brought with them several loud speakers and heavy bags full of new *NIV Study Bibles* and *Williamson's Commentary on the Westminster Confession of Faith* to be given out to pastors and elders. There was a tense moment at customs in Entebbe as we arrived, before we got the go-ahead to bring everything into the country. It is important to clearly distinguish between personal items and ministry items, pack them separately if possible, and know what is in each bag when asked. Living out of a suitcase – I found a lot of time was spent unpacking and repacking each day. Getting on and off of metro buses, subways and trains with so much luggage was tricky too. Fortunately I picked up a *Jansport* backpack with pockets for water bottles in London, it became a necessity when I was in Africa, away from my luggage all day long.

While passing through the customs counters of various countries and airports, it was coming back home that was perhaps the trickiest. Most places just waved us through, but U.S. Customs wants exact dollar amounts on what we are bringing back – even that “duty free” stuff sold in all the “airport terminal shopping malls.” So save receipts and keep track of what is spent on items, which is even trickier when many of those items were purchased with foreign currencies!

To give you an idea of the exchange rates: One US Dollar equals 1.43 English Pounds; 299 Hungarian Forints and 1883 Bank of Ugandan Shillings. Exchange rates are better for larger bills. You are allowed to bring back \$400 worth of merchandise without duty.



ACTI Team - March 11-19, 2001

Travel to Africa requires medical a lot of health preparations – immunizations against a panoply of tropical diseases, a pharmacy of over the counter remedies in your luggage, and lots of precautions regarding food, and drink, and sanitation. All these tend to frighten people away. I was careful about these things – I found the mosquitoes were not much a problem – but

then I wasn't in the bush either. In Uganda you will be eating African cuisine. (In Hungary, American fast food is available though the catsup looks anemic .) The bags of Snickers bars and Trail mix I took along for bedtime snacks managed

to alleviate some of the desperation for some protein that comes after a day of starches. I had my share of *matoke*, goat and yes, even grasshoppers. I also got to try some of the native fruits – some of which I'd never heard of.

Are we Tourists or Missionaries? One of the questions the short term missionary has to face is that unlike someone who resides in a foreign land – to some extent they will be tourists. Before they can speak, they need to look. They are getting acquainted with a strange culture and customs, probably limited communication skills, dealing with currencies and shopping, food, etc. I made a lot of observations in both Hungary and Uganda about the prospects of the Gospel ministry there. Fortunately, in Uganda, English is a common language and with translators I could do much speaking as well.

First impressions – in both Budapest and Kampala I arrived around 10 PM at night. In Budapest, the neighborhoods seemed dark – there wasn't much traffic – it was Saturday night, we drove through Pest, across the Danube into Buda – downtown had neon lights advertising western products, but not a lot a people about, and found our way to the Ecumenical House – a suburban guest house run by the Lutheran Church. Kampala, arriving on a Sunday night, by contrast, was full of activity – we passed innumerable “garage sized” shops, and there were many others marketing their goods on candle lit mats or make-shift tables by the roadsides – every where it seemed crowded with people. The traffic was the way it always is in Kampala – seeming chaos. Hungary at night is quiet – in Kampala it never quiets down.

Our first morning in Kaposvar, I awoke to the sounds of doves, and then one by one the bells of City Hall and various churches – obviously needing to synchronize their clocks. In Kampala, I woke to the unfamiliar calls of cranes and other birds and then chants of the Muslims calling the faithful to prayer. Breakfast in Hungary is sliced bread, meat and cheese, and tea. At Namirembe, it is fresh slices of pineapple and mango, and the luxury of a choice of omelets – as long as you pick the western.

Budapest has an amazing public transit system. Buses, trams, subways, rail, and taxis all interlocked. And narrow winding streets with tiny cars. Electrified rail and bus routes link the cities. The system is crowded and everything, even escalators, moves fast. Kaposvar, a more “modern” city is full of public housing – one building has 3,000 inhabitants. There are beautiful baroque buildings, statues, fountains, and walking streets for shopping. MacDonal’s and Burger King are there too, and a new “Wal-mart styled” complex with a multi-screen cinema is threatening the business of the small shops in Kaposvar. There is quite a bit of Unemployment and people tend to be poor, but they are fashion conscious and they have cell phones.

Uganda is a land of brick buildings that people put up themselves of home made bricks, with sheet metal roofs. There is no public transport service so to speak, but there is an extensive network of fourteen passenger white Japanese minibuses or *Matatu's* that will take you to wherever you want to go, but only when all seats in the van are full. The roads, marginal at their best, are crowded with *Matatu's*; overloaded trucks, *Boda boda's* (moped taxi's with extra passengers), bicycles pushed along with incredible loads of stuff, pedestrians walking in or crossing the roads, and *ankole* cows with huge racks of horns which roam freely even in the heart of Kampala. Market areas are bee hives of constant activity which picks up at night. Horns blare - an endless string of “close calls.” But somehow, their traffic “system” works – they seem to know when to yield, or hit the horn, or how to get by with barely inches of clearance.

Dangers? The Iron Curtain is long gone, Eastern European streets are quiet at night and probably safer than in the U.S. though pick-pockets still lurk in crowded places. I found Hungarians a very friendly people. In Uganda stories abound of rebels killing tourists, of riots and bombs, and HIV and Ebola outbreaks. These things do happen – and did while I was there. There are uniformed security people armed with automatic weapons roaming about – they are there to keep order. But Uganda is not that dangerous. It is a large city. Seattle has awful traffic, and it has riots and violence and many other problems too.

Life in Kampala has its own order of things – Kampala is a city of one and a half million. It seems to have a different mood every day. Africa is full of ironies and surprises. There are people everywhere, going about the

business of day to day life in the third world. Many people have to haul their water from a distant well, and they walk in the roads to get about, you see them working with mattocks in garden patches, or making their own bricks, or moving huge loads to the market on bicycles.

In Uganda, people sit and converse constantly in front of homes or shops.

Laundry, cooking, most of their daily life is outside. Their homes are dark and sparsely furnished within and their windows seldom have glass. Door-to-door, people are very open to hearing “a word from the Lord.” Having a “*musugu*” (white person) along attracts a lot of interest and attention, especially from the children. People can sit and listen for long periods of time without interjecting remarks. They seem remain passive and give away little in their facial expressions and body language as they listen, at least to my untrained eyes. Out witnessing, Pastor Francis would lead someone to faith, and I would be unaware it was happening. Even the children can sit for hours through an adult teaching session.

In contrast, Hungarians build their houses with the back walls to the street, and fences with locked gates are the norm. Security guards roam the bigger shops and you have to be careful to take a cart or shopping basket when you enter, lest they think you are there to steal. Certainly pre-evangelism is much more important here – approaches like IM’s English Speaking camps, or my wife’s Raggedy Ann contribution to the Patchwork ministry at the Baptist church which attracted many non-Christian ladies. In Kaposvar, I met a number of young people who could speak English. Some of them were teaching in Kaposvar’s schools, but were from America, France, Holland. There are lots of openings for teachers in Eastern Europe. But credentials are a necessity too – even when just teaching things like crafts. I got the impression that in Hungary working uniforms are worn with pride and give a sense of authority. When we send people to preach or teach, they need to be “uniformed” with as many credentials as we can. I also learned that in Hungary, which taxes its population extensively, that a national staff member needs 43% percent more support than a “tourist visa” staff person from the U.S. needs just to pay their taxes.



In Hungary, I was mainly an observer – my daughter’s “goal” for us was to experience her life as a missionary. Most of a missionary’s time and energy goes into the same things that ours do. However life in the old world and third world does not have the conveniences that we have. Shopping, cooking, laundry is much more time consuming.

Getting around is also more of a challenge. Ron and Verna Sutton, IM missionaries in Kaposvar have a constant stream of visitors to their home. It is their office and meeting place. Much of their ministry revolves around building relationships with people and an open door and frequent hospitality is a part of their ministry. Ron has a large garden patch in a maze of gardens and orchards on the edge of town, as do many city dwellers – Hungarians are an agrarian people still. I spent a half a day working with him there. My wife had her hands full preparing to teach over forty Hungarian women how to sew Raggedy Ann dolls. This pre-evangelism “ministry” at the Baptist Church had some other benefits in that the leaders of the Quilting group had to organize themselves to make up extra kits and getting the instructions translated and printed up. We also learned that Hungarians have a way of giving with expectations of getting something back – and that the missionaries have difficulty communicating the concept of unconditional grace to that culture.

Sarah’s Hungarian is improving and she knows her way around Budapest’s transportation systems – we were so dependent on her when we arrived. Even with a number of others around who could translate for us, just our every day communication was a challenge and time consuming, as well as demanding close concentration. Presenting theological concepts often requires language skills beyond the capacities of those who can translate everyday chatter. I found it hard to pay attention to a sermon being translated, it must be hard for other hearers too. Of course, teaching and preaching with a translator does give you more time to think about what you will say next, but you often have to adapt your message to your audience. In Uganda, I was frequently challenged to connect my sermon and teaching illustrations to things they could relate to. The door-to-door evangelism (where I often spent lengthy periods not knowing what they are talking about) gave me opportunities to observe their day-to-day life and I drew on those observations frequently as I spoke and taught. It also

Kajjansi Church construction



gave me lots of practice presenting the Gospel from different places in the Bible – which I chose to do instead of a “canned presentation.”

I went to Uganda with some uncertainty as to exactly what I would be doing – though expecting I would be preaching and teaching in a variety of situations. When you go to Uganda with an **ACTI** team you go both over- and un- prepared. That is,

you take along a variety of sermons and teaching notes; and then have to improvise from that when you get there. There is little time for study or preparation. Some of my notes I was sure I would use, I didn’t – and some of material I threw in on a whim I was very glad I had. It is best to be quite flexible, adapting to the people as you go. John Pickett, a veteran of ministry there, told me they need basic doctrinal teaching, much more than marriage seminars and evangelism clinics. He was right. Most men have about high school education. And though they are more intensely interested in the Bible than folks stateside, most don’t know the Scriptures very well. With religious freedom in Uganda, there are Muslims and Catholics and Anglicans and a host of self-proclaimed prophets proclaiming all sorts of teachings all over the place. Several men commented to me that Uganda needs teachers more than evangelists. I certainly found the Q & A times especially tested my knowledge of the Bible and its applications.

My wife meanwhile remained in Hungary, staying with Sarah in her tiny apartment. She gave her testimony at the Methodist Church, joined Sarah to the ministry to Gypsy children at Iharosbereny, and met socially with a number of people whom Sarah interacts with and ministers to regularly, building discipling relationships. Marianne met the “Boys” – four students at Word of Life Bible School in Toalmas, east of Budapest – one of them, Bruno, is interning as a pastor at Iharosbereny. Marianne visited his school and stayed with his family on the way to catch the plane home.

My ministry in Uganda was one I was suited for – working alongside with the leadership of the session of a new congregation to get the congregation on a solid Scriptural foundation. I felt an immediate rapport with the pastor and elders. Of the list of topics for the seminars – the sufficiency of the Word of God topped the list. I taught on that from Psalm 19; on the sufficiency of God from Psalm 62, on

snare and traps and spiritual warfare from Psalms 140-143; and on the sufficiency of the body of Christ - the Church. Due to our transportation difficulties the last morning (we were ejected from our vehicle by a policeman hoping for a bribe) I wasn’t able to cover the One Another’s as well.

View from New Life Presbyterian Church in Kajjansi, Uganda

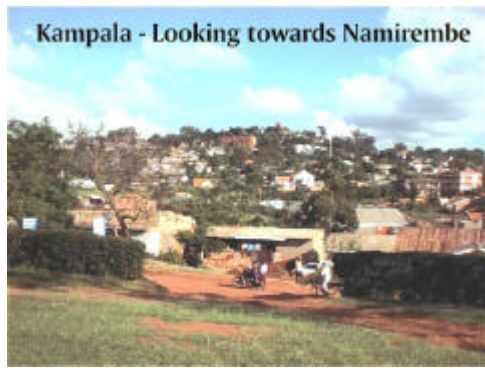


Preaching in the evening Crusades drew on my “storytelling” sermons – using Bible stories; or folktales to highlight my texts. Imagine preaching on Psalm 36:1-9, or 2 Kings 4:1-7; or Mark 4:35-5:20 on a platform lit by a 50 watt bulb under the African night sky, assisted by a translator to a crowd of two to three hundred people out there in the dark. (By the time people get home from work it is usually dark.) And there were people responding, coming forward to accept Christ. Sunday morning there were around a hundred and fifty at the morning service – worship was very spirit filled – clapping and dancing accompanied the singing, and everyone prayed aloud at the same time in their own tongues during the prayer time. People dress their best for the Lord. I preached on Jesus seeking to save the lost – Bartimaeus and Zaccheus, and several more came forward in response.

New Life Presbyterian Church in Kajjansi began with an **ACTI – Reconciliation Ministries** church planting crusade that brought nearly three hundred to faith last fall. Money donated from *Lookout Mountain Presbyterian* in Chattanooga put up a roof, and brick walls have been built up halfway. The setting and view is wonderful. The pastor hasn’t completed Bible College yet – but is a most capable man of the Word who loves his people and has vision – for a primary school for children, for a clinic for the many sick in his community. The people seemed to feast on the teaching we brought to them. And the pastor and elders took advantage of our presence to address the many issues facing the body. I found myself dealing with all sorts of tough questions – prophets, role of women, using local herbs – and often they would jump in to emphasize the things I tried to answer as best I could from the Word of God.

We had the assistance of about a dozen or so brothers and sisters in the Lord from *First Presbyterian Church* in Kampala during that week. We would pick up as many as we could – still some had to find their own way to Kajjansi – and they helped with door-to-door, with moving and setting up sound equipment, with lively “choir” music for the seminars and crusades, with cooking meals for a multitude – and I have many opportunities to minister to them individually as well – encouraging them in their faith and answering many individual questions.

Others in our team ministered at another new church in Kawembe, as well as in a prison – where the turn out filled the room. On Sunday, Curtis Anderson, a college teacher, who worked with me at Kajjansi,



made a long trip to Masaka to minister Sunday in a remote church whose pastor had recently died. I have heard since from Pastor Francis that the new converts are continuing to come – and the school is becoming a reality with financial help from the U.S. \$6,000 is small to us – but it can buy land and build school buildings there. Among the converts of my ministry was an important community leader and his wife. He is one of seven school teachers now in the congregation (another is the pastor’s wife). Despite their poverty – substantial funds were raised at a rally the afternoon I left to continue the construction of the church as well, though more is needed. I have received a number of heart-felt messages of appreciation for my ministry.

I left Uganda feeling that God had put both steel and fire into my heart. I didn’t want the ministry to end. Dr. Henry Krabbendam mentioned that I seemed to be doing the very things I loved most – and he was right – I had won the hearts of Kajjansi and was teaching the Word of God and building up His church there. I came home with a sense of the great need for missions – there are vast numbers of people in Budapest and Kampala needing the Gospel – looking out over these cities, you can’t help but feel the great need. And the very different needs and challenges of the old and the third worlds. To be sure, Hungary has many beautiful churches – but there are few born again Christians. Evangelical churches are tiny. Catholicism, secularism and Western materialism compete with the Gospel. Evangelists and Church planters are badly needed, and schools to train leaders will need to follow. Uganda is being evangelized – and you have a sense the Spirit is moving powerfully there – but the people struggle with much poverty and diseases like HIV/AIDS. Islam, Catholicism and a host of witches and cults compete there with the Gospel. People are needed to assist the national churches there in church planting and Bible schools are needed to train pastors and elders too.

I came home with a determination to return to Uganda again. There I felt more appreciation for my ministry than I have ever felt here. There may not be a lot of places where I can have an impact on the world, but Uganda is probably one. My wife came home with a sense of how trivial life seems here. And wanting to get out of the rut we have been in – to be where we can give our energies to His work. The “where?” and “how?” remains His to know, but the desire has been significantly increased. I hope that you will consider getting involved in Short Term missions. If not in going yourself –

then most certainly sending others. As I ministered in Uganda, I repeatedly told them that I was sent by two churches, of my presbytery, and that my servant ministry was in fact theirs too. So support missions! (Your money goes much farther overseas) Or go yourself and see what the Lord is doing in the rest of the world.



Mission Trip Itinerary and Activities:

March 2nd – 3rd We Flew 8.5 hours to London, 6 hour layover, then 2 hours to Budapest. Arriving at 9:00 PM -- a nine hour time change.

Barry and Marianne in Hungary

March 4th – 5th two nights lodging in Ecumenical House, Touring Budapest, then **Monday** afternoon 3 hours by train to Kaposvar. Dinner with Ezther's Parents Home – Our hosts for this week.

March 6th – 9th Stayed with a Hungarian family. Learning about missionary life in Hungary. Raggedy Class.

Tuesday March 6th – Shopping - Lunch at Sarah's - Dinner at Sutton's – Meeting and planning for Raggedy Class – CCEL Software for Ron

Wednesday March 7th - Laundry, shopping, Lake trip, Dad cooks dinner at Sarah's, Calvary Chapel Midweek Service

Thursday March 8th – Barry helps Ron at the gardens. *Women's Day*. Tea at Ezther's parents new home. Marianne teaches the Raggedy Ann Class. Pancakes at Sutttons afterwards

Friday March 9th A trip to the castle at Keszthely with Ron. Open House Reception with I.M. campers at the Sutttons.

Marianne in Hungary

March 10th – 14th Marianne stays with Sarah at her apartment

Saturday March 10th – Marianne and Sarah have lunch/ Bible Study with Ponca – a student from Pecs.

Sunday - Methodist Church (Marianne gave her testimony) Then to the Gypsy ministry at Iharosbereny (1 hour west) – play activities with the children

Monday – Wood cutting trip to forest (Fish Soup (uck). Fruit Soup Lunch (Yummy) with Gabby. Movie in evening

Tuesday – Door repair by Bruno. Shopping. IM Business Meeting at Sutttons

Wednesday - Tour of Historic village of Szenna. Dinner with Bory and Timi

Thursday - Travel by car to Budapest. – Stayed at Bruno's house – Visited Word of Life School at Toalmás

March 16th – Marianne flies to London, 3 hour layover, then home to Seattle (15 hour trip - Nine hour time change.)

Barry in Uganda

March 10th – Barry leaves Kaposvar by train to Budapest, then via undergrounds and bus to Airport, flies to London.

Changes Airports - shuttle bus, 18 hour overnight layover at Gatwick – but it is too late to see London

March 11th – Barry meets Dr. Krabbendam's team and they travel to Uganda – 8 hour flight. Arriving 10:00 P.M. Travel to Namirembe Guest House – my lodging for the week.

Monday March 12th – *Election Day* in Uganda – since Kampala is “shut down” to vote – The team toured Dr.Krabbendam's property; ate Ugandan food, and then went sightseeing at Jinja – the source of the Nile.

March 13th–17th Prayer at 6:30, leaving via ACTI's *Matatu* (14 passenger taxi) to Kajjansi around 8:00 AM, picking up team at First Presbyterian on the way. Ministry at Kajjanzi with Curtis Anderson and Justin Johnson. Two days of Door-to-door evangelism with Pastor Francis, then three days of seminars and Q&A; with a Crusade every evening. Lunch break at 2:30 (Shopping Saturday afternoon) Returned to Namirembe Guest House around 8:30-9:00 PM .

March 19th Barry flew to London; Changed airports - shuttle bus, 5 hour layover; flight to Seattle (28 hour trip – eleven hour time change.)

Internet Links:

Eldrbarry's Mission Trip..... <http://www.seanet.com/~eldrbarry/ug/eldruga.htm>

Uganda Links..... <http://www.seanet.com/~eldrbarry/ug/uganlink.htm>

Sarah McWilliam's Prayer Letters..... http://www.seanet.com/~eldrbarry/im/sarah_im.htm

Hungary Links..... <http://www.seanet.com/~eldrbarry/im/hunglink.htm>

African Christian Training Institute..... <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/4131/#index>

Short Term Missions Guide <http://www.geocities.com/athens/4124/>

Reconciliation Ministries <http://www.rmni.org>

International Messengers..... <http://www.internationalmessengers.org/>

Christian Classics Ethereal Library <http://www.ccel.org/>
