

## THE VANCES - JUNE 2005

*“Long, long ago in a galaxy far, far away...”* As the American culture is caught up in the final saga of the *Star Wars* films, the church must never forget our story. Pentecost is the birthday of the church. A day when the Holy Spirit came empowering the disciples of Jesus to begin the missionary task of the church. They boldly proclaimed the validity of the life, death and resurrection in word and through their lives and even their deaths!

Today, the Kingdom of God encompasses the world. We are a global community of many ethnic and cultural backgrounds. We speak many languages. Yet, as on the day of Pentecost the message is heard in every tongue. We must learn to celebrate the stories of our brothers and sisters around the world. As missionaries, we're called to enable, empower and equip the African church to stand as equal brothers and sisters in the Kingdom of God. We've done great at building the monuments: churches, schools, clinics, etc. We've handed over leadership to the African church, but we have failed in handing over the financial empowerment and means of becoming self-supporting.

It is a new day in Mission! As servants of Christ unto the African church we must now empower the church financially through economic development. As trustees of the resources of the Kingdom we have an awesome responsibility and opportunity before us. We are beginning to realize this dream and vision. Through the infrastructure of the church lives are being transformed. Agriculture, in particular banana plantations, wood working factories and other forms of employment are changing the economic climate. The Wings of the Morning Flight Ministry purchased a farm near Lubumbashi. We have begun a banana plantation that establishes the financial means for the continual operation of this ministry long after the missionaries have retired or departed from the scene. This is already a reality at the Kafakumba Training center in Zambia. Over 55 farmers through partnership with the church have been enabled to get on their feet. This is the vision for the Town Center UMC where Ken is pastor. This will enable the many ministries of the church: street children, community youth center (more than sports: teaching/training skills for life opportunities), and a counselor on staff dealing with the victims of AIDS. It will create jobs where unemployment is 97% and one U.S dollar per day is the average income. The possibilities are plentiful. The problem is that no one has the resources or capital for the initial start up. Thus, the church becomes the infrastructure to enable, empower and equip the local farmers, villagers and churches to get established. Teaching young girls to sew and providing them with sewing machines ensures them a life. Skills such as brick masons, carpentry, mechanics, etc. along with the skills of farming are seeing this program become a reality.

This will be the focus of getting Likasi Pastor's school back in operation. The immediate concern will be to secure financial backing to purchase farms and set up the operations. Once in place we are looking at 3 years to see the re-opening of the school. This is a reality for Kafakumba Training Center and is in the initial stages for the Wings of the Morning Flight Ministry. The African church has a renewed sense of vision and purpose. There is an atmosphere of enthusiasm and expectation. This is a holistic approach to the Gospel. It proclaims the life style of a Christian as taught and illustrated by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This Gospel touches the stomachs of starving

children; the AIDS patients; those yearning for knowledge through education. This touches the very essence of life: body, soul and spirit.

Many are aware that Pastor Kasongo Munza is currently in South Africa undergoing chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He has completed an intensive session and is being re-evaluated to determine the next steps in this process. He is optimistic that he will return to Zambia in June. Your prayer support is appreciated. Due to Kasongo's illness he is unable to direct and teach at Kafakumba Pastor's school and to run the Conference Training Center. Coupled with the many programs that are going on along with groups of visitors Ken has been requested to return to Zambia. Thus, Ken will be returning to Africa in June and working through the end of August when our current term will be completed. After Ken returns to the States we'll be getting Stacie, who graduated from High School and will be remaining in the States to attend University, moved and settled into college before the rest of the family (Ken, Debbie and Joshua) return to Africa to begin our next term. Your continued prayer support is greatly appreciated during this time of 'transition' for our family, work and ministry.

This has been a very busy and hectic time for our family in the States. Stacie enjoyed being involved in many activities and completing her senior year of high school. Speaking in many "old" and "new" churches that support us, our work and ministry has kept us traveling on a tight schedule. We've had more requests than we have dates for speaking. We apologize that we have not been able to get into every church on a Sunday morning. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility in our schedule.

The story of Christ began "*long, long ago*" and continues to be told each day within our lives. As servants of Jesus we proclaim the story of His life, death and resurrection. We have the "*force*" of God's Spirit empowering and enabling us to be faithful to the call and ministry of Christ in the world today. As citizens of the Kingdom of God our lives are interconnected with our brothers/sisters around the world. We are trustees of God's resources to minister unto the "least of these" even as Jesus did. We have the privilege of bringing the Good News of God's love, grace, forgiveness and reconciliation to the world. We thank you for joining with us in this ministry as we ask God's blessing upon you to the call of Jesus Christ upon your life, work and ministry.

Your servants in Christ,

*Ken, Debbie, Stacie & Joshua* **VANCE**

P.O. Box 3082

Marion, IN 46953

Phone: 765-674-3429

Email: [kenvance@coppernet.zm](mailto:kenvance@coppernet.zm)