



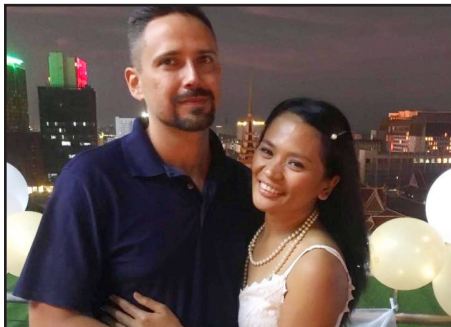
Greetings Friends,

As we begin a new year, we're mindful of the faithfulness and grace our Father has shown to us during our two years of serving him in Zambia. Thank you all for your prayers for us in the last couple of months as we finished our work in Zambia and attended our son's wedding celebration to Myra Omicton before returning to the U.S. We will recommence deputation work this month and plan to participate in mission conferences in Alabama, Florida, and then on to the Upper Midwest.

Leaving Zambia:

We closed our house in Kabwe by the first week of December and have felt blessed to have made friends and partners in furthering the message of God's grace in the central part of Africa.

We left behind a thriving prison ministry under the direction of Eddie Phiri that incorporates use of Bible correspondence courses from Bible Correspondence Fellowship/Prison Mission Association. We have been allowed access to the only maximum-security prison in Zambia that includes their death row where we have seen the greatest response. Many wearing white ("condemned") prison uni-



Simeon and Myra on their wedding day

forms came to Christ or were confirmed in their faith. Condemned inmates are the first to show up for our meetings and the last to leave. It was extraordinary to see the gospel transformation that made these men into the gentlest, most nonthreatening souls to the degree that we didn't hesitate to take visitors, among them the entire 2019 EXITE team, into the prison with us. If you'd like to help support the prison ministry to print lessons and purchase Bibles, please visit www.gracem.org and click on "projects," then "2019-2020 Christmas Projects" for more information.

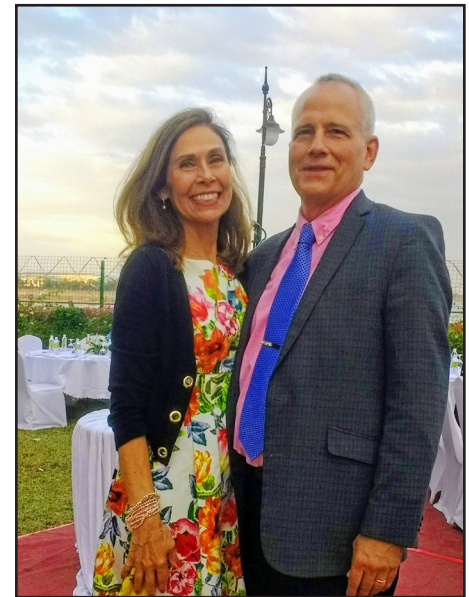
At Kabwe Central Hospital, Tom worked alongside Drs. Banda and Malembo, who head the outpatient/urgent care and emergency departments respectively, to develop a reorganization plan to provide more efficient workflow that concentrates resources where they are most needed. While providing care on home visits to expatriates, Tom saw a German volunteer intern whose diagnosis was eventually determined to be a rare case of sleeping sickness from the bite of a tsetse fly that occurred while on a game park visit with her uncle.

Our home church in Kabwe, Grace Community Fellowship, has a strengthened and unified group of elders who have divided up pastoral duties and who oversee this diverse body of believers without a designated pastor. A significant portion of the church continues to be among the deaf who participate through the help of a team of signers.

The Grace Ministries International office in Kabwe, Zambia, now has a secretary, Limpo, who registers Bible Correspondence participants and corrects and prints their lessons. We have also

assembled a lending library of Christian literature that she manages.

Michelle acted as a catalyst among several groups of mostly younger missionary and nonmissionary women to give them places to create cohesion and mutual support. She mentored young mothers having difficulty adjusting to raising children where family support is no longer available. These mothers also feared tropical and out-of-control ordinary disease in a place where the usual array of sophisticated medical systems is not immediately available to them.



Tom and Michelle January 2020

Through a difficult process, we were successful at improving financial accountability of assistance from various donors to needy Zambians after uncovering misuse of some of the funds. Overall, our time in Zambia was a good reintroduction to life and the challenges of ministry in Africa. We believe we left things in the hands of capable brothers and sisters in



Some of our new friends and partners in Burundi: Sylvain's family, Method Mwendapoli and Dr. Randy Bond

Christ who will rely on Him to help them continue to progress in their ministries.

Our New Field of Service: Burundi

On our way home from Zambia we made a stop in the capital city of Bujumbura to reconnect with previous contacts and to make a few more connections as we prepare to make a transition to ministry there by mid-2020.

For security reasons, Burundi officials are leery of outsiders. Visitors must have recognized organizations assure the need for them to enter and contribute to the development of their country. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been drafted and awaits editing and approval by the leaders of Hope Africa University (HAU) which will pave the way for our entry into Burundi.

Our Goals for our First Term in Burundi

- Obtain faculty positions at HAU in the graduate nursing and language arts departments
- Begin Bible studies first among students and faculty, then extend into the community until we reach 300 or more who count themselves as Grace Church Burundi members
- Find and purchase land suitable for construction of a multipurpose building for the first church
- Create a regular program for HAU's FM radio station that includes a com-

bination of health and Bible teaching topics

- Host the *Farming God's Way* training program by mid-2021
- Register GMI with the government as a religious non-profit organization
- Find a house to rent and used vehicle to purchase

GMI encourages work in teams. We will be joined by Method and Omelina Mwendapoli, our partner missionaries from Tanzania who have years of experience planting churches in Mwanza and other towns. During our visit to Bujumbura in early December, we met as a team to discuss the vision and outreach tactics for beginning a multifaceted ministry. After finishing the upcoming season of mission conferences here in the U.S., we hope to move to Bujumbura to settle in by late June or July. Establishing GMI in Burundi will advance the fulfillment of GMI's *Vision 2023*. We look forward to being a part of God's plan for expanding Christian witness in Burundi and count ourselves blessed to be used by Him for this ministry.

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Family Stuff:

After leaving Africa, we visited our son, Simeon, and his new wife, Myra, to celebrate their marriage in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Myra had been a missionary with Things to Come Mission (TCM) for over ten years and we're grateful that the Lord has blessed Simeon with a godly woman. They plan to live and work in Cambodia and together in their off time will continue to help advance the church planting work of TCM.

Please pray with confidence for these challenges: *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.* 1 John 5:14

1. Full monthly financial support and project funds for a vehicle and set-up expenses.
2. Presidential elections are scheduled for late May in Burundi. There is concern that disputes over the election could ignite violent outbursts as occurred in 2015.
3. Finalization of an MOU with HAU.
4. As part of confirming the value of our presence, we must contribute to one or more of Burundi's priority needs such as agricultural enhancement or getting street children into a shelter and caring for them. One answer may be to link with GMI missionary Ted Rabenold to bring *Farming God's Way* training to Burundi.
5. A house to rent with enough room to welcome visitors from the U.S.

Thanks to all of you for your confident prayers and support on our behalf! We look forward to visiting with many of you these next few months and updating you on the specifics of our ministry in Burundi.

Tom & Michelle Sanchez