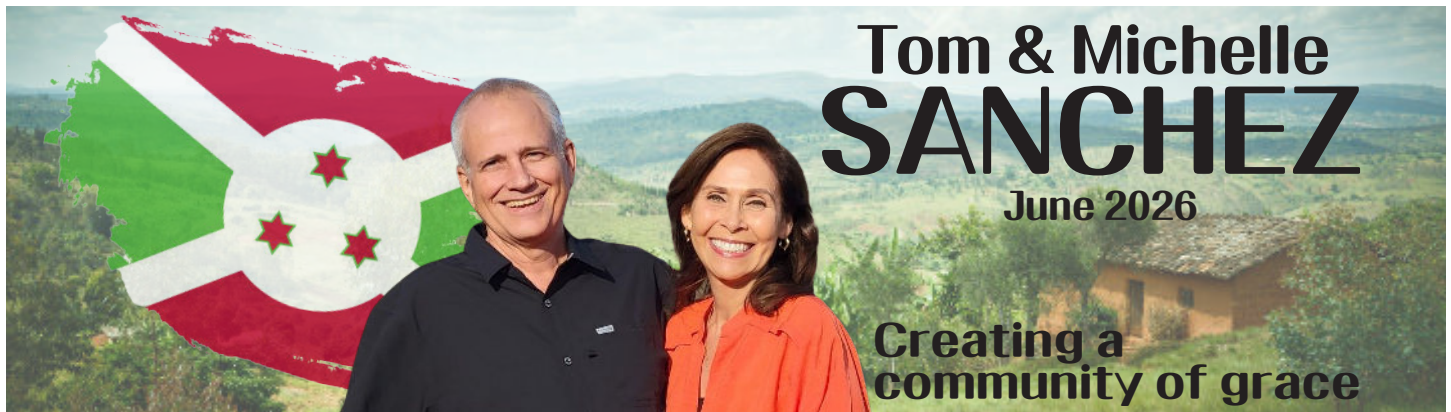




Dear friends,

We arrived back in Burundi on May 8th. It took a lot of cleaning to feel comfortable in our apartment because of the accumulated dust, but we're back to doing the daily upkeep. It was great to have Michael, a British bachelor-missionary, stay in our apartment while we were gone. Sadly, while getting this letter ready, he passed away in his new apartment, one floor up from us. He will be buried here in Burundi. His only sibling, Neil, is coming for the funeral and is distant from faith in Christ. Pray that the pieces he missed of Michael's life story will bring him to trust in our Saviour.

An outbreak of Bundibugyo Ebola virus started in Northeast DR-Congo around the time of our arrival and has been spreading ever since. It's believed that it kills 30-40% of those infected, and the strong are taken down along with the weak. So far, it has not come into Rwanda or Burundi. If it gets out of hand, it will be a regional disaster, humanly and economically. One Bujumbura merchant told me that 60-65% (he was that precise!) of his sales are to DR-Congo buyers. We've heard that from others as well. That's not just materials; it represents the movement of food too. Please pray that God will give the "Enough!" order soon (**2 Sam. 24:16**).

Our GMI teammate, Method Mwendapole, made excellent progress advancing the impact of BGBI (Burundi Grace Bible Institute) over the last year. This past week, we opened a **FIFTH BGBI** in-seat theological education site in the capital city of Gitega. Tom and Method just returned from teaching the first week-long module there. More of the curriculum is being translated into Kirundi so that the fourth module can be taught in all five sites, and then on to the fifth module.

Michelle has just finished teaching her concentrated Academic Writing course at Great Lakes School of Theology & Leadership (GLSTL). In the next few months, Tom will teach pharmacology at Hope Africa University (HAU) and an introductory course in psychology at GLSTL. HAU sponsors the renewal of our two-year residence visa that we now have.



BGBI Module 1 Session in Gitega - our newest and 5th teaching site



The 'Hallway Clinic' outside our apartment door is still up and running

Tom is back to providing employee healthcare for the water well charity, **Amazi Water**. The **Hallway Clinic** outside our front door, manned by Kitoka Luyuba, whom Tom supervises, never closed during our absence and is now better supplied. **Sidewalk Church**, reaching dayworkers, has had its first couple of sessions. While we were away, two regular attenders passed away after 'getting sick.' We wonder if their deaths could have been prevented. We are working to improve the general health of the dayworkers and those with chronic open wounds by giving them locally available fruit! They don't consume much fruit and a variety of vegetables because they are more expensive relative to simple starches.

While in the US, many asked whether this country or that country is "home" to us, and therefore, is a relief to return to. The answer is "no". Over the years, between and within these countries, we went through many major changes in location. One year here, two years there, then reduce and store what we will need again before we go back to the US for furlough. Then, when we returned overseas, we usually started all over in yet another place, as no home was still there waiting for us. Burundi has been a welcome exception to the hectic return and settling in to a new place. No country has been home in the deepest sense, but we do get accustomed to and enjoy the new way of life, climate, geography, languages, and such.

Our childhood and early adult ties to those same things in the US are strong and filled with happy and sad poignant memories that make erasing all that and overwriting it with new experiences impossible. Home memories are peopled by our families and friends, whom we love deeply.

During this furlough, Tom spent some time with a few cousins and friends with whom his ties go back to grade school. We hope Ralphy, Jimmy, and Arty heard the love behind our parting words. Let's meditate on this. There are ways of being that are better for the human soul. Openly shedding tears is one of them. The Creator God revealed in the Bible is a highly emotional being. Paul cried with profound love for his friends on whom he sometimes conveyed spiritual children and parent status (**Acts 20:19, 31**) gained from long, close stays in homes and places that weren't his own. All his friends, likewise, were moved to weeping, and had to **tear themselves away** from one another to set sail (**Acts 20:37; 21:1**). We felt some of that with you. We want you to know that there is pain with the many partings. It's not a big relief to leave HOME in the US. You are all missed.

Tom and Michelle



Scan the QR Code to
stay in touch!



Back to the same apartment in
'Asiatique' (Asian Quarter)

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