



March 2018

Dear Friends and Supporters,

There are many times in life when we are not really sure which way God would have us to go. Sometimes the way is very clear and we follow it to an expected end, but often, we find ourselves shooting toward a goal and seeing that goal change. Our goal has been to move to Rwanda for some years now, and we have been working steadily to make that happen. Getting paperwork for us to live in Rwanda is difficult and must be done a certain way. We had thought up until last week that we had that way figured out. Now, things have changed.

Last week, the government of Rwanda closed 700 churches in Kigali, the capital, and is in the process of closing more churches countrywide. The reasons mostly have to do with safety, noise pollution, and underqualified pastors. Churches need to meet in approved buildings, on property that the churches own, and soon, pastors need to have theological training approved by the government. All teaching must be done in an approved facility with approved teachers. While these regulations are reasonable for public safety issues, they also pose a great problem for us in the beginning of our ministry. A church is not a building, but instead a body of believers. It shouldn't matter where they meet or when. Meeting in a house for Bible study is how all of the churches that our mission has begun in Uganda have started. All of the groups we have meeting in Rwanda do so in houses. Even our teaching, which we had several weeks ago, takes place in a house. This is now forbidden because it is considered to be a zoning violation and unsuitable for that purpose. This puts us in a really difficult spot. Do we raise money to buy land and put up buildings? Do we appeal to the government for exemption? Do we find a middle ground to still meet, but do it covertly?

The reasons for this change have much to do with Pentecostal churches who use loud speakers to blast their message to everyone in the surrounding area, provide healing and miracle experiences that cause a false belief in the supernatural, and manipulate others for the sake of personal gain. While we would not identify with any of these groups, we are sympathetic to those beginning new ministries. We have to begin somewhere and having the money to build a church building before the church is established may price us out of the market completely. We moved the ministry out of Kigali because we could not afford to buy land and build a church there. Now it looks like we will have to find a way to build buildings before we actually have churches. The land we purchased is great, but it is currently under building restrictions because of its location, and we would need to raise money to build on it anyway. Not just any building will do.

At this point, we do not have a definite idea of how everything will work, but the above is what we have seen and been told to expect. We are hoping to get more clarity in the next several weeks. We are still waiting on the paperwork for the mission in Rwanda to be finalized. If it is, we have something to work with although we will probably not be able to move into the country at this point. We are contemplating a move to the border to be able to assist in a greater way even though we remain in Uganda. Please pray for wisdom especially over the next several weeks. Pray that God would give us clarity on the direction He would have our ministry to take. We have to remember the words of Proverbs 21:1: *"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever he will."*

In Christ,

David, Talia, Hope, Joy, Josiah, and Abigail Ruley

Email: dandtruley@gmail.com

Sending Church: People's Baptist Church • 3523 Spotswood Trail • Penn Laird, VA 22846 • (540) 434-6554 • www.peoplesbaptistonline.com

Serving with: Baptist International Missions, Inc. • P.O. Box 9 • Harrison, TN 37341 • (423) 344-5050 • www.bimi.org