

Hello Everyone!

A new message from Charlotte Sinclair Barkley, including a 'Farewell Kenya' note from Cheryl, from the Congo, Part 1.

Please continue to keep Charlotte in your prayers as she continues the work the Lord has for her as well as all of the people and children whose lives Charlotte and the Team have touched in Jesus' name. Pray also for those Charlotte will come in contact with throughout this year's Africa journey.

If you would like to send Charlotte a brief message, you may send it to me and I will be happy to forward your greetings and prayers to her. Computers are scarce in Africa and often her visits are far out into bush country with no, or very limited, electricity or modern conveniences. She may not be able to Reply until her return to USA but welcomes your notes of encouragement.

If you do not wish to receive these updates, please REPLY and note REMOVE in the Subject line.

"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Isaiah 52:7) – Romans 10:14-15

In His Amazing Love,

Laura G.
(L_Grgic@cox.net) (L_Grgic...)

Dear Family & Friends of the Persecuted Church,

Nairobi, Kenya. July 14.

(To explain why I'm running behind in getting these updates to you via dear Laura, I say simply "TIA" - or "This Is Africa"! That says it all! Thank you dear family & friends for your patience!)

GOD'S CHALLENGE #1.

How I longed to see the Team off at the airport late that Thursday night, July 14, as they prepared to head home to the USA!

I prayed, "Lord, ... I'm scheduled to speak at the Conference in Kinshasa, Congo, the afternoon of the same day (the 14th) ... What's more, only one airline flies to Kinshasa ... Kenya Airways ... and that only once a day ... on certain days ... I have no choice but to be on that early flight which means I can't see my precious Team off ... what do I do now?"

God's Provision came through our dear missionary friends from Phoenix, Arizona: Chuck and Tammy McDonald. They drove to Nairobi from Tala, along with their daughter Tarrin (visiting for the summer and an extra bonus, a friend of Cheryl) to spend the day with Daniel and Cheryl. They had a wonderful time of food, fun, fellowship and special sights.

The eve of my departure I went to Nakumat (super store) to buy the cheapest camera I could find - it was a Kodak and even included a 220 V battery charger plus memory card! Now I was set for Congo.

FAREWELL KITALE ... ACCORDING TO CHERYL.

"Parting is such sweet sorrow." These are the words I left America with and these are the words I will return to America with. I have analyzed this line and invite you to do the same as you read my blurb on Africa.

"I had an amazing time in Kitale. I learned so much, adjusted to being dirty, got bit by tons of bugs, but most of all got to truly love. I got to love kids at the Children's Home, (the orphanage); care about those who hosted us; and have a true heart of both sorrow and compassion.

"See, the biggest thing that hits me about Kenya is death. At least three people that the pastor knew died while I was there.

"**Another boy has** spinal meningitis and if I am to be completely honest - he looks like he is dying too. I know this is sad stuff to read, but this is the poverty they face; this is the poverty that I before did not understand.

"**On another note** amazing things happened while I was there: 3 orphans got to move from their 'Guardian' - usually a widow, who couldn't afford to feed them or keep them from getting Malaria.

"**They went to** the children's home and hopefully will be ok. (2 of them had high temps, probably Malaria and the other was the one with spinal meningitis). Did you read that? Maybe these 3 will have a chance at life.

"**On Tuesday afternoon/evening** (our last night there) we threw the kids a party. For a little while they got to smile, laugh and just be kids. For a little while they didn't have to be the young adults that define many of the kids in this orphanage.



Photo: ... Charlotte and Cheryl in Kenyan dresses

"**Also, I can't tell you** the number of times I sang, 'There is No One Like Jesus' with little Karen (Pastor Timothy's youngest). I also cooked 'tea' with Elizabeth and Florence (Pastor's daughter and wife) and watched Florence recover from a bad cough.

"**So many more good** things happened and as I left I was ready to cry. Granted I miss my home more than I can explain, but I truly love the people I met and got to know.

"Please keep them all in your prayers, especially the boy with spinal meningitis and the church of Chaptais - they have many beautiful things happening there.

"I love you all and will see you very soon."

Cheryl

GOD'S CHALLENGE #2. (Charlotte)

Samuel of Mayfield drove me to the airport early that morning. I passed through the airport entrance where only passengers were allowed. A minute or so later, I looked down and discovered my notebook containing Conference notes, was missing.

Did I leave it at Mayfield? In the van? ... I wasn't sure. I'd kept it out so I could study on the flight. What to do now? I looked around for Samuel but he was long gone.

Panic set in. I prayed: "Lord ... HELP!" I asked a few airport staff for help but no one seemed to understand. A hundred thoughts raced through my mind: "Samual won't be back at Mayfield for an hour ... by then it will be too late to turn around and drive back here ... besides I don't have his personal cell number - only Mayfield's."

GOD'S PROVISION.

I spotted an airport official and again explained the problem, as I struggled to control my tears. He smiled, pointed towards the airport glass security door. There was Samuel outside waving his arms. He'd seen Mama's notebook on the dashboard (since it was still dark out, this alone is a miracle) and drove back to the airport. He passed it through the door to the security guard who handed it

to me. Crisis averted. "Lord ... I'll be more careful next time ... thank you!"

GOD'S CHALLENGE #3.

Due to weight restrictions, I was only allowed 20 kg (about 40 lb) for my total baggage. Thus I couldn't take as many 'relief supplies' as I had hoped. In '09 I traveled to Congo by bus so it wasn't a problem.

GOD'S PROVISION.

Still I managed to take something small for everyone whom I would be spending time with - such as packets of seeds for the garden; tea bags (all donated by loving friends) - even a few 'David's Pouches' from the Widow's Group. "Lord ... size has nothing to do with it ... it's the love behind the gift that counts."

SURPRISE WELCOME TO CONGO.

Two hours later we landed in Brazzaville, Congo, where we remained for about 45 minutes as some passengers got off while others climbed on board. After takeoff, we landed in Kinshasa a mere 10 minutes later.

In the terminal I followed the signs and found myself standing in a line for "Expatriates" (foreigners). We shuffled along ever so slowly. I'd emailed my itinerary ahead but didn't know who was meeting me. I only knew one person in the Conference - Pastor Guy of Phoenix, Arizona, who fled the Congo during the war.

Suddenly I spotted a lady airport official waving wildly in my direction, calling "Mama Charlotte!" Since she was a stranger, I

looked behind me wondering if there was another "Mama Charlotte" behind, but there was no one.

"Who, me?" I indicated.

"Yes, YOU!"

Finally I reached the Immigration booth and passed my Passport through the window. 'My' lady security official walked over and introduced herself, "I'm Mama Bijoux...."

Her appearance was well timed as just then the Immigration Officer, frowning, asked (or should I say 'demanded'), "WHERE are you staying?!" I knew the PERSON but not the ADDRESS and would have most certainly been in serious trouble had I not provided one.

Mama Bijoux stepped up to the window and rattled off an address - I breathed a sigh of relief. She then led me by the arm, rattling away in French (commonly spoken here). I HAD planned to collect my luggage from the carousel, wherever that was, but Mama Bijoux had other ideas.

She passed through a security door meant only for airport personnel. I prayed, "Lord ... surely I'll be arrested any minute!" as she led me through places passengers aren't allowed.

We exited the building where a young man waited. "Where are your baggage claim tickets ... I'll collect them."

I handed them over and silently praised the Lord, "Lord ... this is a first ... someone ELSE collecting MY baggage? I don't believe it!"

We then entered a private room where the Congo Team waited, dressed in Conference T-shirts: Pastor Christopher, our host; Pastor Guy of Arizona, USA (from Congo); Pastor Fanchon of Ohio, USA (from Congo); and Mama Veronique. Only Pastor Guy and Pastor Fanchon spoke English well. We got acquainted, through interpreters, until my baggage arrived.

BEAUTIFUL LADIES & FLOWERS.

As we exited the building, I saw in the distance a line of perhaps 8-9 ladies dressed in long flowing traditional Congo skirts. In front of them stood a little girl dressed all in white, her hair beautifully braided with silver sparkles.

I wondered, "They must be welcoming a VIP? or movie star...?"

As we got closer I saw they all wore Conference T-shirts. The little girl recited a sweet welcoming speech and presented me with a beautiful bouquet of flowers. I burst into tears. I consider myself just an ordinary person, so undeserving of such a welcome!



Photo: The beautiful ladies who welcomed me to Congo (Plus Team members)

To capture the moment, I suggested a photo but they quickly reminded me, "Mama ... NO PHOTOS ALLOWED AT THE AIRPORT!" Oops!

KINSHASA.

The pastors and I climbed into Pastor Christopher's car for the 45 minute journey to his home. I got my first look at the city of Kinshasa, a population of about 8.4 million. It's a mixture of Old World and New; tarred and dirt roads; primitive homes, shanty shops, hundreds of sidewalk businesses -- poverty everywhere.



Photo: Street scene, downtown Kinshasa

The cars and buses on the road were extremely old and in bad shape; missing major parts, i.e., doors, windows, bumpers, hoods, etc. and dented beyond repair. Even passengers riding the bus sat on the rims of missing windows, half in and half out. The roadside was littered with abandoned cars, like so many unburied carcasses.

Not one traffic light in town. It was a free-for-all with cars, trucks and buses merging from every direction; horns blaring.

In the middle of all this traffic were hundreds of pedestrians jay walking, weaving in and out of traffic, crossing busy main roads

in front of moving cars, oblivious to danger. Dodging them demanded ones full concentration.

WELCOME TO PASTOR CHRISTOPHER'S HOME.

The street where Pastor Christopher lived was one solid stretch of wall the full length of the block; the tops lined with broken glass. One could not tell where one house ended and another began - except for the iron security gates and doors. Pastor's home was part of a complex that held four families.

I was seated in a comfortable sitting room by Pastor's wife, 'Mama Fanny'. Soon the 'airport ladies' arrived along with the Congo Team and other friends. Now we could take photos galore!

Pastor Christopher's six children marched in and lined up like little stair- steps in "Sound of Music", dressed in Sunday best. They recited their names; the youngest, aged 3, was 'Love'. My white face scared her to death at first! In fact, try as I might, it took a few days for her to warm up. One precious photo taken before I left is of her puckering up for a big fat kiss with me!



Photo: Pastor Christopher's Six Children with Charlotte

Also, it wasn't until breakfast the next day that I 'observed' that Mama Fanny was expecting #7. That loose fitting Congo dress threw me off.

I was shown to a bedroom, obviously Pastor Christopher and Fanny's own bedroom. I protested loudly to no avail. This meant they would sleep in the sitting room. It humbled me knowing what lengths the people go to for 'hospitality' to strangers!

Mama Fanny entered the bedroom. Through Mary, the interpreter, she said, "Here's a Congo dress, head scarf, jewelry and sandals to wear for this afternoon's Conference"

As it turned out, the other pastors wore 'matching' Congolese shirts! In fact, all my time in Congo I wore only Congolese dresses. Good-bye to American clothes, grubby, old sandals and socks. I tried my new clothes on immediately. Fanny said, "You look smart!" (so she DID know a few choice English words).



Photo: Pastor Guy, Charlotte, Pastor Fanchon in matching Congolese garb (Beautiful!!!! Notice the Conference billboard in background)

Fanny, Mary, and I sat down for lunch which was served in the sitting room at a small, plastic table: cooked bananas, fresh fish (the WHOLE fish, from tail to head, stared back at me), kasava leaves (greens), rice and ugali (corn meal shaped into oval cakes).

Mary introduced herself: "I speak English and will be your translator as no one in the house speaks it ... I'll be living here during your stay ... I'm 22 years old and a college freshman ... there are 9 children in my family, I'm #7."



Photo: Pastor Christopher and Mary, my Interpreter

THE CONFERENCE

We soon departed for the Conference, about 40 minutes (depending on traffic). We stopped at one street where Pastor Christopher asked me to get out. I got out and looked up, there was a giant billboard with the Team's pictures advertising the Conference.

As Pastor Chris drove he explained, through Mary my translator: "The name of our new church is MERA ... we are only 7 months old ... started with 12 people ... when I wrote Pastor Guy and Pastor Fanchon to come from the USA, I expected them to say 'no' to such a small church ... but they said, 'We will come for only 2 people'!"

Soon we arrived in the downtown area. The church met in a large center courtyard in the middle of a 5-story office building.

First, we walked up to the 3rd floor to an apartment rented by the church for their guests. This was where Pastor Guy and Pastor Fanchon were staying.

A security guard checked us out first before allowing us to enter. Pastor Guy, "They have assigned us (the Congo Team) two 24 hour a day security guards ... to keep us safe."

The Conference had started three days earlier, today was the 4th day. Soon it was time to go downstairs, around the outside, to the entrance. Inside it was packed, on the ground level and also in the balcony.

First there was a moving 'flag presentation' wherein Pastor Christopher presented each of the USA team (Pastor Guy, Pastor Fanchon and I) with our own individual Congolese flags.

Next, we (the USA Team) presented Pastor Chris with an American flag - a symbol of our "unity through Christ" between our countries. It was an electrifying moment. Cameras were everywhere.

The first choir to perform were ladies all dressed in red, white and black (Mary, my interpreter, was part of this group). The second choir was men dressed in salmon colored shirts and black dress pants. They used percussion instruments only.

Next, the pastors preached. Myself, I tell everyone I'm NOT a 'preacher', I'm a 'teacher'. When they speak, they shout and pace the stage like a caged animal. Me? I stand in one place, quietly 'teaching' - a very different style that amazed them.

When it was time for the offering for the poor, I had no Congolese money to give. Pastor Fanchon sat to my left and quietly passed me a bill. How thoughtful! I hadn't even asked. I placed it in

the offering bowl up front. The rest of the service progressed very well as I hope you can see from these few highlights I've given you here.

Afterwards the Team exited the church first and returned to the upstairs apartment for a few minutes. There was a bathroom but nothing worked (no plumbing, water, etc). Again, I say to myself, 'TIA'.

HOME AGAIN AND GOOD NIGHT!

It was late that night we drove home: Fanny, the kids, Pastor Chris, Mary and I. Suppers here are served late - 9-10 pm. However, I excused myself and collapsed into bed. I hoped my hosts weren't too disappointed!

The bed had a lovely bottom sheet with giant orange polka-dots - the top sheet appeared the next day. So that night I used my bush jacket over my legs as the night air was a bit chilly.

I was very tired but extremely thankful: "Lord ... thank you for YOUR PROVISIONS on this, my first day in D.R. Congo ... I have fallen in love with these precious people ... such hospitality I have never known! I can hardly wait to see what You have in store in the days to follow!"

Good night, until next time,

Yours for the Salvation of Congo,

Charlotte