

*The Strietzel Special*

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Dear Friends,

March 25, 2009

Greetings from Bunia, East DRC, in the name of Jesus Christ!

Thank You

We are grateful for this opportunity to let you know how much we appreciate your prayers and support, not only for our ministry, but for the people of Congo, as we live and work here.



Yes!

Our joyful news is that in mid-December, our son, Jason, proposed to Rachel Shedd, and she said “Yes!” They are planning a May 31<sup>st</sup> wedding in Naperville, IL. Jason will graduate from Moody Bible Institute in May and Rachel next year, so they are planning to live in an apartment not far from school while Rachel finishes her studies. Rachel is a missionary kid from Ecuador, a lot of fun to be with, and we are so happy to welcome her as our daughter-in-love.

Christmas Holidays

Christmas and the New Year were special for us as we welcomed Stephanie and Jason back home, and as Rachel accompanied them to share in ‘the Africa Experience’ with us. We did a lot of traveling and just enjoyed being together once again.

Across the Atlantic...Again

Lary and I will be flying together to Chicago on May 15<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Jason’s graduation the next day. Lary’s flight back to Congo will be on June 1<sup>st</sup>, the day after Jason and Rachel’s wedding, but I will stay until June 15<sup>th</sup>, to be able to visit more with Stephanie, family and friends in Indiana.



Team Spirit: Near the end of February, a team of four men came from a church in Idaho, to help fix up a couple of houses in Nyankunde. It doesn’t mean we’ll be moving there immediately, but it does mean that when it comes time to move, things will be ready. The Lord has perfect timing, and we are trying to be patient! We sure appreciated the team’s hard work during what seemed to be the two hottest weeks of the year; they made a great improvement on a house that at one time was totally ruined.

### Hand-Over

We would appreciate your prayers for us during these next few months, as our program manager and his family, Dave and Donna Jacobsson and their sons, Matthew (16) and Andrew (8), will be taking a furlough and staying in the U.S., to work at MAF headquarters in Nampa. This will be a very difficult “till we meet again,” as they have been close friends and co-workers for many years; however, we will be sending them off with our love and prayers for a refreshing and wonderful time in the U.S.



A couple of weeks ago, Lary started a transition into the role of program manager for East Congo. The task is huge; there never seems to be enough hours in the day to physically complete the work that needs to be done. Please pray that we will not strive in vain toward our own goals, but that we would truly be doing the Lord’s will in decision-making and working together as a team.

### “The EYE”

A highlight of our week was when the restoration ministry team, L’OEIL (Organization, Evangelism, Intercession, Liberation) invited our MAF team for dinner at a beautiful outdoor restaurant. They thanked MAF for partnering with them to take the message of forgiveness and restoration to various areas of East Congo. In practical terms: MAF flies this team to other towns and villages to conduct seminars – times to teach the Biblical message of forgiveness to those who have been traumatized during the recent years’ wars, and to challenge them to take concrete steps to demonstrate that forgiveness. These words were conveyed during one of their updates:



*“God is at work, confirming His Word and desire in all ways. His intervention in response to your prayers is seen through healing, restoration, and protection which are of the highest values. But what is also seen is the evidence that Faith is producing lasting fruits for eternity. So above all, souls are being won for Christ and for the renewal of churches.”*

### “There will be wars and rumors of wars...”

We would appreciate your prayers for the Gospel to continue to go forth into Congo and neighboring countries...so that hearts will be changed...so that true peace would come to this region. Some of the flights our pilots have made have been to take people out of dangerous and difficult situations. The LRA, a Ugandan rebel group, has been active in Northeastern Congo these past few months. They attack villages, loot, steal, kill, and take women and children as prisoners and future soldiers. It has been heart-breaking to hear these stories and see first-hand how evil the human race can be.

### Pray for Prisoners

For those of you who have a heart for prison ministry, would you please pray for the situation at the prison here in Bunia? Eight hundred men are filling the prison where there is room for less than two hundred. They receive food only if their families bring them something. Prisoners are dying each day, and their bodies are being carried down the road. Some prisoners are there because they have been accused unjustly. We must do something, but feeding hundreds of people each day seems like an overwhelming task to undertake. Please pray that the Lord will multiply the ‘5 loaves and 2 fish.’”

Serving Christ with You,

*Lary & Sheryl Strietzel*