

## WEEK 4 REPORT FROM UGANDA

On Sunday morning we worshipped at Masindi Lutheran Church and on Sunday evening we had a dinner of smoked pork ribs while we watched English Premier League football at the Kaija home.

On Monday, Rev. Raymond drove Rev. Peter and me southwest from Masindi to Ibanda, a drive of about 6 ½ hours. Along the way we stopped in Ishongororo to visit with Southwestern Deanery Dean, Benson Barahuka. We also passed the landmark below, probably only about 10 miles north of Ibanda. I had been on this stretch of road before, two years ago, and this landmark wasn't there then.



**With Rev. Peter Maganda**

Tuesday was a day for me to prepare for the 3-day Renewal Conference while Revs. Kaija and Maganda met with the Southwestern Deanery Dean and Council.

Wednesday through Friday the Southwestern Deanery hosted our Renewal Conference, which is the same one I led for the Eastern and Midwestern Deaneries. The conference was held at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Ibanda and probably 80 clergy and lay leaders attended from churches all over the deanery.





**A layman gives a testimony. This man came to Uganda as a refugee from the DRC.**



**Small group discussion**





**Women's Session**



**Men's session**

At the conclusion of the conference on Friday, there was a service of Holy Baptism for Genuine Karuhanga, daughter of Rev. Allan and his wife Janet. Allan is the pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. Dean Raymond Kaija presided and to my surprise I was asked by Allan to be a sponsor for their daughter.





**Dean Raymond Kaija presides at the baptism of Genuine Karuhanga**



**With the attendees after the conference on Friday**

One of the things I haven't mentioned before is the tremendous amount of gratitude people have for our Renewal Conferences. Words cannot adequately describe the joy people have and the amount of gratitude people display to, not just me, but to our board of directors and all the Lutherans in America for what we bring to them. And, of course, people always plead with me to come back again.

Friday evening the first of the two annual rainy seasons started, at least here in western Uganda. It also rained a couple times on Saturday and Sunday mornings, so it seems to be a genuine start and should last about three months. This is good news because farmers can now plant crops to feed their families and earn some money when the harvest comes in June or July. It's also cooler and the dust is gone, which is another blessing. Uganda is very hot and dusty during the dry seasons.

On Saturday I had a free day, for which I was grateful, as I had not been feeling well the last few days. Thankfully, I was still able to carry out all of my duties each day. Raymond Kaija came down with the same problem the same day I did. Fortunately, he was able to drive home on Saturday and I received an email from him today, telling me he is doing better. Peter Maganda traveled home Friday night and arrived with the same condition. Such are the risks in third-world countries.

One of the local pastors took me to a walk-in clinic in Ibanda on Saturday, where I was able to see a doctor and get a prescription, and I'm improving today (Sunday).

This morning I worshipped at Holy Trinity Lutheran in Ibanda, where Rev. Allan asked me to preach after I arrived. Fortunately, I have preached on the temptation of Jesus at least a couple times before and was able to remember most of what I had preached.

At the end of the worship service, the chairman of the church council read the following letter to me in front of the congregation:

“Dear Bill,

On behalf of the church, I chairman of the church, thank you for sparing your precious time for the seminars you conducted here. Your kind presence gave us a great opportunity to share in your words of encouragement. The three days we spent here were amazing for all of us as we had you here at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Ibanda.

We learned a lot from you, especially about how one should trust and be obedient (to God) and these words you taught us will help us and participants to renew our minds, souls and hearts. To me my life will change because of God's words you shared with us.

Thank you for the good job you are doing for God's people; may God bless you as you're traveling back. Extend our greetings to your people in America.”

On Sunday evening my good friend Rev. Kuruka Amutuhair, Anglican priest in charge of youth ministry for the Diocese of Northwest Ankole and son of LCU Head of Laity Fred Magezi, stopped by my hotel to tell me that I was invited by Bishop Amos Magezi (no relation to Fred and Kuruka) to attend Monday morning devotions for diocesan staff at St. Paul's Cathedral - and also that Bishop Magezi wants me to preach.