

# PRISONERS *for* CHRIST OUTREACH MINISTRIES



***258,000 genocide murder victims entombed at Kigali Memorial Centre.***

17 Prison Services	11 Prisons
6,511 in attendance	2,209 Commitments
8 Missionaries	6 Women's Services
4 Host Pastors	2,004 bar soap
3 Countries	1,430 lbs sugar
3 Church Services	1,100 lbs Rice
3 Encouragement Sessions	550 lbs Beans
1 Major Conference	550 lbs Flour
18,000 Air Miles	440 lbs Baby Food
750 Ground Miles	220 lbs Maize
1 Message	88 lbs Salt
1 Savior	11 Soccer Balls

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## Rwanda – Burundi – Congo 2008 Missions Trip

Daily Journal \* October 1 – 17, 2008

### Day 1 – Traveling – Seattle to Amsterdam to Nairobi

Team arrived at SeaTac no later than 10am for the 12:55pm flight. Morale and enthusiasm very high! Dave brought along a complete pizza that Brier Pizza donated to the team. After checking in and getting our boarding passes for both the Seattle to Amsterdam and the Amsterdam to Nairobi flights we assembled together for prayer. By pre-arrangement we phoned in to Standing Stones where Greg Von Tobel (President of PFC) and the men of the Standing Stones prayed together with us (on cell phone speaker phone). It was an outstanding way to begin the trip!



Left to Right: Kneeling – Dave Jordan, Eric Hoort, Standing – Libby and Don Dermenstein, Dee Szolomayer, Kevin Jones, Don Szolomayer, Bob Jordan

We sought to keep our bag weights down to no more than 44 lbs (20 kg) principally because of the surcharge that would be levied on the short Nairobi, Kenya to Kigali, Rwanda flight. Most of the checked luggage weighted between 43 and 44 lbs!



The “pizza devotional” just before boarding. Left to Right – Dave; Dee, Don and Libby D.

While eating the pizza (which amazingly we were able to get through security!) Bob shared the lead-off devotional (someone shares each morning of the trip). He shared a key verse from each chapter in the Book of Acts, through chapter 15 (he’ll finish the chapters on his next day to do the devotional). The team boarded on time and left on time. We settled in for the 9-½ flight. It was a blessing to be stepping on the plane after hours and hours of preparation that began all the way back in January!

The flight was easy and we arrived in Amsterdam at 7:30am local time. Many of us called home to check in. After a \$4 bottle of Coke (my how things are expensive around the world...) and some fellowship we boarded the plane for Nairobi. Bob had the misfortune of sitting behind an inebriated gentleman who insisted on reclining his seat all the way back, even when asked for a little leniency (by Bob and the flight attendant). So, cramped as it was, we journeyed on the second leg, another 9-½ flight!



Eric, Pastor Joseph, and Kevin at the airport

We arrived, again without incident, (just how we like it) in Nairobi. Since we were spending the night we had to obtain transit visas, which cost \$20 per person and an annoying amount of paperwork. Soon we were met by the precious pastor of our Kenya PFC ministry, Pastor Joseph. We gathered our bags and got on the van and headed for a grocery store to purchase bottled water, then on to the overnight stay. Many of us slept on the last leg of the flight, but it was still good to get to the College Co-operative House. We were in our rooms by 10:30pm. Breakfast call is at 7am. The Lord was gracious to us – we all arrived safely in Kenya, greeting Pastor Joseph, and were able to get some rest and be refreshed. Tomorrow we travel to Kigali, Rwanda, by plane and begin ministry that night at Pastor Jean’s church.

## Day 2 – Traveling to Rwanda, Service at Pastor Jean’s Church

Team arose early and we met for a wonderful breakfast at 7am. Don and Libby were up at 6am and walked much of the grounds. Lots of birds singing! Pastor Joseph joined us. We then drove to Kazuri Beads and were toured through the production facility. The team then purchased many beads for family, friends and donors.



**Don and Libby in Kenya Hotel Courtyard**

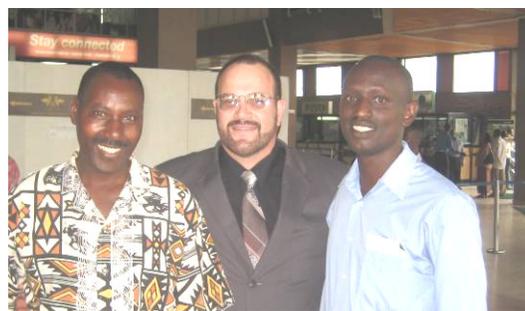


**Pastor Joseph’s Church in Kenya**

Joseph had moved to a new home and invited us over for a look. We saw his wife, who served Chai (a milky tea). We fellowshiped for a bit, then Eric lead a prayer of blessing over the home. Pastor’s church is on the grounds and we did a walk through and rejoiced with Pastor Joseph. After this we drove to the airport.

The flight was almost on time and we arrived just in front of a thunderstorm. After gathering the bags we met Pastor Jean and Kabasha Innocent. What a grand time of re-uniting! We drove on to the hotel and the team got installed. I made arrangements for dinner then drove with the African brothers to exchange money and get a few cases of water. We then had dinner and walked a couple blocks to Pastor Jean’s church for a Friday evening service.

After the worship service Bob introduced each team member and all had an opportunity to greet the church. Bob shared a message on the Parable of the Sower from Luke chapter eight. Afterward the team met to discuss the pluses-and-minuses of the service. We noted that we had scheduled some testimonies and a short sermon, all of which were overlooked by Bob. Bob was fatigued and simply spaced out on the order of the service. The team was gracious but the ball was dropped. The work of the enemy, fatigue, emotion of the moment, carelessness – all contributed for sure. The team prayed for the leaders which was a major blessing. We agreed to write out the order of the service for the next time. We have over 20 events to go, so we want to maximize the opportunity and stay vigilant as to the wiles of the enemy.



**Pastor John, Bob, Kabasha Innocence**

The team was back in bed by 10pm. We don't have to meet until 9am. Kevin and Bob made some next-day arrangements with Pastor John and the interpreter Frank. The books were balanced and all seemed to be well. Time for lights out!

### Day 3 – Nsinda Prison, Rwanda

After a good night's rest the team met for breakfast and devotions at 9am. Felt good to sleep! Big rain storm last night and a few leaks in the roof but we're rejoicing all the way!

The team had a fine breakfast and Dee shared the devotions from Hebrews 11 on faith. We piled in the van for the trip to Nsinda Prison, a prison that holds 10,000 inmates, both men and women. The prison is 90 minutes away from our hotel and we left in plenty of time to arrive a full 40 minutes early. There was a foreign film crew there taking footage for a documentary. We visited with them for a few minutes – they were preparing a film on NGOs (Non-Governmental Agencies).



Van w/ 2 seats on one side, 1 on the other

Rwanda does not allow us to take any photographs in the prisons, though we ask every time anyway! The OC (Officer in Charge – Director) was not at the facility (Saturday) but Charles, the coordinator of all events was our host. He was very gracious and stayed in the service with us.



Most of the US team with Charles

The service was thrilling; in fact the services were thrilling, because we did TWO simultaneous services! The day before we worked with Pastor John to see if we could in fact run a separate service for the women in the prison. We received permission and that's what happened.

Here's how the Men's service went: Men: 1000 with 200 first time commitments to Christ. Emcee – Kevin, Testimonies – Eric and Dave, Short Sermon – Kevin, Regular Sermon – Bob, Altar Call – Kevin, Healing prayer – Bob. Our interpreter was Frank, whom we worked with two years ago, and our host was Pastor John.

Bob preached the main sermon on "Another Chance" from the life of Peter.

We brought Patrick with us, a member of Pastor John's church who did the interpreting for the Women's service. Here's how the Women's service went: Emcee – Don S., married couples testimonies – Szolomayer's and Dermenstein's, Altar Call – Don D. Attendance was 276. No specific conversions, but many tears and much rejoicing and a huge response to the healing altar call. To carry out the dual services required our married couples to go to the other end of the prison where the women were. Pastor John went with them and it worked out very well.

The choir and inmate worship team were outstanding. They really know how to worship in Africa and it was very easy to enter in and dance before the Lord with them. Our team really bonded well with the inmates.



Eric and Dave with guards at gate of Nsinda

The Lord showed up in a mighty way. We were pleased beyond words at His goodness to us and his love for the Rwandan inmate. On the way out I was able to take a picture of some of the guards by the gate we entered. Eric and Dave are shown in the picture. We left humanitarian aid of 240 bars of soap, 100 Kg of sugar, and one soccer ball with pump.

We drove back to Kigali and went to a shopping center with a food court and all the Americans had a pizza dinner. It was very good! Back at the hotel the power was out for a while and Kevin and I worked on the books by candle-light. There had been a storm. Power was restored and each person was tucked in by 9pm! Tomorrow we go to Pastor John's church where our team will lead the service as is desired by Pastor John.

#### **Day 4 – DOUBLE HEADER: AM: Pastor John's Church; PM: Remera Prison, Rwanda**

The team met at 8am and Eric led the devotionals. He shared concerning the heart of man. Pastor John invited the PFC team to take over the service after the worship. The service was scheduled to run from 9am to 1pm, but we ran over by 45 minutes! The worship service ran 2.5 hours before special music and two different offerings. The children did many musical numbers. Lots of excitement!



**Frank (Intrepeter extraordinarie) and Bob**

When the PFC team took over the service Kevin was the emcee. He shared throughout the session, Don and Libby, Don and Dee, David, and Eric all shared either experiences, testimonies, or a special scripture or scriptures. Bob preached the main message from 2 Timothy on "Seven Marks of a Mature Christian." At the altar call five persons came forward to receive Christ. We also had prayer for the sick with many coming forward. The service was a blessing to us all and God was good. We all agree that the US churches could use some mentoring in worship and sticking around for a goodly time to let the Holy Ghost move. The 60 or 90 minute church service seems rather vanilla compared to the Rwandan service! 😊

We went from the church to the hotel to grab some snacks then bought more humanitarian aid and made the short drive to the prison in the city. There were 1100 men present (this prison has no women) with 86 salvations. Kevin was emcee, he introduced the two married couples, who each shared briefly.

Then Dave shared a short scripture, followed by Eric who brought the short sermon. Kevin continued his excellent practice of mingling in his own testimony throughout the session. Bob preached the main message on "Coming From Behind" on the life of Joseph from Genesis 37-50. The theme continues to be forgiveness, healing, restoration, and a bright future in Christ Jesus, and no hope of anything without Him.



**PFC team behind the bars of Remera Prison**

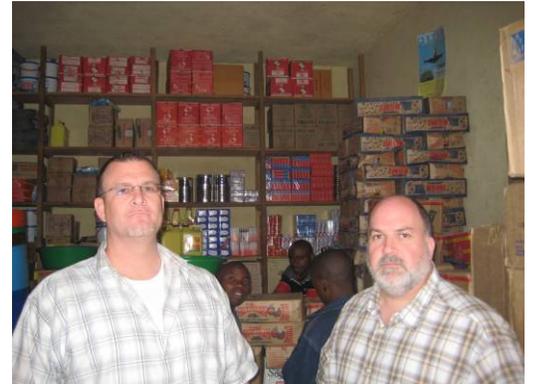
We brought humanitarian aid in the form of 240 bars of soap, two sacks of 50 Kg of sugar, a box of chalk used by the inmates on a blackboard to learn to read and write, and a soccer ball.

The team is overjoyed at the events of today. God is using the entire team for his glory. We are all encouraged and believing God for his continued gracious presence in our midst. We rejoiced over a

pizza dinner and a frozen yogurt dessert. Tomorrow begins the first of three straight days of ministry with lots of ground travel. Tomorrow marks our first journey into the Congo on this trip.

**Day 5 – DOUBLE HEADER: early PM: Ruhengari Prison, Rwanda; evening: Encouragement Session, Goma City, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Left early in the morning for Ruhengari, a two hour drive. Dave did the devotion on Thankfulness and Humility. The drive was beautiful as we saw much of the Rwandan countryside. We arrived at the prison at 11am after purchasing humanitarian aid and exchanging money in Kigali. We were greeted by the Director, a Christian man who we learned is also an ordained pastor in his church. He was kind and gracious to us all. We presented him with a pen and pencil set, a notebook, some candies, a tote bag, and a necktie. He commented that since he's been there starting in 1995 many volunteer and Christian groups have come to the prison but this is the first time anyone has presented him with a gift. He was very appreciative. We prayed together for him and his dual work both as prison Director and ordained Minister. He told us that the work we were doing was the only thing that was going to change the hearts of the people in prison. I noted on the board 635 men in this prison for Genocide crimes, and 24 women for Genocide crimes in this prison of over 3,000.



**Eric and Dave buying humanitarian aid**



**Don and Libby, the Director, and Dee and Don**

We were able to split the team into two parts and the Szolomayer's and the Dermenstein's led the service for the women, with Dave, Kevin, Bob and Eric doing the men's service. The women's service had 140 in attendance, with 40 new commitments to Christ and 70 responding to the altar call for healing. What a blessing! Due to the close proximity of the women's service to the men's service we ditched the microphone in the men's service. The attendance at the men's service was 450, with 150 first time commitments to Christ and 75 responding to the altar call for healing. Kevin preached the main sermon about Zaccheaus, and used persons from the assembly to visually demonstrate the story. It was very well received. We brought sugar, soap,

and a soccer ball as gifts. The Director did the closing prayer and determined to give out the soap on the spot. This ended up producing a small riot with the women. Order was restored but the lesson was to not do that again! When there is not enough for everyone, then don't pass it out, but let the authorities do it later.

From the service we had a buffet lunch and then drove to the Rwanda-Congo border at Goma. As usual leaving one country and entering another is a chore, but we got through it. We were met by the PFC Goma team, led by Pastor William, Pastor Fifi, and Evangelist Emmanuel. We drove straight to the church, which was being remodeled but had no electricity and thus no lights. We had less than 45 minutes for the entire encouragement session. Kevin emceed and the team share briefly before Bob brought the teaching on



**Don D. Encouragement Session closing prayer with Patrick one of our interpreters.**

“Mentoring Christian Prisoners.” There were 50 in attendance and though time was short the goal was reached – to encourage the saints in the work of prison ministry.

The evening ended with Bob and Kevin doing a leadership audit meeting with Pastors William and Fifi.

**Day 6 – DOUBLE HEADER: morning Munzenzie (Central) Prison, DR Congo; afternoon: Gisenyi Prison, Rwanda**

The Goma PFC team was successful in obtaining humanitarian aid. This was a great blessing! The prisoners in the Central Prison in Goma have not been fed well at all, and our local volunteers are hindered in sharing the gospel when the prisoners are hungry. We went over budget on this prison recognizing the great need. Kevin carried a 220 lb sack himself, to the amazement of the locals!



**Kevin the Gentle Giant packing 220 lbs!**

At breakfast Don D. shared the devotion and it was on the grace and forgiveness that God has shown him. Everyone was encouraged.

We conducted a single service in the Central Prison. There were more inmates present than when we were there in 2006. It was very hot, and a helicopter gun ship flew right over the prison. On the outskirts of the city violent rebel activity has been underway for many months. Eric preached the main message to 400 men and a few women. Half responded to the invitation by Don S.! Dave shared a testimony, Bob shared a short sermon on The Prodigal Son, and Kevin was the emcee. The Goma PFC team was encouraged and Kevin and I had a leadership meeting with the Goma team the night before. They are to be commended for their service for Christ and the prisoners performed in the midst of war, lack of jobs, seriously depressed economy, and poor infrastructure. Yet God was magnified in our midst. We departed at the border and committed brothers to the work that was before them.



**Leaving the Goma brethren at Congo border.**



**Gisenyi inmates carrying maize flour**

We departed for the short drive to the border and after the normal hassles made our way to purchase humanitarian aid for Gisenyi prison just over the border in Rwanda. The Director here received us graciously and allowed us to have a separate men’s and women’s service. The Szolomayer’s and



**Manicured Rwandan countryside; beautiful!**

Dermenstein’s led this with Pastor John and Patrick our second interpreter. 276 women present with 40 first time commitments to Christ. The four single men with Frank our interpreter, and the prison Director, led the men’s service. David preached his first sermon, with over 400 present and 200 first time commitments to Christ. Eric was emcee, Kevin

and Bob shared a testimony and Eric did the altar close with Bob doing the healing prayer. We brought sugar, soap, maize flour, and 110 lbs of powdered baby formula.

We did a lot of driving, traveling from Goma back to Kigali. We did some driving in the dark, but saw much of the Northern Province. The lush, manicured “land of 1000 hills” that is Rwanda was as beautiful a countryside as any of us have ever seen. We had a quick dinner on the way home and were back at our Kigali hotel by 9:30pm. The team had a good day!

### Day 7 – Butare Prison, Rwanda; traveling to Bujumbura, Burundi

The team arose early for the drive from Kigali to Butare. We obtained humanitarian aid and packed all of our bags for the journey. We will not be back to Kigali until five days from now. Butare is a large prison and we brought what we could in aid. We met the Director and he was very gracious. He allowed us to pray for him, and Dave led the prayer.

Once again we were favored with the prison authorities and allowed to have the women’s service and men’s service separately. The married couples again led the women’s service, and testified that they could have stayed another hour (we had almost 90 minutes as it was!). The men’s service was emceed by Bob, testimony by Eric, short sermon



Dave, Eric, and Kevin with Butare aid stuffs

by Dave and main message by Kevin. We estimated 600 in attendance, with half of the men responding to the altar call. We also had prayer for healing. God showed up again, and we give him praise and glory!



Our interpreter Frank and his wife and girls

We were within a kilometer of Frank’s home, and we went to his home for lunch. Two years ago we had met his lovely, gracious wife and newborn child. Now the newborn is almost two years old and he has a new daughter. Frank has a handsome family!

En route to Bujumbura we stopped at a rest area and I noted the 5-point plan for Rwanda. It’s called the 2020 plan, and it has five points for their national recovery and rebuilding. I noted, as did Don D. and Don S., the marked improvement in the cleanliness of the country, and the improved infrastructure. It is obvious that Rwanda is on its way to recovery. They are also a Christian nation, and the influence of the gospel is apparent. God’s good hand is on Rwanda.



5-point Rwandan National Values program to promote progress to Vision 2020.

We arrived in Bujumbura just before dark, and went to Pastor Willie’s church for a quick greeting. We then went on to the hotel where we checked in and had an excellent dinner, with some choosing the fish dinner we had two years ago and some the spaghetti dinner, both of which were highly recommended.

The team continues to rejoice over the work the Holy Spirit is doing in our midst. He is interested in the prisoner and his blessing is on our work. We praise God for his goodness.

**Day 8 – DOUBLE HEADER: afternoon: Uvira, Congo, Prison; evening: Encouragement Session, Uvira, DR Congo**

This was the hardest day for the team to date. Opposition began right away with our vehicle not starting. Libby prayed and they rolled the van a tad bit, popped the clutch and it started! We drove a short way to the Congo border. It took a while to get out of Burundi but the real delay came in getting into Congo. We were scampering around organizing things and I had to have Kevin watch my bag. In one of our only humorous moments of the day he asked where to keep it and I said on his head. Well, I came back and he had it balanced on his head in true African style! Talk about doing what the group leader said!! Now that's submission!



**Kevin toting Bob's bag – African style!**

This was our hottest and most humid day. Pastor Willie of Bujumbura was stopped at the border due to some minor paperwork issue and after an eternity we ended up providing \$20 so the border “officials” would give him his passport back and also so he'd have enough money to get back home. Our interpreter had a cell phone out that took pictures and though he wasn't taking pictures he was apprehended by the border guard and accused of something and it took some praying and fast talking to get him back on the bus.

We made it to the prison and had a fine introduction to the Director. We provided him with gifts and also brought more humanitarian aid. The prices are out of this world, but we managed to get a sack of sugar, 150 bars of soap, 100 lbs of beans and 100 lbs of maize flour. The prisoners in this poor prison are constantly hungry and destitute. The Director even appealed to us for more food and some clothing as well. We did a single service, with everyone participating and David doing the main message. As it turned out we could not take pictures (government officials were on the premises) – that means our first seven prisons we didn't get one picture inside! Oh well, perhaps in Burundi it will be different. We did minister to some 300 persons, with 175 responding to the



**David outside Central Prison in Uvira, Congo**



**Bob with interpreter teaching in the Congo Encouragement Session for Pastor Kiza**

altar call for a commitment to Christ! Our service started much later than planned due to the officials being on-site, so we had to compress our service – but the work of the Lord went forth just the same!

From the prison we went directly to an open-air area and the 17 volunteers from Pastor Kiza's church (all of whom attended the prison service) gathered for an Encouragement Session regarding jail and prison ministry. Our theme was again “Mentoring Christian Prisoners.” Bob taught the main subject, and Kevin taught on the PFC Correspondence Course Bible Study that we made available on CD.

After dinner the team gathered for its first “Truth and No Consequences” download session. This is intended to allow issues to be aired that, even if no change in format or approach can be made, yet everyone’s voice may be heard. The planned 15-minute session went 90 minutes, but it was all good and we all remain unified and blessed beyond measure!

### Day 9 – All-day PFC Training Conference, Uvira, DR Congo



**Dee teaching at the Uvira, Congo PFC Conference**

Weather-wise this was the hardest venue. Very hot, very humid, and there was no air conditioning, but there was a fan in the hotel! The water supply for the entire city was not functioning, so those who wanted to used a bucket of water from the water container on the roof for shower water. The water was pretty cold for such a warm place, but it was better than nothing!

We obtained some humanitarian aid (over budget) and after an early start made our way to the church where the saints were assembled for the conference. We had well over 70 in attendance and they were eager and interested, men and women! The conference was a blessing for Pastor Kiza, who has desired a conference in his city for a number of years.

Every team member taught. We started at 9:30am and taught straight through to 1pm. The conference was a success on all fronts. The saints assembled participated eagerly in the question and answer sessions and many were seen to be taking notes. Kevin was the emcee and Bob led off the teaching by talking about PFC and sharing his testimony. The 3-½ hour session was very well received and all the team was very blessed.



**Eric teaching at the Uvira, Congo PFC Conf.**



**Don and Libby with Pastor Kiza, wife Elizabeth, and four of their children**

After saying our goodbyes Pastor Kiza accompanied the American team to the border and amazingly we got out of the Congo and into Burundi with virtually little effort. On the way home to the hotel we stopped at a beach on the north end of Lake Tanganyika, part of the “great lakes” region of eastern Africa. The air was cool and sweet rolling off the lake and many children were swimming there.

We returned to the hotel and, since we had been drenched in sweat for two days (I was wearing a long sleeve dress shirt, necktie, and sport coat) and loaded with sunscreen and bug repellent everyone hit the air conditioned rooms of our hotel in Bujumbura, got hot showers and gathered for a meal (with much thanksgiving!).



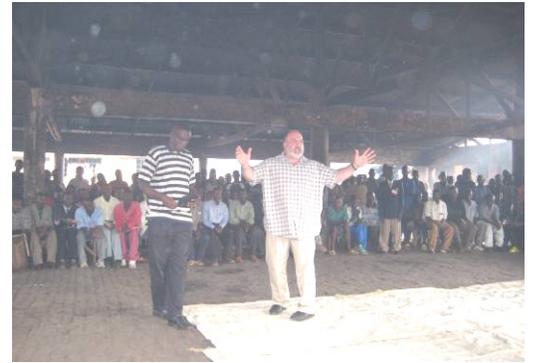
**Bob at northern head of Lake Tanganyika**

## Day 10 – Gitega Prison, Burundi

The team had an early bedtime and no early wake up call. After getting cleaned up and sleeping in an air-conditioned room we were doing very, very well!! We went to the market to gather humanitarian aid. The hustle and bustle of the market place in Bujumbura has to be experienced! Many little shops wedged side-by-side often selling the same wares. Tennis shoes, soap, American goods, fresh vegetables, etc. We purchased as much as our budget would allow (getting enough for the next day's aid as well) and made our way to the vehicle to depart. Young men would carry our sacks of 50-lb food stuffs on their head and shoulders, and some carried two sacks! These boys probably weighed little more than the 100 lbs they were carrying. One very sad aspect of the busy market place was the deformed infant children who are placed in the middle of an aisle opening with a can or basket for receiving gifts. One child I saw looked like a thalidomide baby – feet and hands attached to the torso without limbs. I looked at this baby and it was smiling and looking up, just like any happy child. Another child had an enlarged head, easily twice the size it should have been, wrapped up and set in the middle aisle with a basket nearby. Our hearts broke again at the poverty and despair of a land torn by war and corruption.

Our drive to Gitega took over two hours. We were traveling through mountainous terrain and Eric and Bob felt it in our stomach more than anyone else. The driver was appearing to set a land speed record and the constant back-and-forth was taxing!

We arrived and went directly in to the service. We were assembled in a small arena with men standing 360-degrees around us. There was an active market in the prison and there was a lot of extraneous noise. This made it hard to minister as we quite literally had to yell as we roamed back and forth. There was a lot of charcoal cooking going on, so we ended up breathing smoke the entire time while yelling at the top of our lungs! Yet it was all good. The Szolomayer's and Dermenstein's held a separate women's service, and Bob preached the main message on "Jesus, Friend of Sinners" using examples from The Adulterous Woman, The Demonic of the Gadarenes, Zaccheus, and the Condemned Prisoner. Eric gave the invitation and many men received Christ. This is what we do as a ministry! Even though the foodstuffs we bring are needed and well received, the message of the Savior of the world is the most important gift we can leave with them.



Dave sharing the short sermon at Gitega Prison

Our service was cut short because we were advised that, due to rebel violence outside of the city, we had to return to Bujumbura before the roads were closed. On our drive back, which was even faster than when we came in (if that's possible) we passed the presidential motorcade, complete with five different identical white SUV's with tinted windows, and pickup trucks in front and back with all sorts of armed guards. Thirty minutes later we passed another motorcade that looked identical to the first. This is to reduce the risk of the president's car being attacked. Which convoy is he in? Which car is he in? This is to throw off the bad guys – but what an expense!



Eric with two Gitega Prison guards

The head of the prison stayed at the prison for our service, and we drove him back to Bujumbura. The roads are not safe after dark, and sure enough when we came to a fork in the road the road was blocked. Looked like no

passage allowed. The prison director and our pastors all got out and the short version is after prayer and haggling we were able to proceed. We even took a soldier with us from the checkpoint. Another problem solved by the Holy Ghost. Had we not been able to pass who knows where we would have ended up.

As we drove into Bujumbura the sky, long since black, began to light up with distant lightning. It didn't rain, but we captured a few pictures and some video of the heavenly light show. We turned in after dinner to get as much rest as we could because we were due for a triple header the next day, and we need to get up at 5am!

### **Day 11 – TRIPLE HEADER: Mpimba Prison, Burundi; Church with Pastor Willie; Encouragement Session, Pastor Willie's Church, Bujumbura, Burundi**

The alarm came early today, 5am! We met for breakfast at 6am and were ready to leave for Mpimba prison at 7am sharp. Pastor Willie and the van arrived and off we went to Mpimba prison. We had purchased double humanitarian aid the day before so we did not need to make a stop before going directly to the prison.

We arrived at before 7:30am for the scheduled 7:30am – 9am service. We ended up waiting and not going in to see the Director until 9:45am due to some mix-up and the fact that there had been an incident inside the prison a few short days earlier and security was tight. Add to this a brand new Director and nothing was working in our favor. When the Catholic service ended we went in. We started our service with Don S. as emcee at 10:30am. We then proceeded to have a complete service that ended at 11:30am sharp. The Holy Ghost showed up again and it was worth the wait. I remembered ministering at this prison in 2006 when the former President of Burundi was at our service (as an inmate – a handsome, smartly-dressed man). He has since been released. We were not allowed to take any photographs (we were allowed to in 2006). Eric preached the main message with Kevin bringing the short sermon. 112 men committed to Christ as savior, with 350 men in the service (no women presently in this prison).

We scampered over to Pastor Willie's church where the team was briefly introduced and Bob preached a message entitled "Getting Involved" from Acts 17 about Paul on Mars Hill. We then returned to the hotel, cleaned up, and rested for two hours before returning to the church for the Encouragement Session.



**Don S. leading the American team in "Amazing Grace" at the Burundi Encouragement Session at Pastor Willie's church**

The entire team shared a testimony of what God had been doing in them leading up to and during the campaign in Africa. If the brethren needed encouragement they sure received it! Bob brought the main teaching on "Mentoring Christian Prisoners." This was the third time on this subject and it was taught this time with no notes! It was only a 15-minute teaching because Pastor Willie wanted us to be done by 6pm. Due to numerous songs by the choir our team did not get up to share until well after 5pm. So I confirmed with Pastor Willie that he wanted me done by 6pm and he did. Well, I got done at 6pm on the dot, promptly sat down and Pastor Willie wanted to know why I wasn't still preaching! I told him it was 6pm and he wanted me to be done! So we had more songs and left at 6:45pm! So much for being done by 6pm!!



**Bob with Alan Ntagonera; Libby and Don**

The American team was invited to sing, and Don S. led in “Amazing Grace.” It was a great blessing! I also met and enjoyed being with Alan Ntagonera. This is Pastor Willie’s young son named after Alan Barrentine, PFC International Ministries Director. Pastor Willie and his wife have seven sons and one daughter. If he has another child he said he’d name it Jordan!

### **Day 12 – Rumonge Prison, Burundi**

The previous evening Bob met with the Director of the Rumonge Prison. A handsome man who had a clear air of dignity and respect about him. He was very gracious as we met. We invited him for dinner that evening and for breakfast the following morning, but he had other appointments. He and I, along with Pastor Willie and Patrick our interpreter for this session, chatted for a good 15 minutes.

We had come to learn that the prison, and all of Burundi, was on national holiday the day we were scheduled to be in Rumonge, but nevertheless the director was going to leave early for Rumonge (a 2-hour drive one-way along Lake Tanganyika) to prepare the prison to receive us. This is the very prison where two men died of starvation just before we visited in 2006.

We said our goodbyes and the next morning both Bob and Libby were feeling quite under the weather. Bob had caught a throat ailment (likely from the yelling-preaching at Gitega amidst the charcoal smoke and 2-hour switchback ride at breakneck speeds...) and was sweating a lot, and Libby caught a bug that caused her to be nauseous.

After discussing the tasks before us it was agreed that Don would stay with Libby at the hotel for this trip, and Bob would stay back as well. It proved to be a good decision. We had three Burundi volunteers from Pastor Willie’s church along, so we divided the team with Don and Dee leading the women’s service, along with Pastor John, Patrick, and the native volunteers, and Kevin, Eric, and Dave did the men’s service with Pastor Willie.

Both services, as I’ve been informed, were awesome. The Holy Ghost showed up yet again and many, many people received Christ as savior. There was much rejoicing when they came back to the hotel. The drive down was scenic, and there was a lot of rain as well. We took extra humanitarian aid along, which was a blessing to be sure.

The Director was disappointed that I wasn’t with the team, since we did meet the night before. He at first thought we were spies because the team asked if we could take pictures! He took copious notes before the service as Kevin shared what PFC was all about, then he proceeded to take notes during the church service! He was very pleased we were there and wants us to come back again. We will!

Bob and Libby recovered and all was well. We both, along with Don, got in some good personal prayer time for the team, and Bob and Libby also got some much needed rest. This rest is important as we are nearing the end of the campaign and no one wants to be sick for the flight home, which is rough enough when one is at 100% physical capacity!



**Frank cracking jokes before departure.**

## Day 13 – Kayanza Prison, Burundi

Kayanza is where the Burundians achieved independence from Belgium in 1962. There is a pretty worn monument there right off the main road. We arose early in Bujumbura, obtained our last humanitarian aid for this campaign and set off for the two hour drive to Kayanza, which is directly on the way to Kigali, Rwanda, our final destination for the day.

The entire team was back in action. Both Bob and Libby were rested and refreshed. This worked to our advantage yesterday as Bob conducted the audit session with Pastor Willie late into the night (with Kevin) while Don and Libby visited with three ladies later into the evening who had hosted us at their home two years ago. So all ministry and relationship activities were accomplished during the day, with the full team plenty rested for our final day of prison ministry on this trip.

We were surprised to find that the final service would be in an outdoor area. There were only 32 men (and two women) present for the service, but there were also ten armed and uniformed guards, and there were another 60 townsfolk who came to hear the muzungu (white men) preachers!

Eric led off as emcee and both married couples shared a brief testimony. Dave shared a longer testimony and Kevin brought a short sermon, and Bob preached the long sermon on “I Believe” from four different New Testament confessions of faith by Peter, Martha, the Blind Man, and the Ethiopian Eunuch, the first African recorded in scripture who came to faith in Jesus Christ. Bob did the altar close as well. All



**Dave speaking, prisoners seated, crowd standing, uniformed guards in doorway.**



**Eric exhorting the crowd to choose Christ!**

inmates received Christ and many in the crowd as well. Eric closed the meeting, as all emcees do, and reinforced the decision of faith in Christ that the men and women just made. God was in the house, even though there was no house!

As the team spoke, more and more people came to listen. At one point in Bob’s message he stood at a high point on a car frame, abandoned on the inclined hill, able to see out into the street. People on the street could hear him and came over to see what was going on. Thus they too heard the gospel!

The team then made its way to the Burundi-Rwanda border, once again we crossed a border – another one hour delay – but we were on our way again rejoicing over what God had done in the service. Our message, regardless of our text – be it the life of Peter, the Ethiopian Eunuch, the Parable of the Lost Sheep or Prodigal Son, the Sermon on the Mount, or any other New or Old Testament writing, was Jesus Christ, the Great God and Creator, Savior of men, the friend of sinners, God in the flesh, who gave his life for the sin of the world, was buried, raised again after the third day, and is evermore alive. He sent the Holy Spirit to fill us and to lead us into all truth. Come and receive the



**Don and Libby with Frank at his home.**

forgiveness of sins. Come and have guilt removed. Come and be healed in your body. We left all we had, with raspy voices and weary bodies we finished our 17<sup>th</sup> prison service. Praise God forever!!



**“Marrieds” with Patrick and Pastor John**

We dropped Frank off at his home in Butare and blessed him with gifts. He was an outstanding translator, evangelist and friend. He is 32, has two daughters and a lovely wife, and is studying law in the University of Butare. He is a huge blessing and will be much used to advance the kingdom of God.

We arrived in Kigali at 5pm and promptly went to the restaurant for pizza! A grand time was had by all and we returned to our rooms with praise on our lips to the One whom we serve with such joy and gladness. Back at the hotel we blessed Pastor John and Patrick with gifts as a token of our thanks for all they did for us on this campaign. We were so blessed to work with Pastor John, Frank, and Patrick!

### **Day 14 – Kigali Genocide Memorial tour, Shopping, Farewell Luncheon**

We began the day early with our first stop at the Kigali Genocide Memorial. In 1994 the world was shocked as in a 100-day period between 800,000 and one million Tutsi and moderate Hutu men, women, and children were butchered, tortured, raped, bludgeoned, hacked, and stomped to death in three months of sheer terror.

The memorial has over 258,000 bodies buried on its grounds. This is a quarter of all the dead. Many victims live to this day. Children and adults who survived but witnessed the murder and torture of family members, women purposefully infected with HIV by perpetrators who knew they carried the virus and wanted to infect others. The prison system to this day has tens of thousands of genocide perpetrators and the country is trying community restoration projects to return the guilty to society. Much forgiveness is underway. The memorial describes in various ways – pictures, text (multi-language), videos, personal photographs, documentaries (the PBS *Frontline* production was being shown in one area – *Ghosts of Rwanda*, a report 10-years after the Genocide that can be watched in its entirety on YouTube), and even skulls and leg bones were all present. No pictures are allowed inside. This was my second time there and I wept. Pastor John sobbed and sobbed – he himself lost many family members to the genocide – and he himself leads services in the prisons that house the very people who murdered so many of his own family. He is a man who knows forgiveness in a way a scant few in America do.

Some of us were there for two hours. There is even a wing dedicated to other genocide acts in world history – Armenia at the turn of the century, Germany in the 30s and 40s, Cambodia with Pol Pot, Bosnia, and of course Rwanda, to name some. Some on the team did not go in, and some were in for only a short time before leaving. As we drove away I

was overcome with grief and sorrow and cried again for the pain that I could feel. We preach Jesus so



**Bob at Kigali Genocide Memorial.**

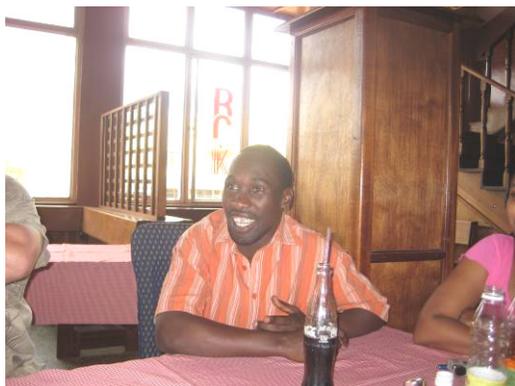


**Dave at the gate of the real Hotel Rwanda**

forcefully for he is the answer to every need, for every broken heart, for every guilt-ridden person, for the lame, the weak, the sinner. He binds up the wounds of the infirm, he is the savior of men. We also preach against sin – sin is the root issue in the heart of man. Why else would a man smash a baby against a wall to kill it? Why else would a man hack to death with machetes two children in their mother's arms? Why? Why? And why do we still trifle with sin? Why do we refuse to live holy, but would rather dabble with sin thinking we'll get away with it? No one gets away with sin, it comes at a price and it still steals, kills, and destroys. If we could get away with sin Jesus would not have had to die for the sin of the world. Think about that the next time you want to carry on with your own secret sin. Get on your knees and ask God's forgiveness and then seek to be filled with his Holy Spirit! Christ has power over sin and we need that power!

After the memorial we drove by the actual "Hotel Rwanda" that served as a haven of safety during the 1994 terror. From there we went shopping in a little village area with many small shops. I picked up some gifts for my family and friends. What a joy to see so much hand-crafted work: carvings and jewelry and pictures and weavings and ceramic plates and pottery. I could have spent hundreds of dollars there!

Our farewell luncheon included the American team and three evangelists from Pastor John's church and of course Patrick our faithful translator. He translated all of our women's services (six in all) and



**Young Patrick at the farewell luncheon. He thanked the Szolomayer's and Dermenstein's for being an example of a Christian marriage.**

was useful in the Congo and the churches too. Frank was our main and most experienced translator, but Patrick found a special place in our hearts. He's a hard worker with a big heart and he's such a young man. We hope he finds a good wife and has a family of his own in the years ahead.

Kevin and I completed our last pastoral interview (we do this with all area directors – we met for between 60 and 90 minutes with Pastors from Goma, Congo; Uvira, Congo, Burundi, and now Pastor John of Rwanda. We wept, prayed, and conducted PFC business, as we seek to not only expand the ministry, but to strengthen the brethren in the process. God is good to us! I had reviewed our end of trip expenses and we had sufficient funds to purchase 48 Bibles for use in

local prisons. We plan on returning home with about \$250. We started out with \$12,800 that we carried with us. Now to get up in the morning and leave by 10am to Nairobi, Kenya. If all is on-time we'll have a 4-hour layover then off to Amsterdam. If all goes well there we'll have a seven hour layover. Ah well, lots of airport and airplane time in front of us now. It was all worth it to be sure!

### **Day 15 – Goodbye Rwanda for now..., Kigali to Nairobi, Nairobi to Amsterdam (part 1)**



**Pastor John and wife Consolatrice**

The team turned in early last night. The farewell luncheon filled us up enough to where no one wanted dinner. Kevin was asleep at 7:30pm and didn't wake up until after 6am! I was clearing up some things and stayed up



**Eric and Frank at Kigali International Airport**

until 11pm when finally the lights went out for our last night in Africa for 2008.

In the morning Pastor John and his wife, along with Patrick, met us at the hotel for the short drive to the airport. Frank met us at the airport to say goodbye and off we went. I gave each of them a sealed thank-you card with a small extra gift. They all were such a blessing to us on this mission. It truly is hard saying goodbye!

We labored through the ticketing process but in time had all of our tickets for the rest of the way home. We arrived in Nairobi after a 60-minute flight then waited in the airport for five hours before boarding for Amsterdam and the 9 ½ hour flight we had in front of us.

### **Day 16 –Nairobi to Amsterdam (part 2), Amsterdam to Seattle (part 1)**

Kevin, my roommate for the entire trip and seatmate for all of the flights up to this point slept most of the way from Nairobi to Amsterdam. I maybe slept for an hour. Just couldn't get any shut-eye, though I could have used some! For some reason this leg, coming and going, had seats that were not well padded, not much leg room, and no direct vent to blow air on you. But big deal. We all arrived safely in Amsterdam and that's the idea!



**Full team waiting to board jet for Amsterdam**

### **Day 17 – Amsterdam to Seattle (part 2)**



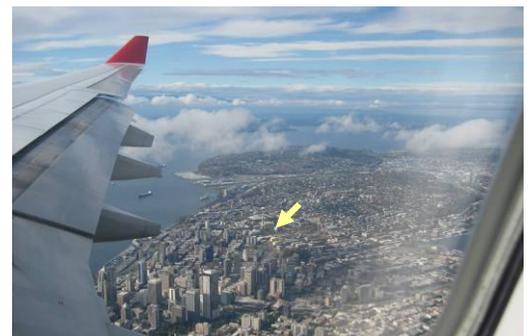
**Kevin reading a map in Amsterdam airport**

Our layover in Amsterdam was seven hours. They had a McDonalds and most of us got a quick meal there. I bought a small Sprite and three cheeseburgers and paid \$12.50 USD. What a deal! Yeah, right...! The time went surprisingly quickly. I finished up some audit reports from the four regional pastors meetings and showed Don D. and



**The frozen north of Canada. Quite a contrast!**

Don S. how the financial spreadsheet works. We account for everything, and have a budget for everything. We spent monies in four countries, changed money in two countries, crossed borders on the ground six times, went through customs numerous times in airports, and after all financial costs were totaled (we do this multiple times daily) we were off \$26.03, which was 0.20 percent of our nearly \$13,000 on-the-ground cash budget. Good enough! We came back with \$300 USD and no foreign money; this extra will be used for foreign missions where we just came from. The temperature in Amsterdam is similar to Seattle. Overcast, cool for this time of year. We had considered going into town for a bit, but we all decided just to hang out in the airport. Some napped, some walked around, some shopped, and I worked on reports ☺. Since I didn't sleep much on the previous leg, I could barely keep my eyes open by the time we boarded the plane for Seattle. Once on the plane I chatted briefly with my new seatmate



**Seattle! Arrow shows the Space Needle!**

(Kevin had been moved to the front for some unknown reason). I had the window this time and after the plane began to taxi I put on my eye-mask and earplugs and fell asleep for an hour. I woke up, took some sleep aids, and went back to sleep for another four hours. Felt good! Of course the meal had already been served and I slept through it (a rarity) but I went to the back and they fixed me up well!

Our course home went over Greenland and northern Canada. The tundra below in Canada was quite frozen, as we'd expect. Quite a difference from when we were in Kigali, Rwanda!

Since all my reports were done I went ahead and watched a couple of mindless movies. That took about three hours and in no time we were heading into Seattle. It was a nice autumn day with no rain! Two years ago when we landed after being in Rwanda we were greeted with a one-in-a-hundred-years storm that flooded the region, knocked out power for seven days in many areas, and closed the airport shortly after we arrived. Much better this time!

We happily de-planed and went through customs, then obtained our bags. Everyone was well and in good spirits. The mission was a success, we Strengthened the Brethren and watched as the Holy Spirit of God worked his good work and used us everyday folk to participate in advancing the Kingdom of Heaven! The plane landed on-time at 2:20pm and I was home by 4:15pm. The Szolomayer's, who live in the Yakima area, wrote the next day that they arrived home at 6:30pm. Kevin wrote to me that he woke up at 3am and went to his office to do some work. I fell asleep myself at 5pm and woke up at midnight, had a bite to eat, and went back to bed and awoke at 8:30am. Perhaps I'm back on Seattle time! As I write this I'm two hours away from going to the Snohomish County Jail where I minister on a monthly basis – every third Saturday. Sunday I'll be back in church, my home church, where I haven't been on Sunday morning since April when I started filling in at our Mount Vernon branch church. I cleared my emails, and the office where I work said there's plenty waiting for me and lots of things are going on. Looks like I'm back in the saddle at home once again!



**Don and Dee Szolomayer and Don and Libby Dermenstein curbside at SeaTac waiting to go home!**



**Dave and Bob in Bob's driveway, home again!**

I showed the kids and Leslie all the stuff I brought back – gifts, souvenirs, even a couple of maps (one of Rwanda, one of Africa). The entire team enjoyed the replies we received from our Blog site. It made it seem that we were closer to home. Kevin and I shared our cell phones with others to call home so we've got quite the bill coming, but it's all part of the process. Later Saturday evening Dave and his family will come over, along with our mom, and we'll have a BBQ. Just too tired to stick with the original plan of doing it Friday night when we arrived! I checked in with the Prisoners For Christ office and advised all of our safe return.

As is our custom we'll produce a DVD of the trip. We took a lot of pictures and videos (though only three of the 11 prisons allowed pictures inside) and should have something ready in a few weeks. The team will gather for a reunion celebration dinner sometime shortly in the days ahead. For now we rest and recoup and reflect on the good things God did in our midst.

From all of our team to all of our prayer partners, financial donors, churches, pastors, families and friends, I say thank you for your participation in the work that was done. We sensed your prayers, support, and encouragement the entire time. We were awe-struck at what was accomplished, how our health was sustained, how we traveled without breakdowns, and how well everyone worked together in a spirit of unity, humility, and singular purpose – to lift up the name of Jesus Christ. Sometimes we ministered with broken hearts, seeing some of the suffering of those behind bars as well as free. Burundi and Congo rank at the bottom of the worlds poorest countries. It is a different land, but God's good hand is yet on that land and people and for that we're encouraged and grateful.

The leadership at Prisoners For Christ is preparing the 2009 international missions calendar. Please pray with us that we'll be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit regarding where to focus our efforts. Pray too as to your involvement in 2009. Maybe you, an ordinary person, can be used of the Lord on the international field. Perhaps you will want to be a contributor, or major contributor, to the needs of foreign pastors who labor in very difficult circumstances. However you participate, you will be blessed beyond measure. We sure were! World without end, amen!

*Bob Jordan*



**Three days before departure at the final pre-trip meeting all wives and husbands met at PFC headquarters in Woodinville, WA. Seated left to right: Luesa Jordan, Libby Dermenstein, Leslie Jordan, Dee Szolomayer, Dawn Jones, Shanna Mosher Standing left to right: Dave Jordan, Don Dermenstein, Bob Jordan, Don Szolomayer, Kevin Jones, Eric Hoort.**