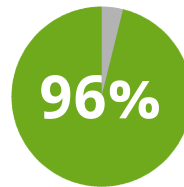


JOURNALS POSTED ON AUGUST 25, 2018

Kikongo in July



GLEN & RITA CHAPMAN

SUPPORT PLEDGED



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Dear Friends,

May I, Rita, say how good it is to be back in community in Kikongo again! Tomorrow, it will have been a month since my return home. Daily, I'm grateful. My heart is warmed to be back to my old pursuits and passions, living, ministering and sharing life with friends who are special. It actually happened much sooner than I anticipated. By 8:00 am on my first morning home, in fact. Barely finished with breakfast, I was already teaching an intensive English class to our first year theology students up at UNIBAC. Although the entire course was over in no time, I thoroughly enjoyed the class. Congolese culture, expressions and humor make for some pretty fun interactions sometimes. Also, we were able to use a gift of brand new English/French Oxford

Picture Dictionaries for the first time. My students strutted their stuff and were the envy of all the other university students who had already completed their English for the year - without books. One of my other firsts was to go back to work in UNIBAC's library. It was a treat to be led through the library the first day by the two UNIBAC students who managed the library in our absence. They were proud. The library was able to function for both students and professors last year, thanks to them. I'm proud. Both students are finalists this year.

Well, if you know us, life isn't all academic. There was a big, dead tree threatening to drop yet more massive branches on my favorite garden spot when I arrived home, too. Two strong young men were soon enlisted to chop the thing down. When it fell, it created an instant party with the whole neighborhood running in to haul away the pieces for firewood. The tree has marvelously disappeared branch by branch, chunk by chunk, and my garden is taking shape again. Community. Catching up again with families all around Kikongo who have come to be part of our lives over the years has been a joy. Children have grown like weeds, new babies have been born, and yes, there are absences that cause us to pause, too. Mostly though, it's just good to see everyone. See that in spite of life, and sometimes it's messiness, they are smiling, carrying on, and OK. It's been good to visit them at their homes. Good to hear their stories. And, finally, after years of attending early morning chapel at Kikongo, I have recently been reflecting on what that specific community means to me. Although my heart is fickle and changeable day by day, sitting on a church bench in the coolness and quietness of each morning with others waiting before God, is special. None of us are perfect. None of us have our theology all right, but we who are present all share in a commitment to begin our day together in God's Presence. Our paths may be different, but I appreciate their community on this faith journey we are on.

Thank you again for your prayers and for the ways you lovingly uphold us and the ministry we are privileged to partner in here. In less than a week, our little University here will celebrate its first ever graduation!

Rita