

Ernie & Cissy Hopper

Missionary
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Sponsoring Church
Westwood Missionary Baptist Church
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Winter Haven, FL 33880
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Pastor : Walter Lanier
Missions Director: Doug Wiersema



African Missions

Walking through a cacao thicket isn't one of my favorite activities. The coppices floor, carpeted with dry, crispy leaves of the trees formed a perfect camouflage for gaboon vipers or puff adders. Though that was the case, I had no other option if I was to see the lot we planned to purchase for our ministry to the Batwa tribe in western Uganda. Thirty minutes later we had surveyed, marked the boundaries and, praise the Lord, hadn't seen any snakes.

For the actual purchase, I was taken about a quarter of a mile away and sequestered under an oak-like tree for two hours while the agreement was finalized and the money was paid. I was later informed that had I been present, the price demanded would have been much higher. As it was, I paid half of the price and promised to pay the rest in January when I return.

We do need some help developing this plot. We need to put a culvert in the front so as to have vehicular access. I'm estimating that cost to be about $1000. We also need to fence three sides. It's about one-half acre in size. I guess that cost to be about $2000 for chain link and posts. Then, we want to erect a two-room building which will suffice as a church meeting place on the week-ends and as a school during the week.

The Batwa is a tribe of pygmies that, about 60 years ago, was moved by the British out of the Democratic Republic of Congo and into Uganda. Their kids were bullied by the children of the local tribes and haven't gone to school for many years. If this ministry is to progress as I am expecting, they need to know how to read and write. We already have an experienced certified teacher there who can do the teaching. We will need about $3000 for this church/school building. Please help if you can and pray for us if you can't.

When Idi Amin came to power in Uganda just over fifty years ago, he demanded that the people in western Uganda either convert to Islam, leave the area or be killed. As a result, we are working there now with first-generation Christians and first-generation Baptists. One of the main leaders is Sammy Jackson. He is a graduate of our Bible Institute and is the one who introduced us to the Batwa. We ordained him in August. Being the first time an ordination was done in Sammy's home area, over 300 came in the course of the day to see how we did. We started at 10:00am and I left at 4:00pm.

We also started a new class of our Bible Institute at Sammy's home church with 10 preachers. They are doing seminars every 2 months. I am in FL right now and will head back to Africa in early January. Pray for us as the ministry continues to grow. E.D.H.









