

Billy Graham Center Scholarship Program News

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News and Events

• Congratulations to our newly graduated BGC Scholars! We are excited to hear about what God will do in and through you in the coming years!

• Wheaton College recently welcomed Lisa Beamer as the 2011 Commencement Speaker. [You can watch her address here.](#)

• If we aren't currently receiving your newsletters, please add bgc.scholar@wheaton.edu to your lists! We love to hear about your work all over the world and pray for you regularly.

Alumni Prayer Requests

♦ Greg Thellman (2002) in Croatia asks prayer for the Balkans and the churches in Eastern Europe. Pray for him and his wife Lidija for wisdom and strength as they serve the church there.

♦ Pray for God's protection and that His ultimate work would be hastened and not hindered with the recent event of the killing of Osama Bin Laden on May 1, 2011. Pray that those working in those places at greatest risk would be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

♦ Pray for the 2011 Wheaton College graduates who will be returning to ministries or seeking opportunities for service outside the U.S. Pray they will persevere through the process of following the Lord's leading in faith believing in His plan for them.

♦ Congrats to [Benson Tumuhirwe](#) (1992) on receiving his Doctorate from Trinity International University in Deerfield, Illinois. Good job!!!



Mutual Mission: A Word from Diane

Rwanda, July 2010. Anglican leadership from the greater Chicago area, BGC Executive Director, Lon Allison, and I embarked with our team of ten for a mutual mission project with the Anglican Church of Rwanda. Over one million people were murdered in a horrific genocide from April to July 1994 in this East African nation. Our trip gave us a unique view of the questions asked by many Rwandan Christian leaders. How does a country reconcile and build for the future while still weeping for its lost sons and daughters? And on a more spiritual note, how does one in Rwanda, divided by hatred, reconcile the genocide with a God of love?

While in Rwanda we visited several genocide memorials and museums, had audience and prayer with Archbishop Kolini, spoke in several churches, took part in the annual Anglican conference in Musanze and visited Gahini, the site of the East Africa revivals of the 1930s. With our Rwandan brothers and sisters, we worshiped, danced, listened, wept, prayed, and sent 8 young evangelists out to plant churches in neighboring Uganda and Tanzania.

Relationships were strengthened and next steps laid to bring Rwandan Christians to speak to the churches in the U.S. about reconciliation and forgiveness. The first fruits of this were seen when Bishop Nathan of Rwanda visited Wheaton in February 2011, speaking in Grad Chapel and inspiring us with his message of hope.

Mutual mission expresses the need and desire of the global church to partner together to fulfill the Great Commission and build the Church of Jesus Christ strong. The Church of the Global South and East has significant words to share with the Church of the West. We need each other. How is mutual mission expressing itself through you and your work?



—Diane Garvin
Coordinator, Scholarship Program



With this ring, I thee wed.

At the Scholarship Program office, we receive a lot of wedding and baby announcements from scholars and friends all over the world! It is such a joy to share these special moments and to hear about the traditions of each scholar's culture. We've shared two of these stories with you below.

Enoch Okode studied Biblical Exegesis at Wheaton College Graduate School from 2007 to 2009. He now teaches at Scott Theological College near Nairobi, Kenya. He recently wrote to us describing the many steps in his wedding to Virginia in December 2010 (pictured above).

The first step is referred to as 'Ntheo' (a traditional marriage covenant). I was expected to buy three goats, one of which was slaughtered and eaten during the occasion. The shedding of this goat's blood together with the meal that followed formally declared that we had entered a marriage covenant. In addition to our family members, a few close relatives and friends were also invited to this event. Traditionally a local brew should also be served. But because we are Christians, we bought soda. Other aspects of this celebration included introductions, speeches and counseling for Virginia and me. Ntheo was followed by a day of celebration and feasting with friends, family, and the community at large. I was expected to pay a token to Virginia's parents at this time.

Traditionally once these first two steps have passed the lady would be mine; we would be free to begin living as husband and wife. I only needed to go, pay the dowry, and bring her from her parents' home to my home. I completed this step on December 17, 2010, a day before our wedding.

Once we fulfilled the cultural requirements, we moved on to the religious/faith requirements. It is interesting that although we are free to live as husband and wife once the above steps (traditional wedding) were completed, we could not since we are 'church people!' Our church wedding took place on December 18, 2010 at Scott Theological College, Kenya. Nearly 300 people celebrated with us on a day of deep celebration, great fellowship, and amazing worship.

Jean and Joy Viguiere are both current BGC Pre-field Missionary Candidate Scholars. Jean grew up in France and Montreal, and Joy spent the majority of her childhood as an MK in Burkina Faso. They plan to work in Bible translation. Jean shared the following about their wedding

Joy and I were married on the 17th of April last year. According to American custom, we were married in the bride's home church in central Illinois, and most of my close relatives came from France to celebrate with us. A few members of my non-Christian extended family also came, and we made it an opportunity to share with them.

As at most American weddings, we held a rehearsal and dinner on the eve of the ceremony. Because Joy had been involved in ministry within the Indian community in Chicago, and since Indian food is simply amazing, we served Chicken Makhani. The caterers, under orders to prepare the dinner with no hot pepper, agreed reluctantly to make it, "with no spice, and just a little bit!" Well, it was spicy enough that my dad couldn't eat anything but the naan bread.

The night before the ceremony, we avoided anything reminiscent of bachelor/bachelorette parties, though I still feared what one of my crazy American friends would do to me. Sure enough, I did get caught, though by three of my crazy French brothers. They tied me up with rope, blindfolded me, threw me in a van, and drove me away bouncing on the floor to loud music. After my head had gotten smashed under the seat a couple of times we arrived at the church for a time of singing and prayer together, probably the best memory of my wedding.

Though most Americans prefer very short wedding ceremonies, ours ran about an hour and a half, and was designed as a purposeful time of worship and dedication to the Lord. Finally, we followed the French tradition of an extended dinner reception - three hours of eating, interspersed with speeches and games.