Dear Family and Friends,

It has been awhile since I have written. The internet is not too easy to get going and I have just not taken the time to get something written. Bob and Dawn Baird arrived last week. Ed and I made the trip to Kigali, Rwanda to meet their plane. It was a long trip back to Bukavu but we enjoyed being with the Bairds. They stayed with us for 6 nights before their house was ready for them to move into. Thankfully they are within walking distance of us so that makes it much easier.

Ed is painting the extra room at the front of the house. I am turning it into my office. It is a noisy room for guests at night so it is the logical one to turn into an office. I will also have an office at Tracy's Heart. I am in the process of trying to find an inexpensive desk the will serve my needs there. I will begin being there next Tuesday. I had planned to be there this week after the Bairds moved into their home but then I became sick again. I caught a bad cold first. I am sure this sounds familiar to many of you. Just as I was beginning to feel like I was going to get over that my kidney infection returned. I suspect it never really went away but without a way to test that I just finished the course of antibiotics and went on. Well I am on the antibiotics again so hopefully that will take care of it all. I do feel noticeably better today than I did yesterday so that is a good sign.

Two nights ago we had a very bad rain storm. The rain came in sheets like I have never seen it do before. Of course we found the places where the roof leaks and discovered that if it rains hard enough water comes in around the windows and under the back door. It was not too bad though and we were thankful to be in a safe, mostly dry place. The next morning we learned that several houses on the mountainside had collapsed due to mud slides. One house collapsed on the young father, mother, and child inside, killing all three. Several people lost their homes and businesses. The hardships just never stop here.

I would like to ask you to pray for a young 14 year old girl who we will call Mapendo. She has been ill a lot lately and wants to know what is wrong with her. Her mother died with AIDS when she was very small and her father just recently died with AIDS as well. Mapendo was born with HIV and is now becoming will with it herself. No one has told her how her parents died. It is now time for her to be told and to deal with her own illness. She has a very hard time in front of her. Please pray that God gives her strength beyond what a 14 year old would have. Pray also that, if he so designs, God will heal her of this terrible disease that she is suffering from through no fault of her own. As our medical director said, she is innocent but will suffer none the less. We are looking for a program to get her into. She should qualify for some help with her AIDS since she is an orphan as well.

On a lighter note, I knew that we would likely have some geckos in the house. There used to be one living in our bedroom but I had not seen him since we got back. I do not know the life span of a gecko so maybe this is not the same one but he appeared again in the bathroom in the middle of the night. Of course he was hanging on the ceiling directly above the toilet. And he is much bigger than the last time I saw him, if he is the same one. You can imagine the dilemma it presents at 1:30 AM to have a big gecko hanging over the toilet! I finally managed to make enough noise without waking Ed to get the thing to move away from the toilet. I have not seen him since but I know he is lurking somewhere in the bedroom. I am thankful for our mosquito net. It keeps more than mosquitoes out of the bed!

Please keep us in your prayers as we continue to settle in here in Bukavu. I am hoping for some routine but each day seems to bring something unexpected. It has been a joy to renew friendships with

people we have not seen in several months. As one of those friends said to me a few days ago after telling me the various struggles in his life since we last spoke, “God is good and Jesus is coming again!”
Love, Brenda