



# FORWARD-LEARNING Global Security Report



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PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS-IN-CONFIDENCE

## **SPECIAL REPORT: ON A MISSION TO STAY BEHIND**

*TEEN MISSIONARIES FROM THE U.S. FIGHT RITUAL CHILD MURDER & WITHSTAND AL SHABAAB ATTACKS IN UGANDA*

*Dear Lori. Your dad said you might stay longer. Is this true – or [just] one of his stories? Love, Jamie.<sup>1</sup>*

Nine members of a Methodist mission to Uganda flew home to Pennsylvania more or less on schedule last week. **Several members of the team, though, were on a mission to stay behind.** In charge was Lori Ssebulime of Selinsgrove, PA. Married to a Ugandan she met on a previous mission trip, Lori was the go-to person for both the folks back home at CHRIST COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH in Selinsgrove and their mission partners in Kampala, Uganda, at the BWAISE PENTACOSTAL CHURCH (BPC) and its LIFE CARE SCHOOL.



The LIFE CARE SCHOOL and the student body, nursery through elementary school grade three.  
(Probably taken in 2008, the photo is courtesy of BWAISE PENTACOSTAL CHURCH, Kampala.)

The Pennsylvanians felt called to tackle a vital, last-minute mission: protect the school children in Kampala. Spirits were high. And for this team of volunteers, it would be the last mission in Uganda this year, so emotions were running high, too.

*Hi Lori. I am so happy for you that you and some team members are able to remain in Uganda for another week. It is a wonderful thing when the Lord allows you to be in the place ... where your heart is ... [S]pecific blessings ... will occur, just because you guys are there! Love, Anne.*

Since their first mission trip there in 2004, the volunteers from the Central Pennsylvania church had built strong, personal bonds with the church in Bwaise, one of the poorest districts in Kampala. Lori and her volunteers stayed behind to help The Rev. Peter Mutabazi and his wife Alice address a special vulnerability at the LIFE CARE SCHOOL.

<sup>1</sup> Letters of encouragement were sent to members of UGANDA MISSION 2010 before and after the bombings in Kampala Sunday evening, 11 July 2010, and these excerpts are drawn from the team's website with our appreciation.

**Ritual Child Sacrifice in Uganda.** The mission team felt called to protect children against abduction and the grisly practice of child sacrifice, more prevalent in Uganda than authorities there once thought (a sentiment based likely on the paltry number of prosecutions). Uganda's WITCHCRAFT ACT OF 1957 imposed 5-year sentences on those who merely threatened others with ritual-related death. Lack of enforcement has emboldened witchdoctors who engage in child trafficking, ritual murder and body-parts smuggling. Incredibly, some children are sacrificed at the hands of **family members** who believe the shedding of innocent blood will bring them prosperity. Abduction by strangers, however, is just as common.

*Hi Scott.... [T]rying to get in touch with you. Can you please ... message me back?  
Thomas [Scott & Pamela's son] wants to stay [in Kampala] longer,... but I want to talk to  
you about it.... I'm not sure about leaving him here without me, so I may stay too  
Love you much, Pamela.*



**A Measure of What We Would Call “Force Protection.”** Thomas Kramer, son of Scott and Pamela Kramer, wanted to stay an extra week to do what he could to protect these children at the LIFECARE SCHOOL from ritual murder. (*Un-marked photo courtesy of UGANDA MISSION 2010.*)

Witchdoctors involved in the macabre practice often hide under the moniker of traditional healer (e.g., herbalist), cloaking their genuine intent. Typically, an impoverished Ugandan, who believes witchcraft offers a get-rich-quick guarantee, “consults” with a witchdoctor at a cost of \$260 U.S. Most of that money goes to one of five or six witchdoctor protection rackets operating in the nation. After the “consultation,” the Ugandan then goes about capturing other people’s children. Those seeking consult – *not* the witchdoctors – perform the ritual murder, carve up the bodies and offer the blood, the heart and other organs to “the spirits” – all via the witchdoctor who, by all appearances, doesn’t touch a soul. (Tongues, eyes and limbs also figure in the ritual.) Last year, a 21-year-old woman in Bwaise kidnapped an infant for sacrifice. Her take for the ritual murder: about \$52 U.S.

**That was Pastor Peter’s fear and the reason the young missionaries from Susquehanna Valley, Pennsylvania, were on a mission to stay behind in Kampala.** They felt called to do what they could to prevent the abduction and ritual murder of students at LIFECARE SCHOOL. A mix of youngsters with parents and those who’ve been orphaned, the school children are particularly vulnerable, Pastor Peter believed, simply because there were so many of them – some 200 – at one location.

*Kris Sledge, Lori Ssebulime, Emily Kerstetter, Joanne Kerstetter, Pam Kramer  
and Thomas Kramer will be staying in Uganda for an additional week. [They] will fly home on July 13th.  
Your continued prayers are a must.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> Announcement at UGANDA MISSION 2010 posted late last week.



Young Kris Sledge led the singing of worship songs in native Luganda so well, a member of the BWAISE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH named Becky wrote jokingly to him (in text-message-style): “mr worship leader, i know ur enjoyn everythg in uganda, please say bye to ur family back in US, coz we are goin to retain u in our worship team hehehehehe.” Even Pastor Peter agreed: “I agree with you Beck! Kris led in two native songs in my village and left every one so amazed. They gave him a gift of 2,000 shillings in appreciation.” 2,000 Ugandan shillings are about a dollar. We believe Kris is standing with Cheriz, a Ugandan girl sponsored and virtually adopted by Carla and Rich Gotshall, congregants at CHRIST COMMUNITY METHODIST CHURCH in Selinsgrove who spent their honeymoon on UGANDA MISSION 2010. They were among the volunteers who left Kampala the week prior. (Un-marked photo courtesy of UGANDA MISSION 2010, the website Kris created to support the mission trip.)

*Hi Emily! What an experience you are having.... I know you are working hard. Praying you are storing memories for a lifetime ... Glad you tried the fried grasshoppers ... a taste you will probably never forget. :) You are in my thoughts and prayers, Ruth.*



Emily Kerstetter, 16, with some of the children of the LIFECARE SCHOOL. (Un-marked photo courtesy of UGANDA MISSION 2010.)

Last Sunday night was a last go-out for the mission team before returning to Selinsgrove. With them was Pastor Peter, Becky the worship leader who had formed such a close bond with Kris Sledge, and others from BCP and the school they stayed to protect. They all gathered at the ETHIOPIAN VILLAGE RESTAURANT to watch Spain vs. Netherlands, the final match of the WORLD CUP.

That night, Emily Kerstetter sidled up to team leader Lori. It had been a whirlwind emotional year for the 16-year-old. In January, her grandmother Joanne from the church in Selinsgrove began encouraging her to join the team bound for Kampala, saying it wouldn't be easy. The sophomore at MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY in Catonsville, Maryland, had to raise \$4000 for her journey.

Now, Emily was at her journey's end. Seated at an Ethiopian restaurant in Kampala, Uganda, she was sobbing on Lori's shoulder. She didn't want to leave. Couldn't she spend the rest of the summer with her friends at BWAISE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH? It was minutes before half-time in the WORLD CUP match. **At that very moment, AL SHABAAB struck: a suicide attacker detonated a bomb.**

Lori fell backward, losing consciousness. Kris Sledge caught shrapnel in his leg and face. Pamela Kramer was hurt as was son Thomas. Joanne Kerstetter's arm was fractured. **But where was Emily?**

In total chaos, with the sound of rushing wind droning in her ears, amidst blood and flesh, and thinking she had slipped into a nightmare, Lori crawled through debris, calling out for the 16-year-old who just wanted to stay behind. After minutes that felt like years, Lori found Emily, screaming in a pool of blood, the most seriously injured of all the mission team members – and the youngest.

*I tried and tried to pick Emily up ... then I saw her leg and I could see her bones and flesh everywhere. I think I started to scream then too. I started pulling her towards the entrance of the rest. Francis [from the church in Bwaise] appeared out of the smoke and chaos and picked Emily up off the ground and carried her to the van. I saw bodies lying on the ground all around me ... I saw a body of man right in front of me and the side of his body was ripped open....*

07-12-2010, 04:49 PM #1

**Exclusive news: Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen claims responsibility for the great Attack on Uganda !!!!**

Salaam Alajkom Wa rahmatulahi wa barakatuh.

**BREAKING NEWS!**

**Takbeeeeeeeeeeeeeerrrrrrr!!!**

I received some great news ikhwaani wa akhwaati.

Our brothers from Al Shabaab claims responsibility for the great Attack on Uganda !!!!

○ Allah accept this work from our brothers in the Islamic state of Somalia.  
○ Allah accept this work from our brothers in the Islamic state of Somalia.  
○ Allah accept this work from our brothers in the Islamic state of Somalia.

○ Allah, Revealer of the book, Disperser of the clouds, Defeater of the parties, defeat the Crusaders, and their apostate allies!

○ Allah, make them and their equipment easy booty for Muslims!  
○ Allah, destroy them and shake them!

○ Allah, You are the one who helps us and the one who assists us, with Your power we move and by Your power we fight!

Allah is Great!

But honor belongs to Allah, and thus to His Messenger, and to the Believers; but of this the hypocrites are not aware.

Quote

The Following 20 Users Say JazakAllah For This Useful Post:

AbdulAzeezAlMujahid (Yesterday), AbdulBasir007 (07-12-2010), Abu Anas al-Ansari (Yesterday), Abu Ateeq (Yesterday), Abu Hafs al-Gharib (Yesterday), Abu Hajar (Yesterday), Abu Ibrahim (Yesterday), Abu Mu'aad (07-12-2010), Abu Saleh (07-12-2010), Abu Umar (07-12-2010), Abu Zacharia\_27 (07-12-2010), Ahmed Yassin 23 (07-12-2010), AsadAllah (07-12-2010), Ayubi (07-12-2010), Azouni (07-12-2010), Binyamine (07-12-2010), Ibn Ali al-Turki (07-12-2010), lalaje (Yesterday), Qitalfabisilliah (Yesterday), tjhann1629 (07-12-2010)

“Great News.” At the *jibadi* ANSAR-AL-MUJAHIDEEN, the *Muj* celebrate “the great news” that AL SHABAAB claimed responsibility for “the great Attack on Uganda.” The word in red (“Takbeeeeeerrr!!!”) is an enthusiastic rendering of the Arabic word تَكْبِير or *Takbir*, the superlative form of the familiar expression أكبر الله or *Allahu Akbar*, meaning “Allah is greatest.” Of that, we remain unconvinced.

*I remember turning in a circle and seeing bodies everywhere I looked. I touched my own face and head, because I could taste blood and felt warm liquid which I assumed was blood. I still had no idea what had happened but, as people were screaming and moaning, ... the thought flashed through my head [that it was a bombing], but all this happened in a second.... It was literally a snap of the finger, blink of an eye, just an instant, and everything was chaos.*

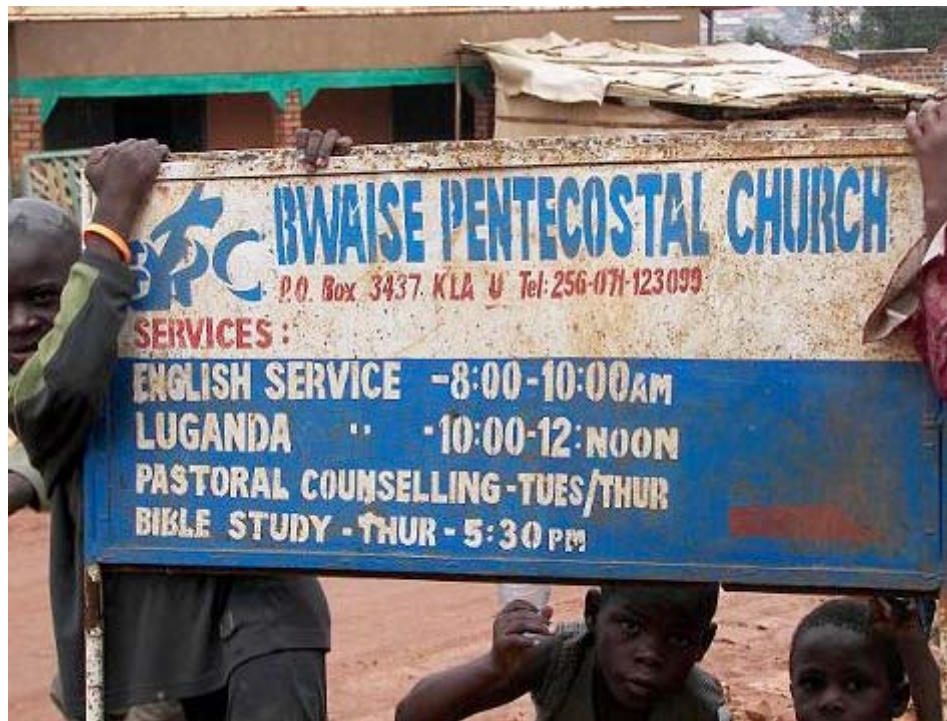
*When Francis lifted Emily, and I saw the flesh fall off of her leg and the remaining burnt flesh dangling, I was terrified, and I don't remember how I got to the van ... One of the things [we] have discussed countless times yesterday and today is how ... people all around [us] were dead [or] seriously injured but [we] were able to walk out. If our theory is right, the bomb exploded right at the end of our table.... The bomb exploded right in front of us and people behind [us] were dead, and on the sides and in front....*

– Lori Ssebulime

The people of **BWAISE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH** did not fare as well in the blast in Kampala. The AL SHABAAB attack claimed the life of the Rev. Peter Mutabazi. A memorial service was held yesterday at 0400 (EST) for Pastor Peter and two parishioners also killed in the bombing. One of those slain was Becky – the worship leader who wanted young Kris Sledge to stay in her worship team forever.

While Emily, her grandmother Joanne, and the others were whisked to a trauma center in Johannesburg, Lori<sup>3</sup> returned to Bwaise to be with the Mutabazi family. She wrote:

[W]hen they opened the casket, there was [Pastor] Peter with most of his lower face gone.... [His daughter] Grace ran to me crying, "My daddy's gone! My daddy's not coming back!" ...



(Un-marked photo courtesy of UGANDA MISSION 2010.)

Pastor Peter left behind his wife Alice, Grace and four other children, a small yet thriving church and LIFECARE – the little school surrounded by the big wall of faith built by 6 people from Pennsylvania on a mission to stay behind.

PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS –IN- CONFIDENCE  
**TURN TIGHTER, GO FASTER, LOOK FURTHER™**

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<sup>3</sup> To this hour, Lori the mission team leader remains in shock. She may be suffering from what is technically called acute stress reaction. Finding closure elusive, she is in need of medical care herself. Last night, she wrote about staying with Francis, a musician on the BPC worship team: "I am a bit scared when it is dark now, and last night driving back to Francis's house, I was really scared. Everytime Francis said something, I was startled... All this is [still] so mind-boggling. Please continue to pray. I am not looking forward to flying home alone now, but so thankful they were able to get everyone else out. I think I needed to be here for the [memorial] service ..."