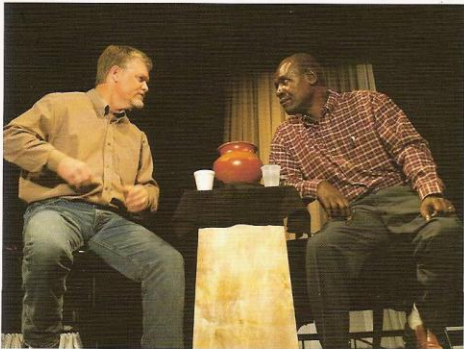


Faith in Cheyenne

Two Men, Two Countries, Brothers in Faith

By Bond Eddy



Pastor Galen Huck of Cheyenne Hills Church and Pastor Francis Nyung of Uganda, Africa, share their unique story with visitors of Cheyenne Hills Church.

Sitting across the table talking with Pastor Francis Nyung and Pastor Galen Huck, one is immediately struck with how much these two men are like long lost brothers. To be more accurate you feel like talking to a close set of twins. Their eyes twinkle with inside jokes that are often left unsaid, and the two are constantly finishing each others sentences. The fact that one grew up in war torn Northern Africa and the other grew up on a farm in Kansas is immaterial; these men are brothers of the deepest sort. You also would be hard pressed to believe that up until three years ago they had never even met.

Pastor Francis, a native of Northern Uganda, has lived a life almost unfathomable to an American. Immediately after he was born his father tore him from the arms of his mother and tossed him into the bush where he was left to die. Surviving this experience would, by itself, make him a remarkable man but the entire course of his life has been extraordinary. After his traumatic birth he went on to study for the Catholic priesthood; became a civil engineer; was arrested by the government of Idi Amin and imprisoned; drafted into the army and trained in North Korea; assigned to the protection detail of President Obote; escaped certain death to Tanzania with the fall of the government in the mid 80's; was arrested and sentenced to death trying to return to Uganda; spent more than three years

on death row; served as a prison chaplain; was freed and returned to the Army eventually becoming a General Officer; became a farmer; became a refugee; became a pastor; founded a church movement that has planted over 50 churches in three countries and has converted over 6,000 people. In his words it has been "a good life but with many challenges."

Pastor Galen, the Senior Pastor at Cheyenne Hills Church, met Pastor Francis on his first trip to Africa in 2006. When asked why he went to Africa on his first trip his answer was refreshingly simple; "I went out of obedience." He confided that he went

on his first trip without any real plans, he went simply because God told him to go and that was it. Unknown to him that trip would lead to a partnership that has impacted thousands of lives in two hemispheres. He went on that first trip to fetch and carry and provide a layman's survey of the drinking water in the areas surrounding Lira. A third party contacted Pastor Francis (because he owned a motorcycle) and asked him to help the American visit the refugee camps and villages in war torn countryside.

That trip through the war ravaged country side was a shared experience in suffering that helped forge this remarkable friendship. Pastor Galen still groans and holds his lower back remembering the ride. They both laugh and joke about what a site they must have made roaring across

Northern Uganda, two men on one motor bike one African and one Caucasian, both holding on for dear life and praying up a storm. Pastor Francis remembers he was very surprised when Galen accompanied him into the countryside. The war was just winding down and to his knowledge no other American missionary groups had made trips into the country side. Galen's willingness to "get his feet dirty" so impressed him that he knew he had to make a connection with this man. Along the way Pastor Francis introduced his new American friend to a group of more than 40 pastors he had disciplined and equipped while living in the refugee camps. These men were

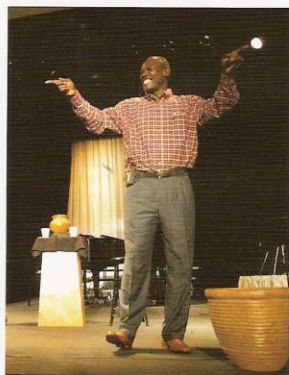
pastoring new churches in the camps and rural villages while scratching out a meager living farming reclaimed land.

Pastor Galen was entranced by the fertility of the soil but shocked by the amount of manual labor it took for to cultivate even a small garden. At the end of their time together Francis asked Galen what he thought was the most important thing the church needed in Northern Uganda. His answer wasn't bibles or training it was "I think you need oxen." Unbeknownst to Galen that is exactly what Francis and the church had been praying for. During the war all the livestock in Northern Uganda was stolen or lost, and the farmers in the area (including the pastors) were forced to cultivated the fields by hand spending long hours in the field breaking the soil with nothing but a hoe. Galen's insight birthed what has come to be known as Program Oxen.



Workers in front of the Aboke Church in Uganda.

Program Oxen purchases teams of oxen equipped with a plow and harness for distribution to Northern Ugandan clergy. These gifts, distributed to clergy from all different denominations, allow the recipients to not only spend more time pastoring but also enrich their communities providing a shared resource for rebuilding the war torn area. This Cheyenne-Ugandan connection has at its center a shared desire, as expressed by Pastor Galen, to "move away from the historical model of missions through sustainment towards one that enables independence an indigenous church." To all appearances this goal is being met. To date the program, active in two churches, has provided over 60 sets of oxen as well as bicycles for pastors and equipment for an orphanage that teaches war orphans trade skills such as carpentry or tailoring. During Francis' recent visit to America over \$76,000 was raised for various projects ranging from a well for the war orphan's home to roofing materials for local churches. Any churches interested in making ministry connections in Northern Uganda can contact Pastor Francis by calling his long lost brother Pastor Galen Huck at Cheyenne Hills Church. Who knows, maybe there are other long lost brothers out there just waiting to be discovered.



Pastor Francis gets emotional as he presents to the audience.