



January 28, 2008

Dear Friends and Family:

Recently, Brian Stout, one of our teacher/trainers, was sharing with me some of the conversations which he had with pastors at our November conference in Mbarara, Uganda. This week-long training meeting happened to be the third in our five-stage program of courses for church leaders in this region. Of the **various comments** which **he heard frequently** from participants, the most notable was: “**You came back.**” This remark was followed by variations of “**You care about us.**”

*They seemed so surprised*---as if they were accustomed to being ignored or cursorily dismissed. How sad that their personal experiences would prompt them to feel that way! How awful that others would regard pastoral ministry as insignificant!

We came back because **our core mission is to equip Christian leaders to fulfill God’s calling**; they are important to His plans for His creation and they matter to Him. We came back so that through our training conferences we might **build up their competence and confidence to serve God** more effectively in such difficult circumstances. We came back because **we care deeply about them**; they are not part of some tragedy in some remote part of the world which does not concern us. We care about them because **they are our brothers and sisters in Christ**, members of His universal church, and they will be singing God’s praises with us in heaven.

More than ever, we see *the vast need of Africa*---thousands and thousands of God’s workers who hunger for greater knowledge and deeper understanding of His Word. More than ever, **we hear reports of the growing impact of our ministry in Africa**. We look back on this past year with joy---and with the knowledge that we are making a difference.

At the same time we look forward to another year of empowering Africa’s church leaders. In addition to our customary training conferences, this year **we are introducing** a series of long-needed **conferences for female leaders in the African church**. We will **pilot a training program for leaders in Uganda’s national men’s prison**.

For these opportunities and the privilege of serving Him we give thanks to the Lord and praise His name. *We give thanks to you* as well---our prayer and financial partners in this teaching ministry. We would ask that you continue to support the vital work of Leadership Vistas. And *may the Lord in His infinite love and grace bless you abundantly*.

In Christ’s Service,

Jerrold C. Brown  
Executive Director