

## STORIES OF GRACE

**Feature: Our missionaries that we support share some Stories of Grace  
Mike and Amy Volovski served Encompass World Missions in CAR**



At the age of 48, we answered God's call to the Central African Republic. We had come to a crossroads in our lives. After two pastorates and a number of years in secular work, Mike was teaching Greek and Hebrew in a small Christian School of Theology near Altoona, PA. However, in 1983, due to a financial crunch in the school, Mike was going to be reduced to a part time salary. That was an indication to us that we needed to make a change. In desperation, after a number of tries on our part to make something work, we called the mission office at Winona Lake to see what the needs might be in Africa. They told us that a Greek and Hebrew teacher was needed at the seminary at Bata. That was like the writing on the wall for us. We felt that God was definitely leading us to the Central African Republic. He gave us perfect peace as we began our preparations to go. Many things had to fall into place before we could leave in three months for Albertville, France for the study of the French language. The Lord took care of all the details (especially the need of support which came after visiting 25 churches) making it possible to be on our way in time to begin our French studies in September, 1983. After a year in France, we went on to Africa the following summer.

On our journey to France, it was not certain what Amy might be doing in Africa. That year in France, the Missionary School Teacher at Bata resigned and Amy was asked to take her place. That, too, fit right into Amy's experience of being an elementary school teacher for over twenty years.

We fell in love with Africa immediately. There were many adjustments to make but God was good in giving us peace and joy about being there. The two most difficult things about our missionary career were the challenges of learning and speaking new languages and leaving our grown children at home. As the grandchildren came along, we missed that joy of being with them but God gave the grace needed.

Sixteen years (1984-2000) as missionary teachers at Bata Station in the CAR went by very quickly. It was the happiest years of our lives. There were so many unusual and unique experiences. Amy kept a journal of everything. This was to help remember all the new and interesting things that took place in a different country and culture because after a while, some of those things became common place. A part of us is still in our beloved country with so many memories and so many people whose lives were impacted by our ministry. 3 John, verse 4 says, "I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children (in the Lord) are following the truth." Hearing about those whose lives that were touched in Africa being used of the Lord has brought much joy to us.

We left Bata Station in CAR, in May of 2000 at the age of 65 for retirement. It was bittersweet for us. We greatly enjoyed going back in 2006 for a short term experience of one month. From time to time we are privileged to see some of our former students from Africa here in the United States.

In the summer of 2001, we moved into the parsonage at 250 Philadelphia Ave., Waynesboro. For seven years we enjoyed our stay and involvement in the church. We are very grateful for that opportunity of living in the parsonage (Amy's dream home – big, old, and charming) and being a part of the church family. Since our retirement, the church has been sending in support to Encompass World Partners to help defray the cost of health insurance benefits that is offered to us as retired missionaries. We are very appreciative of this faithful support of the church towards our benefits. We are now living in Altoona, PA, and are enjoying our involvement in our church.