

# Phyllis Hall to Uganda

East Africa

Sending Church:  
Calvary Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1118  
Timberville, VA 22853  
(540) 896-8329

Mission Board:  
Baptist International Missions, Inc.  
P.O. Box 9  
Harrison, TN 37341  
(423) 344-5050

Field Address:  
P.O. Box 818  
Soroti, Uganda EAST AFRICA  
cell: 011-256-772-721-568  
New email: [phyllis@bimi.org](mailto:phyllis@bimi.org)



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## New Normal?

In my last letter, I informed you that the government had allowed schools to partially open, allowing primary level 7 (P7) to return in order for the teachers to prepare them for the national Primary Leaving Exam (PLE). I am glad to let you know that our P7 pupils took the PLE. They are currently awaiting their results. Also, schools are now completely open, and we have all primary levels here, except P7, who are finished. We are observing COVID standard operating procedures (SOP's) the government requires for schools. We look at our classes all spaced out, with their faces hidden by masks, which also makes their speech hard to hear, and the school year schedule is so messed up – **not normal**.

Praise the Lord, our churches in Soroti and surrounding villages are also open with no COVID cases so far! Our Soroti church is growing in many ways. They are preparing a new church building on land close by. The church has been meeting on our Soroti Orphan Assistance Project (SOAP) property. But, now, after giving to a building fund for many years, they have enough funds and are building! Our church and school theme this year is "Building a Strong Foundation!" We are observing SOP's the government requires for churches – no shaking hands, no sitting together, no visible smiling faces – **not normal**.

Besides teaching in our school, I am currently discipling two ladies – one on Tuesday afternoons after school, and the other on Thursdays. Please pray for Christine and Martha. They are very attentive, and I enjoy studying with them. It seems so "**normal**"!

Please pray for my village Bible study with the elderly and disabled ladies. It has not opened back up yet. The national pastor who ministers with me does not want to start going again until the ladies have been vaccinated. It is true that they are at high risk if they get COVID, but they keep calling and asking us to come. Uganda has received vaccines and has been offering them to health workers and the elderly. But, according to an article I read, over the last two months, the number of COVID cases has risen by 80% in Uganda, especially in our Soroti district. Most people out-and-about do not wear masks or observe social distancing. According to the minister of health, if the situation gets too bad, they will impose another lockdown. **Not normal!**

I have been seeing a physical therapist who is helping me with a knee problem. I have to travel to Kampala to see her. Please pray for good results and safety as I travel back and forth. The PT takes COVID precautions very seriously (she is from India)! Also, please pray that the government will soon make safe vaccines available to foreigners since I'm sure it will become a requirement for international travel. Pray for our SOAP team: Alan and Elena Sutphen (director), Debbie Guimon, Kerri Phillips, Linda Green and me. Pray for the political situation here. Like American, the last election has caused unrest. So, as we pray for peace and health for you as you deal with COVID and unrest, pray for us. We pray that this new normal will give people ears to hear the Good News!

**Here or there – things are not normal – is that a trumpet I hear?**

*Phyllis Hall*

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