



Angela's passion is motivating others to "Make Your Life Matter No Matter What." Her ministry draws from years of leading worship and teaching God's Word. Her weekly devotional blog, "The M & M's of Life", encourages readers to make their life extraordinary and make it count. As the founder of "Voice of the Voiceless," she champions the plight of deprived pastor's wives and rural children through her mission trips to Africa.

Ordained Potomac Network minister, Angela has served as Worship and Women's Pastor at River of Life Worship Center in

Fredericksburg, VA, where she now serves as Associate Pastor along with Lead Pastor husband, Dale. She holds a degree in Music Education, has completed two music CDs, and is featured on *Her Green Room*, website for National A/G Pastor's Wives.

Angela makes endless to-do lists, works from home in her pajamas any chance she gets, and owns a well-worn pair of hiking boots from climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro for clean water. She wears many hats but her favorites are mom to two amazing teenagers, Gabrielle and Christian, and wife to her husband of more than twenty years, Dale.

The Song of Africa: to hear, to be fully present, to pray

Journal Entry: Friday, February 13

Angela Donadio

I woke up early on the last morning in glorious Ruaha, the sun rising over the thatched roof of my banda. I breathed in Africa, this intoxicating continent I admire, explore with profound curiosity, grieve over and deeply love.

On the African plains and within the unfenced majesty of the Ruaha, I am keenly aware that one becomes fiercely present. Void of the mind-numbing noise and mental clutter that I, as most Americans, have grown accustomed to - no television, no electricity, no pressing to-do list - one truly hears.

Present in the moment, I hear...

- the distinctive melody of the male basket weavers song joins the cacophony of birds to proudly displaying their new nests for an interested female.
- the call of the rooster waking with the dawn as the sun greets another day.
- the brush of an elephant's tail against my tent in the pitch darkness, as he feeds on brush for hours within feet of my bed.
- the menacing, soul-penetrating sound of two female lions roaring throughout the night just over the riverbank in sight of my banda.
- the trumpeting of a mother elephant, proudly protecting her baby.

I hear the subtle cues of my game drive guide, a moderate Muslim, yet interested enough in "this Jesus" to admit his desire to "learn about the Bible but I have no one to teach me." Living deep within the brush of Tanzania, he is grateful for my promise of a Swahili Bible to be delivered, in a few weeks, by a missionary friend.

We were created to be fully present, to listen...to hear...
To hear the still, small voice of a loving Savior through prayer.
To hear the sound of stillness.
To hear the gentle, calming rhythms of being present.
I sense the summons to shed the weight of anxiety, loosen the grip of busyness and lay back into Africa's unforced pace. To hear her symphony of tones, notes and voices - unique, diverse, rich and encompassing.

It's the song of Africa - and she invites me to be fully present.

In Dar Es Salaam, the symphony doesn't stop. Different notes are played at different times, sometimes overwhelming and intimidating and sometimes timid and uncertain. And I listen, straining closely to hear how God is speaking.

To hear the Muslim call to prayer piercing through the night sky
- I'm awake, and fully present.

To hear the stories from a long-time friend recalling the faithfulness of God and the splendor of divine connection.
- I'm engaged - regaled - and fully present.

To hear the ancient methods of the master woodcarver, crafting beauty from blocks of wood.
- I'm intrigued, and fully present.

To hear the sound of a keyboard as I play with the worship team..."Jesus be the Center of it all" in this sprawling, daunting city where God is moving.
- I'm humbled, and fully present.

I hear my Dad's familiar voice, sharing his life story with the beautiful people of Tanzania, framed by Psalm 1: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly...but who delights in the law of The Lord."

I hear the affirmation of scripture, One day, every tribe, every nation, every tongue will worship the One True God
- I'm grateful. So grateful. And I'm fully present.

These rhythms - this song of Africa - is healing balm for my soul. This being fully present - rare and unspoiled and long overdue - is a welcome respite and warranted reminder. I'm reminded to pray that I would listen every moment, no matter where I am - to pause, to hear, to listen, to respond, to savor....to truly live in the present through prayer.