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For Immediate Release

Reunited With Mother After Nearly 20 Years

Grand Rapids, Mich. --- When John and Sarah Chuol fled their village in Sudan in 1990, Sarah was separated from her mother, Elizabeth Nyamuon.

The couple eventually found their way to Kampala, Uganda, to the refugee camp and applied for U.S. refugee status. After four years at the camp, their travel plans were finalized but then delayed due to 9/11.

In 2005, the Chuols and their four children arrived in Grand Rapids. Among their few treasured possessions were photos and cards sent from Genesis United Methodist Church. The church "adopted" the Chuols while the family was in Kampala, sending clothing, money so the children could go to school and homemade greeting cards from Sunday school classes.

Through friends, the couple learned Elizabeth was alive. Genesis members have helped get paperwork completed so Elizabeth can join her family. She has received refugee status, with help from PARA (Programs Assisting Refugee Acculturation), part of Bethany Christian Services and Congressman Vern Ehlers' office.

Elizabeth, 76, will arrive at Gerald R. Ford International Airport on Continental flight 2640 at 5:10 p.m. on Tuesday, October 20, to see her daughter for the first time in nearly 20 years. She has not met her son-in-law or any of the Chuols' five children. Though she is frail and cannot see clearly, due to river blindness (onchocerciasis), Elizabeth and the Chuols have not lost sight of what matters most—faith, family and the generosity of others.

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