

EAST AFRICA SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

FEATURING SCHOLARS-IN-RESIDENCE

RABBI JEFFREY SUMMIT,
*Rabbi Jeffrey Summit, Ph.D., Research Professor
of Music and Judaic Studies, Tufts University*

RICHARD SOBOL,
*Award-winning Photojournalist and Author
of Abayudaya: The Jews of Uganda*

CELEBRATE THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE ABAYUDAYA JEWISH
COMMUNITY IN UGANDA

17-Day Tour of Tanzania & Uganda
June 17-July 3, 2019





YOUR TRIP PLANNERS

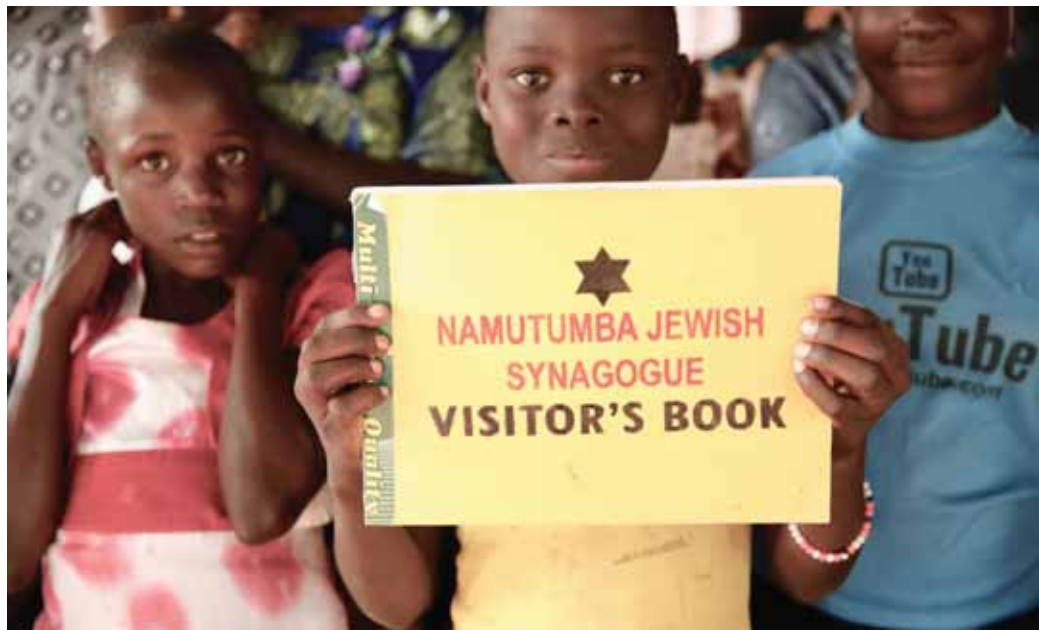
VINEYARD GLOBAL

Vineyard Journeys is a project of Vineyard Global LLC, a boutique marketing consulting firm that focuses on the global hospitality industry with a specialty in African destinations. The firm was founded in 2011 by Managing Director Mindy Harris. After more than a decade on the pulpit of both Conservative and Reform congregations, Mindy decided to hang up her cantorial hat, and move into the private sector.

Building this trip has been a labor of love for Mindy – an effort to combine a passion for the African landscape and a personal relationship with Rabbi Gershom Sizomu and the Abayudaya into a once-in-a-lifetime travel experience for Jewish guests from the US.

A trip to Tanzania in 2015 convinced Mindy to shift her consulting agency's focus to the international tourism industry. Ever since, Vineyard has been providing marketing services to international and domestic properties, including Finca Rosa Blanca Resort and Coffee Plantation in Costa Rica, and most recently Basecamp Explorer, a collection of safari lodges in Kenya. Mindy has now traveled 4 times to the African continent, and has visited many destinations within Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, and knows the region well.

This trip is coordinated in collaboration with highly respected ground operators: Uganda Safari Company and Asilia Africa.



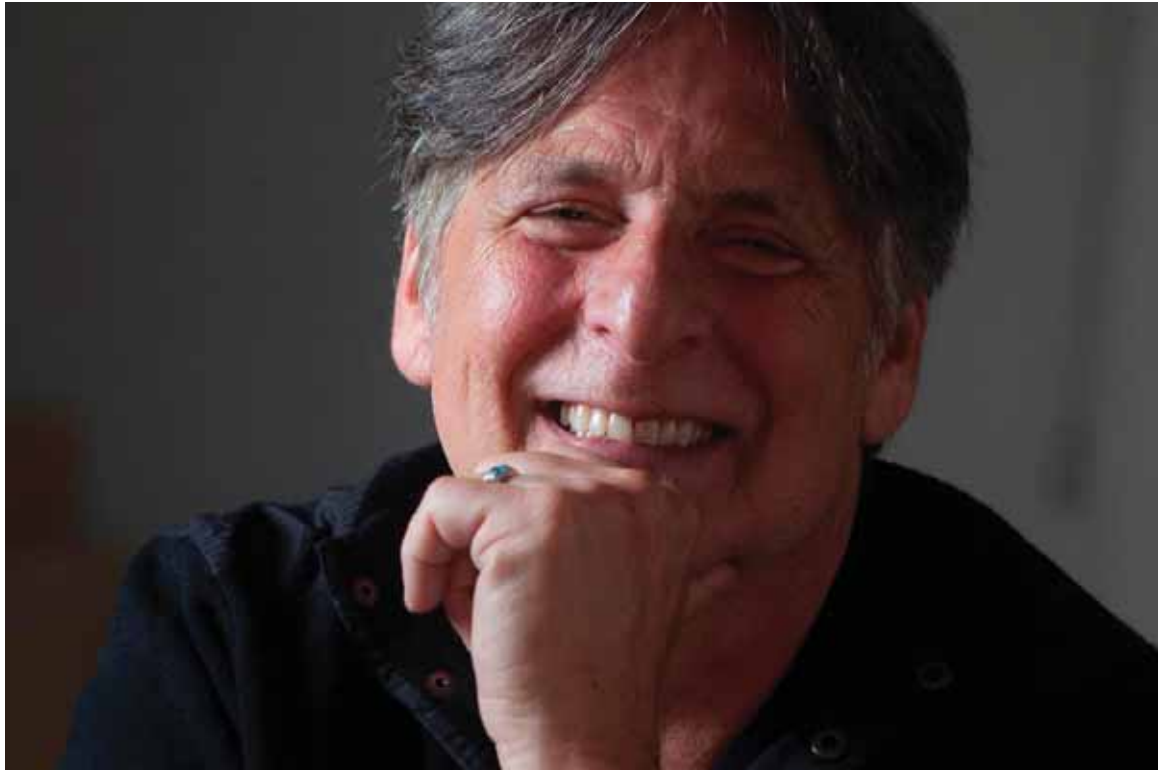
RABBI JEFFREY SUMMIT

Rabbi Jeffrey A. Summit, Ph.D. holds an appointment as Research Professor in the Department of Music and Judaic Studies at Tufts University. He is a Senior Consultant for Hillel International directing the project “Living Our Values.” He holds emeritus appointments at Tufts as Emeritus Neubauer Executive Director of Tufts Hillel and Emeritus Jewish Chaplain. He is the author of *Singing God's Words: The Performance of Biblical Chant in Contemporary Judaism* (Oxford University Press) and *The Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Music and Identity in Contemporary Jewish Worship* (Oxford University Press).

His CD *Abayudaya: Music from the Jewish People of Uganda* (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings) was nominated for a GRAMMY award. His CD with video *Delicious Peace: Coffee, Music and Interfaith Harmony in Uganda* (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings) was awarded Best World Music CD by the Independent Music Awards. His research and writing focus on music and identity, music and spiritual experience, music and advocacy, and the impact of technology on the transmission of tradition. Rabbi Summit lectures widely around the country and has been invited to speak at Harvard, Stanford, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth College and dozens of other institutions of higher learning.

On this East Africa Spiritual Journey tour, Rabbi Summit will share a few informal evening seminars on his work with music of the Abayudaya and share his insights for opportunities and challenges for Jews in this region. He will also co-lead an alternative Shabbat-in-the-bush experience.





RICHARD SOBOL

Richard Sobol is an award-winning photographer who travels the world for his work, which has appeared in *Time*, *National Geographic*, *Newsweek*, *People*, *Paris Match*, *Bunte*, *Stern*, *The New York Times*, and *Photo District News*, among other publications. His *Traveling Photographer* series of books for children includes the titles *The Story of Silk*, *The Life of Rice*, *The Mysteries of Angkor Wat*, and *Breakfast in the Rainforest*.

His most recent book, *Growing Peace: A Story of Farming, Music, and Religious Harmony*, provides a glimpse into life in the Abayudaya region of Eastern Uganda, where the people have overcome religious differences to work together for the good of the community. In the early 2000s, Richard was one of the first Americans to photograph and document the lives and practices of the Jewish community around Mbale. His book *Abayudaya: the Jews of Uganda* (Abbeville Press), provides a stunning and poignant glimpse into the remote villages occupied by Uganda's practicing Jews. Richard Sobol and Rabbi Jeffrey Summit have been personal friends for decades and spent much of their research/field time together in Uganda.

On this East Africa Spiritual Journey tour, Richard will share with us his experience discovering the remote Jewish villages in Eastern Uganda and will provide some preliminary instruction (for wildlife photography enthusiasts) on techniques for creating beautiful wildlife photographs.

TRIP SUMMARY

ON THIS SPIRITUAL JOURNEY, WE WILL VISIT EASTERN UGANDA TO LEARN ABOUT THE ABAYUDAYA COMMUNITY IN MBALE AND GAIN INSIGHT INTO GLOBAL JEWISH OBSERVANCE.

The first half of our trip will take us into neighboring Tanzania to behold the East African landscape and stunning wildlife. We will look out over the famed Serengeti plains, and drive up and into the Ngorongoro Crater, a UNESCO World Heritage site. In Tanzania, we will experience a sunrise Shacharit and Shabbat in the bush – a once-in-a-lifetime spiritual experience. Photography enthusiasts will enjoy a seminar with award-winning

The accommodations in both Uganda and Kenya are respected upscale properties and provide all needed amenities such as delicious Western-style meals, WiFi, en-suite baths with hot running water and toilets, comfy beds, cocktails, door-to-door transportation and unparalleled African hospitality.

Our time in Mbale will include an unforgettable musical Shabbat with Rabbi Gershom Sizomu at the new Stern Synagogue in Nabugoye Hill, tours of Hadassah Primary School and Semei Kakungulu High School, and visits to all the neighboring Jewish villages.



THE JOURNEY TO EAST AFRICA BEGINS...

DAY 1

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT // SUNDAY-MONDAY

Depart USA and arrive at Kilimanjaro Airport (JRO), Tanzania. On arrival, we will be welcomed at the airport and transferred to Rivertrees Country Inn in the leafy suburbs of Arusha where we will enjoy a warm meal, hot shower, and have the evening to rest.

DAY 2

ARUSHA, KARATU // TUESDAY

We depart Rivertrees Country Inn for a 3-hour drive to the Ngorongoro Crater National Park area, in a town region called Karatu. After unpacking while taking in a deep breath and marveling at the striking view over the cool green highlands, guests are welcome to take a nature walk through the park area and enjoy the diverse flora and fauna. Dinner and overnight at **Kitela Lodge**.

DAY 3

KARATU // WEDNESDAY

An early departure will bring us to the gates of the Ngorongoro Crater National Park around sunrise, as we begin the miraculous ascent to the crater rim, which rises a full 2,000 feet up into the sky. Ngorongoro is thought to have formed about 2.5 million years ago from a large active volcano whose cone collapsed inward after a major eruption, leaving the present vast, unbroken caldera as its chief remnant. We will enjoy a picnic breakfast at the Hippo Pool, and lunch in the Crater as we encounter wildlife on this first Tanzanian bush game drive. Dinner and overnight at **Kitela Lodge**.





SERENGETI

DAY 4

KARATU, SERENGETI // THURSDAY

After breakfast, we will bid farewell to the lush green surrounds of the Ngorongoro Crater and make our way towards the lower dusty savannah of the Serengeti. Famed the world over, Serengeti National Park is derived from the Maa word “siringit” – which means “never-ending plains.” We will drive for hours on end and feel as though we are the only souls left on earth in quiet synthesis with the natural world around us. Hordes of wildebeest making their way through the annual Great Migration bring predators, along with a wide and diverse array of gazelle, zebra, warthogs, buffalo, and hundreds of bird species. Dinner and overnight at **Kubu Kubu Lodge**.

DAY 5

SERENGETI // FRIDAY

This morning we will rise before dawn to catch the early morning activity and cool breezes on the otherwise dusty plains. We might encounter a pride of young lionesses nursing a small clan of cubs, or a troop of elephants silently passing across the plains in search of water. Game drives in Tanzania are like no other experience in life and bring us perspective on our human role within a much larger planet. We will end the day with a breathtaking Kabbalat Shabbat experience and dinner in the Africa bush, under a starlit sky. Dinner and overnight at **Kubu Kubu Lodge**.

DAY 6

SERENGETI // SATURDAY

This morning we will be filled with so much inspiration, we will indeed be ready for our alternative Sunrise Shacharit in the Serengeti wilderness. The words “Kol Han’shama” – “Everything that breathes will give praise to you” will have a new meaning on this special African Shabbat. The rest of our day will be spent gazing at hippos lazing in the sun or listening to the sounds of laughing hyenas as they gallop across the plains. As we turn a corner, we may catch an enormous giraffe delicately plucking acacia leaves off very tall branches. After a long day in the bush, we will cool off by the pool in the afternoon and conclude Shabbat with Havdalah. Dinner and overnight at **Kubu Kubu Lodge**.

DAY 7

SERENGETI, LAKE MANYARA // SUNDAY

Today we will hop into our Landrovers and bid farewell to the Serengeti as we make our way down towards Lake Manyara and the Tarangire National Park. The open pans of the lake area provide very good wildlife viewing as herbivores and all manner of gentle creatures make their way towards the water. Folks wanting a break from game driving can take a walking safari around the lake area with a local guide and learn about the smaller creatures and plant life native to East Africa. Dinner and overnight at **Maramboi Lodge**.



LAKE MANYARA

DAY 8

LAKE MANYARA, TARANGIRE // MONDAY

Nearby Tarangire National Park provides a very diverse and engaging landscape in contrast to the Serengeti open plains. Thick dense acacia woodlands house leopards, buffalo herds, and the large elephant families that Tarangire is famous for. On a hot afternoon, baby elephants will wallow and bathe in the swampy areas of Tarangire, just down stream from a rowdy pod of hippos. Lake Manyara provides opportunities for ornithologists keen on viewing and observing over 300 migratory birds, including flamingo, long-crested eagle, and grey-headed kingfisher. Dinner and overnight at **Maramboi Lodge**.



DAY 9

LAKE MANYARA, ARUSHA // TUESDAY

We wave goodbye to the Tanzanian wilds and make our way back to civilization. The animals, the plants and its interconnectedness will leave us with a sense of peace. En route we will watch some local Tanzanian towns and village centers pass us by, along with banana plantations, corn fields and acres of crops grown by locals. Our last night will be spent back in Arusha, with an afternoon free to decompress from the dusty bumpiness of safari and readying ourselves for the journey to Uganda. Dinner and overnight at **Rivertrees Country Inn**.



DAY 10

ARUSHA, ENTEBBE // WEDNESDAY

After a quick breakfast in Arusha, we hop into our airport transfer and make our way to Kilimanjaro Airport for our connecting flight on to Entebbe, Uganda. The short flight will bring us up over African's largest mountain with a bird's eye view. By afternoon-time we will have landed in Uganda's suburban city of Entebbe, home to the famous Israeli airport raid in the 1970's. After a long day's journey, we will have a chance to relax at the hotel, and stock up on supplies and gifts for our friends up in the village. Dinner and overnight at **Best Western**.



MBALE

DAY 11

ENTEBBE, MBALE // THURSDAY

We will be collected from Best Western early and will begin our road journey to Mbale. The drive will take roughly 5 hours and will offer some fascinating views of the Eastern Ugandan landscape and interesting sights as we pass through smaller villages en route. We will have the opportunity to stop in a town called Jinja and experience the Nile River at its source via a short boat cruise. After a picnic lunch, we continue on to Mbale, where we will check into our rooms at **Mbale Resort Hotel**. Our stay at Mbale Resort will include full meals. Outdoor pool, and other amenities including WiFi are readily available.

DAY 12

MBALE // FRIDAY

We will head down in Mbale Town and enter the **Central Market** with the Abayudaya women for a day of Shabbat preparation and community volunteering. Those who enjoy culinary activities will help with Shabbat dinner preparation. Other hands-on volunteer opportunities will be available. Tonight's Shabbat dinner and services with the Abayudaya is sure to be the highlight of our trip. Transportation will be provided back to Mbale Resort Hotel after an evening of learning, prayer, and good company.
Laila Tov.



MBALE

DAY 13

MBALE // SATURDAY

Shabbat Shalom! We will head out in the morning to join the Abayudaya at the newly constructed Stern Synagogue for Saturday morning services and Kiddush lunch. A shuttle will be provided after Kiddush for those who need a Shabbes nap at the hotel. For those wanting to stay in the village—adult learning sessions, informal conversations, reflective walks around Nabugoye Hill, or private time to read and enjoy the green Ugandan hillside will fill your Shabbat afternoon experience. We will conclude Shabbat with a vegetarian catered dinner, Havdalah, and a community sing. Transport back to our hotel. This is a Shabbat we will never forget.

“IF YOU WANT
TO GO QUICKLY,
GO ALONE.
IF YOU WANT
TO GO FAR,
GO TOGETHER.”

— AFRICAN PROVERB



MBALE

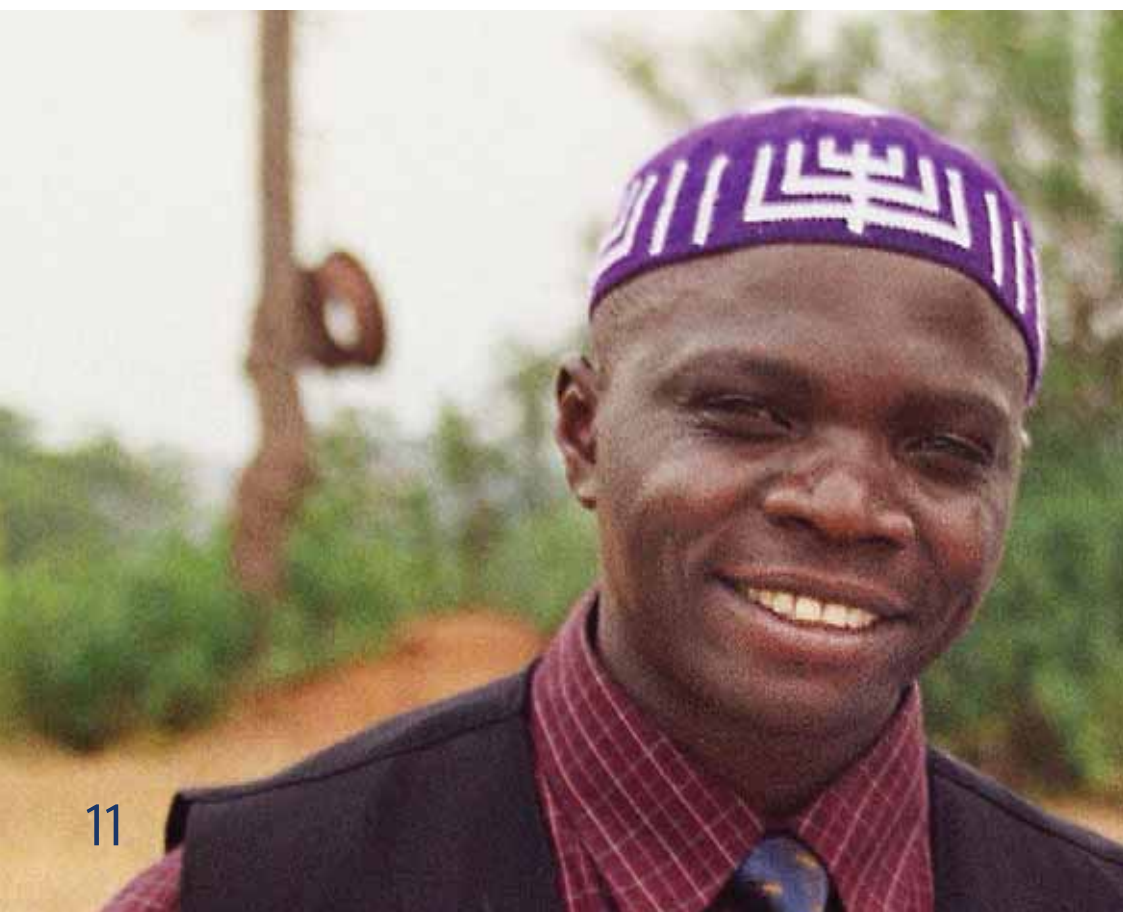
DAY 14

MBALE // SUNDAY

We sleep in after an amazing Shabbat experience, and head out to visit Nasenyi village for a tour of farms, the new Nasenyi synagogue building and a special hands-on “matoke-making” cooking experience. We will see how Ugandans live in their villages day to day, and see how they cook over a fire and make Uganda’s most ubiquitous dish – “matoke,” or steamed plantains. This afternoon will take us for a natural excursion up to the Sipi Falls region for some nature walks, hiking, and a taste of the region’s highly acclaimed Sipi Falls coffee. Dinner and overnight at **Mbale Resort Hotel**.

“We are here in the middle of Uganda, in the middle of Africa. And being a small Jewish community we always feel good receiving people from all over the world — to share with us the joy of Judaism; to come and identify with us so we don’t feel isolated.”

— RABBI GERSHOM SIZOMU





DAY 15

MBALE // MONDAY

After breakfast, we will be collected from the hotel and make a stop at the Tobin Health Centre in Mbale, a clinic provided to the Abayudaya by Jewish community partners. Then we will make our way up to Nabugoye Hill, where we will have an opportunity to visit Jewish Schools in the Nabugoye Hill area, including **Hadassah Primary School** and **Semei Kakungulu High School**. After lunch in Mbale, we will head to neighboring Namutumba to meet with another Jewish village and see their synagogue building, and homes, and have some time to share stories and hear about challenges of life in rural Uganda. In the late afternoon we will enjoy some free time and dinner at Mbale Resort Hotel with a visit from college student beneficiaries of the Abayudaya Education Fund.

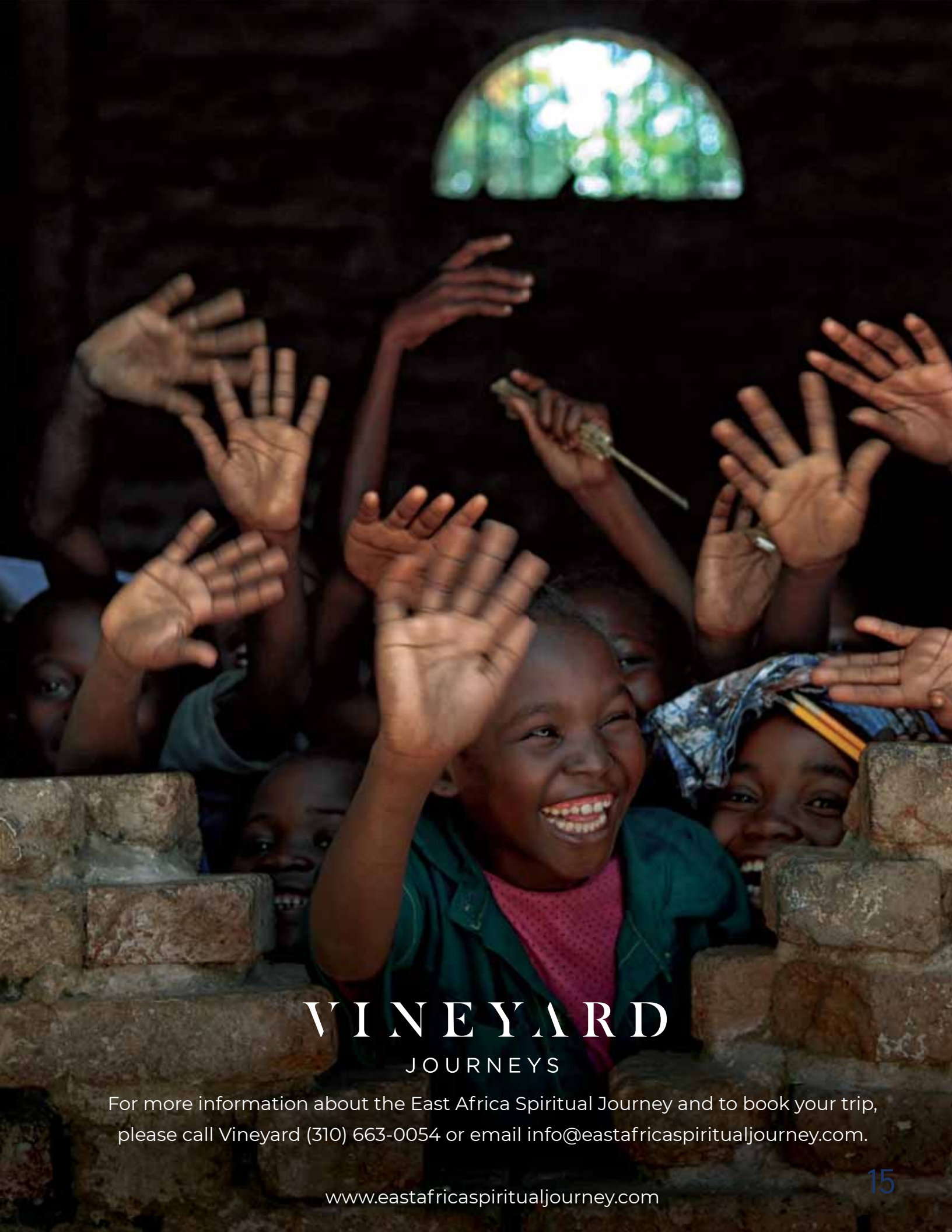
MBALE

DAY 16

MBALE // TUESDAY

We say goodbye to the Mbale region, and head back down to Entebbe on our last day in Uganda. Our time with the Abayudaya will be a precious gift that we will hold onto – and new relationships formed will last a lifetime. Late international flights on this day for some, while others will overnight at Best Western in Entebbe, for flight out in the morning. Shalom, Africa!





VINEYARD

JOURNEYS

For more information about the East Africa Spiritual Journey and to book your trip, please call Vineyard (310) 663-0054 or email info@eastafricaspiritualjourney.com.

www.eastafricaspiritualjourney.com