



December 2011

Komera Newsletter

Beckminster Methodist
Church
Birches Barn Road
Wolverhampton
WV3 7BQ

Editorial

When does a project become a relationship? Five years ago we began the KOMERA Project and we have made a very real difference, firstly at Kibagora Hospital, then by buying a new headquarters for PHARP in Kigali and also by funding the development of the Methodist Training Centre at Gikondo, in Kigali.

Sending people to Rwanda, - I think 44 people have now visited from the District - has led to support for quite a number of other initiatives:- a new church on the Shara Peninsular, a roof and cement for the outside of the walls for the church at the Kaziba Refugee Camp and similar work at the Mararabe Youth Centre in a rural location about twenty kilometers from Gitorama. We have supported HIV groups, funded 'Bee Hives and Goats', supported education, especially improvements in English speaking, funded a director of training for the Methodist Church (focussing mostly on ministerial training) and quite a lot more.

Some of the above examples have happened as friends outside our district have learned about KOMERA. – Heather, a friend of Yvonne Gough's living in Bakewell, came with us to Rwanda and now she too is giving a lot of support. The venture is developing a life of its own – and that is what we mean when now we speak of the District's relationship with Rwanda.

A part of this has been people from Rwanda coming here, further deepening the friendships. Part of why it is so unacceptable that the visas for the young people have been turned down, is that we have been unable to return the wonderful hospitality we have received in Rwanda.

Where does the relationship go in the future? Who knows! Part of the excitement of mission is that we cannot predict the outcomes – but God's hand is upon it and we can trust in the Spirit's leadership as we look to the future.

John Howard

Photo caption right:

Young people cementing walls at the Mararabe Youth Centre.

November 2011 Visit

Despite the huge disappointment of not being able to welcome the young people from Rwanda, it was a joy to welcome back Bishop Samuel and Anastase & Julienne from PHARP.

Their three and a half week visit has just come to an end and they have all arrived home safely. We had a packed itinerary and visited many parts of the District including churches, children's centres, schools (primary (5), secondary and special), rotary groups, soroptomists groups, local councillors, Walsall Football Club and the National Memorial Arboretum.

I am sure that every group that heard the personal stories of Bishop Samuel, Anastase and Julienne couldn't fail to be moved by their ability to forgive in the face of terrible personal tragedy and trauma. People were so impressed by the work they are doing in Rwanda with survivors and perpetrators of the genocide, orphans, women, youth and HIV/Aids victims. Many groups have agreed to help them in a variety of ways. The visitors were at times overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of groups, families and individuals.

May we continue to pray for and support the work of our Brothers and Sisters in Christ, it truly was a privilege to spend so much time with them. We look forward to the time when they can return with their group of young people.



Goats and Beehives

Are you looking for a practical and personal way to engage with our friends in Rwanda? Abraham Ishwami, who is secretary to Kibagora Hospital, has set up a project helping families to be independent by providing them with Goats or modern efficient Bee Hives and the equipment for honey making. They are also setting up a co-operative to sell the honey.



For £30 you could buy a goat or for £20 a beehive as a Christmas or any-time gift. Already 10 families have goats:-the picture above shows a goat and its kid and more kids are expected this month.

Gift cards are available from the District Office (phone 01902 332508 for details).

Adult trip to Rwanda -- August 2012

We hope to be taking a group of adults to Rwanda to visit those people with whom we are developing an ever-deepening relationship. The proposed dates are 15th to 29th August 2012. It will cost about £1200 for the two weeks, dependent on price of airline tickets. An information evening is to be held on Thursday 12th January at 7-30pm at Beckminster Methodist Church, Wolverhampton, WV3 7BQ.

Further details are available from the District Office.

Future Youth Trip to Rwanda 2013

All our young people who have been to Rwanda have found it to be a life-changing experience and we hope that we will be able to take another group of young people in 2013. Plans are at a very embryonic stage but watch this space.

Please do contact the District Office if you need more information on the above; 01902 332508, bs@wsmeth.org.uk. Members of the World Church Committee would also be happy to help - especially if you would like a visit to learn more about aspects of KOMERA.

The Visa Situation

Following the disappointment of having the visa applications turned down for the Rwandan young people, several people are working hard to reverse this decision. John Howard has met with his MP, a local member of the House of Lords will also do some advocacy work for us and we know that people round the district have been writing to MPs. The more pressure we can bring to bear, the more likely we are to be successful and if you feel you could write to your MP, regardless of whether they have been contacted already on the issue, we would be grateful. An outline letter is available from the District Office.



An international football match between the young people from our District and the youth group at Mararabe.

Finance Update

Fundraising for the youth visit has taken a lot of our energy with 2012 Calendars still on sale. Also the film 'Shooting Dogs' was shown at the Lighthouse Cinema, Wolverhampton for two nights in October. As well as being a fundraising initiative, it also helped raise awareness to the background of the situation in Rwanda.

A total of £10,000 was promised to the Methodist training centre at Gikondo, some earmarked for the building of the kitchen. Brian Dawson is grateful for money sent to him for this purpose and greetings cards are now on sale for Gikondo. Julienne brought beautiful craft work from the PHARP training centre on her recent visit and this is being sold around the District. Yvonne has a supply of goods if you would like them to sell at a fundraising event.

Fundraising still continues and, as you can see, is needed for a variety of purposes. As mentioned above, we are even now hoping to bring several young people to the District and are still raising money for this.