



Uganda Calling!

Home and Away

May 2018

Greetings from Anona & Dave

In this newsletter we want to update you on our work with 'Uganda Mountain Ministry' following Dave's visit to Kasese in April this year. We are pleased to partner our friend Pastor Alfonse Bwambale in this ministry, which seeks to train the many pastors of mostly pentecostal churches in the Rwenzori mountains. Only about 5% of these pastors have any theological training at all and we seek to bring the truth of God's word to those who really want to learn.



As part of this report, we would like to update you regarding a lady called **Jane Masika**. Some of you may recall that she is the lady who was widowed when her husband, Pastor Peter Baluku, was fatally abused by soldiers when travelling down the mountain to our pastors' conference in February last year.

This picture is of Jane and her children outside of their home in the mountains.

This is what Alfonse writes about her:

'I would like to thank everyone who contributed towards family of the late Pastor Baluku who died as he was coming to the seminar. I hope you still recall that story. Your support to this family has brought a very big difference in her life and the children. This lady is so amazing in all what she is doing. Last season she planted Irish potatoes, and God really blessed her. She had such a good crop that she was able to bless other widows with bags of Irish potatoes, which made a very big difference to the community. She not selfish, she is looking always to minister to other widows. As if that is not enough, from the land we bought for her she makes sure always to share with other widows. Her children are growing up, doing well and are studying in good school. She has become a woman of responsibility and she has planted Vanilla for her future and the family. God bless everyone who contributed toward this lady.'

We committed to support this lady for one year which has just ended. Also, due to the generosity of friends, we were able to buy for her one acre of land which she is cultivating with vanilla. So, she is now able to stand independently – out of adversity has come something good.

We send a small amount of money to Alfonse each month, this is intended for his support but, in his words, this is how he uses it:

'The small money I usually get from David & Anona Banks, we use to hold teaching seminars with different leaders in the mountains. Also, my own church youth group have managed to join me so

that we can make small wooden bridge up in the mountains to cut the distance some villagers have to walk to come down mountains. Also, we have provided a small water tank system to one community in need. I do usually have one big event one a year after saving the small money I receive that will bring a difference in the community. For now I am looking at another wooden bridge needing repair so that we can rehabilitate it. The local community is willing to join to help.’ A small amount of money can go a long way in the mountains and Alfonse is someone who commits all he has to his ministry.



The Bridge



The Water Tank

Dave's visit in April was to teach groups of pastors in various locations around the vicinity of Kasese District, also teaching students at the Western Uganda Baptist Theological College. Again, these are Alfonses thoughts regarding that visit:

‘Praise God for all what is God doing in our lives and mainly in the work we are doing in the mountains, it needs commitment and having faith. God is on our side, this is seen in the ten days when David Banks has been here moving around teaching different church leaders. All has been good and after teaching I started to have a lot of calls wanting to learn more on what we have taught, which has been amazing. It has been amazing in the way that the deacons and the elders of the churches have been the ones challenging the Pastors and Bishops (of the Pentecostal churches we are teaching). These Pastors and Bishops have never taken any theological course, so the ones who have been coming in our seminars are the ones who have gone and challenged their leaders and the leaders have taken step of wanting to know what we are teaching.’

We felt led to be teaching on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. This was tough for many of the church leaders because they had previously been taken down an incorrect path on this subject. During a Q & A time in the very first seminar we taught at, we were informed that the pastors in that area had been told not to allow the Holy Spirit into their churches as it would cause them problems! This is despite the fact that they are ‘pentecostal’ churches and pentecostalism is built on the person, work and gifts of the Spirit. Part of our response was to tell them *‘no Holy Spirit, no true church’*. And so it continued from seminar to seminar, and we are beginning to see the Pentecostal movement challenged in that area of Uganda.

Again, let Alfonse give an example of the wrong view the pastors had of the Holy Spirit: *‘To extend, one pastor had paid UGX 50,000 (about £10) to receive the Holy Spirit. Once he knew the truth about who the Holy Spirit is and how he could receive Him, he went back to the one who deceived him and asked for his money back. The amazing consequence is that the pastor who deceived him not only agreed to pay the money back, but also stood down from ministry until he had both paid it back and received the teaching for himself.’*

Church leaders are arriving at Alfonse's home and contacting his mobile to both repent and ask for him to visit their churches and teach the truth of scripture. God is working in His church and the church is starting to recognise it!

More from Alfonse: *'Another Pastor said "I never believed that the Holy Spirit will work that way we have been taught. When David said we are going to pray for the Holy Spirit to come, I saw him in my life. Thank you for coming". This also happened at the Bible college when one lady testified to me what happened in her life. Praise God.'*



Students at the Baptist College



In the Classroom

We taught on servanthood, and again challenged the perception of the church leaders. Let Alfonse explain: *'Servanthood has been another teaching that has challenged the leaders to lower themselves in service. Not everyone wants to servant but a good number of leaders want to be served. They think that Christian congregations are the one to be servants to the pastors - which is wrong - we need to follow the example of the one who called us, who is Jesus. By washing the feet of the leaders in the church we have given a very big challenge, and the believers have a lot to ask - which has already begun. We have given a good example to the leaders. God calls us as leaders to become servants to the people we are leading; if they see our servanthood they will follow the example of what we are doing. I have seen most of the church leaders are BOSSES even PRESIDENTS. In churches there is no difference between the church and the government offices. One bishop has said "I don't know even why I was called a bishop!" Which is not good for me to hear. The question to them is: 'who called you and who disciplined you?'* The same bishop said we should emphasize the Discipleship lesson at least to every Pastor, Elder and Deacon so that they can go teach the Christian in the churches. Once we understand discipleship we shall know what to do and the church shall stand on the good foundation.'

All this is a real challenge, not just to those leaders who have been challenged, but to all of us as we consider our attitudes towards church, leadership and how we are living our Christian lives.

This trip has been a real encouragement to us because we are seeing further signs of awareness by the church leaders as to the real truths of our faith. Their willingness to recognise where they have been in error, embrace the truth and ask for more training is such a blessing. Where we might have expected to experience confrontation, we have seen change. This is what gospel truth does when we allow ourselves to be exposed to it.

Previously, our stated vision has been to purchase a piece of land on which we can establish a Leadership Training School for the pastors. Following this visit, this vision has not only been confirmed to us, it has been shown to be the next necessary step.

Now, just a short update on what is happening at Zion Community School, Kakuba. You might remember that we had a very temporary wooden kitchen at the school which badly needed replacing. We're pleased to let you know that this has now been completed and we have one very happy school cook!



OUT with the old.....



.....and IN with the new!

You can see it is a great improvement! All part of our vision for excellence at the school.



New School Signs



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