



# Global Partnership Ministries

A ministry of Bethany Fellowship of Churches

April 2017

## Stories of God's Amazing Grace

I traveled to one of the most remote places I've ever been in Rwanda and actually Africa on February 5<sup>th</sup>. In fact, the road ended and we still had a way to go to arrive at the little village of Kagogo, buried deep in the beautiful mountains of eastern Rwanda. This is where I preached at a church plant only a few months old; the village's first evangelical church. Twenty-five-year-old Ishmael was a Muslim who received Christ 1 1/2 years ago because of the children's work we help with in Ntoma, Rwanda. He has helped plant this new church where dozens of Muslims have

come to faith in Christ.



On some of Ishmael's family's land, they just completed a small, simple building with mud walls, a dirt floor and a tin roof. The building was built by the new believers who gave out of their poverty and with funds given by the VBS children at Wildwood Baptist Church in East Moline, Illinois.

The church was full on the Sunday I preached with nearly 100 people attending. It was quite an honor being the first "white-man" to preach there. As I shared "What is the True Gospel," three young men and two women responded to the invitation and prayed to receive Jesus as their Savior. What a thrill! The angels were rejoicing in Heaven!

When I finished preaching, a young man sitting behind me on the platform stood to introduce himself and said, "I am a Muslim and used to work with Ishmael in the Mosque before Ishmael became a Christian." In front of the entire congregation, he said, "Someday I believe I will be joining Ishmael here at his church." Wow! Please pray this young man will soon come to know Jesus as his Savior.



## Teaching in Nigeria in May

I'll be departing for Nigeria May 4 to teach at the Nigeria FORUM, May 8-12. The FORUM is a two-year program which provides training for national evangelists and church leaders. There, I'll be teaching on how to organize an evangelistic festival as well as teaching biblical leadership principles from the book of Nehemiah.

The cost for the trip will be \$3,000. Currently, we have received 50% of these expenses. **Would you or your church consider helping with a financial gift towards this opportunity to train these Nigerian leaders?** Gifts large or small are greatly appreciated. Thank you!

## Bible Distribution to New Believers in Rwanda



Early this year, we were able to provide 429 Kinyarwanda Bibles to some of the new believers who had accepted Christ at the June *Festival of Hope* in Rwanda. We're grateful for ministry partners who provided the funds to make this possible.

These new believers held in their hands for the very first time their own copy of the Bible. The joy and gratitude expressed by them is beyond description.

Marakiya (right) was one of those who came to know Jesus as His Savior during the *Festival of Hope*. In January, he received one of the 429 Bibles. He was very excited and grateful to receive his own Bible so he can tell others about his Bible and Jesus.



Before coming to Christ, Marakiya was the village drunkard, but Jesus radically

transformed his life. He has changed so dramatically that many people are asking how they can also know Jesus. His wife and family have also become believers due to the change in his life. He is so happy and is now telling others of what Jesus did in his heart!

**Eleven come to Christ** - On Sunday, March 19, I had the great privilege of preaching at the Cocody AOG Church in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire which was packed with 1,500 people. The service was also live-streamed over the internet with hundreds more listening all around the world including Communist countries. Six people responded there to the invitation to receive Christ as their Savior and five people listening by the Internet also made decisions. It was an amazing morning. Praise the Lord!



## Honored as a Rwandan Dad!



It was a great honor to be asked by one of our Rwandan "sons" to stand in as his "dad" at his wedding on February 11. Jabo's biological father passed away when he was a teenager. As a Rwandan father, I was given the highest honor having been given the hat and staff during the Dowry Ceremony. It was held in the morning and followed by lunch. The wedding followed that afternoon finishing with an evening reception. An African wedding is an all day event! It was a beautiful wedding and a beautiful day. We congratulate Jabo and Assumpta on their marriage!





Cote d'Ivoire will be our focus for 2017 and 2018 as we partner with the Luis Palau Association. This year we're preparing for evangelistic festivals in the cities of Yamoussoukro with Andrew Palau and San Pedro with four partner evangelists in October and November. In 2018, we will be focusing on Abidjan, a city of six million people, and four additional cities with our partner evangelists.



San Pedro Pastors

During our recent trip to Cote d'Ivoire in March, we had great meetings with pastors and church leaders in both cities as well as meetings with the Mayor and the Prefect in Yamoussoukro who were both very receptive to the festival.



Meeting with Mayor

The pastors are very excited about what God is going to do in the coming months. They are praying for a great harvest of souls!

Please pray for Cote d'Ivoire which has experienced much suffering over the past several years due to civil war and civil uprisings.



Yamoussoukro Pastors

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## **New School office building completed**

We're thrilled that funds have been received to complete the new school office building in Ntoma, Rwanda. For now, this building will provide space for the older girls new sewing classes. This will help them learn a trade to pay for



their school fees and to make a living once they graduate from secondary school. Several sewing machines were purchased through funds given by the kids at Wildwood Baptist Church VBS and others.

The office space and the sewing machines are a great blessing to the work in Ntoma. Our next goal is to see another classroom building constructed to handle the expanding number children wanting to attend school which will include a number of Muslim children.

## Cornerstone laid for the Rusumo AIC Church in Rwanda



On February 8, I had the privilege of visiting the Rusumo AIC Church in Southeastern Rwanda near the Tanzania border. Here I will lay the cornerstone for a new church building. The church was planted in 2004 and has met in the rundown (or shabby) village community hall which has been a detriment to church growth. A church building is needed badly!

People have started making the mud blocks for the construction of the wall and

we're trusting the Lord to provide funds to help bring another church building to completion. This will be the fourth church in which we've provided financial assistance to the local believers. We praise the Lord for the growth of the Church throughout Rwanda.

There are at least eight additional churches in need of construction. We would love to help with the construction as the Lord provides the funds. Approximately \$120,000 is needed to help begin and/or finish buildings for these eight churches. Many are coming to faith in Christ continually and new churches are being planted regularly. There is great need for the building of churches.

**Personal Note:** It's been an amazing year already and we have eight months to go. There are so many ministry opportunities before us yet this year: The *Love Cote d'Ivoire Festival*; an invitation to teach and encourage pastors in Burundi, Rwanda and possibly Kenya; and preparations for a festival in Rwanda.

Of course, all of this takes funding. We're trusting the Lord to provide the means to match the opportunities He has opened for us. We've had a couple churches and some individuals who have had to cut back on their support in recent months.

Would you or your church consider giving on a regular basis to help us continue the work God has called us to?

We're grateful for each one who supports our ministry with prayer and donations. For your convenience, secure online giving is available by going to our website – [www.globalpartnershipministries.org](http://www.globalpartnershipministries.org). You can choose to give one-time or set-up automatic giving through your bank account or credit card. Of course you may send a check directly to us.

Thank you for your prayers and partnership in the Gospel,

**Gary**

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