

D MASCUS

NEWSLINE 2/3.09

How then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

Romans
10:14-15

Rocking and Rolling around in Rwanda.

There's good reason for Rwanda being known as the land of a thousand hills. Everywhere you look there are hills and travelling around meant going up and down steep 'roads'. In reality the 'roads' are dirt tracks strewn with potholes and rocks and on several occasions the vehicles being used struggled to cope. Bouncing around in the back of a truck meant a few bruises and sore bottoms.

But all the DT Team survived

and all of the fourteen poorest parishes were visited during our stay. Eight of these parishes are being helped through our SAP programme. Having seen the needs and heard of the huge difference our support makes, we would dearly like to help the other six parishes who are struggling to make ends meet. If you would like to help meet this need, then please contact us for more details about the SAP programme.

(Continued on page 3)

Below: Pastors helped by our SAP programme pictured with Bishop Rwaje (rhs) and Canon Pheneas (lhs) and Andy (white face!)



Dear Friends,

One of the lasting memories from our time in Rwanda is the enthusiastic praise and worship that took place in each of the meetings we went to. Whether it was a huge thanksgiving service in Byumba cathedral or a small congregation of God's people in some remote village, the desire to worship the Lord with body and soul was real.

Smiling faces, stamping feet, clapping hands, swaying arms, whoops of delight and vocal harmonies were interspersed with high jumps of praise and a cloud of dust. It didn't matter how old you were, how large you were or how good you were, everyone was free to join in. Some would run and join in the dancing for a bit before retreating back to their seats. Young children were mixing it with teenagers and grannies. Inevitably we were encouraged to join in even if our arms and legs were somewhat jerky compared to theirs. What mattered was the joy in our hearts and our love for Jesus.

And that's the point. For all the poverty and struggles for Christians in Rwanda, there was a simple yet real joy and delight in being God's people so evident in these meetings. We have a lot to learn from them.

Your friend,



News Updates:

Congratulations go to **David and Mary Jarratt** who have recently celebrated their ruby wedding anniversary! A number of us from DT joined with others at Upton-upon-Severn Baptist church to give thanks for God's goodness to them and through them.. We are so grateful for their help in compiling our Prayer Diary. Ω

Andy and Gavin Rowden (Trustee) had a good day with the fellowship at **New Farm Chapel in Alresford, Hants** in early August. We met with the church leaders to discuss ways in which we might work together to reach out into the local community. Please pray that the Lord would guide us all as to the way forward. We are due to go back there in the autumn. Ω

It was good to revisit **Acocks Green Baptist** church recently and see all that the Lord has been doing there. Whilst some changes have taken place, there have also been some real encouragements. One of these has been the number of men who have joined the fellowship in the last few months and are beginning to get involved in different ways. The weekly coffee shop provides a place for people from the community to drop in and experience the love of Christ through practical care and support. Andy is going back there in the autumn. Ω



Helpful abbreviations: DT = Damascus Trust; CRC = Christian Renewal Church; PTSM = Plenty To Share Ministries; SAP = Support A Pastor; CRBS = Christian Renewal Bible School; SAC = Support A Child; EDoB = Episcopalian Diocese of Byumba; ITM = International Teaching Ministries

(Continued from page 1)

A two-day conference for all the pastors in the diocese went very well and was much appreciated. Andy gave teaching from the book of Nehemiah looking at seven principles of leadership. We had times of discussion and feedback as well as singing and dancing. It was a privilege to share with them.

Far right: Pastors from the diocese of Byumba who attended the two-day teaching conference.

Visiting the different parishes gave us a helpful insight into the life of the local Church and the work of pastors. There may be more than one thousand registered Christians in each parish but only a few hundred who are truly committed. Most parishes have between six and eight congregations, each of which is looked after by a Catechist. These lay workers have received only basic training so Bible teaching and pastoral care can be very limited. It puts a heavy burden on the pastors to provide further training and oversight. As a consequence of the genocide there are few older men in most parishes, yet the Mother's Union is very strong and active and the Church of Jesus continues to grow.



Right: DT Team with Canon Pheneas. L to R: Mark, Hazel, Chris, Pheneas (!) Andy, Zoe, Stephanie and Jill.

D MASCUS
OVERSEAS



One big need is for good Bible teaching material in the Kirirwanda language and Meg Guillebaud ('retired' CMS missionary) is doing her best to write and translate such material.

As well as running the teaching conference and visiting parishes we also saw various projects and developments that are run by Christians. The Church is playing a leading role in bringing healing to those so deeply affected by the war through self-help and counselling programmes.

It was good to meet Bishop Rwaje and Canon Pheneas who oversee the SAP programme and are important for developing our partnership there. For the last few days of our trip, we travelled down to the diocese of Shyogwe to see something of what they are doing there. As expected there are possibilities of a partnership developing there as well! We need the Lord's wisdom to know what areas we should focus our efforts on.

Jill Stevens shares something of her time in Rwanda.

My interest in visiting Rwanda began after hearing about our former vicar's first visit and the impact that it had had on him. Our church in Dorridge became involved in some fund raising projects and further visits were arranged but although I wanted to be involved things didn't work out for me to go.



When I heard about the SAP programme run by Damascus Trust, I felt that this was something I would like to support and when another trip was being planned I decided that the time was right for me to go.

I was quite apprehensive. My main concern was what role I would have within the team. I'm also prone to migraines and stomach upsets and was a bit worried that I might be ill and a nuisance. My daughter was convinced that I would not be able to cope with 'dodgy toilets'. I prayed quite a bit about the

health issues and I know that my home group were also praying about the trip. I really felt that God looked after us; so many things fell into place.

For me the itinerary worked out well. It was good to be able to visit the Genocide Museum in Kigali on our first day before moving up to Byumba. We then spent a couple of days learning about the work of the Diocesan Centre as well as the Hannah Ministries (orphans and child-led families) which was interesting and gave us a lot of background information before we started the Parish visits.

Obviously the highlight for me was being able to meet Pastor Kezia (supported through the SAP programme) and see her home and parish. I had some basic information about her and a photo, but meeting her was very special.

Rwanda is a beautiful country but the roads are, in Meg Guillebaud's words 'truly terrible' especially for someone who is not keen on heights. Things didn't always go to plan, such as



Far left: Jill has a go at doing what Rwandan women do so well - without a hat!

Left: Mark, Stephanie and Zoe with one of the child-led families supported by the Hannah Project. The mum holding her baby is 13 yrs and her sister is 11 yrs.

Right:
Pastor Jean-
de-Dieu
(front middle,
who is
waiting to be
included in
the SAP
programme)
with his
Catechists



car breakdowns, but God did watch over us and I think the problems made us closer as a team and perhaps taught us to trust more and worry less.

Some of the things I have learned and want to remember from the trip are; i) to pray more - even about things that seem relatively unimportant in the general scheme of things. Lots of my prayers were answered on this trip. ii) to value my Bible more; I take it for granted and don't spend enough time reading it. We are so privileged to have it freely available. iii) to be more patient and welcoming; one thing I noticed back home is that everything is rushed and people can be impatient and disagreeable over things that aren't really that important. In Rwanda everyone we met was so welcoming and hospitable. They set an example for us to follow.

Chris Sewell, a secondary school teacher, reflects on his time in Rwanda.

I have experienced nothing of such an intense and emotional

nature within a space of two weeks in the whole of my life. The city of Kigali, with the dust, hustle, bustle and poverty gave an image and reality to what I have read and attempted to portray for pupils over many years. Barefoot children, bicycle taxis, no electricity, the struggle for survival, lack of water and the encounter with grinding poverty. How can you put into words this sort of experience? Yet in all of this we discovered something special.

There was a warmth of fellowship, a genuine openness and welcome into homes, churches and schools. We shared food, worship and conversations. There are unending difficulties and problems, most of which we as individuals will never overcome but it was important for us to



discover and share in these first hand. Most significant of all, however, was to witness the optimism and faith that is clearly evident amongst Christians in the Diocese of Byumba as we travelled around the different parishes.

Far right:
Some school
children
proudly
show Chris
and his wife
Hazel, their
work books.



Left:
The outside
and inside
of a typical
village
church
building.

Zoe Paine stayed on in Rwanda for an extra two weeks.

Whilst the rest of the team flew back to England, Meg and I drove down to the south west of the country to Kumbya which is a conference run mainly for western missionaries and their families who have moved to and are now living and working in east Africa. This third week in Rwanda was lovely as it was very different from what I had already been doing in the country. The families shared with us how and when they had arrived in Africa. It was great to hear about how God has helped them and provided for them and

their families, and also some of the challenges they face as missionaries.

We were staying in cabins at the Kumbya site, which is set on a peninsula jutting out into Lake Kivu. It was a beautiful setting and a perfect place for the missionaries to bring their young children to enjoy exploring nature, play in the lake and interact with other children like themselves, to learn about God and how we can know him for ourselves. I helped with the younger children in 'Vacation Bible School' which was for 4-10 year olds. The week was full of chasing small children (in a nice

To respond in any way you can either go to the 'Contact Us' page on our web-

I enclose a gift of £ _____ towards the work of The Damascus Trust to be used
 In India In Romania In Rwanda In the UK Wherever it is needed most. (please make cheques payable to **Damascus Trust**)
 I would like my gift to benefit from Gift Aid. Please send me the necessary forms.

Please send me further details about:

- Bible teaching series
- Support A Child
- Keep It Simple (Outreach)
- Support A Pastor

Teaching CDs:

- Please send me (____) set/s of Heaven & Hell.
- Please send me (____) set/s of Called to be Holy.
- Please send me (____) set/s of When Jesus Returns.
- Please send me (____) set/s of The Growing Church

(all CDs cost £16 a set including teaching notes. Please enclose cheques with orders payable to 'Damascus Trust')

Far right:
A local water
depot.
Plastic
containers
are filled with
water and
then sold on
around the
villages.

way), singing silly songs with actions, making campfires and cooking sausages on sticks,. We also enjoyed scavenger hunts, sandcastle competitions, cliff jumps!, splashing around in the lake, making pancakes, and most importantly, sharing with each other times of praise to the LORD, exploring the Bible and coming away from Kumbya having experienced something more that will strengthen our relationship with God and help us in our next stage in life.



plans I had made for that week were now changed as everyone in the church community was needed to help with preparations for the funeral on Thursday. The mother had died on the Saturday and when we visited the family on Monday, they were already celebrating the life of this amazing woman with friends. I found this very touching, for she loved the LORD and had a big influence on the lives of the people she met.

Right:
Some of the
widows from
the self-help
groups run
by the
diocese.



We returned to Byumba to hear the sad news that the Bishop's mother had died. The

We heard all about her life at the funeral, which took place in the cathedral and lasted for 4 hours! We then went to watch

(Continued on page 8)

ite; send an email; phone our office or use the form below.

Booklets: Please send me a free copy of :
either Think & Respond or Promises of Revelation or Questions Jesus Asked

To RECEIVE NEWS-LINE & PRAYER DIARY BY EMAIL - please email us at info@damascustrust.org

To help us keep our records up to date and to save administrative costs, please let us know if you no longer want to receive 'News-Line' and / or the 'Prayer Diary'

Surname (Rev/Mr/Mrs/Miss): _____ First name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____ Email: _____

Post to: The Damascus Trust, 51 Clockhouse Way, Braintree, Essex. CM7 3RD

the grave being dug and prepared for another hour or so, before going to the Bishop's house for food.

The funeral, was full of singing and dancing, celebrating this lady's life and praising God for the assurance we can have in life, with Him, after death. It was wonderful to be at there and hear some of her family say what a great mother, grandmother and great-grandmother she was!

The cathedral was packed, and because it was a member of the Bishop's family who had died, all the pastors from the diocese were there, as well as seven of the other Rwandan bishops. It was lovely to see many of the local people help dig and prepare the grave. While this was happening the family and friends sang worship songs and it was a beautiful occasion to be a part of. Ω



Baptisms at PTSM.

A new baptismal tank has been built on the PTSM campus.

Vijaya Raju tells us that this is a real blessing and makes it much easier for new believers to be baptised. Two men and three women were the first to be baptised in this open-air tank.



Left: One of the recent baptisms taking place on the campus at PTSM.

A DT team of four people will be going out at the end of October, to spend twelve days with PTSM. The aim of the visit is to be of practical help and plans include adding an extra water storage tank; kitting out the Omni Van to run health clinics and educational programmes; training the wives of pastors to teach basic health care and educational programme; assess and provide for the needs of the PTSM Children's Home. The team will also visit the villages of the pastors supported through our SAP programme and also help with activities with the adopted children. Of course there will also be plenty of evening meetings to enjoy!

Far left: Canon Pheneas with Pastor Meg (Guillebaud)

Please pray for the team of Robin & Hilary Swan, Pete and Heather Ellis as they prepare for their time in India. Ω

Lamps for Pastors

Recently we bought seven gas lights for use by pastors working with **CRC**. Many evening meetings are held in villages where there is little or no electricity so a gas light is very useful. We also bought a bike for one of the pastors who has recently been included in our SAP programme. Whilst these may seem relatively small things, they make a big difference to the work and ministry of the pastors.

In a recent report to us Charly Tom says; *'The work of Mercy Mission is going well. The school is re-opened with number of new students joined and teachers are appointed. The Hospital, Bible College and Orphanage are all doing well. The Lord blessed me to baptize 17 people on last Saturday. The churches in villages are growing daily by His grace. Our new Mission stations in the State of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa are growing in strength and Spirit.'*

Do pray for the Church in Orissa as they recover from a long period of persecution. Whilst things are better than they were, there are still areas where active persecution is taking place. Do pray also for Charly Tom who spends a lot of time travelling to other countries each year to maintain support for this growing work. This year 15 students graduated from the CRBS and some of these will become

pastors and evangelists with CRC. Please pray for them as they take up their ministry roles. Ω

News Updates:

Andy enjoyed another visit to the **Steps In Faith** group who meet in Braintree. For seven weeks Andy led studies on The Kingdom of God & Heaven. Their enthusiasm for studying God's Word is undiminished. Group leader Margaret wrote: *'As always when you visit us in Steps in Faith you leave us both refreshed and challenged and these past weeks considering the Kingdom of God have been no exception. Thank you so much for your time with us.'* Ω

We've recently heard that a plot of land has been bought in **Oradea, Romania** to build a half-way home for ex-prisoners. Now all they need are the bricks! Meanwhile the **Prison Ministry Team** continues to visit the prison on a regular basis and we have had a couple of testimonies from Christian prisoners sent through to us. We are still hoping to develop some sort of link between the Church in Oradea prison and the Church at Lowdham Grange. Things take time and we need to have patience but please pray that we can help this prison ministry develop in Oradea. We are hoping to go to Romania again before the end of the year. Ω

Bible School - in prison.

Helena Knight, Events Coordinator for the Chaplaincy Team at Lowdham Grange Prison, reports on the 2009 Bible School led by Andy.

‘Despite the potentially unattainable and ecclesiastical title ‘Called to be Holy’, seventeen prisoners gathered for the start of the Bible School. Tables and chairs were arranged as if ready for a college lecture. There was an air of anticipation.

This was the start of almost three days together where the men would listen to teaching from the Bible and have opportunity to discuss and ask questions. Some prisoners are very good at asking questions but not always so good at waiting for the answer or asking questions pertaining to the subject being taught!

The students were, as usual, a mix of backgrounds and understanding of the Christian faith. For example there were those from the travelling community as well as others highly educated. Some had their roots in Jamaica, others in London. Everyone however, was involved in the church at Lowdham Grange and most of them wanted to learn.

By the end of the school we

had a core group of twelve prisoners who had attended the entire time. They were full to the brim with the Word, justified and sanctified! This is what one person said:

‘I found the course very interesting and enlightening; it gave me a deeper insight into the true nature of God and also who we are in Christ. I would recommend this teaching to anybody who would like to gain a clearer understanding of who God is and how we are called to live a righteous and holy life in Christ’.

And yet another said:
‘The lessons have truly exposed to me and many of us here the unique nature and character of God. I have learnt that God does not see my own righteousness as we all have fallen short of the glory of God, but rather, he sees the righteousness of Christ Jesus in us’.

We ended our time together with a celebration service and an act of re-commitment to following Jesus, knowing more of what it means to be ‘Called to be Holy’.
Ω



Left:
The main
reception
and entrance
to HMP
Lowdham
Grange

Jarratt's Journal

In the last News Line we were asking prayer for guidance about the future and financial provision. Well, God has been faithful in responding to those prayers, and many others, during this final term at All Nations. This term's studies included a dissertation (investigating the motives of George Borrow, a 19th century Bible-distributing missionary to Spain), studies in New Testament theology and a challenging course on church planting. As college ends, it is both sad and uplifting to say goodbye to friends as they head into ministry, some in the UK and others to all corners of the globe.

Emma continues to work with the Braintree Street Pastors, and will be co-ordinating youth work at Christ Church until the end of July. Jon will now catch up with a lot of neglected communication, and tackle those D.I.Y. jobs that are calling out for attention. Joseph is now a proper toddler or, more accurately, he's a fearless adventurer who wants to do it himself, only needing a hand for the really big stuff like scaling flights of stairs. His growing vocabulary is based on a baby form of Spanglish (Jon often speaks to him in Spanish), so it's not 'hi', 'hello' or 'hola', but something like 'hilloya'?!



The next steps...

We are certain that God has called and given us the opportunity to serve in Spain, and we now need some time and space to assimilate what has been learnt over the past two years. Our next step will be to spend about three months, from September, in a Christian retreat centre in the mountains near Madrid. At Cascadas ('Waterfalls') we will help with running of the centre and Emma will do some Spanish language training. We will be able to spend proper time together as a family, in order to become stronger and closer as we move towards mission. This period will also give opportunity for talking with Fellowship of the King in southern Spain about the detail of how we will serve with them, deciding whether a mission agency is necessary and, if so, which one to apply to. Before any of this, we'll probably need to clear and let out the house in Braintree (a welcome chance to de-clutter!).

We've had clear reminders of some fundamental truths lately, but most important is this: God is longing that all would hear about salvation through Jesus, and he has chosen to make that happen through his church; people like us, people like you!

Thank you for your prayers

Jon, Emma and Joseph

Think about it - respond to it

But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them.

Josh 2:4

First of all the Lord chooses unlikely people to achieve his purposes. It seems that 'the woman named Rahab' ran some kind of inn, so a fairly natural place for the spies to stay. But it may also have served as a brothel, hence the use of the word 'prostitute' to describe Rahab. Yet her willingness to help in a time of need changed the course of her life as well as that of the Israelites. Rahab is now known for her faith (Heb 11), more than for her business. She was adopted as a Jew and became the mother of Boaz and secured her place in the history of God's people.

Then it was a simple but deliberate act. The spies didn't hide themselves. We read that Rahab had taken them up onto the roof and hidden them. It wasn't an accident or by chance but a deliberate act on Rahab's part. Drying stalks of flax was an everyday sight and it became an ideal way to conceal the two men. In that single action, Rahab declared which side she was on. Under pressure and with little

time to spare she made her choice. It's the same for us. Everyday life gives us many opportunities to show whose side we are on. At work, in the home, out with friends, under pressure, taken by surprise. It's then when the fruit of the Spirit is truly manifest. Living as a disciple of Christ means a deliberate choice on our part, each and every day.

Lastly, faith brought deliverance and salvation. The scarlet rope that provided escape for the spies became the sign of salvation for Rahab and all in her house. Just as the spies had trusted Rahab to save them, now Rahab's faith in their promise was hanging from the window for all to see and that included the Lord. Faith in what Christ did on the cross may seem daft to some but brings deliverance and salvation for all who trust in him.

If the Lord looks beyond the appearance and reputation and sees the heart of a person, then so should we. And if the Lord can use Rahab for his glory, then he can use you and me, whatever our reputation might be. Be available, be willing today. Ω

Damascus Trust was established in 1990 to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people everywhere. It aims to enthuse local Christians in their love for Jesus, enable the local Church to reach out into the community and seeks to establish evangelism as an ongoing aspect of Church life. As a charitable trust, the Damascus Trust relies on gifts and donations. All gifts from those paying tax can benefit the Trust by using Gift Aid for both one-off or regular donations. For more information, please request the leaflet 'Four Ways to Give'.

Bank details:
Lloyds/TSB
(Leamington Spa) Sort
Code: 30-94-
93 Acc.
number:
7425352

THE DAMASCUS TRUST
51 CLOCKHOUSE WAY
BRAINTREE ESSEX CM7 3RD

T/F +44 (0) 1376 342 529
E INFO@DAMASCUSTRUST.ORG
W WWW.DAMASCUSTRUST.ORG

DIRECTOR
ANDY PAINE

THE DAMASCUS TRUST
IS A REGISTERED CHARITY
NUMBER 1013236

