

## African Christian Fellowship (ACF), East Region Uganda 2013 Summer Missions' Trip Report

The missions' team travelled to Uganda on July 26 and returned on August 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. The team was more diversified than in recent years and included 35 brethren of which eleven are from ACF chapters in the United States and a sister from Gaithersburg Church of the Nazarene in Maryland, USA. We were also privileged to have a nurse from Nigeria in the team. Three young adults from the United States and twelve young adults from ACF-Kampala were part of the team and four members of the team were going on missions' trip with ACF for the first time.

The first batch of the missions' team arrived in Kampala on Friday July 26 while the rest of the team arrived on Saturday July 27. We visited the two ACF program sites in Kumi district in the northeastern part of Uganda and Fort Portal in the western part of the country. The program schedule was the same in both sites. We travelled to Kumi district the first week starting from Sunday July 28. The journey took about 9 hours because of poor road condition for a journey that usually takes 6 hours. We carried out all our activities and programs in Akide village for the entire week, and the team drove for about 45



minutes from their hotel at the district center every morning to the village and back in the evening to the hotel. We returned to Kampala on Friday August 2<sup>nd</sup> after the program in Kumi and travelled to Fort Portal on Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup> for the second week of the missions' trip. The journey took about 5 hours and was less stressful because the road condition was good. During the one week we were in Fort Portal, we carried out our program in two places, Kasamba village and Kigarama, the ACF medical clinic site.

The missions' team experienced God's move and power during the two weeks. The theme for the team members this year was "A vessel unto honor", and our morning and night devotions were filled with God's presence with many wet eyes as the team member's hearts were broken and melted through various scriptural passages we shared together. A team member received news that her grand mother was rushed to the hospital with partial stroke and after we prayed, we got the news that his grand mother returned to her farm work before the end of the missions' trip. One of the nights in the hotel a member of the team was attacked by the powers of witchcraft but was delivered after the team members prayed for her. It was a transforming trip for every member of the team.

## **Pastors and Church Leaders Seminar/Training**

During the first two days of the missions' trip, the team organized a seminar for Pastors and church leaders dealing with several topics based on the theme "A church without spot or wrinkle". The topics treated on the first day include, "The state of the church", "A powerless church" and "An apostolic church". The topics were respectively handled by Pastor George of the Church of Living God in Fort Portal, Raymond Mbawuike, and Ifeoma Aroh. The two topics treated on the second day are "A healthy family environment-Foundation for a healthy church" and "A witnessing church-Soul winning and discipleship". The topics were respectively handled by Festus Ukwuani and Emmanuel Ezeonu.



Over 60 Pastors and church leaders attended the seminar in Kasamba village in Fort Portal and the team made presentations on the five topics on the schedule. However because of the remote location of Akide village in Kumi, many pastors and church leaders could not attend, and the program was adjusted to focus on salvation message and 8 of the people in attendance gave their lives to Christ.

The seminar in Kasamba village was very successful and at the end of each presentation the audience asked insightful questions. We had a breakout session for men and women after the presentation on the family. The breakout group discussion revealed some challenges the church is facing in that area including the problem of divorce. One man who is a leader in a church had married and separated from two women and is living with the third one. The audience expressed satisfaction for hearing people from outside teaching the authentic word of God and desired to have more teachings organized for them in the future.

## **Youths and Young Adults Seminar**

This is our first pre-planned youth and young adult program in recent years during our missions outreach in Uganda beyond the programs organized for the children we sponsor in schools through our Child Sponsorship Program. In Akeda village, on July 29 the first day of the missions' trip, after our meeting with the pastors took off, our youths gathered for their own fellowship. We took off with 20 youths, but the number kept fluctuating because people kept joining while others left the group. We went straight into the word, dealing with the theme "Remember your Creator in the Days of your Youth". We discussed why it is good counsel, and expected of God that we serve Him while we are still young. We narrowed it down to the salvation message and made an alter call. Five (5) people gave their lives to Christ. When one believer in our midst requested for a bible, we realized that of all the youths that gathered, only

one had a New Testament bible. We were able to give bible to some who are able to read from the few bible our team members came with to the missions' field.

By the second day on July 30 in Akeda village, we had a larger crowd. Some came because they wanted to see if we were giving out bibles. On this day we discussed "Youth and Relationships", focusing on keeping pure, and drawing from the previous day's topic. If we are to serve God as youths, we have to keep our hearts and relationships pure. During



the alter call, seven people gave their lives to Christ. When the list was passed around more than seven people put down their names; some because they were hoping to get bibles. All the bibles we had were given out, but it was not enough to go around.

In Kasamba village during the second week of our missions work in Fort Portal area, we had nineteen youths the first day, August 5, and we dealt with the same topic as the first day in Akeda. An alter call was made at the end of the discussion, but no one gave their lives to Christ. It was obvious that a seed was sown, and we believe God to make it grow, blossom and bear fruit.

On the second day August 6, we started out with Pastor Makuma discussing the place of the Youth in the Church. He revealed that God has always used young people all through history, and this generation is no exception. A question and answer session ensued, with most of the questions bothering on why it is difficult for young people to follow Christ.

We followed this session with a panel discussion on "Youth and Relationships" with Sis. Ifeoma Aroh, Sis. Rose Grace Makuma and Ogochukwu Okaro. This session was practical and down to earth. The youths enjoyed it very much and asked many questions which were addressed. The third session dealing with career choices followed. Chichi Okonkwo, Ndubisi Okeke, and Jessica Chibueze shared how God guided them through their career choices up until this day. We now opened it up for the youths to discuss what they want to do with their lives. This was an interesting session, but most interesting was a young woman who started crying in the midst of sharing. She did not finish because she could not hold back the tears. It turned out that she lost her mother three years ago and had not gone back to school since then, because there was no one else to put her through school. We have many of such cases and will appreciate volunteers to sign up to sponsor children in primary, secondary, and the university. We have stopped recruiting children into our child sponsorship program because of lack of sponsors.

Overall, our time was fruitful in both locations. Young people turned to Christ, and the ones already following Christ were strengthened. There remains grave need for prayers, for the young

converts, and for God to lift these villages up from their state of poverty and ignorance of the word and ways of God.

## **Children's Programs**

Our children's program this year was better planned than in previous years as more time and thought were dedicated to planning the activities organized for the children. The theme for our children's program this year was "A new generation of Africans". The young adults who travelled with the team from the USA, Chi Chi Okonkwo and Jessica Chibueze led the children's program with the young adults from ACF-Uganda Kampala team, with support and oversight from other adult team members including Grace Owunwanne, Kimberly Spillers, Dorothy Egbuocha, Sis Lydia Tabi, and Ifeoma Aroh. We had two segments of children's program in Akeda village, one on the first two days and another during the last two days at our medical outreach. We had only one segment of children's program in Kasamba village with children at a primary school in the village during the Pastor's and church leader's seminar. The school allowed us three hours each day to minister to the children.

### **a. Special sessions during the Pastors and church leaders seminars**

In both Akide and Kasamba village, ministry tools were used to engage the children involved. This year, puppets were used to tell bible stories to the children in their languages. All of the children enjoyed seeing the colorful puppets and heard the story of salvation, creation, and Noah among others. In both villages, we shared the gospel with the children and almost 200 children gave their lives to Christ! It was such a joy to see how eager many of them were to know God personally. We also played many games with the children including games with the puppets. This year's children's program was quite successful and God answered all of our prayed concerning the children's ministry.



### **b. Bathing of the kids at the medical missions**

This is the second year that Jessica Chibueze is organizing this program with the support of our team members. Many of the kids attended our missions outreach very

dirty and with torn cloths. Some are selected from those who attend the medical outreach. They are given special bath and dressed with new clothes and shoes. You will not believe they are the same children because of how they appear after the makeover. This program has had a great impact beyond expectation as many of the children have been provided motherly care and love through this program. Many of the mothers have provided gifts to Jessica and the team in appreciation of making their children look special. This year, there was another dimension to the impact of this program as someone in the community vowed to follow the example set by this program to promote the importance of simple hygiene in the community by encouraging parents to bath their children on regular bases. Jessica with the team was able to give bath to 60 children this year.



### **Gospel Outreach and Open Air Crusades**

The open air crusades were held on the evenings of our Monday and Tuesday program in Akide and Kasamba villages. We hold our open air crusades in remote villages that have not been reached with the gospel and Akide and Kasamba village meet those criteria. Akide village is a desolate remote area with no Pentecostal or Evangelical church in the village. Kasamba village is a sparsely populated tea plantation that has not been reached with the gospel. The one Pentecostal Assemblies of God church in the area is struggling to survive.

Holding an open air crusade in Uganda during July and August is a risky business because this is their rainy season. However, this year before our arrival the problem was not too much rain, but lack of rain. It had not rained in Kumi area for a long time, but it started raining after we arrived in Akide village. The Local Council chairman when he came to welcome the team was happy and said the missions' team brought them rain and prayed for God to bless the team. On the first evening of our first crusade, after intensive praise worship in preparation for the speaker to come and preach, it began to rain. The team was not happy it rained as we were not able to conclude the crusade that night. During our night devotion God spoke through some members of the team confirming that God allowed the rain because the people needed it since it has not rained for a



long time. In the morning the coordinator of our program in Kumi came during our morning devotion in the hotel to inform us that God revealed to him in the night as he was asking why it has to rain that He baptized the team through the rain with the Holy Spirit for the work we came to do. As a confirmation that God intentionally allowed the rain, we did not have problem with rain until we concluded our program in Kumi for the remaining part of the program. It threatened to rain during one of the days. Dark clouds appeared over the sky with thunder and lightning, but God drove the cloud away and our program continued uninterrupted.

We did not have any problem with rain during our program in Kasamba village in Fort Porto and the worship sessions at both sites during the crusade were filled with the power of God. God spoke severally through inner witness of the Holy Spirit that He has sent us to possess the two villages for Him. Worthy of note is the fact that on the first day in Akide village, rain did not allow us to make alter call and on the first day in Kasamba village no one came to answer the alter call. However, on the second day in both sites, there was spiritual explosion as twelve (12) people gave their lives to Christ in Kasamba village including teachers from the primary school we had our children's program. In Akide village 107 people gave their lives to Christ during the crusade and pastors and youths seminars.

### **Meeting with ACF Sponsored Children, Economic Empowerment and the Role of Graduates of ACF Child Sponsorship Program**

We did not hold a separate full day program with our sponsored children like in previous years because the schools were still in session. We made arrangement with schools to pick our children briefly from schools in Kumi and met with them in a nearby place on the road on our way to Akide village on the second day. We had to visit the students in their schools on the third day in the Fort Portal site to talk with them and give them their gifts. The children were given clothes,

shoes and new blankets and were also provided with spiritual, psychological and career guidance during the short meeting and visits at the schools.

Four of ACF sponsored children who are engaged in some economic activities were provided with bicycles to help them with movement and sale of the products they are marketing. A fifth bicycle was given to the ACF-Uganda Kumi Program Implementation Committee (PIC) to help with administration and monitoring of the ACF program in Kumi district.



One significant development was the involvement of the children who graduated from ACF Child Sponsorship program in this year's missions' trip. In the past, we lacked interpreters during the presentations and counseling sessions at the medical outreaches. However, the graduates were mobilized by our Program Coordinators to serve as interpreters during the missions' trip. One of our children who is graduating from medical school also helped to see patients during our medical outreach in Akide village. God is using ACF to raise a new army of the cross in Uganda that can change the future of the country.

### **Medical Outreaches and Medical Clinics**

We held our medical outreaches during the last two days of our program in Kumi and Fort Portal. The medical outreach in Kumi was held in Akide village, the same venue for other programs. However, the medical outreach in Fort Portal was held at the ACF clinic site in Kigarama instead of Kasamba village the site for the Pastors and church leader's seminar and open air crusade. The turnout was huge like in previous years and with the help of five doctors and eight nurses respectively in both sites, we were able to provide medical services to about 1,300 people during the two days of medical outreach in both sites.

The ACF medical clinic in Kigarama, Fort Portal is partially equipped with a few items left for the clinic to take off in October this year (2013). It was remarkable watching the doctors and

nurses consult with the equipment currently in place including the examination beds. It looked like working in real hospital environment.



The survey of the 1.892 hectares of land for the construction of the second ACF clinic in Kumi has been concluded and we have paid for the title and given a lease certificate. The community doubled the original portion of the land last year to the current size to help us use a portion for farming to raise funds to sustain our program in Uganda. In addition to paying 80 percent of the cost for surveying the land, the community has also promised to contribute 5,000 bricks towards the construction of the clinic.

### **Counseling at the Medical Missions**

Counseling during our medical outreaches is very comprehensive and provide us the opportunity to pray for those who are sick and lead them to Christ after they have seen the doctor and before they receive their medicine. Our counseling team included Emmanuel Ezeonu, Cyril Umeizu, Ogochukwu Okaro, Kimberly Spillers, Lydia Tabi, Raymond Mbawuike, and Grace Owunwanne. In Akide village, 77 people gave their lives to Christ through our counseling sessions at the medical outreach.



The impact of our medical and counseling program is illustrated by these testimonies from two people who attended the program.

*The first patient testified “I had a bladder problem but after taking drugs and getting a prayer from ACF visitors, I am now okay. I do not feel pain anymore”.*

*Another patient also said “I had a back ache since 2011. The back ache would not allow me to bend. I treated it for two years and it could not get any better. But after getting drugs and prayers from ACF-Mission team, my husband encouraged me to take the drugs and complete the dose. It is amazing my back is now okay, it has allowed me to do my routine duties normally.”*

### **New Converts Meeting**

We held a new converts meeting on Friday morning, the last day of our program in Kumi and Fort Portal. We started the new convert class during our missions’ trip last year. In Akide village, 64 people attended the new converts meeting, while 40 people attended the new converts meeting in Kasamba village. The number in Kasamba village was impressive given that only 12 people physically stepped out to give their lives to Christ during the pastor’s seminar and crusade.

Our program coordinators in Kumi reported that 47 new converts are regularly attending the discipleship and follow up classes in Akide village on Saturday every week and among them are three primary school teachers, one nurse and one clan leader. Also in Kasamba village 20 of the 40 who turned up for the new converts meeting are regularly attending the follow up and discipleship class. They hold their classes on Wednesday every week.

The missions’ team remains grateful for all your financial and prayer support during the period of the missions’ trip. They covet your continuous prayer support for the new converts in the two villages we visited and for the growth of the gospel in those two mission sites. Pray for God to send volunteers to support our Child Sponsorship Program in Uganda and other projects ACF have in the country, especially the construction of our medical clinic in Kumi and Fort Portal.

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