

REVIVAL WEEK REPORT MARCH 2015.

After our evangelical crusade of June 2014, the Caring Hands team noted fundamental spiritual gaps that needed to be addressed to continue the great work that has been begun in Kasensero. It's one thing to identify challenges, but quite another to address these issues especially working with a community of diverse beliefs.

One of the most striking challenges we saw was the lack of unity among born again churches in Kasensero. The CH team met late in 2014 to brainstorm corrective strategies to this problem. It was agreed that CH would host a revival seminar focusing on Christian discipleship where local church leaders and spouses would be invited to attend. We then embarked on the task set before us and God was faithful.

For months, we sought God's guidance on what to share with His servants, how to share it, who, when, and where to share it, eventually settling on March 15th – 18th 2015. We secured the largest motel in town to host the event, assembled a team of leaders and speakers skilled to expound upon various disciplines including Christian marriage, finances, prayer, personal relationships, the new convert, the Holy Spirit and the Second Coming. Pastors and wives of three churches in Kasensero were contacted and invited to attend along with several other community spiritual leaders.

As in most dealings with Ugandan villagers, it was difficult to convince these participants that Caring Hands had no ulterior motive behind the event other than encouraging them to mature in faith to bring them together in Christ's unity. The rumor in the community was that Caring Hands wanted to take over all the churches. This mindset did not only make it difficult for us to make arrangements, but created suspicion among the church leaders. We again sought God, and called for a meeting with them to diffuse the situation. This decision necessitated traveling to Kasensero a week before the event. We heard excuses of not wanting to spend the nights at the motel as we had originally planned as they couldn't leave their homes, chickens, and children alone. The whole event seemed to be in jeopardy, and I remember praying for a change of heart. Suddenly, to our amazement, one of them put everything into perspective for the rest. "Brothers, looking and thinking deeply about the benefits from this event, I notice that if we continue to give excuses we are at the losing end." I wanted to jump up and give him a hug. As I stared at him thanking God inwardly, another pastor added, "If we can afford to go for burials for a week, how about spending a few days in the Lord's presence and letting him teach us?" I wanted to stand up and kiss the Heavens. That's what God can do! God certainly hears our prayers of quiet desperation!

Despite poor phone networks and a boatload of phone calls, the following days cemented the event in everyone's heart. The CH team, including a contingent on loan from Shepard's Heart International Ministries (SHIM) from Lingira Island, arrived at the White House Motel in Kasensero on March 15th at 1 PM and were warmly greeted by contingents from each of the three churches involved.

Pastor Okello oversaw the arrangements of the Gospel of Life Church pastored by Ps. Muwanguzi Joseph, SHIM teacher Julius Twali interacted the Redeemed Church pastored by Ps. Katete Stephen, and Susan Nalugo registered the Jubilee Revival Church headed by Ps. Mugerwa Peter.

After welcoming services, we reconvened at the motel where everyone was given accommodations followed by a lively dinner and much conversation.

Monday morning the conference commenced with a praise and prayer session followed by exercises to get everyone's blood flowing. Notable was SHIM's Okoro Tefiro's enthusiasm with this daily routine during the conference.

At 9:00 AM Susan Nalugo addressed the conference welcoming and thanking everyone for attending. She then read a letter written by Dr. Charles Holt exhorting the participants to open their hearts to God and each other during the event in light of the Christ's promise of His imminent return.

After opening praise and worship lead by Olive Okoro, Pastor Okello took charge of the morning sessions teaching on "New Converts" followed by a subsequent session on the "Ministry of the Holy Spirit". After lunch, the afternoon sessions were devoted to "Teamwork" topics being facilitated by Susan Nalugo while Julius Twali taught on "Christian Finances". Please see our schedule for the complete itinerary of the conference. The days sessions were interspersed with times for worship and prayer, along with interactive games. Question and answer periods followed the sessions and proved quite popular demonstrating conference attendees were seriously engaged in the teachings. Monday ended with dinner followed by a viewing of the movie "Left Behind", a modern day film interpretation of the biblical Rapture.

Tuesday's schedule followed the same format with early morning prayer, worship and exercises. Pastor Robert Wafula took the lead during the morning session teaching on the topic of "Servant Leadership". This powerful message was followed by teachings on the "Power of Prayer". After lunch, Julius Twali took the participants through biblical principles on the topic of "Christian Financial Management".

The final day centered around participant involvement in teachings on relationships and marriage led by Tefiro and Olive Okoro. The session proved quite engaging with attendees as they were asked to pick up and carry their wives driving home spiritual truths in a humorous practical exercise. The conference ended on the Okoro's insights into what God had shown them about the importance of praise and worship in living a godly and spirit filled life.

The head pastors from the three churches were then asked to give personal comments on the conference and participants were videotaped about their impressions of the event. Our team departed Kasensero late afternoon amid an overwhelming chorus of requests for us to stay longer, a sign of successful testimony if there ever was one.

Our two biggest challenges during the conference were:

- 1.) the habitual problem of “African time” and participants not comprehending the concept of punctuality, resulting in persistent tardiness of attendees and,
- 2.) Identifying invited attendees and other locals who showed up during mealtimes wanting to take advantage of free food.

Next time we will implement “meal tickets” for all participants so we can keep an accurate record on who and how many we will feed during future events. We have also determined that we will assign individual team members to act as event hosts sharing sleeping accommodations with participants making sure attendees know when and where various activities are taking place.

The team was able to minister to one of the pastors whom we challenged to change his thinking about the important of sending his children to school and acting independently. Prior to the conference, the man had determined that formal education of his children was unimportant, and even approached us to help him develop a separate ministry. Our response to him about these matters were eye opening for him. Even with these kinds of challenges, we believe the event was a great success as the local pastors pledged to work together in unity.

The event team would like to express their gratitude to all those pastors, teachers, Caring Hands and SHIM team members who participated in and financed the conference. We want to thank God for his strength, provision, grace, protection, wisdom and anointing making this endeavor a success. He who started a good work in Kasensero will see it to completion. God bless you all.

Pastor Boniface Ayo Okello

Ms. Susan Nalugo