

JUNE 2020



“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:5-6

Ministry

It is a great privilege to be part of Word of Life especially during a time such as this. There is godly and wise leadership with the gospel firmly central to everything. One of the key ministries of Word of Life Uganda is to help build and strengthen local churches. Pastors have been struck hard by the pandemic (no standing orders here!). A small team have been keeping in touch and visiting pastors in the Kampala area. Their observations are:

- a) Pastors have no food to feed their families.
- b) Pastors are contemplating leaving the ministry. One has ‘disappeared’. Already, there are two churches without pastors.
- c) There has been a rise in domestic abuse in pastors’ families. There are some wives (in the village) working hard in the fields whilst their pastor husbands sit at home. There are wives condemning husbands for not fulfilling the perceived role of the husband to provide for the family. Pastors are asking Word of Life to speak to their wives. One pastor is afraid he will lose his wife. They are asking, ‘Where is this God who is going to provide?’ The leader of the team explained to us that their theology has been found wanting and that Word of Life can come alongside with prayer, practical support and theological help.

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Where do the Muluutas fit in with all of this? We have the blessing of living and working from our compound. We are slowly coming to terms with less travelling and vastly reduced interactions with other people; not something either of us finds easy. Bernie works full-time as a software developer from an empty house on the compound.



Through the support of gospel partners, we have been able to support 60+ families who have been severely affected by the lockdown. Some of those include local boda-boda drivers, barbers, salon workers, house helps, pastors, friends, roadside food vendors and three people doing ministry (each with many other people) in the slum including the headmaster of the school I was teaching in regularly. Relationships are developing and deepening.

Alongside this, we have been writing a series of audio devotionals aimed at the above people and addressing the questions they are asking about God and suffering. This ministry has somewhat snowballed. At the request of others we are working towards

producing one a week written in English; recorded both in English and Luganda and formatted for use in a school or church setting for children. The head teacher is asking for lessons that he will personally deliver to the children and those working in the slum would love the Luganda audio devotions to share with those around them. The team at Word of Life visiting pastors would also love the Luganda versions to support the ongoing ministry there.

All Saint's Cathedral children's team and youth team as well as the youth team from their plant church have asked for English audios (I've also been asked to help with the online youth work with this church). The Word of Life Discipleship Training School and Bible Institute would like the English audios as well as a weekly bible study for the Bible Institute girls. I'm thinking we will work through the book of Philippians.



On Sundays, we spend the morning joining a supporting church from the UK and the afternoons having fellowship with the family of four on our compound. Bernie is preaching through the book of 1 Peter. S and K have been asking excellent questions surrounding the gospel and suffering. So, yes we are in a pandemic. Yes, some ministries and ways of ministering seem to be on hold but new opportunities and ways of furthering the Kingdom are arising. Pray we would serve Jesus wholeheartedly with the gifts he has given us in this new season of married life!

Prayer requests

- **Praise God that he enabled us to get married! We are delighted to be husband and wife and loving getting to know each other and growing together as we seek to love one another well. I had wanted to write a lot more about wedding, marriage and lockdown in this update but I seem to have got carried away with the ministry topic. Forgive me. Much more about Bernie and marriage to come in the next one! And for those who know me well, fear not! I am not taking on too much. We work eight and a half-hours a day and try to turn phones off at 8pm so there is still plenty of time to invest in and enjoy being married!**
- **Pray for Bernie and me to grow in our ability to communicate well and to be intentionally biblical in our conversations about government.**
- **Pray for the families of pastors and their flocks.**
- **Pray for the team conducting visits: for emotional strength and wise, biblical words.**
- **Pray for Word of Life to think through how to help these pastors become more self-sufficient during this time.**
- **Pray for a reliable internet connection to be available that isn't expensive. Bernie needs this for work but providers have been taking advantage of people working from home and have been hiking up the prices.**
- **Pray we would make time and persevere in keeping in touch with those particularly struck by the pandemic and help more to become self-sufficient.**
- **Pray for us to be praying, studying and writing faithfully as we seek to produce one devotion a week in its various forms.**
- **Pray for Bernie to have time and energy to translate the tracts. It's a big job - around five hours per audio.**
- **Pray the devotionals would reach whomever God intends in the right format and language and that they would help people understand Jesus more. Pray they would be faithfully biblical, accessible, culturally relevant, encouraging and insightful and would gently challenge some prevalent false theology along the way.**
- **Pray for our studies in 1 Peter and for us all to be growing in our understanding of the gospel and suffering.**

Rachael and Bernie Muluuta PO Box 34005, Kampala, Uganda.

rholyome@yahoo.co.uk | +256 783 356820 | Skype name: rachaeljh1983

Crosslinks, 251 Lewisham Way, London SE4 1XF | 32 Montgomery Road, Belfast BT6 9HL | +44 (0)20 8691 6111 | pletters@crosslinks.org

