

# Uganda : Planting *Rooted in Jesus* – Diocese of South Rwenzori

## 3 – 19 May 2008

### SOMA MISSION REPORT

Revd Stephen Dinsmore

## 1 Summary

The team was invited to his Diocese of South Rwenzori by the Rt Rev Jackson Nzerebende Tembo to establish the small group, peer led, interactive discipleship course *Rooted in Jesus*. The team was to lead three three-day conferences in three locations, each of which grouped two Archdeaconries, in the Diocese.

UK Team

Stephen Dinsmore (TL); Sonja Arnold; Alex Scott

## 2 Pre Mission

### 2:1 The Diocese

The Diocese was carved from Rwenzori Diocese on 26th August 1984. At that time there were 26 parishes and 33 priests. Now there are more than 38 parishes and 85 priests. South Rwenzori Diocese is located in the Southwest of South is Lake Edward and to the West the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is set equator and on 33° E, with an area of 5800 kilometres. The Diocese is in the foothills of Mountains and the lowlands are part of the Valley. Despite being on the equator, the Mountains rise to snow capped peaks and most of the district. The lowlands are over above sea level, the peaks are over 4,250 Eastern side, the mountains slope down the foot of the mountains is Kasese Town, administrative centre for the District.



Uganda. To the border with the across the square the Rwenzori Western Rift Rwenzori dominates 600 meters meters. On the into a plain. At the Kasese is also



home to the Diocesan Office and St. Paul's Cathedral. The Diocese is coterminous with the political district and the Catholic Diocese of Kasese. Messiah Radio was established in 1997, on land donated by the Diocese. It provides 24-hour a day programming and is the most listened-to station in the area. This station is the only source of Christian education, religious music and non-partisan news for many people in the area. The radio station currently serves the western part of the country plus parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania.

## **Intercession**

Intercession is the critical element of a mission – coordinated for SOMA UK by Hilary Steynor. Personal Intercessors: each team member recruited personal intercessors (on e-mail and or text), who committed themselves to pray for the mission, daily from one week beforehand to at least one week after the team return. Each personal intercessor was to recruit other intercessors to pray for them, their family, home & etc during this period.

## **3 The Conferences**

### **3:1 Personnel**

Rt Rev Jackson Nzerebende Tembo, Diocese of South Rwenzori  
Revd Capt James Tumwesigye CA, Diocesan Mission and evangelism Coordinator  
Revd Revd William Musisi Assistant Diocesan Mission Coordinator  
Capt Bulemu Ezeru CA, Chaplain Kagando Hospital  
Bwambale Sampson

### **Diocesan Rij Coordinator**

Revd Capt James Tumwesigye

### **Archdeaconry Rij Coordinators**

Kasese	Living Mwangesya
Bwera	Nyamisondorya Juliet
Kisinga	Takoreya Edson
Deanery	A Munonewa
Rwesonde	James Nurembo
Maliba	Isack Mumbire

### **3:3 a personal reflection**

Sonja Arnold -

When Bishop Jackson Nzerebende Tembo told members of his Diocesan mission team about his plan to introduce the “Rooted in Jesus” participatory small group discipleship programme into the Diocese of South Rwenzori, Uganda they knew that God had answered their prayers. Revd Captain James Tumwesigye and his colleague William Musisi had been praying about the need for discipleship across the Diocese, praying for the Spirit to reveal the strategic solution. It was therefore a very expectant, committed and enthusiastic team that welcomed our SOMA team to the Diocese in May 2008.

The team of Revd Stephen Dinsmore, Alex Scott and Revd Sonja Arnold led three conferences, two in very rural areas up in the breathtakingly beautiful South Rwenzori mountains and one in the cathedral town of Kasese. The clergy, senior lay reader and senior mission co-ordinator from each parish were invited by the Bishop and in all we were able to train and commission 150 of them as leaders of “Rooted in Jesus” discipleship groups. Both the material and participatory method of leading the small groups was received enthusiastically, especially as its design allows for it to be used in areas with low literacy rates, which is still the case in some rural areas in that region. At the end of each of the three conferences the delegates had begun the process of thinking and praying about who should be invited to the first of their groups and with the first part of the material translated into Lukonzo they had all they needed to begin – and were raring to go!

As well as establishing “Rooted in Jesus” the conferences were a time of refreshing and renewal for many. We were deeply humbled to hear some of the testimonies about how God had been touching lives and bringing conviction. In one, a woman publicly confessed that she had been contemplating committing suicide before the conference but God had intervened and had given her new hope. It was very moving to see the love and compassion shown to her by other leaders who put into place follow up support straight away.

As with so many SOMA conferences we too felt the gracious hand of the Lord upon us and the power of intercession supporting us during the whole trip. We praise God for sustaining and healing Revd Captain James’ wife Harriet through a bout of malaria which began the day we arrived and for the many unseen ways that He was protecting and guiding us.

A recurring theme throughout the trip was Psalm 1 and Jeremiah 17:7,8, the image of a tree planted by water, its roots going down deep, which goes on thriving and bearing fruit even in times of hardship and trouble. This is our continued prayer for the people of the South Rwenzori Diocese and we look forward to seeing this fruit in years to come.

## **4 The Future**

James Tumwesigye is a capable leader. He has the support of the Diocesan Bishop and an excellent co-worker in the person of William. James, William and Ezra very quickly got a firm grasp of the vision, values and practice of Rooted in Jesus. Bishop Jackson is a strategist, is impressed with the course and ‘cannot stop telling everyone about it’.

The diocese is expecting a second visit by a team in 2009. This will be vital to steer the development of the course, further equip group leaders and encourage James, William and Bishop Jackson.

There is real opportunity to combine this with ministry to the also Lhukonzo speaking Congolese across the border in N Kivu Diocese. Access is via Bwera.