

# *Rooted in Jesus Junior* team to the Diocese of Masasi, Tanzania

July 2011

**Team members from the UK:** Rev Sonja Arnold, Jonathan Rendall and Liz Borrajo

**Team members from Masasi Diocese:** Edna Nachunga and Sophia Mung'ong'o

**Bishop:** Patrick Mwachiko



Team meeting in the Diocesan guest house

The Diocese of Masasi borders Mozambique in the Southern part of Tanzania. *Rooted in Jesus* was first planted in the Diocese by a team led by Alison Morgan in 2009. This was followed by a follow-up conference led by Matthew Grayshon in 2010. It was during this last visit that the team were also able to send Jonathan Rendall to the two parishes of Mkomaindo and Mkuti to introduce the newly developed *Rooted in Jesus Junior* programme. Following on from the positive reports from these two parishes, Bishop Patrick invited us to come and train more Sunday School teachers so that *Junior* could be introduced into every parish in the Diocese.

The UK team comprised of Sonja Arnold (an experienced SOMA and RinJ conference leader), Jonathan Rendall (who has 24 years experience of working in primary education) and Liz Borrajo (training to be a teacher at Chester University). In addition to the RinJ team we had Sophie Wallis and Lauren Hodder with us. Jonathan had arranged for these two young people from his church to spend some time in the Diocese gaining experience of another culture. Whilst not on the conference team they travelled with us and stayed with us in the Diocesan guest house. It was great fun to have them with us and we were able to encourage them as they had their first experience of engaging with another culture.

Joining us on the team were Edna and Sophia, both coordinators of *Rooted in Jesus Junior* in Mkomaindo and Mkuti parishes. These two women have both played a significant role in ensuring the smooth introduction of *Junior* to their parishes and played an invaluable part at the conference; helping us with the teaching, organising groups and encouraging the delegates. We were also ably assisted in translation by Canon Lukas Saidi, Diocesan Secretary and *Rooted in Jesus* co-ordinator for the Diocese as well as Fr Carlos Marcos, the priest of the Mkomoindo parish. The Bishop was not able to join us for the conference but did visit us nearly every evening to make us feel welcome and to keep up with how the conference was going.



Edna and Sophia

We ran just one 4 day conference which was attended by 58 delegates (mostly women) from 27 parishes. This meant that all the parishes in the Diocese were represented. We were able to hold the conference in the very beautiful Diocesan Conference centre which was cool and airy and gave wonderful views over the surrounding countryside. Having the use of this large room meant that we could experiment with a slightly different model of teaching the main sessions. We decided that, in line with the ethos of the *Rooted in Jesus* programme we should try to model group work and discussion as much as possible. This proved to be very successful.

One of our main priorities was to ensure that the delegates had really grasped how to lead a *Rooted in Jesus Junior* session themselves. Of course, the best way to learn how to do something is to do it and then receive feedback and so this was the model we used. This process was

Carefully managed by Jonathan who with Edna and Sophia found new leaders each day, giving them the task to prepare overnight the sessions they would lead the next day. The lessons given were then watched over by Jonathan, Edna and Sophia. The combination of group discussion, encouragement and carefully given feedback each day enabled the conference delegates to really grasp the principles behind leading, to grow as teachers and to gain confidence in leading.



The fruits of group work

As well as wanting delegates to grasp the teaching we were keen that they should also meet with God themselves during the conference. Ministry sessions at the end of each day were geared to this end. The delegates were very open and keen to receive from God. Liz spoke powerfully on being healed by grace, ending her talk with an appeal to lay before Jesus the burdens that were holding us back from wholeheartedly following Him. This led to large numbers of delegates coming forward to receive prayer. On the last evening Sonja encouraged each person to realise that God had called them and could use them even if they felt weak and insignificant. A time of praying for one another to be bold and courageous was then followed by a precious time of intercession for Tanzania, especially for the planting of *Junior* in Tanzania and for the impact on the nation of a godly generation of disciples of Jesus. The conference closed with a wonderful service of thanksgiving in the Cathedral with, of course, beautiful singing and dancing including a special song and dance composed to thank us for

our visit. We were given the most beautiful hand-crafted gifts. Jonathan's gift had special significance; he was given two candlesticks, one which represented the light that he had brought to Masasi by introducing *Rooted in Jesus Junior* and one which represented the light which would go out from Masasi as a result of the implementation of the *Rooted in Jesus Junior* programme.



Jonathan preparing delegates for leading groups



A delegate practising leading a group under Edna's watchful eye

Sonja Arnold, team leader, September 2011

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Liz speaking