

Rooted in Jesus Report

Dioceses of Masasi & South West Tanganyika

11th September – 24th September 2016



Rooted in Jesus Tanzania is directed by Rt Revd Stanley Hotay. This year Bishop Stanley invited us to help facilitate conferences in the Dioceses of Masasi and South West Tanganyika. Bishop James Almasi of Masasi (one of the two regional coordinators for RinJ in Tanzania) had invited a team to help relaunch *Rooted in Jesus* in the diocese following his consecration as Bishop; and Bishop Matthew Mhagama had requested an introductory conference to introduce RinJ to his diocese. A team led by Preb Simon Cawdell spent two weeks in Tanzania in September 2016.

Team members:

From UK: Revd Preb Simon Cawdell (Leader), Mrs Hilary Buckingham, Mr Jonathan Rendall

From Tanzania: Rt Revd James Almasi, Bishop of Masasi

Bishop James was able to meet us in person at Mtwara airport with his car and driver, and very kindly accompanied us throughout the whole visit.

Conference 1 : Diocese of Masasi

Masasi Tuesday evening 13th – Friday 16th September (noon)

Masasi is close to the northern borders of Mozambique. The anti-apartheid activist Trevor Huddleston was its bishop for 8 years from 1960. It is a hot, sandy area with rocky outcrops towering above the Diocesan centre where the first conference was held.

71 participants undertook the course through to completion and were awarded certificates at a final Communion Service on Friday in Masasi Cathedral. They were drawn from the evangelists and catechists of the diocese and had been called together by Bishop James for the occasion. Their delight in having time together was obvious, and their desire to worship (and especially to sing) was a source of great joy.



Participants receive certificates from Bishop James Almasi, Masasi Cathedral

The venue was the Umonga Conference Hall within the cathedral compound. Workshop were partly held outside under trees in the afternoons as temperatures were in excess of 30 degrees. Delegates listened with obvious attention, and there was a clear desire to engage with the course and the possibilities it holds for their parishes.

The demonstration lesson and the practice lesson were engaged well, and participants had obviously understood the concept and ethos of the *Rooted in Jesus* course.

Ministry sessions were held in the Cathedral and again showed a full level of engagement. Bishop James presided over a final eucharist into which we placed the giving of certificates as a part of the commissioning and sending out.

We were left in little doubt of the impact that the course will have on the churches of the diocese as the participants return home.

I would like to thank the diocese for their generous hospitality, and also the kind donor whose donation enabled us to stay at a guesthouse in town which was of a very high standard.

Conference 2 : Diocese of South West Tanganyika

Sunday evening 18th – Wednesday 21st September (noon)

The conference was held at Milo Bible College some 6,000 feet up, on a windy ridge in the Livingstone Mountain range in SW Tanganyika 15 hours' drive from Masasi. We had been warned it might be chilly, and it was! The venue for the content of the course was the 19th Century Lutheran Church which provided a very appropriate and historic setting, and accommodation was comfortable and on site, and again hospitality was very generous. Fires were provided!

117 participants completed the course consisting of a combination of clergy, catechists and evangelists. As at Masasi the level of engagement was exemplary and participants were clearly enthusiastic about the possibilities of the course in their parishes. Indeed a



A RinJ group session, Milo

number of senior diocesan staff members were very excited about how transformative it could be.

The fact the course here was fully residential meant that we were able to conduct sessions in the evening, which aided the timetable and meant we were able to conduct two practice lessons. The level of comprehension was excellent and by the second lesson the techniques of leadership which we had encouraged were fully embedded with the leaders of the sessions. It was very heartening.

One story demonstrates the favour of God which we felt throughout. During the workshop on prayer, led by Jonathan, at its conclusion an older lady presented feeling very stiff – a condition she had lived with for 15 years. A participant who was seeking God's will for her vocation prayed for her, and healing was instantaneous. The first lady testified she felt something in her body move, and later she was dancing in the worship which she had not been able to do for a very long time. The delegates were overjoyed at the testimony.

Afterwards

In both dioceses the Bishop had determined upon a co-ordinator by the time we left, but in neither case had the appointment actually been made, for reasons peculiar to each respective diocese, but which we understood. Both candidates had attended the course.

Reflection & Conclusion

Notwithstanding the fact I was team leader I was in fact the junior member of the team in experience, and it was a great honour to work with and lead my vastly more experienced colleagues. The team dynamics were excellent, and we thoroughly enjoyed our ministry together. To all of them a great thank you. It was a privilege to serve together and to see the Holy Spirit move with such power.

To God be the Glory.

Simon Cawdell
Bridgnorth
15th October 2016



Celebrating in Milo afterwards!