

Rooted in Jesus team to the Diocese of Shinyanga, Tanzania

April 2013

Team : Bishop Stanley Hotay, Canon Jacob Oyange, Rev Charles Unjiro (Tanzania) and Dave and Jenny Ridge (UK)

Where

Shinyanga is a fairly large town in the North-West of Tanzania, situated about 160km south of Lake Victoria. It is a centre for the diamond mining industry and has good road links both north and south. The diocese was only created in 2005 and Bishop Charles Ngusa is their first bishop. His desire is to see Rooted in Jesus established in his diocese before his retirement which may be as soon as the end of 2014.

What Happened

Dave and Jenny arrived from England the weekend before the conference was due to start on the Wednesday in order to preach at St Stevens Cathedral, Shinyanga and at St Luke's Parish Church on Easter Sunday. Bishop Charles described us as being like John the Baptist preparing the way for the conference to come. We were also able to pray for the sick at St Luke's in the morning and at the cathedral at an afternoon event put on especially because we were there.

After a couple of days off when we were able to visit an island on Lake Victoria, we awaited the arrival of the Tanzanian team. Unfortunately Bishop Stanley and Charles were involved in a car accident en route to Shinyanga meaning that they would not arrive in time to start the conference. Jacob's arrival was also delayed. This led to Dave and Jenny leading the whole of the first day by themselves. The highlight of this was the ministry time when the delegates were asked to write down things that were troubling them and bring them and put them at the foot of the cross to be burnt later. The bishop then appeared with a brazier, and a bonfire was held in the middle of the cathedral. One woman later testified that *her son had been imprisoned for a few months due to false accusations by his previous employer. His lawyers said he had an excellent defence but it seems bribery prevented the case coming to court. His mother had written this on her paper that was burned and when turning on her phone at the end of the session she received a message saying the case was closed and her son was free.*



+Stanley, Charles and Jacob all arrived safely and the conference continued for the next two and a half days with a full team.



There were 67 delegates on the conference a mixture of pastors and lay leaders of whom 5 were women. We were delighted that the Bishop himself attended almost all of the conference sessions. In a couple of Q and A sessions chaired by +Stanley it seemed that diocesan issues dominated and that heart-felt issues were being raised. Though we had intended these sessions for conference related topics +Charles appeared happy to field their questions and concerns.

Canon Isack Manere, sub-dean of the cathedral, and Canon James Tuli of a rural parish were appointed as RinJ co-ordinators. Since a lot of planning time had been taken up with Q&A +Stanley had everyone write their plans down and these were collected before the presentation of certificates and books.

Our prayer is that the issues they are facing will not hinder them setting out to develop *Rooted in Jesus* in their diocese.



Jenny Ridge