



# Rooted in Jesus Teams to Tanzania

## Dioceses of Kiteto and Mount Kilimanjaro

October 2012

Team leaders Martin Cavender, Alison Morgan, Jonathan Rendall  
with James Almasi, Tim Davis, Heather Kemball and Sophia Mung'ong'o

In October 2012, ten years after *Rooted in Jesus* was first pioneered in these two dioceses in Tanzania, we returned with a multifaceted programme of support and encouragement. Formerly a single diocese, the southern part of Mount Kilimanjaro (DMK) gained its independence in 2009 as the Diocese of Kiteto, and Isaiah Chambala was elected bishop to succeed John Hayden who, as assistant bishop, had spent 5 years laying the foundations for the new diocese. In 2011 Stanley Hotay was elected to succeed Bishop Simon Makundi following his retirement. Stanley and Isaiah have been involved with *Rooted in Jesus* from the beginning, but both of them have faced a difficult start to their episcopal ministry with, for different reasons and in different ways, opposition and conflict threatening to destroy the ministry of each diocese. They invited us to send a refresher RinJ team, in Kiteto to help re-establish harmony among the pastors and to launch RinJ Junior among the Sunday School teachers, and in DMK to help the clergy to put behind them the pain of years of conflict and irregular administration, and to relaunch RinJ as the primary tool for evangelism and discipleship in the diocese.

### The Diocese of Kiteto

We sent two teams to Kibaya, one led by Martin Cavender to work with +Isaiah and the 68 pastors and some of their wives, and one led by Jonathan Rendall to work with 86 Sunday School teachers from all over the diocese. Martin and Tim led two days for the pastors based on Hebrews 11 and 1 Corinthians 3, while Alison worked with the pastors' wives. The pastors were encouraged to write a letter to God expressing any pain and anger they felt towards one another or towards the diocese, then repentance and forgiveness, as appropriate; these were prayed over and burned together in a pit behind the old Development Building which was all that was there when we first visited in 2002. The wives spent time listening to God and opening themselves up to his healing presence, and praying for the pastors. We were deeply moved not just by the depth of the pain but by the readiness of everyone to put the past behind them and move on together – pastors declared that 'today the diocese of Kiteto has been healed' and that 'what has been done there is to burn all our sins, all our problems, we are healed!' One estranged pastor arrived unannounced to be reconciled to the bishop, and bishop and pastors met together in the evening to sing a haunting song almost of lament, a song of recovered harmony, of quiet beauty and praise; the meeting continued until three in the morning, with +Isaiah commenting happily that 'the rural deans are on fire!'. The conference closed with a eucharist, and with laughter and dancing outside afterwards.

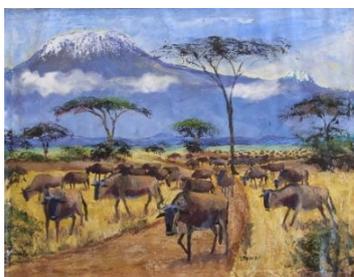
It was an enormous privilege to be allowed to continue to walk alongside these people among whom RinJ first began, and to learn the following day that most of the many new pastors had themselves begun as ordinary group members, before being invited first to lead a group and then to train for ordination. 138 groups are currently running, and those involved shared how the illiterate group members are active in ministry, preaching to others from the memory verses, and how RinJ has united them, saying they come from many tribes, but through RinJ they have become members of one tribe, the tribe of Jesus Christ. Alison was able to remind them of the history of RinJ, of the great prophecy of blessing received in 2003 and now fulfilled in many ways, and to share with them how what began among them



is now in use in 44 dioceses in 14 countries: the parable of the mustard seed in action.

Meanwhile Jonathan, James, Heather and Sophia were working with 86 high-spirited Sunday School teachers, delighted to be drawn together for the first time to train as RinJ Junior leaders, and eager to learn from James and Sophia's experience of piloting Junior in the Diocese of Masasi. Jacob Oyange came down with two colleagues from the Diocese of Mara to see how Junior works; they hope to introduce it there fully next year. A great deal of noise was made, and the Junior conference continued a day longer than the adult one. Meanwhile Martin, Tim and Alison were taken off for a mystery tour to the new deanery of Misichilo, where Alison was overwhelmed to find herself unveiling a dedication plaque to the new church in Samaria, and where what can only be described as a combination of riot and festival greeted them at Nita, with welcome and drumming and, on our part, profound joy and gratitude for the way the Lord works among his people.

## The Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro



Jonathan, James and Sophia left for home. After a long drive up to Arusha, a morning of preaching in Christ Church cathedral and a glorious day of walking and refreshment in Arusha National Park, Alison, Martin, Tim and Heather met with +Stanley, 40 of the diocese's 42 pastors and some 140 evangelists. As in Kibaya, the first day was spent considering the past, and by evening a breakthrough of repentance, faith and reconciliation was achieved, with letters to God being burned, and meetings being held between people previously at odds with one another. The morning star, said one of the rural deans, has risen over DMK; 'all the sins of DMK have been burned', said another. The next day we moved on to *Rooted in Jesus*, providing the first training for the 40 student evangelists from Munguishi Bible College, and a recap for many others. Alison enjoyed catching up with pastors she had not seen since her last visit 7 years ago, some then evangelists. We spent time focussing on the Holy Spirit, considering the character of a Christian leader, and listening to God in prayer, as well as demonstrating and practising *Rooted in Jesus* sessions. The atmosphere was excellent, and everyone applied themselves assiduously to everything that was asked of them, continuing late into the evening with diocesan meetings on subjects as varied as solar power to the diocesan vision of planting 300 churches in 5 years – for which, as elsewhere, they will use RinJ.

Our final morning brought a treat – a visit to St Paul's church, up on the slopes of Mount Meru, where we admired the school and church being built with money raised solely by the congregation, and rejoiced in worship led by the Maasai choir. We ate like kings, and set off for the airport full of thanks to God – and to all those who prayed so faithfully and effectively for us all during the conferences, and those who helped fund them. One of the lasting fruits of the time beyond the diocese will be that +Stanley has agreed to act as national coordinator in Tanzania for *Rooted in Jesus*, now in use in 8 of the 26 dioceses and planned by another 4; he will be supported by James Almasi and Jacob Oyange, the deans and RinJ coordinators of Southern Highlands and Mara respectively.

As we have said so often in the last few weeks : *Bwana asifiwe!* What a privilege it is to serve the living God...

Alison Morgan

