

“The Good Samaritan Sponsorship Project”



NEW LIFE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 2007 NEWSLETTER

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East Africa

“Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: ‘I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?’” Jeremiah 32: 26-27

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

THE EBOLA VIRUS STRIKES UGANDA

It has been seven years since the last outbreak of the Ebola virus in northern Uganda which infected 425 of which half died. Now it has struck again in western Uganda in the town of Bundibugyo a place where World Harvest Mission whose US headquarters is in Philadelphia has a team of missionaries. Two of the missionaries are a doctor team, Scott and Jennifer Myhre who have served there for 14 years. At this point it appears a few hundred have been infected resulting in 30 deaths.

Bundibugyo is as far west in Uganda as you can go in the foothills of the Ruwenzori Mountains before entering into the Republic of the Congo. It is reported by Dr. Scott Myhre that the first family afflicted were hunters who ate a monkey in the village of Kikyoo which is about 14 kilometers from the town of Bundibugyo. A Uganda doctor, Jonah Kule who had been assisted in his medical education by the mission was the first to investigate this Ebola outbreak sometime in October. There had been rumors of a mysterious illness with fever, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, and accelerated death. At the start the suspicion was an outbreak of cholera. Dr. Jonah had cared for an old man from the village who ended up dying. In the end blood samples sent to America confirmed on November 29 a new strain of Ebola. Dr. Jonah was contacted by the mission of the results but already had some symptoms but seemed strong and healthy, however, suddenly Dr. Jonah died. We had met Dr. Jonah on one of our trips to Uganda a few years ago when he had three children, now he has five with his wife pregnant. If you would like to help Dr. Jonah’s family please go to this web site of World Harvest, www.whm.org/project?ID=11128 for they have started a support fund for the family.



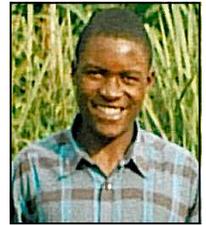
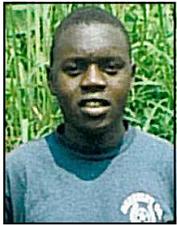
Dr. Jonah Kule

According to the Myhres the protocol now in seeing a patient involves changing into surgical scrubs in a clean changing area and then donning the hot zone suit (every centimeter of skin covered plus goggles), then sprayed with chlorine solution after emerging. There is now concern about contact with the dead bodies, discovered to be a risk for acquiring Ebola during this epidemic. The Myhres are forbidden to leave the Bundibugyo District until a symptom-free three-week interval has passed since their last contact with a known case. They mourn the death of their colleague and friend and brother in Christ. When they see the family at the burial it is complicated since they are now Ebola contacts too, like they are, and they should not be touching each other. So they refrain from touching or hugging in comforting Jonah’s wife and children.

There are two teams, including infection control doctors from the World Health Organization and the United States’ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Doctors with no Borders in Uganda to help local officials contain the outbreak. Normal operations at Bundibugyo Hospital are difficult in the best of times. The area is very remote even by Uganda standards has no electricity but has a powerful generator but the cost of fuel prohibits its use for more than a few hours daily. Solar panels provide lighting, and the wards have concrete floors and paint peeling off the walls.

All the schools have closed earlier than planned. Christ School in Bundibugyo has enrolled nine of our students from the Good Samaritan Project. They are safely home but the question remains what about next year. Will the school be opened on time and if not the students will have to be placed in another schools in Ft. Portal.

Their names are: Nuuru Manyireki, Tadeo Katuramu, Patrick Asimiwe, Stephen Kyalimpa, Michael Kamanyire, Patrick Nyakojo, Derrick Kamulindwa, Christopher Kisembo, and Robert Mugume. Their pictures are below:



“Greetings in our redeemers name and thank you so much for your prayers for the situation in Uganda. Besides the situation in Bundibugyo there are reported 20 people near Kasese district towards Queen Elizabeth National Park that have been confined to home. Public functions like weddings, introduction ceremonies, etc., have been banned in Bundibugyo. I was to preside over a mass wedding of three couples in Bundibugyo church on December 8 but it has been put off. Medical personnel in some hospitals have refused to touch any patient with similar symptoms. A man reportedly died in Jinja hospital in eastern Uganda, when he was rushed to the hospital vomiting blood, no doctor was willing to attend to him till he died. Please pray that God will take away this situation as well as yellow fever and meningitis, 2 Chronicles 7:14. People now fear greeting while shaking hands and most banks and supermarkets handle money with hands dressed with gloves.”

You might be asking at this point with all going on in Ft. Portal whether the Christmas party will still go on as planned. Well the answer is, yes it will! Pastor Sam has told me that he met with the local government leader, LC 1, Paul and they agreed to have it on Monday, December 17 but with extra precautions such as many washing stations and extra washing in the food preparations. As you might think there has been a drastic reduction in social functions because of the fears of contact via handshakes and hugging.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him,
who have been called according to His purpose.” ~ Romans 8: 28

Merry Christmas to all and thank you for your Christian love to the children of Uganda.
Please persist for His glory!

In His Arms, *Dick & Barbara*

PS – According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Ebola hemorrhagic fever (Ebola HF) is a relentless, frequently lethal disease in humans, gorillas, monkeys, and other nonhuman primates. It has appeared sporadically since its initial recognition in 1976.