



Method & Omelina Mwendapole

Serving with Grace Ministries International

AUGUST 2024

Greetings to you in Jesus Christ,

The days are passing quickly and I can hardly believe there are only a little more than four months left in 2024. We give thanks and praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His goodness and the many mercies He provides to our family. We also thank God for the way He blesses us in His ministry here in Burundi. And we thank you for your generous support and partnership with us in serving the Lord. **Your financial support and prayers have sustained us in the Lord's work here in Burundi. Thank you so much and God bless you.**

Our children and grandchildren are in Tanzania with our son Emmanuel and our granddaughter Celina continuing their schooling there. We pray that God will continue to protect them and empower them in their studies. We thank God that Omelina has recovered well from her surgery last year. Our daughter Elizabeth is married and we are thankful that her family is also doing well.

Ministry Updates

In June we were visited by Grace Ministries International (GMI) Operations Director, Dwayne Huff. His visit to Bujumbura brought a lot of enthusiasm to the ministry here, especially when he was able to help us recognize and give certificates of completion to more than seventy students who completed the Bible Correspondence Fellowship (BCF) lesson modules we offer in local churches. He also had the privilege of meeting more than fifty orphans and helping to distribute gift bags with school supplies for the children who are part of our orphan care ministry. **We were very encouraged by Dwayne's visit and the time he spent in our home enjoying fellowship together and discussing ministry issues face-to-face.**

We have been busy holding training seminars and teaching Bible studies in various churches throughout the city of Bujumbura and even in surrounding areas. We are currently teaching classes in five churches that have invited us to teach about the grace of God. We have also been preparing materials for the Burundi Bible Institute (BBI) in the Burundi language of Kirundi. **Translating lessons into Kirundi is a huge part of our work here and we praise God that we recently completed the translation of all of the BCF lessons into Kirundi.** We have also completed the translation of some of the BBI course modules into Kirundi. This translation work is being done by a team of well-qualified Burundian Christians with the supervision of our GMI teammates, Tom and Michelle Sanchez. What a blessing it is to have lessons available in the heart language of the Burundian people.

We are still teaching in Kiswahili and using translators when we speak as we continue to work on learning Kirundi. It is a great help to have the written lessons in Kirundi and it also helps us as we continue to learn the language. **We thank God for the translation work that has been completed, for the one hundred-eight students who have studied the BCF lessons, and for the ninety students who have completed the first module of eleven lessons and received their certificates.**

We continue to hold seminars on leadership, the Bible, and theology in the churches that have invited us to teach their congregations. The doctrine of



Dwayne spending time with orphans and street kids in Mtakura Bujumbura June 2024



TOP: BCF students in Moriah Temple

BOTTOM: BCF students in Maravya Bujumbura



salvation has been an important topic to teach to the believers in the churches that have opened their doors to us. We have found it is a doctrine that is not taught correctly by many churches here and the people often rely on their own "good" works to save them. They also lack assurance of eternal security. It has been a great blessing to everyone involved each time we conduct these doctrinal seminars. **We praise God that some people have accepted Jesus as their Savior at these seminars and others have experienced the joy of knowing they are eternally secure in Jesus Christ.**



Orphans and street kids in Bujumbura given school supplies

The students in the Tanzanian Pastor's Training School in Mwanza, which Method has been overseeing, finished their studies this past June and have now returned home to continue serving in their local churches. Thank you so much for your prayers and the support you have provided for this three-year pastoral training program. **We thank the Lord that all the churches in the Mwanza region have pastors who have graduated from this program.**

After her health improved, Omelina was able to spend more time developing ministries for women and children in the local churches. **The women of the Grace Bible Church in Gatunguru have finished learning how to weave cloth and make handbags. Under Omelina's instruction, they are now starting to learn to sew.** In this class, they will learn by sewing uniforms for the orphans and street children to whom we minister. Most of the women are also attending a BCF Bible study class every Tuesday.

Donations from last year's Street Kids in Burundi Christmas Project helped us provide sixty children with school supplies, food, and medical treatment. This has been a unique way to share the gospel with the families who care for these children, and we are pleased that most of these children attend church services where they learn the Word of God. May the Lord bless all of you who contributed to this project and helped provide some of the basic needs for these children. Next year we hope to expand our impact in the community by starting a program to help unwed mothers, teaching them how to sew and provide an income for themselves and their children. The population of street kids and unwed mothers is very high in Bujumbura and meeting some of their physical needs opens doors to reach them with the gospel and have their lives transformed by the gospel.

To fulfill GMI's goal of planting Biblically sound churches here in Burundi, we are working diligently to prepare materials for the first classes we will offer at Burundi Bible Institute (BBI). We have finished translating two semesters of lessons, and we have been using the BCF lessons to prepare students to enroll in the more advanced studies that will be offered through BBI. Burundi Bible Institute will be taught in week-long modules where the instructor will travel to local churches that will serve as host sites for the classes. **Please pray for BBI as we look forward to launching our first session later this year or early next year, and consider financially supporting this ministry for the glory of God.**

As we continue teaching the BCF Bible study classes, we are also preparing Burundian leaders to take over the leadership of these classes. The trip we had planned to take Burundians to Tanzania to learn beekeeping from GMI team member Ted Rabenold was canceled due to the difficulty of getting passports in such a short time for the Burundians to travel to Tanzania. We are hopeful that we can make this trip in 2025 which will allow more time for the men to get their passports.

We face various challenges while serving here in Burundi, and one of the most challenging is a severe shortage of fuel. This has made it difficult to travel to the many churches where we are teaching and leading seminars. When we are able to find fuel, it is very expensive. The economic situation in Burundi has become very bad and life is really difficult for many Burundians. In addition, monkey fever has arrived in Burundi causing major health concerns. We ask for your prayers and for God's wisdom as we serve Christ here. We desire to come to the US to visit you all, but our visa applications were rejected when we applied last year. **We plan to apply again very soon and ask that you pray for their approval so we can visit the US sometime in 2025.**

As we see the great spiritual and physical needs here in Burundi we think of the words of the Lord Jesus who said, **"THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL BUT THE WORKERS ARE FEW. ASK THE LORD OF THE HARVEST, THEREFORE TO SEND OUT WORKERS INTO HIS HARVEST FIELD"** Matt. 9:37. We believe that the Lord has sent us here for His purposes, and as our partners in ministry, your prayers and support are a great encouragement to us.

May God bless you all,

Method and Omelina Mwendapole



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