

Rwanda Challenge 2021

Upcoming Events

Aug—Nov — With many restrictions lifted, RC is waiting for the court to clear the purchase of the MACU-Rwanda Campus. Once this happens, RC plans to initiate the next trip.

January 2022 — MACU-Rwanda intends to begin classes with the second cohort.

Volcano Relief

While we were in Rwanda, Mt. Nyiragongo, a volcano in neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo, erupted without much warning. Probably worse than the eruption were the earthquakes that followed over the course of about two weeks. Several 4.5+ magnitude quakes in a row were felt in Kigali, which is about 60 miles southeast of the affected region. While some of those tremors were merely unnerving for us, they damaged hundreds of homes on both sides of the border nearer the epicenters. Two church leaders in the English proficiency training are from the city of Gisenyi, closest to the volcano. They were with us in Kigali and rushed back to their families once the earthquakes began in earnest. Fortunately, their families survived, but their homes, the church buildings, and the homes of many in their congregations and communities were damaged. Many families were sleeping outside on the ground for fear that the houses would collapse on them in the night.

Several weeks before the trip Frank & I (Scott) met via Zoom with Randy Jones, project director with International Disaster Emergency Services (IDES) and discussed ways RC & IDES might partner in the region. When news of the damage reached Kigali, we decided to contact IDES about relief opportunities and completed an application for a grant to provide food, household necessities, and Bibles through the churches. In the weeks after we departed, Theophile visited the area to survey damage. A contribution made by Cornerstone Church of Christ, Chatham, Virginia, was used to distribute food to some of the families on that trip. At the end of July, we received approval for a grant from IDES for \$26,600. We are thankful that God connected RC and IDES in advance of this need! Relief work is outside the scope of RC's current mission. Nevertheless, if we can connect resources to needs in these situations, Frank and I both believe that is what Jesus would want. Please be in prayer for those still dealing with the aftermath of this natural disaster. Look for more updates in future editions to see how this effort progresses.



Food provided by Cornerstone Church of Christ



Earthquakes from the Volcano create damage in the DRC and Rwanda

Recent Highlights

November — A team from eastern North Carolina joined Frank to assist potential Rwandan students with English and computer skills to prepare them for the AA degree.

January — Major lockdowns in Rwanda due to Covid continued into April.

May 12-29 — Trip to Rwanda to offer the first two classes of MACU-Rwanda.

June 22 — New restrictions begin; **June 28-July 17** — Trip to Rwanda (International Team) cancelled following new restrictions due to the Covid spike.

The Vision

Local church leaders throughout Rwanda who have the capacity to lead the Rwandan Church and become missionaries to neighboring countries.

A Resurgence of Covid

One week before the May team departed Rwanda, Mt. Nyiragongo erupted. The rest of the week we felt tremors in Kigali from earthquakes in Goma. The day before our departure our plane was grounded due to the ash from the volcano. A friend who works for Brussels Airlines was able to get us new flights and connect us with our original flights out of Brussels. One week later Covid began to spike in Rwanda, partially due to people flooding into Rwanda after the destruction of the volcano. Daily Covid numbers began to double and triple the January/February highs. First the districts (counties) were quarantined, resulting in the June/July trip being cancelled. The Rwandan government began to lift restrictions at the beginning of August. One of the implications of the lockdown was the courts were closed. A new court date has been set for September 29, but a new online procedure is being introduced. As soon as the court clears the purchase of the MACU-Rwanda campus, the next trip will be planned to begin finishing the campus building.

“The Old Mama”

(DOB? — July 8, 2021)

I will never forget the night we showed The Passion of the Christ under the Hermon Church tent (the colorful tent). The Old Mama lived right beside the tent and was a faithful member of the church. She contributed the first iron sheets (roofing) for the construction of the church building. The day after the movie, Theophile and I visited her in her home. She made a fist and softly beat her chest. Then she expressed how much Jesus' suffering had hurt her. We regret the Old Mama did not live to see the completion of the church building. We rejoice in her hope in Jesus (1 John 3:1-3) and her new home in heaven.



Prayer Requests (Phil. 1:9-11)

- Ask for wisdom and discernment in equipping Rwandan church leaders
- Thank God for guiding us through dangers like volcanoes, earthquakes, and Covid-19
- Ask God to overcome all obstacles and delays hindering MACU-Rwanda students and the campus

Financial Partners

Make checks payable to:
Rwanda Challenge

Send Checks to:
Cornerstone Church of Christ
1186 Fairview Road N.
Chatham, VA 24531

For new campus write on memo line: MACU-Rwanda Campus