

Rwanda Challenge 2017

Upcoming Events

March — Mid-Atlantic Christian University Homecoming and share RC with Towne South Church of Christ (NC)

May — Teach church leaders in Rwanda

The Vision

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

A Growing Family, Progress in Rwanda, and New Friends

A lot has happened since I boarded a plane in Boston December 18th: Boston to Poland to Rwanda to Spain to Boston. While I celebrated Christmas in Poland with Messianic Jews from Israel, our seventh grandchild, Haizea, was born on December 25 in Bilbao, Spain. Myra was there, but I had to wait for a month. Yes, Haizea was asking, "When is my Papa coming?"

Poland was amazing: the history, the stories, the architecture, the growing church, and ministry to Jewish people. Prior to Rwanda, I visited Poland with Jan Barczuk in order to broaden my understanding of missions in the world, to be introduced to the Church in Poland and Polish Christians serving Jewish people. An added blessing in Poland was to visit Josh and Ann Winans serving with PROeM Ministries. When I visited Auschwitz, I reflected on the differences and similarities of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. My biggest surprise was the strength of the (small but strong) churches I visited. The church leaders I met were deeply committed, educated, very creative, and had some good Bible resources. While Poland is a difficult field, I anticipate the Church in Poland will experience positive growth in the next five to ten years.

Spain was a different experience. After a month in Rwanda, I stopped in Bilbao, Spain to join Myra in being proud grandparents. During the visit, I did have the privilege of sharing in a baby dedication (yes, Haizea is beautiful and she loves her Papa) and preaching for the only English speaking church in Bilbao. I was very interested in learning about the health of the church.

"Church in Spain" continued on other side



**Demitre and Yana serve
a Messianic Synagogue in northwest Israel**



Haizea Del Rio Reynolds



Frank, Ryan, and Theophile

2017 Highlights

December 2016 — Preached and taught in Poland the last two weeks of December

**January — Taught seven groups of church leaders in Rwanda
Conducted first full web-based teaching (NC to Kigali)
Preached for English speaking church in Bilbao, Spain**

“Church in Spain” continued

Of course, Bilbao is only a small portion of Spain, but I was told the situation in Bilbao is similar to the rest of the country. It was a surprise to discover there are very few Bible resources in Spanish. Spain is predominately Catholic with amazing church buildings that are basically empty. One percent or less of the population is considered Evangelical. A comparison: the church in Poland was much stronger than the church in Spain. The church in Spain is small and weak, and lacks Spanish resources. Church leaders were educated in other countries. However, there is great potential in a culture that is angry with the Church, but does not know the “real” Jesus.

Then there is Rwanda. I am extremely excited about the growth I see in the Rwandan church leaders RC partners with. On January 16, 2017, we launched our first full web-based teaching. Three preachers in eastern NC taught Philippians for our *Equip a Church Leader* group. Other than losing the connection, briefly, a few times each day, I think everyone was thrilled with the results. The Rwandan leaders went home with an in-depth understanding of Philippians.

In Rwanda, I met a new friend, Ryan Sandford, from New Hampshire. After I made my transition in 2010, Ryan found his way to Manchester Christian. Then he worked at International Justice Mission (ijm.org) in D.C. for a year before transitioning to Rwanda to teach English for two years. It was a joy to meet this brother in Christ.

Prayer Requests (Phil. 1:9-11)

- Ask for wisdom and discernment in equipping Rwandan church leaders
- Praise God for new opportunities to teach church leaders around the world
- Praise God for those who pray and those who support RC financially
- Pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world: pray that they “may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which [they] shine like stars in the universe as [they] hold out the word of life.” Philippians 2:15-16

A few closing observations:

- The Church in Poland is small, but strong
- The Church in Israel is even smaller, but growing
- The Church in Rwanda is large, but weak
- The Church in Spain is small with great potential

For more information go to:

<http://www.operationworld.org/countries-alphabetically>

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