

## 2019 Highlights

**January — Taught four groups of church leaders in Rwanda with Scott McClimans**

**February — Preached for English-speaking church and Spanish church in Spain  
Shared about Rwanda Challenge with Spanish church**

**March — Shared Rwanda Challenge in North Carolina and Virginia**

**May — Shared Rwanda Challenge with two churches in North Carolina**

**May/June—Taught in Rwanda with Alison DeLong**

## The Vision

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

## A Time for Transition/Reflection

**There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: Ecclesiastes 3:1**

Rwanda Challenge is now in an Ecclesiastes 3 season of transition (see opposite page for some background). RC officially began in October 2011. Our first partnership trip to Virginia/North Carolina began in a fall New England snowstorm. I had been to Rwanda three times and had experienced the lack of Bible understanding prevalent among Rwandan church leaders (similar to church leaders in most of the world). The vision was to help church leaders in Rwanda to have an opportunity to study the Bible at a deeper level. The intent was not to begin a Bible college, but to provide a high level of Bible training, offering certificates, not degrees. God has blessed RC with eight fruitful years.

Now, with the 2018 "preacher law" passed in Rwanda, the vision is the same, but the approach must change. In the next few trips RC will be seeking to transition from Bible certificates to an internationally recognized associate degree provided by MACU. This will be a significant change for me, partners who travel with me, and the Rwandan youth and preachers.

In this time of reflection I want to acknowledge the impact of this transition on a large number of Rwandan preachers. The largest percentage of the present preachers cannot pursue an associate degree simply because they lack the required high school diploma to begin the program. They have served faithfully and to the best of their ability for a season. In four years that season will legally come to an end. Their role in the local church will change.

I am asking you to pray for them. Thank God for their faithfulness in ministry. Pray for them as they work through the implications of this transition. Seek God for their future role in the local church.

## Prayer Requests (Phil. 1:9-11)

- Ask for wisdom and discernment in equipping Rwandan church leaders
- Seek God for Mid-Atlantic Christian University as she applies with the Higher Education Council to offer an associate degree in Rwanda
- Thank God for Rwandan church leaders whose role in the local church will soon change

## Financial Partners

Make checks payable to:  
Rwanda Challenge

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

Online giving is available  
on the website below.

# Rwanda Challenge 2019

## Upcoming Events

October — Teach in Asia and Rwanda

January — Teach in Rwanda

## Bible Degree for Rwandan Students/Church Leaders

**Dilemma:** On the June trip to Rwanda we were trying to understand the new law passed in September 2018 concerning a Bible degree for preachers. The preachers did not understand it. We had a copy of the law, but no one seemed to understand it. We had two meetings, but there was still confusion. Shortly before I left Rwanda, Theophile and I met with Isaac. He is a friend of Theophile, has a law degree, and works with the National Council of Churches. Isaac understood the law and was able to explain it. In summary: preachers in Rwanda are required to have an associate degree (accredited) in Bible/religion to legally lead the local church. The present preachers are grandfathered for five years (beginning last year). There is more, but that is the essence of what we need to understand.

**Hurdle:** However, there is one more crucial piece. In order to offer an associate degree in Rwanda you must be approved by the Higher Education Council (HEC) in Rwanda. You can get the degree somewhere else, but that would be out of reach for most Rwandans.

### Opportunity:

Mid-Atlantic Christian University (MACU) and Rwanda Challenge have agreed to explore approval to offer an Associate of Arts: Bible and Ministry degree in Rwanda. Dr. Kevin Larsen, Vice President for Academic Affairs plans to join Frank for a week in Rwanda to clarify details with the HEC. With this clarification we intend to move forward in the application process.

**More Hurdles:** It is our present understanding that a physical address in Rwanda will be required by the HEC. This means property and a building (rent or own) with a classroom, offices, computer lab, some staff, etc. Another hurdle will be qualified students. A high school diploma is required to begin the degree program. Over half the students cannot meet this requirement. One more hurdle



Younger students face new challenges as they seek to lead the Church

is a library which is required by the accrediting association. The good news: high school graduates in Rwanda are required to know English. The bad news: the books are in the U.S. and will need to be shipped.

This is a difficult journey, but we believe God will use it to strengthen His Church in Rwanda. May He be praised.

Please keep the Rwandan Church in your prayers.