

October 2009

SHELBY

Imvura iri kugwa

In Kinyarwanda, this means "it is raining" or literally, "rain, it is falling". We have moved into the short rainy season called umuhindo and are so thankful for the refreshment after a long dry spell.



Chris at a very long wedding he video-taped for a friend

WHAT WILL GOD DO IN RWANDA?

Our missionary community has been working together to develop a vision and mission statements, as well as a strategy for reaching the entire nation of Rwanda with the gospel of Jesus. We meet every Monday and spend time in praying and planning. Here is what has been developed so far. We are so excited to be partnering with God in this great adventure and see how he does way more than we have asked or imagined.

Vision Statement:

Kingdom communities of obedient disciples transforming and redeeming Rwanda.

Mission Statement:

We are a multi-national community of Jesus' disciples prayerfully partnering with God as He expands His kingdom in Rwanda.

We will:

Serve the people--By adding value to the skills and lives of families and communities through spiritually purposeful partnering, training, coaching and teaching.

Spread the kingdom-- By inviting people into relationship with God through discovery Bible studies in order to redeem the nation.

Share the vision--By encouraging and modeling an obedient lifestyle in which the cycle of transformation continues.



ONE IN THE FRONT, ONE ON THE BACK Jill carrying Baby Tess Rwandan-style at 15 months and carrying Baby Cy at 22 weeks in the front.

Looking Back and Looking Forward

Up until this point, our main objective has been to become conversational in Kinyarwanda, develop relationships, learn about the culture here and listen to God as He directs our steps. We have not wanted to be the “Americans that come with an answers” but rather, as we have been advised by so many, to just come for a bit and listen and learn first. We know that we will never be finished listening and learning here. We still have a long way to go before we are fluent in Kinyarwanda. We know we will probably never know this culture inside and out. However, we do believe that we have been here long enough now and know enough now to begin to “move out”. It’s been amazing how God has been working in us and through us even during this “being” time.

As an example, we took our worker Fils to an outdoor restaurant a couple of weeks ago. While we were waiting for our food, Chris took Tess and was playing hide and seek with her. Noticing the stares of a few others in the restaurant, I remarked to Fils, “Rwandan fathers wouldn’t do that, would they?” He said, “No, they wouldn’t. But, I will. I know Papa Tess loves Tess so much. Many Rwandans don’t show affection for their children but I am learning from Papa Tess. I watch you because this is how I want my family to be.”

As we move forward and have started our strategy development, we are excited about what is on the horizon for our whole team. Specifically, we see God directing us to work with youth and families. The family unit here has suffered much post-genocide. It needs to be redeemed and restored. Hmm...once a youth minister, always a youth minister. Below are some specific ministries we are working on:

- Family Day--Chris’ mom and dad are coming in December and they will help us with a seminar and activities about family matters at one of the local churches.
- Bible College--Chris will resume teaching at the Bible College for a 3rd term coming in January.
- KIE (Kigali Institute of Education)--Chris is working with a professor in our neighborhood who teaches at KIE. This is the only university in the nation where secondary teachers receive their instruction. He is partnering with them to provide character and ethics education--something really missing here. Then, these teachers could teach this curriculum to their students. This would probably start in January, also.
- Church Leader Training--Next month, Chris, David and Heath will head out to a village to conduct a church leader training. At the end of the two-day training, they will be showing The Jesus Film to the entire community. The director of the Bible College has asked them to this and has left the content up to them. They are working on that this month.
- Youth Evening--We want to partner with the local schools and offer some fun, wholesome entertainment for their students who are succeeding. There is not anything to do here except roam the streets. So, ATN will host a Youth Evening once a month where we will either show a movie or play games.
- Soccer (Football) Camp and League--Chris is working on putting these together for our community.

These are the areas we have felt drawn and are praying that God uses them, not just to serve Rwandans physically, but to expand His kingdom and make disciples.

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Language

We are making progress in the language but it is still a big challenge. Please pray for consistency in study.

2. Upcoming Plans

Please be in prayer about the many plans and opportunities we discussed in detail in the article to the left.

3. Labor & Delivery

Jill is due to delivery Baby Cy on March 1. We are so thankful for a Canadian midwife we have met here. The quality of medical care is pretty low overall. After much prayer, we have decided to stay to have the baby. Please pray for continued peace in this decision and, more importantly, for a safe and healthy delivery.

4. Vehicle Situation

Our truck doesn’t seem like it will accommodate our growing family. However, we have been unable to sell it thus far. Deals keep falling through. Please pray for a reliable vehicle that will suit our growing family’s needs.

Mailing Address:

B.P. 6490

Kigali, Rwanda, Africa

Chris’ cell:

011 250 078 327 2931

Jill’s cell:

011 250 078 328 3346

www.shelbysinrwanda.org

rwandachris@gmail.com