

# AMAKA

The Newsletter of Africa Renewal Ministries

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## Adopting a Village Brings a Lifetime of Blessings

The heart of ARM is to change lives, to reach communities and to ultimately transform the nation of Uganda through the miraculous love of Jesus Christ. This compelling mission has grown into a complex vision that is shared and supported by individuals and churches across the globe. Sisters Community Church in Sisters, Oregon is one such body of believers who have taken the concept of foreign missions support to a whole new level by adopting an entire village. We recently spoke with Paul Rawlins, Outward Pastor at Sisters, to find out how the



Paul Rawlins of Sisters Community Church and Pastor Fred Sekyewa of ARM Uganda

church's commitment to one Ugandan village has radically impacted lives at home and abroad.

"We just realized as a church we had a huge passion to be in missions," explains Rawlins. "But we were spread too thin, not maximizing our funds and talent for the greatest impact. We felt God calling us to one area of focus -- a church-to-church partnership in which we would have a lifetime commitment that would be both strategic and impacting." In 2004, Sisters Church began devoting the majority of its funds, talent and energy to its new partner, Christ Glorious Church led by Pastor Tom Godwin in the village of Kapchorwa, Uganda. This lifetime partnership is now a thriving ministry that involves the entire congregation.

Rawlins points out that the relationship between the two congregations has become very personal as members of his church are able to see first-hand the impact their contributions make. Sisters sponsors close to 400 children. "It's amazing to see our people get connected to the kids in such a powerful way. Our goal is not simply to impact the church in Uganda; we work to empower Christ Glorious to do what God has called them to do within the community by investing

our time and talents. The children are a huge part of that. We don't have to work hard to get teams together to go to Uganda or to raise funds as this partnership is gaining momentum.

The clear communication of our village's needs, paired with success stories and ample training and direction, helps to motivate our church members to get involved. They have become an integral part in how this all works with almost 25% of the congregation traveling to Uganda at one time or another."



Kent Boles of Sisters assists with school construction.

When they first began the partnership, Sisters realized the importance of understanding both the needs and culture of the Ugandan people. They took a holistic approach and began with meeting the physical needs through water treatment projects and programs to address social issues. Their initial efforts have expanded to include a new 11-room school building, vocational training and additional water projects. According to Rawlins, "We felt that we could not just do evangelistic outreach when there were so many physical needs. We understood that we needed to love these people first, empower them and pull them out of their negative environment and sense of hopelessness... We felt it was essential to build an infrastructure for a long-term relationship through education and health. Ultimately, the Ugandans are the best evangelists of their own people."



Nurse Cindy Uttley comforts a young girl in Kapchorwa.

Rawlins insists the blessings are two-fold. "One side is being transformed by the gifts of another, spiritually, physically and socially, experiencing the love of Christ in

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\* AMAKA means "family" in Luganda, the tribal language used in Gaba, Uganda, where ARM is headquartered.

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## Partnering Churches for the Glory of God



Pastor Peter Kasirivu  
President and  
Founder  
ARM-Uganda

As an organization we have recognized our calling to link the western church with the Ugandan church. This connection is vital in fulfilling the great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ -- to go into the world and make disciples of all nations. In the world today, we have found the best way of making disciples is to reach people in their communities, using their language, honoring their culture. Churches of the west now have the opportunity to fulfill their commission in a non-traditional, more impactful way — through ARM's **Adopt a Village Ministry**.

At the local level, Ugandan churches are already touching lives within the communities; therefore, it is key for western churches to partner with these established churches and their pastors. ARM's

revolutionary idea encourages these church-to-church partnerships. Our role is to assist congregations in the west to connect with and adopt a Ugandan church. ARM identifies a church and a pastor, or a city which has a need for a church plant, and dialogue begins between ARM and the western church, according to the nature of the partnership. If the Ugandan church already exists, the western church begins providing

support in the areas of discipleship, evangelism and pastoral care. As the relationship grows, these two sister churches will dream together as to how to minister more effectively and touch the people in the surrounding community. Whether it is supporting health concerns, water projects or education, together the partnered churches make a difference in the lives of the villagers.

We currently have a number of strong and healthy West/Uganda church partnerships. Two recent examples include Gulu Bible Community Church that has teamed with Community Bible Church of Texas and Rock Harbor Church of California, and Christ

Glorious Church in Kapchorwa that has partnered with Sisters Community Church of Oregon. You'll read their exciting stories in this newsletter.

### Becoming a Partner Church

- Pray for God's guidance and calling towards foreign missions.
- Initiate dialogue between the church, ARM USA and ARM Uganda.
- Plan an initial leadership mission trip to Uganda to see the possibilities of partnership.
- Begin deeper dialogue with the potential African pastor.
- Consider if this partnership is a good fit for your congregation or if another location should be tried.
- Plan subsequent mission trips with more members of the church to establish church planting, or work with the existing Ugandan church.
- Sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ugandan church and the western church.

As a ministry, adopting a village is at the core of Christ's call on our lives and the key to reaching out to our communities with His love. This ministry will be our focus over the next few years as the entire Body of Christ is strengthened through these partnerships, for the glory of God. Instead of simply meeting an immediate need, adopting a village is a long-term commitment that empowers the local Ugandan church to carry on the great commission in the community it serves. If you or your church has a calling towards foreign missions, we've listed what you can expect and should consider.

### What Western Churches Should Consider

- Organizing a mission trip once or twice a year to your sister church.
- Supporting the pastor financially.
- Helping to mentor and grow the leadership on the ground in Uganda.
- Commitment to the long-term vision and well-being of a village
  - Commit to sponsoring children, 300 initially.
  - Commit to meeting the needs of the village which might mean drilling wells, beginning vocational programs, building schools or community health facilities, and helping the church acquire land and a house of worship.

### Expectations in Adopting a Village

- ARM identifies a pioneer Ugandan pastor and a city to plant a church, or an existing visionary local church ready for partnership.
- ARM provides information as to the needs of the village.
- ARM initiates dialogue between the church in the west and the pioneer church.
- ARM trains and prepares the Ugandan pastor in areas of inter-cultural communication, discipleship and church planting.
- ARM ensures a smooth flow of resources and accountability between the two partnered churches.
- ARM provides on-going mentoring for the Ugandan pastor.
- When projects begin, ARM USA will become the conduit through which finances and other resources will flow and ARM will ensure that plans are fulfilled.

## Transforming a Nation, One Village at a Time

There was a time in U.S. churches when “missions” meant sending money to American missionaries evangelizing people throughout the world. Occasionally a mission team from the U.S. would travel to a country to “do good works” for a few days, then return home to life as usual. But in the words of a 1960’s musical icon, “The times, they are a changing!”



*Holistically meeting the needs of a community is part of ARM’s Adopt a Village ministry.*

Fortunately today, many churches with a heart for missions see a different role the American church can play internationally, that of supporting indigenous pastors as they reach their people for Christ. Recognizing the passion Ugandan Christian leaders have for their people, we have been invited to come alongside to provide support, resources and encouragement, as they devote their lives and efforts to their communities.

The vision for mission work has become more strategic and deliberate, maturing into long-term partnerships between U.S. churches and local pastors within specific mission locations. Christ taught us by example, that to reach people spiritually, one must be prepared to meet physical and social needs as well. U.S. congregations, with the guidance of ARM, are reaching out to the local Ugandan churches, taking part in the transformation of villages in areas of public health, clean drinking water, education, medical care and social reform.

What an experience to see “village building” through the local church! I’ve made enough trips to Uganda

to observe the changes that occur in a village from year to year — new schools, water wells, orphanages, completed churches and an overall sense of HOPE among the people. All of these projects have been done through the local church, in the name of Jesus.



Don Jones  
Executive Director  
ARM-USA

For several years, my home church has been involved in a village in southern Uganda through ARM. It has been a joy for our church family to see children grow and hope restored in the parents and village leaders. The local church influences the community in many positive ways as it becomes an integral part of social and spiritual transformation. This work has also energized our church family to want to do more, offering its many talents, skills and ideas to the benefit of these new, emerging Ugandan churches. U.S. congregations who partner with a village and send mission teams over bless the Ugandan people, and in return, they are blessed by being able to use their talents in such a place, seeing transformation first-hand.

Several U.S. churches have created a model of village partnership with ARM. These associations have led to the birth of new communities, greatly enriching the health, social well-being and spiritual life of the villagers.

It is clear that the needs and opportunities in Uganda far exceed the resources and abilities of ARM; however, when a church commits to adopting a village, it is possible to transform a nation for Christ, one village at a time!

*Sisters, continued from page 1*



*Andrew Schar (left) and Mike Dyer (right) of Sisters Community Church construct a pit toilet near Kapchorwa, Uganda.*

their lives on a daily basis. The other side, one that can be so easily distracted from its goal by our culture, is so focused and passionate about the powerful impact it’s having. This is such a different model. I watch our people get lit up as they see their talents used by God. It is amazing to see our church ignited to such relevancy.”

Sisters believes the concept of adopting another church is simple but also revolutionary. Rawlins feels that God is

using them to learn the nuances and intricacies of this type of cross-cultural relationship so they can then provide a working model to help other churches get involved and

avoid the hurdles and barriers they have already traversed. “We hope and pray that we can be a catalyst to help others have this kind of ministry.”

To find out more about Sisters Community Church and how your church can get more information on adopting a village, please visit us at [www.africarenewal.org](http://www.africarenewal.org) or [www.sisterschurch.com](http://www.sisterschurch.com).



*Evangelist Mike Parker holds an open-air worship service in Kapchorwa.*

## Partnering Churches to Rebuild and Restore Gulu

Over the past decade many American churches have explored the concept of long-term, church-to-church partnerships with small ministries around the globe. They've established vital relationships that have proven very effective in the development of local ministries on foreign soil. Two U.S. churches pioneering this new missions concept are [Rock Harbor](#) of Costa



David Mann talks with clan leaders in Gulu about returning to their lands.

Mesa, California, and [Community Bible Church](#) of San Antonio, Texas. The two have joined forces, committed to restoring the war-ravaged villages of Gulu in northern Uganda.

In 2005, Community Bible Church's Outbound Director David Mann and his wife Dana traveled to Gulu where they witnessed "IDP" camps where over a million displaced people lived due to the war. Even more astounding were the thousands of children who had been born in the displacement camps, never knowing of life outside poverty and these impossibly overcrowded conditions.

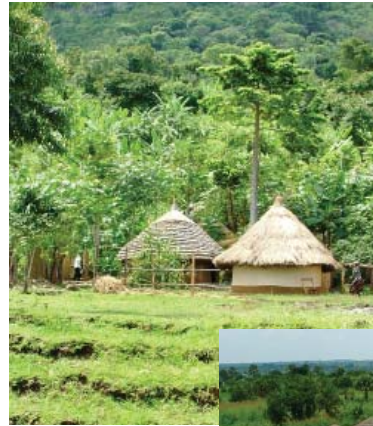
On this specific trip, God planted a vision within the Manns' hearts. They saw these displaced people returning to their homes with lives restored and their communities rebuilt. They took this vision of

restoration back home to their church in San Antonio, and after partnering with Gulu Bible Community Church under the leadership of Pastor Chris Isabirye, the dream has become a vital reality for the people of Gulu.

Community Bible Church's vision has since developed into a ministry of commitment and compassion, made possible by its very resourceful congregation. To date, they have raised funds to help build a church building, purchase oxen and farm equipment, and drill water wells within the villages. Mann calls this a "holistic" approach to ministry. And as they begin to help displaced Ugandans move back to their homelands, the church is documenting the entire process as



Pastor Chris of Gulu Bible Community Church



Above, an example of a family returned to their land. This is the "after" picture and Mann's dream for all Gulu families.

a means to educate and enable other churches who would like to do something similar. Mann explains, "We want to bring our experiences back to the churches in America. Not only can you change the life of a child through sponsorship, you can change an entire



A portion of one of the IDP Camps in Gulu. The camps are overcrowded and unsanitary.

community." He is very passionate about reviving the land, empowering the people to be independent from the camps, and creating safe, operational villages.

The congregation of Rock Harbour Church embraced the idea of long-term "partnering" several years ago. Under the direction of Mike Kenyon, Pastor of REACH at Rock Harbor, the church has been involved with the Gulu community for more than three years. Kenyon relates, "We want to be an encouragement and minister on the ground. We want to get behind what God is doing [in Gulu]. Our goal is not to plant another Rock Harbor Church". Kenyon and his volunteer team have been to Uganda four times to participate in ministries such as medical relief, vacation Bible school and local outreach. During the most recent trip, he and his team were able to provide much



The new building for the church in Gulu. The original tent church is to the left.

needed funding for land and help with the new church building, plus additional funds were earmarked for a future school building. While in Gulu, the team photographed over 300 kids that Kenyon hopes will soon be sponsored

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## Gerlach Instrumental in Mwangaza and ARM Success

If it weren't for invaluable people like Tammy Gerlach of Simi Valley, California, ARM would not be the organization it is today. From the very first Mwangaza tour, Tammy has helped handle logistics while the choir toured Southern California, from scheduling the numerous performance dates, to transportation and housing for each of the choir members, as well as the adults who travel with them. For the last tour, she served as the host family coordinator for Mwangaza from the time they left Texas until they finished touring the West Coast.



Tammy Gerlach in Uganda with Jaida from the second Mwangaza U.S. tour

In addition to Mwangaza, Tammy also helps coordinate the logistics of Pastor James and Pastor Fred when they are in California. She assists in scheduling appointments, transportation and accommodations. Tammy also helps the pastors host sponsorship events to raise money for Ugandan children. Her home is always open and her heart willing to assist in any way she possibly can. The former sound technician for Mwangaza, Adam Ansel, now lives in the Gerlach home when he is not in Uganda.

Tammy has been instrumental in raising crucial funding for sponsorship. She has strategized and hosted numerous sponsorship events, as well as recruited private sponsors who have committed to supporting entire homes for orphanages within the villages. In 2007 she also led a team of 18 women to Uganda with funds to start a much needed playground for the children in Gaba. They were also able to fund new clothing and shoes for the orphanages in Bethany Children's Village.

Tammy remembers a poem that tells of a woman who is broken-hearted over a tattered little girl she sees on a street. The woman asks God why he allowed this; God responds that she was made to help the little girl. Tammy says that poem always stuck with her, and when she traveled to Uganda last August, it really hit home. She stresses that not only was she sent to Uganda to be a blessing, but having been so impacted by the people, she felt she had received the greater blessing. She adds, "God made everybody for a reason. When you figure that reason out, you just need to go with it."

**If you're interested in volunteering with ARM, please visit our [website](#) to sign up!**

Gulu, continued from [page 4](#)

by members of his church. Through the child sponsorship funds, additional money will be generated to support the new building, faculty, curriculum and more.

This model of a focused and concentrated partnership has provided Rock Harbor Church the opportunity to foster meaningful relationships with the young people of Gulu. Church members understand the long term commitment, and they feel a sense of responsibility as well as ownership in the region. Kenyon sums it up, "Each church here has a unique role that they can play. Each congregation is a unique part to the equation. No one church can do it all. Partnering with other churches to meet a need can be fun and have a much greater impact. The key is to listen to what the needs are, and let the church on the ground take the lead."

That's just what [Rock Harbor](#) and [Community Bible Church](#) have done, empowering Gulu Community Church and Pastor Chris to transform the lives of his people for the glory of God.



Barr Boynton, Katie Jennings, Christa Edwards and Pastor Chris pray over a baby in Gulu.

### Prayer Requests for Villages

**Please pray that God will provide:**

- Visionary, pioneering pastors
- Training for the existing village pastors and leaders of the churches
- Land on which to build houses of worship in these villages
- More U.S. churches for the existing pastors who are ready to enter into partnerships
- Continued financial support for ARM as it grows this program

**Many churches have adopted villages or special projects in villages on their own or in partnership with others. For a complete list of those who have generously invested in these communities, please visit [africarenewal.org](http://africarenewal.org).**



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## Mwangaza's "Message of Light" Coming to California!

Mark your calendar! Mwangaza will be touring southern California this April for a six-week concert series, ministering to churches and carrying out fund-raising events with partners like Children's Hunger Fund and ARM, among others. The purpose of this tour is to generate funds, resources and friends for the on-going Mwangaza Ministry, to ensure that the "Message of Light" is shared by Ugandan children throughout the U.S. and other western nations on a year-round basis. The tour will also offer sponsorships for children and college students in the Next Generation Leadership Program.



*Mwangaza participates in a street concert in Holland in September 2007.*

The choir will be comprised of members from the first Mwangaza US tour.

The September 2007 tour which took the choir to Holland was an great success. We acquired the funding needed for the expansion of the primary school in Gaba. Now a two-story, eight-classroom structure stands adjacent to the existing building, plus a semi-permanent block of classrooms with desks, five computers and teachers' tables. Also, the Lord provided sponsorship for more than 135 children, funds for part of the construction of the high school at Rakai and for the kindergarten at Bethany Children's Village.

### 2008 Mission Trips

ARM is sponsoring two mission trips in 2008. The first, an **Educational Mission Team** in early July will work with the Ugandan teachers and education leadership as they continue to move towards "Christian World View" studies and enhanced classroom effectiveness. The second, a **Medical Mission Team** in mid-October will return to the Mubende district to provide medical care, public health education, and children assessments for the villages of Kachungwa and Mulete. This team is in need of an ophthalmologist and a pediatric physician. If you have interest in either of these mission trips, please visit [www.africarenewal.org](http://www.africarenewal.org) for further information.

**Want to help with the 2008 Mwangaza tour in Southern California? Sign up on our website!**

**Sign up to receive AMAKA electronically at [www.africarenewal.org](http://www.africarenewal.org)!**