

REPORT: 2022 Enrichment Workshop & Kampala/Lagos Missionary Journeys!

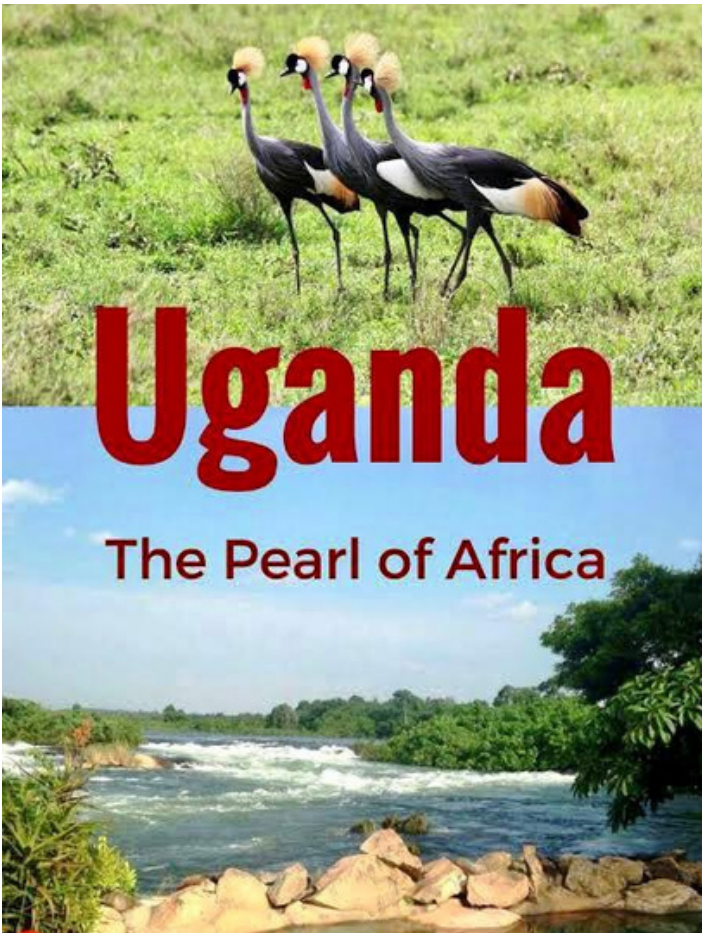
- DR. ANDREW SMELLIE

“And we all...are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the LORD, who is the Spirit.”
- 2 Corinthians 3:18

Greetings from Kampala, Uganda and Lagos, Nigeria! Patrique and I, along with Osas & Ariel Atohengbe, have recently returned from a missionary trip to strengthen our powerful sister church in Lagos, after previously “scouting out the land” in Kampala for our upcoming planting in June of this year! The scripture above encourages my heart as the “transformation” of the Joburg Church has been inspiring since returning to in-person services on November 21st of last year. I reminded the church that “too much Zoom can bring doom!” if we continue rely on the crutch of virtual services for our spiritual health since the last wave of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. The Joburg Church responded in the last 6 weeks of 2021 by witnessing a record number of additions through our “Miracles at the 11th Hour” Campaign, as 8 precious souls (7 in Joburg and 1 in Kampala) were baptized into Christ! To God be the glory!

From January 7th-9th, the Joburg Church kicked off our movement theme of “The Year of the Spirit”by hosting our Enrichment Workshop entitled, “Transformed by the Spirit!” It was an incredible time of vision, fellowship and instruction as we made the decision to not be timid, but to live lives of “power, love and self-discipline” by allowing God’s Word to guide us! (2 Timothy 1:7).

From the Bible Talk Leaders Meeting on Friday to the Men's & Women's classes on Saturday and the Workshop Service on Sunday, the fellowship was electric, the classes were convicting, and the Spirit was moving powerfully as we prepared for a fruitful year for the LORD! Both the visitors and disciples alike were "in awe" of the love and unity in God’s kingdom.

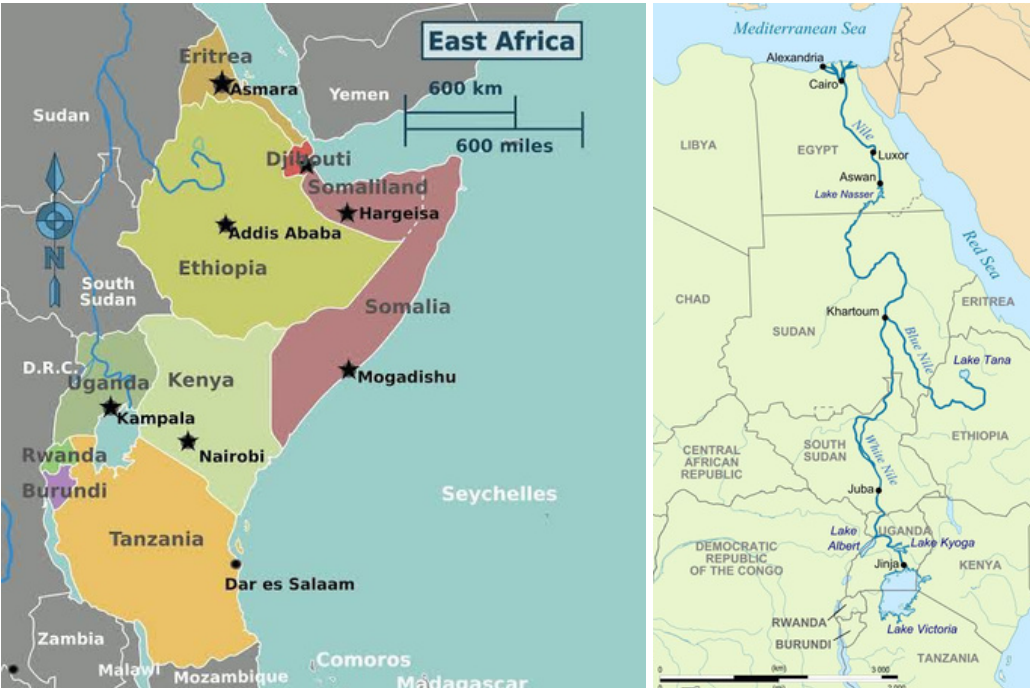


On Monday, January 10th, myself and the Atohengbes took a flight from Johannesburg to visit our brothers and sister in Uganda – over 4000km away from South Africa! After arriving in Entebbe at approximately 2:15AM in the morning and taking the required COVID test, we boarded a taxi to take the hour-long drive to Kampala. We reached our hotel safely at around 3:45AM and enjoyed a well-deserved rest! A dear son in the faith from Lagos, Deji Aregbesola, arrived later Tuesday morning and was greeted by our Ugandan brothers at the airport before joining us all for lunch! The LORD granted our request to go to the roof of our hotel and pray over the city of Kampala, also known as the “City of Seven Hills” as we dreamed for the sending out of the Kampala Mission Team at our African Missions Conference in Lagos this June!



The Ugandan disciples along with us from Joburg and Lagos

Winston Churchill, the former Prime Minister of Great Britain, is credited with giving Uganda the nickname of “The Pearl of Africa” in 1908 for its “beauty, natural wonders and profusion of brilliant life.” I was inspired to learn that Uganda is the source of the Nile River, as the river runs in a northerly direction through four countries including Egypt! As Ezekiel 47:9 states, “so where the river flows everything will live,” so the planting of Kampala is sure to start the advancement of the gospel across East Africa! **I am so proud of the sacrifice of the Joburg Church, who generously raised the funds to help sponsor this trip from our 10X Missions Contribution in November!**



The Map of East Africa and the Nile River which originates in Uganda!

On Wednesday, we had an appointment in downtown Kampala to meet with our lawyer, Peninah “Penny” Nakatudde, a senior advocate at the Katende Law Firm (the largest and most prestigious law firm in Uganda) to begin the incorporation process of the church. What followed next was an event that I will always remember about the “perfect timing” of God! After completing the necessary incorporation documents, Penny surprisingly asked for a portion of the payment in cash. When I told her I simply had the church card, she graciously stated that I could make the transfer later. To “make the most of every opportunity,” I asked if there was an ATM nearby, and she stated there was one around the corner. Ivan Mugalya, one of our Ugandan brothers, asked to come with me as well as our brother Osas. As we turned the corner from the law firm and walked down a main street in Kampala, I was shocked to see a young man walking towards me with a green MERCYworldwide shirt, the symbol of the benevolence arm of our movement of churches! As he passed by, I asked Ivan if he knew him, which he didn’t, as none of the disciples in Kampala have yet to receive that shirt.

I then asked Osas to run after him and inquire who he was and where he got the shirt. Ivan followed as I went inside a lobby where the ATM was to retrieve the funds. After coming out, I was pleasantly surprised to find out that the young man, Jamil, had received the shirt from his older religious brother, Opio, who had been baptized in Lira, Uganda before returning to Kampala! Lira is city approximately 4.5 hours north of Kampala, where our brother Ezekiel Awira leads a remnant group! How amazing is the timing of God!! (Acts 17:26-27). Jamil gave us his number, so please pray for both he and his brother Opio to study the Bible and join God’s new movement!



Ivan, Jamil (wearing the miraculous MERCY shirt) and Osas!

This remarkable event was just one of the many inspiring highlights during our week in Kampala, as Wednesday night we invited a Ugandan Presidential Candidate and leader of the Ugandan Democratic Party, Norbert Mao, out to church and welcomed Fred Arogo’s wife, Marie, who came to Kampala from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to study the Bible with the sisters! On Thursday we visited Makerere University, arguably the most prestigious university in East Africa, and welcomed the brothers’ household and later had a exciting Song Devotional with all the disciples on the roof of our hotel. On Saturday, we shared our faith at the nearby mall and met scores of new friends! On Sunday, we had a glorious worship service with 12 disciples and 12 visitors in attendance as we witnessed the baptism of Norbert Bomugisha, a campus student majoring in Petroleum Engineering! By the grace of God, we received our Certificate of Incorporation and finally acquired our church name, the “Great Pearl International Christian Church” after several attempts, which included praying together in Penny’s office! Please pray for her to become a disciple! If all that was not enough, on our last night in Kampala as we called four disciples to become new ministry interns for the church – Ivan, Eric, Destiny and John – and they accepted in tears as we gave them the vision to win all of East Africa for the LORD!



Our new brother Norbert got baptized and Marie (on the left, with glasses) is on her way!



God is moving in Uganda as the Great Pearl International Christian church is on the move with a new logo and new fired-up interns!



Abbigail and Claudine baptize their mother, Shereen!

In Johannesburg, the Spirit continued to move powerfully as the mother of two Joburg disciples, Shereen Julius, overcame much persecution to be baptized into Christ! I am so proud of Patrique and the sisters who poured their hearts into making her a sold-out disciple!

On January 17th, the Atohengbes, Deji and myself boarded the plane for Lagos, after “tearing ourselves” away from the valiant disciples of our East African family. After arriving around 11PM and waiting about 1.5 hours for my Visa-on-Arrival, the Lagos disciples greeted us with singing and dancing at 12:30AM in the morning!



The Smellies' and Atohengbes' got an exciting greeting in Lagos!

It was a joy to meet with the Lagos Staff later that morning as I preached a lesson entitled, “United in Mind and Thought.” I encouraged the Staff to expect a complete unity of commitment and service from the church as it prepares to send members to help plant the Kampala Church this year and provide most of the team members to plant Accra, Ghana in 2023! It was exciting to dream together to raise up new interns and Shepherds-in-Training for this great church!



The mighty staff of the Lagos International Christian Church!

After multiple meetings on Wednesday and Thursday with different Lagos Staff Members, I was overjoyed to welcome Patrique along with several other Lagos disciples as she arrived at 6:45AM on Friday morning to join me for the Lagos Enrichment Workshops!



Dolapo is reunited with her mother-in-the-faith, Patrique!

Patrique and I were eager to visit the Real MERCY School (RMS) that was established last year in its new “brick and mortar” home! These primary school students welcomed us by singing “We Love You with the Love of the LORD!” The RMS principal and a Lagos disciple, Biodun Abiodurin, took us for a tour of its eight classroom, kitchen, and bathroom facilities that were a far cry from the original structure that we visited back in 2018. After two fires in the Okobaba area endangered the original school last year, funds were graciously provided by MERCYworldwide to support the building of a new school and feeding program in a close but safer area.



MERCYworldwide is in full effect at “The Real School” in Okobaba!

Just recently, the original wooden school was completely burned down by another fire and 40 families from the school were displaced. Thankfully, the Real MERCY School continues to bring joy to these children through education and a warm meal to their tummies! It was very unsettling to also visit the burned Okobaba area, yet the smiles on the faces of the students as they left the Real MERCY School to return home reminded us of the impact that MERCYww is having in these young lives. Please pray as we are working to develop a school library and computer room for these 100 students!



The original wooden structure of “The Real School” back in 2018

The Lagos Enrichment Workshop encouraged my heart, as I witnessed the second and third “generation” of Lagos disciples raising up to lead through song leading, serving and preaching, as well a glorious baptism of a farmer, Adeshina! Please pray for God to bless this precious church to reach 300 disciples this year, as they focus on daily evangelism, the raising up of leaders and the financial sacrifice to do “even greater things!”

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February

- 12th: Married's Valentine's Party
- 19th: Singles & Campus Valentines Devotional
- 26th: New Semester of ICCM Begins!
- 26th: Married's Devotional

March

- 12th/26th - Singles Devotional
- 19th: ICCM Session #2
- 26th: Smellie's return from the U.S.A.

African Missions Conference: June 23rd - 26th



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The incredible saints of the Lagos International Christian Church!

In Johannesburg last Sunday, the Joburg church cheered at the baptism of Claire Shabangu, a campus student at the University of Witwatersrand, as the church reached 50 disciples for the LORD! This week, we also celebrated the baptism of Njubalo Sibeko, a law student at Rhodes University! Please pray for the campus ministry to explode for the LORD this year as their new term begins later this month!



Claire (from Wits U.) and Njabulo (from Rhodes U.) are baptized!

Joburg Family, the Spirit is transforming lives powerfully on the Motherland! Please pray for all of us to draw closer to God and make Him known as we prepare for our 2022 African Missions Conference from June 23rd-26th, entitled, “Compelled by the Spirit!” May we bring the LORD “ever increasing glory” as we transform our lives and the lives of others throughout the Motherland and beyond!

Your brother in Christ,

Dr. Andrew Smellie
Evangelist



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

10:00 am

Glenhove Events Hub 52 Glenhove Rd,
Johannesburg Gauteng, South Africa 2196

WEDNESDAY MIDWEEK SERVICE

6:30 pm

(Alternating Men & Women)

Glenhove Events Hub 52 Glenhove Rd,
Johannesburg Gauteng, South Africa 2196