

5 September 2017

Prayer points:

- Praise Jesus for the amazing provision of University sponsorship for Burundian students in two North African countries. Ask that the Christians amongst them will be equipped in every way to be relevant and bold in their witness.
- For Christian leaders in Burundi, like Célestin to see the opportunities the Holy Spirit is giving and respond.
- Wisdom from heaven as we write our strategic plan.
- Help for Paul writing his final essay.
- Mission Congress in October to exceed our hopes and for a group to emerge from it who will work together on facilitating more mission from Burundi.

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'By their fruit you will recognise them'
(Matt 7:20)

Paul writes: It is all too easy to judge by appearances. The little office of the missions' department did not have much to say for itself. We were shown a front room – bare but for a desk and a few posters used for trainings and then back to a small office that we squeezed into – Jeremy, Alison, myself, the team leader and his wife. The challenges they were facing were not unusual. It was exciting to hear there was enthusiasm and interest from his denomination and beyond to learn about missions to the unreached in Africa. However, the commitment to finding the finances and making the sacrifices that missions involves is a long road.

Churches here, like much of Africa, haven't had much experience of sending and supporting missionaries to go out. Alison and I have

Strategic planning, Congress and more

Alison writes: We've enjoyed a fortnight's holiday and are feeling refreshed and ready for the season ahead. We continue to meet with Christian leaders in Burundi as we complete our initial survey of the mission interest and opportunities, including with our leader, Emmanuel this week. We're working on a draft of our strategic plan for the end of the month which we hope to finish after the Mission Congress (11-13th October in Bujumbura).

often talked and prayed with our African brothers and sisters about how some of these obstacles might be overcome.*

All of a sudden, the note changed. Just last week Célestin** was phoned by a member of his church who was passionate about working as a missionary. This was nothing new. What was new, was that he had received sponsorship to study in North Africa. The government would be dealing with all the complexities of travel, visas and finance!

We've known that there are many Christian students from Sub Saharan Africa who're studying in N Africa but the challenge was to identify them and give them relevant training before they arrived there. Célestin told us how, this week, he will be training four such sponsored

Please pray for the Congress. May it be a catalyst for both reflecting on the mission of the Protestant church in Burundi over nearly 90 years and for seeking God and finding new ways of facilitating its mission within and outside Burundi in the decades to come.

Paul was encouraged to receive feedback from the MA course leader that his contextual theology essay was enthralling; he received a distinc-



N African University which Alison visited

students, brought together by that one, in preparation for their studies. *Please pray for these four young men as they start out on a crash course on cross cultural mission understanding. May they quickly learn how to speak God's Word.*

We left that office with a new respect. We don't know quite how the fruit will grow and where the seeds may fall but we had a strong sense that God was making it grow.

** This was the basis for Alison's dissertation in which she interviewed indigenous African mission agency leaders – do ask if you'd like a copy.*

*** We have changed names and kept anonymity of students and exact locations for security reasons.*



Jeremy learning to prune trees

tion! He's currently working on his final essay, due in on 6 October and then he'll move onto the dissertation. Jeremy continues to delight us and we, as parents, are learning fast.