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NAHIMANA'S NEWS

Dear Friends,

2024 is rapidly drawing to a close. As we go through the Advent Season, a time of remembering and celebrating Jesus – the greatest gift that was ever given, I wanted to thank each one of you for the gift you are to us here at Restoration of Hope in Burundi. Your prayers and support mean more to us that you will ever know, and we are so grateful to God for your faithfulness. May He bless you with His peace and His provision this Christmastime.

This has been a year of change for the Nahimana family in so many ways. Becoming an empty-nester at 47 was never part of my plan – I thought that only happened to old people!

Although we returned to Burundi almost 3 months ago, our trip to the UK seems a distant memory. It was wonderful to spend time together with our wider family for a couple of weeks before Bethany, Abigail and I headed to Oklahoma to take Abigail to university. Honda and Josiah did a 'lads trip' round various places in England, which they both greatly enjoyed. Three days after we returned from America, Josiah moved in with his host family, the Browns – dad Paul is a Magician and Entertainer, so I think Josiah is going to have a lot of fun for the next couple of years! With Jos and Abi gone, we were grateful to have time with Bethany who was on her university break – she left Burundi 6 years ago, so time spent together is a real joy.

September was a month of ministry, traveling round to share at supporting churches about all that God has done through the work of Restoration of Hope for the last 20 years. It was wonderful to visit friends and families who pray for and financially support our work, eat delicious food (thank you to those who cooked us a meal!) and then we had a couple of days to prepare to return to Burundi...packing 4 suitcases was very different to our previous record of taking 17 cases on one return trip! On the 30th of September we boarded the plane and headed back to a new season of life in Burundi...the first time I have lived in a child-free house in 27 years in Africa!



Restoration of Hope:

Education: In September, through Hope in Burundi, our educational support charity, we were able to put 134 children into school. 49 are in primary, 71 in secondary and 14 are studying for their bachelor's degrees at university. In the midst of the struggles Burundi is facing we are pleased to share that 5 young people we support graduated from university this year with degrees in the following subjects: Emile Irakoze – Business Administration, Privat Nduwimana – Computer Science, Innes Igiraneza – Community Health, Arnaud Irakoze – Accounting and Jessica Nahimana – Economics. Thank you to each of you whose financial support has made this possible – from living life on the streets to graduating university with a degree is nothing short of miraculous!



Women's Project: We are very grateful to be able to continue our Women's Sewing project, thanks to the generosity a small charity in Canada. The dire economic situation in Burundi means that we are over-subscribed and have a long waiting list of girls and young women who want to be trained to work as tailors and run their own small businesses. It would be possible to fill every space 5 times over, but for now our maximum capacity is 10 per year. It may seem like a drop in a bucket, but for the 10 women the training they receive is life changing.



Uvira: We were so pleased to be able to contribute more than half of the finances needed for the rebuilding of Pastor Joel's church in Uvira Congo, following the fire which razed it to the ground last March. The new church is made of cement breezeblocks rather than wood, so should be a more durable structure. We continue to stand with Pastor Joel in trusting God for the remaining finance needed to finish the construction.

Gitega Hope House: Gitega is the administrative capital of Burundi and is a 2-hour drive from the economic capital where we live. Since 2010 it has been home to 11 children and young people in our second Hope House. Honda or members of his team would travel to visit the RoH family twice a month to provide input, oversight and support to the house parents there. For the last 3 years that has become increasingly difficult due to the lack of fuel in the country. The departure of our last head of home earlier in the year, combined with various discipline issues, brought us to the conclusion that returning the family to Bujumbura was the best option.

We were able to make space at our Hope House in Mutakura for the young people and they are now all attending schools in the local area. 2 of the older RoH boys who are no longer in school have remained in Gitega and will keep an eye on the house. Honda had various ideas about turning it into a community centre or a place for the physically and mentally handicapped, but we have discovered that getting permission to do anything from the local authorities is a high on impossible task – the administration in Gitega is very complicated. For now, we wait for further direction from heaven to see how to proceed!

Christmas: This Christmas, thanks to the generosity of friends and supporters, especially our faithful car-booters Ed and Barbara Moulton, we are able to do our 'Bless the neighbourhood' outreach on Christmas

Eve. This will provide treats to over 1000 children who would otherwise not celebrate Christmas at all. We will also be able to buy new outfits for all those in our care and feed over 300 people on Christmas Day.

Burundi - the challenges of living in a country on the edge:

After 2 months in the West, returning to a country that still has no fuel was a challenge. Since July, Honda managed to refuel his diesel car at the pump only twice. The rest of the time he has to purchase fuel on the black-market for 3-4 times the usual price. Sadly, black-market fuel brought over the border from Congo in jerry cans, is often contaminated and as a result of using poor quality fuel, Honda's Kia is no longer drivable. When we were in England, we spent a fortune buying parts to DHL out to Burundi, but sadly nothing worked and we have now been advised the only thing left to do to resurrect the Kia, is purchase another engine! So for now, we have a very expensive silver garden ornament - these are the frustrations that no one prepares you for when you say you want to go on the mission-field... Thankfully, earlier in the year Honda had purchased an ancient Toyota Prado which he had hoped to restore to be able to sell, as an income generating project. God's timing is perfect – after being worked on, the Prado is now drivable and being old and pretty basic, is not fazed by poor quality fuel, so Honda is once again mobile...when he can find fuel!

Last week I read a report published by OLUCOME, the 'Observatory for the for the fight against corruption and economic embezzlement', calling for the government to take the courageous decision to resign because it is unable to find a solution to the generalized crisis that the country is going through! I can't imagine that happening, but it did make for interesting reading... Surveys conducted by OLUCOME between April and November 2024, show that prices of basic necessities have increased by between 31% and 400% - you can imagine what affect this has had on the population whose wages have remained static. People here are desperate and are losing hope, with many families in the city now eating only once a day. Next year is the beginning of the election season but most doubt that their votes will make a difference to the outcome...

I recently became aware of the plight of 2 young boys who attend the church I helped to plant 5 years ago. They have been faithfully coming to church but are very thin and are often ill with malaria. After the boys talked with our pastor we discovered that they have no family and at night they sleep in a goat shed near the church. In the past, local fishermen have shared food with them, but now the men can't even feed themselves, so unless the boys can get money or food by begging, they regularly don't eat. I was struck by the faithfulness of these boys who always attend church on Sunday morning and the Friday night prayer meeting unless prevented by sickness... and so many Christians instead choose to stay in bed on a Sunday...

Joining the RoH family is not an option because the church is on the opposite side of the city to where our children's home is located and the boys want to stay near the church. We have bought them clothes, blankets, and have arranged for the boys to get a hot meal each day, but if anyone would like to help us help them further, with accommodation, schooling etc, please get in touch.

One of the young men who grew up in Restoration of Hope and has been one of our greatest success stories over the last 20 years was arrested after blowing the whistle on corruption he had witnessed for many years in the office where he worked. Rather than being thankful that grand theft was discovered,

he was instead accused of stealing and held by the secret police for months. He has now been transferred to the Central prison. Please be praying for his case to be thrown out so that he can return home to his wife and 2 young sons.

With a GDP per capita of \$237/£189 Burundi remains the poorest country in the world and has been described as a nation on its knees. The greatest struggle is that people have lost hope that things will change, and the government does not seem to have any solutions. Thankfully we know that in the darkness Jesus is the light of the world, and He is the one we look to at this time...

Prayer Points:

1. Pray for the peace of Burundi and that the government will re-open the border with Rwanda as soon as possible. As we head into election season next year there continue to be rumours circulating, both substantiated and unsubstantiated, which are very troubling. We have no desire to see Burundi plunged back into genocide or civil conflict.
2. Pray for the government – if anyone is in positions where they are hampering not helping the country to progress, pray for a spirit of departure to move them on to pastures new!
3. Pray for our Christmas outreach and celebrations to be a blessing to everyone in our care.
4. Give thanks to God for the amazing way He has provided for RoH for 20 years and ask Him to bless those who have been a blessing to us for so long.
5. Pray for wisdom to know the best decisions to make as we lead RoH into 2025.

Nahimana Family News:



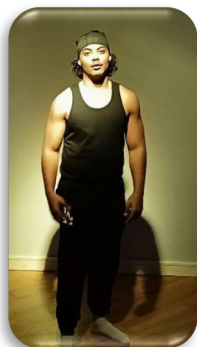
Bethany is in her final year of nursing at the University of Birmingham. She recently returned from a month in Brazil conducting data collection for her master's dissertation project. Bethany loves to travel and so this was a fabulous opportunity to see more of the world. In October she was ecstatic to finally pass her driving test on her first attempt, 5 years after first starting lessons!

Thank you for praying for Bethany - after various tests and heart tracings the conclusion is that her heart is anatomically fine however she has a variety of different arrhythmias. In older patients invasive procedures would be offered to try to reset her heart into a normal rhythm, but being so young the Cardiologist has said that medication is the best option for now. Bethany is not easily fazed and so gets on with life, living with the side effects of her condition, whilst trying to remember to take her medication as prescribed!

Abigail has settled into life at Oklahoma Christian University like a duck to water – she is the happiest and most contented I have ever seen her. She is blessed with an amazing ability to make good friends and is experiencing true American hospitality which is wonderful to see. Abi is enjoying her course, although the American system is different to UK universities. For the first 2 years she has to study General Ed alongside her psychology major. Being examined on American History was quite unexpected, but so far she is passing every class which is great. She has been able to get a job working in the Library on campus which will help to towards her University expenses. God miraculously provided for her first years fees through



generous friends and family, and we continue to trust Him to provide for the next 3 years. This truly is a journey of faith for Abi and if anyone would like to contribute towards her fees, the account details are at the bottom of this letter.



Josiah passed his IGCSE exams and since September has been studying at The Paulet Sixth Form in Burton. He seems to be settling in well – being a boy, he doesn't say much but assures me that if there are problems he will let me know! His host family are awesome, and Josiah really feels at home there. After school every day Jos heads to the gym for a couple of hours and has already overtaken Honda and I on lifting records. He is my man-child – aged 16 but looking and lifting like a full-grown man, and a very strong one at that! Jos was so happy to experience snow for the first time in November – quite a big deal for a child who has spent their whole life in Africa and never really felt cold before!

Honda and I are adjusting to life without children at home – he seems to be adjusting better than me, but I think when children leave home it always hits the Mum the most. Our house hasn't truly been empty – Grace, one of our CRIB daughters, has been living with us for the last 3 months and Rodrigue, the son of our cook is also staying here with his Dad, but it's definitely different to the life we have known up to now. This Christmas Abi will be joining Jos and Betha in England, staying at my parent's home for their first Christmas together in the UK. I am grateful for my siblings and their families who will ensure that Christmas is a memorable time but am somewhat jealous that we won't be there. Bethany will be graduating in December 2025, so that will be our first UK Christmas in 19 years!

Honda is kept busy overseeing Restoration of Hope, running his watch shop, being Dad and mentor to over a hundred young people and taking care of his sometimes-emotional wife! I am still trying to work out what need to be my priorities in this new season. I am running a woman's bible study, leading the Freedom in Christ ministry in Burundi and on leadership at CLM Muha Church, which recently celebrated its 5-year anniversary. We were excited to witness a miracle of provision at the anniversary service, when after praying, food for 400 people fed at least 600, with people being so full that the catering company had food to take home, including meat!!! In Burundi, meat is usually finished first, so for people to say they were full and could eat no more, was a total miracle! I'm also involved in counselling, mentoring and discipling young people and still drag myself to the gym everyday in an attempt to make the most of the body I have been given – 'temple maintenance' is a never-ending task. Plantar fasciitis and Tennis elbow have somewhat curtailed my weight-lifting and cardio exploits, but I'm nothing if not determined! (some would say stubborn).

Thank you so much for standing with us through the highs and lows of life in Africa - your prayers and support are transforming lives and extending the kingdom of God here in Burundi. May God richly bless you in every way and may He grant you a Christmastime filled with tidings of great joy.

Much love,



Honda, Libby, Bethany, Abigail, Josiah and all our extended RoH Family

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If anyone would like to support the work of Restoration of Hope, our charity bank account details are as follows:

Bank: Metro Bank

Sort Code: 23-05-80

Account Name: HOPE IN BURUNDI (HIB)

Account Number: 47530970

If your gift is designated for something specific, please let us know so that the money is used correctly.

If anyone would like to help Abigail with her university expenses, flights etc, the account specifically for that is:

Account name: Laurene Ford

Sort code: 09-01-29

Account Number: 88022473