



Restoring the Breach

Steve & Rachel Good

December 2015

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is always a good time to be reminded to express gratefulness to God and to others for what they mean in our lives. Being thankful is sometimes easy and sometimes hard. But as we give thanks even when we don't feel like it, God gives us joy. A life of thankfulness brings peace to us and to those around us. Thankfulness is the language of love.

We were grateful to have a special thanksgiving time with our small group. We meet every week and have grown to love these friends as we encourage and sharpen each other.



Church Partner Visit

Rachel joined a team from Grand Rapids in the village of Chinhangane one week in October. It was exciting to see the interaction of the people with the team who told Bible stories using the Simply the Story approach. There were many good discussions and eyes opened to the truths of God's word.



Pictured is a discipleship group welcoming us with songs and dancing as Mozambicans do so well.

Steve in Burundi and Congo

In September Steve went to Burundi for his last micro-finance board meeting with Turame. Another organization is taking the lead role instead of World Relief. It is fulfilling to note that Turame has been able to develop a successful agricultural loan product to assist small-scale rice farmers partially due to Steve's guidance. "Successful agricultural" loan products are generally an oxymoron in the micro-finance world. Please pray for Burundi as a nation.

In Congo the Hekima microfinance team is experiencing more peace in the country. However, they have not yet been successful in creating a working agricultural product. Steve traveled up into the mountains where the three-year savings and potato project with WR had just finished. The team met with all of the farmer groups and held focus group discussions about the successes and challenges of the project. It was intriguing to hear how savings groups, coupled with agriculture has transformed the lives of people who were formerly displaced due to warlords and militias controlling the area. In the three years of the project, at least 942 metric tons of potatoes were produced, sold and eaten by the 700 farmers in this project.



One of our key findings was regarding money management. Savings groups are known to be "transformational". It was wonderful to see that the money management, savings mindset and investment thinking changes learned in

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Burundi and Congo cont.

savings groups were directly transferred into the farmers groups by combining the two programs. As one of the interviewees stated, "Farmer Groups could not succeed without savings. They would have even eaten their seed being sprouted for the next potato season." One farmer group said, "We learned how to look after ourselves, how to keep money and not just spend it. It helped people to be united. Putting our money together helped us learn to trust each other. With the cash shareout at the end, we bought assets of livestock and land, paid school fees and received medical assistance. This project helps us to move out of poverty and has changed our lives. We are able to buy food and clothes for our families. We are thankful for these teachings. We did not know how to save, but we are now able to satisfy our needs."

What Else Has Been Happening?

- ◇ We had some opportunities to speak – Steve at a Christian Businessmen's Meeting on the topic "Anointed for Business" and both of us at our church.
- ◇ Rachel was asked to teach English to some WR colleagues. This is new to her and challenging, but also fun.
- ◇ Leadership is influence and we do this by discipling, encouraging, and working behind the scenes to make a difference.
- ◇ Steve is finding new markets in Maputo for coconut oil, rather than shipping most of it to South Africa. The business is stable and we are thankful for the progress it is making and the lives it is impacting.
- ◇ Please continue praying for Mozambique and our resident visas. We are waiting for our work permit to be approved.

Sunday School Christmas Program



Rachel helped organize the Sunday School Christmas program. This happens early at our church because so many people are from other countries and they return home as soon as school is out the end of November. Our theme this

year was wrapped up in the song "It's About the Cross."

May God bless you with discomfort
At easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships
So that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger
At injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people,
So that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears
To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and
To turn their pain into joy

And may God bless you with enough foolishness
To believe that you can make a difference in the world,
So that you can do what others claim cannot be done
To bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

Traditional Franciscan Blessing



We pray you will sense God's presence as we celebrate Christmas. Thank you so much for your generosity, prayers and friendships.

Steve & Rachel

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