

Rwanda Direct Newsletter

Spring 2022



Dear Friends, time for an update!

Finance

As a charity we like to keep you informed about our financial situation. We realise that we haven't done this over the last two years and so we wish to rectify this. 2020 and 2021 were quite extraordinary years as you will appreciate. Normally we have received on average about £15,000 a year in gifts. Amazingly, this is what happened:-

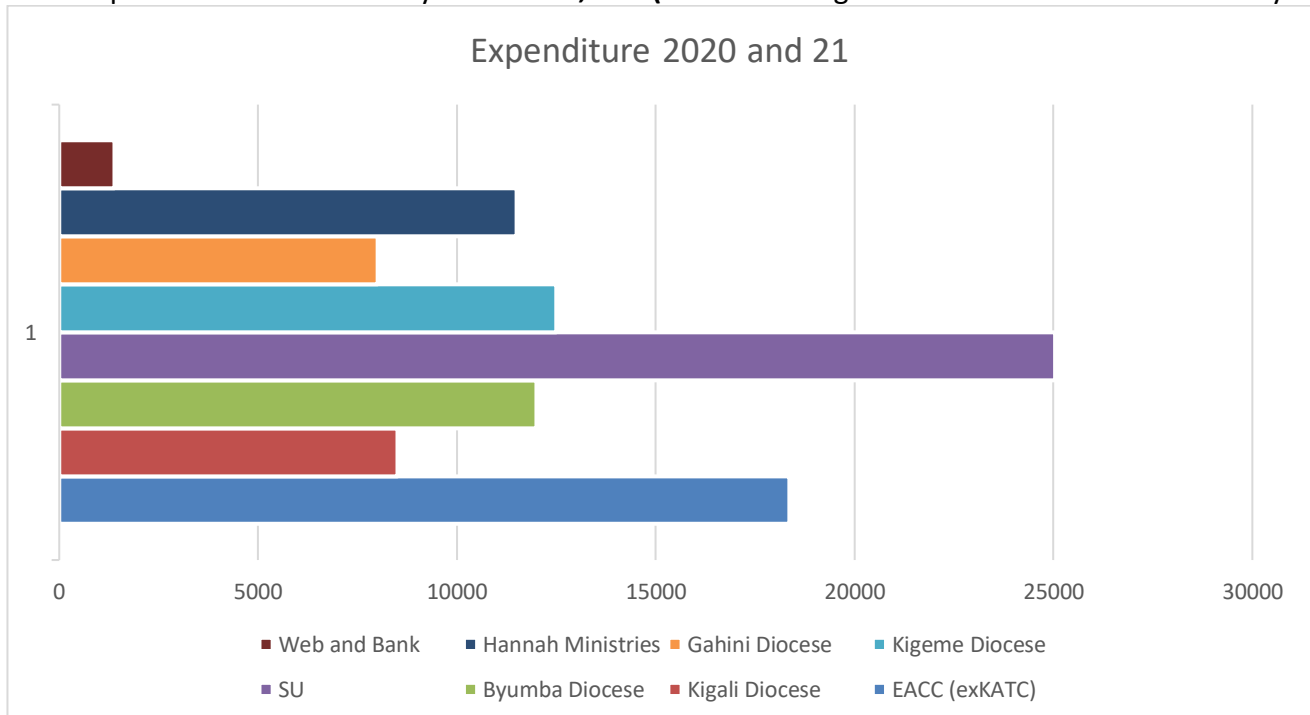
- 2020 Balance brought forward £13,322 plus new gifts of £67,553 Total £80,874
- 2021 new gifts of £27,078 (n.b. no balance brought forward as income accounted for in 2020)

Total income over the two years of **£107,953!**

Against that our expenditure of course soared and gave income to our Church partners in Rwanda at a time of desperate need; their income fell to near zero due to Covid-19 restrictions. So this is what happened:-

- 2020 Expenditure of £71,796
- 2021 Expenditure of £25,502

Total Expenditure over the two years of **£97,298.** (The remaining balance has been allocated this year)



Notes :- Restricted income has gone to the specified partners as intended and further funds provided to increase our support from general giving. The administration costs of our web site and other sundry costs have been covered by a specific gift, so all other gifts go 100% to our Rwandan partners.

God has been so good over these last two years and for that we are truly thankful. We now look to Him in this post Covid time for what He wants to do as giving has dropped. The needs are there, primarily training and evangelism (the Rwandan churches key priorities), but also to help Scripture Union develop and become financially more secure after the battering of this last year. Also, our one development/aid project, Hannah Ministries continues to need support. Pray for God's way!!

Byumba Diocese

We have had this report from Byumba Diocese:-

Funds intended for the Diocese as it was stated that it would be used to support the work of the Diocese as you come out of the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic. The following are the ways through which the Diocesan funds were used.



Distribution of food relief to at least one Christian from each parish and sub Parish.

Various Christians were assisted in buying some food relief and other basic needs such as laundry items that would help them because even though we were slightly coming out of the pandemic, most of the Christians were still locked in that life where they had to be helped because they now rarely find something to feed on unlike in the previous times where casual works were very much common and these would help the most needy to for example find some clothes to wash and in exchange would get some food or little money, they would dig however these days people do it on their own.

These people therefore are very much common and many within the parishes however due to the inability to satisfy them all at once within the Diocese. We just selected at least one from each Parish and offered them such items that have been mentioned above.

Supporting retired Reverends.

As you know, we have retired reverends within the Diocese who now would at least be benefiting from the different schemes of the Diocese but because of the pandemic, they depend on their own except for little support that goes to them when we find and have a way. This is intended to offer them a better life even in the years out of their service though the ministry of God is continuous without any age where it stops from.

These pastors were also among our Diocesan priorities where all of them were given an envelope of 30,000 frw each to support them though it could not be enough but as the saying goes "a half loaf is better than none".

Supporting Widows to the pastors.

We have almost six widows within the Diocese whose husbands were reverends and died in service, whenever the diocese receives funds as help, we usually give them according to how much we have, it was our plan that we should always support them with a given amount in a given period of time however this has not been very much possible to us every time due to limited funds. We also gave them an amount equalling to what was given to the retired pastors and they were very much happy and joyful.



Supporting the Diocesan staff still suffering from the consequences of COVID-19.

Up to now, there are some of the Diocesan employees who have not yet got their contracts renewed because of the virus, they are however sometimes invited in different occasions and they are little money for the service they deliver so the Diocese also thinks about them in various ways and so they were also assisted with little we had to support them financially.

Active Pastors were also assisted from this fund.

Supporting other groups excluding the pastors who do a great role of reaching out to all Christians and reaching the word of God seemed to be meaningless and a discouragement to them. It's been a very long time without while pastors work and they earn nothing at all because of the effects of COVID-19, or they earn like an amount in the range of 10,000frw to 20,000frw which cannot satisfy them with their families as most of them even have to pay for the school necessities. They were each given 25000 frw which could not in actual sense solve all the problems but "without water drops, there could be no oceans".

Scripture Union

Scripture Union's work across Rwanda and in the capital Kigali, is very significant. It provides the only daily Bible Reading notes for adults and young people, supports Christian Unions in secondary schools and universities, supports Sunday Schools across Rwanda with materials and ideas and much more. Income has been severely damaged over these last two years, and this is a real challenge as SU has debts to repay on the wonderful Prayer and Retreat Centre. These loan repayments and the wider work were being covered by the income from the buildings on the site. That was lost in Covid times.

Thanks to a generous donation in 2020, Rwanda Direct was able to send a specific grant to help SU to hire a new, experienced manager and staff to run their guesthouse and hospitality centre more effectively. Jean Baptiste Bugiruwenda (General Secretary of SU) writes:-

'In SU we also are blessed to have a new figure, a new sales and marketing manager. He is a saved Christian, an experienced man of 45 years old. He has grown up in Burundi and has worked in hotels like Novotel and LEMIGO. Monday 7th Feb is the day when he is effectively starting his Job. Sincerely speaking I can't hide you that I contributed a lot in his recruitment although he went through different tests. Pray for me and for him so that he meets our expectations. May he be a blessing for SU and in particular for our guest house. Thank you for your prayers and your concern.'



Photo of Guesthouse staff in training

The future plan we have for our guest house is that in our business plan, we dream to increase the products we are offering. We would wish to start a coffee shop and a bakery. We kept aside Rwf 6 millions thinking that this amount may help. The experienced people say that this is just for the espresso. We plan to see how the Centre would contribute. COVID is now decreasing, we hope that the income will increase and that it will allow us to make this happen.

Pray also for them as Revd Canon Jean-Baptiste Bugiruwenda, SU's current General Secretary is due to retire this year. Pray for the right successor. Jean-Baptiste also asks:-

'Frankly speaking in SU Administration we are financially struggling. We are now a lot depending on the Centre, what is not good. Pray especially for me. I am fearing to leave my successor in a critical situation.'

Bishop Manasseh Gahima of Gahini - Visit

Bishop Manasseh is planning a week's visit to the UK at the end of June. This is to start the process of preparing for the celebration of the centenary of the Anglican Church in Rwanda in 2025. What a hundred years! Gahini in Rwanda was the birthplace of the East African Revival, one of the most powerful revival movements in recent times. The impact of this revival is still spreading through Africa. Of course, the country has also had the horror of the demonic genocide. Bishop Manasseh has been asked by Archbishop Mbanda and the House of Bishops to lead the preparation, hence his visit. Please pray that the visit will be fruitful. If you are interested and would like to meet Bishop Manasseh, or if you know people who were involved in the Revival in Rwanda, do get in touch as below!

Possible Visit to Rwanda - 2023

The world is a very challenging place at the moment. The horror we are seeing in Ukraine shows the power of evil when it is unleashed. That power is all too familiar in Rwanda, yet there has been considerable healing and transformation since the terrors of 1994. The Church is alive and contributing greatly to the healing of the nation. Every now and again Rwanda Directs enables individuals to visit together to learn more from the Church about what God is doing there. It's not a holiday, it's a time to build relationships and learn, for us to be changed, and for blessings to be shared as we fellowship with God's family in Rwanda.

We are thinking about a visit possibly in February 2023. If you might be interested to join this trip, do let us know using the email below.

Monthly Prayer

Covid has taught us many things and one of them is about the possibility of Zoom! We have stopped our Prayer gatherings in Ipswich and will now be meeting by Zoom on the 1st Friday of each month. Our partners know we pray and they have often told us how precious that is to them, so do come and join with us and be part of this vital ministry and keep up to date with news. To do this get in touch using the contact details at the end of this letter and we will let you have the Zoom details each month.

Conclusion

Our world is feeling very unstable, yet the Kingdom of God is advancing in the face of horrible evil. We may feel anxious, but we mustn't let fear take control. Listening to God's still small voice becomes imperative and seeking His Kingdom is vital. Let us join together in prayer and giving as we seek God's blessing on His people, His Church in Rwanda. Let's not forget what He has done there in planting and growing His Church, nor forget the demonic attack that produced the fastest genocide in history – 800,000 people killed in three months. Steadfast, committed relationships are what bring about change. Let's maintain that!

LET'S PRAY AND SEEK GOD FOR HIS PEOPLE IN RWANDA!

Newsletter Circulation – Spread the News Further!

If you know of others who may be interested in helping the Church in Rwanda, do share this Newsletter with them and suggest they get in contact with us as below.

All data is stored with due regard to GDPR legislation, so we will not share contact details with anyone without permission.

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