

BELONG TOGETHER

Spring 2021
Quarterly Update



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TAYLOR'S NOTE

In this season, I have realized there are few things on earth as precious as a community in Christ. For those who believe in the name of Jesus, God has given the right to be His children (John 1:12), meaning that we no longer see ourselves by any earthly identity, but rather as "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19).

When my husband, Jackson, and I were in Rwanda last summer, God opened the eyes of our heart to the Gospel and showed us the importance of community in the church, which is not a building, but the body of believers. Through the study of God's Word, we learned how Christians are meant to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16). The fellowship of Christians was purposed by God for the edification of His people and the furthering of the Gospel, the only message which can save. This gathering is not to be forsaken (Hebrews 10:25).

In Belong Together, God has allowed us to create communities to read and study the Bible with young men and women in Rwanda. Our ministry leaders, by God's grace, are able to teach and preach the Gospel with small groups of young refugees, that they may hear the Truth and be saved. We pray that we may see men and women come to know the Gospel and become part of the church.

This season, especially when gathering in person hasn't always been possible, we have seen more and more the importance of community. Just as the early believers, we desire to "(continue) steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42) in the church, and to have communities where young men and women may explore the Bible, ask questions, and receive sound teaching.

In this Spring 2021 Quarterly Update, we are excited to share with you what God has made possible through communities in Belong Together studying His Word. We thank God for you, and how He has provided through you for these communities to grow and continue. Our prayer is that you also are part of a community in the church where God's Word is truly preached and He is glorified. We hope the Spirit makes the community of the saints all the more precious to you, and that in every way He allows, He may use you to help share the Gospel in all the earth.

With gratitude and joy in Christ,



Taylor Gakundi
Founder and President

ORNELLA'S UPDATE

Ornella leads Belong Together in Rwanda, and has been part of the ministry since we began in 2018. We thank God for Ornella's salvation, and for the wisdom and dedication He has given her to direct the ministry.

2020 and the beginning of 2021 was not easy as physical meetings were impossible most of the time in Rwanda. But even in the midst of this, God's Grace was there, sustaining us through it all! Two women in Belong Together, Lyse and Aria, received salvation, believing in Jesus during the pandemic period! In this season, other BT members had more time for the Bible and for self examination. While it's a hard time for most of us, we keep seeing God's compassion and mercy towards the people whom He has chosen to call His beloved.

I'm currently doing online and physical Bible Studies with BT women. I praise God for how I see the seed of His word growing in some of them. But the most exciting part is the memorization of the book of James that I'm doing with Lyse and Aria. We are finishing the last chapter and the joy it's bringing our hearts is so much that we are planning to continue with the book of Ephesians soon, and plan to include more people who will accept to join us.

The goal is for BT members to be saturated with the word of God and we pray that the Holy Spirit might use it to sanctify us and make us look more like Christ. I wish everyone would start this exercise! It seemed like a mountain before us when we started. But by God's Grace, we're succeeding with it! We keep remembering king David saying that he has kept God's word in his heart so that he may not sin against Him and it gives us courage to keep going on. And seeing the two growing so much in the knowledge of God through His word is very encouraging!

We thank God for you all and for how God is using you to be part of His ministry. May He always use us for the growth of His kingdom!



MEET BRIAN

Once we are saved, God calls us to share the Gospel unashamedly.

When we first met Brian back in 2019, he was working with the Red Cross at the Mahama Refugee Camp in Rwanda, home to nearly 70,000 refugees from Burundi. Brian shared with us stories of young refugees who felt hopeless in their circumstances, some even to the point of taking their lives. Knowing the true hope of salvation in Jesus Christ, on his lunch breaks he began sharing the Gospel with a small group of men and women in the camp.

Towards the end of 2020, Brian volunteered with Belong Together, leading Bible studies with 20 young refugees in Mahama. We thank God it was His will, and His provision through your support, to have Brian be a full-time BT ministry leader in 2021 and officially expand our ministry to Mahama. We're excited for you to get to know Brian more!





"I am Kamusime Brian, born in Rwanda and raised in Uganda in a family of 12 siblings. I am married to my lovely wife, Aline Kamikazi, and currently live in Kigali.

I grew up seeing my family go to church on Christmas day only. When I began high school, I met a group of students who preached a gospel of man's works to earn salvation. But in 2013, God opened my ears through the Good News of Jesus Christ, and now I am living a life of freedom without condemnation.

I believe that salvation is a free gift to all who place their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. I am incapable of doing anything to earn salvation by my own effort.

I am grateful by God's grace to work at the Belong Together ministry to build the body of Christ through discipleship.

During my leisure time I love swimming, having conversations with other people, and sharing God's Word. I also love dancing, songs of worshiping God, and seeing beautiful creatures like animals and birds in Rwanda's national parks.

I studied land administration and management, but am passionate about making disciples of Jesus Christ. My prayer is to see a young generation in Rwanda giving their lives to Christ through the Gospel."

MEN'S GROUP & CURRICULUM

*Update from Emmanuel Masengesho,
Rwanda ministry leader*

Beginning February 2021, I started an online Bible Study with men from Belong Together, going through the book, "Thoughts for young men" by J. C Ryle (1816-1900). After reading the book, I knew it was very good material for young men, since it was written addressing them specifically, showing them the need to consider their spiritual life, and giving them some guidelines on how to care for their souls. Another added advantage of the book is that it has not just the book of JC, but also a study guide with discussion questions.

Men were glad to start it, and since that time we have two sessions per week, one on Tuesday and another on Friday evenings. Everyone goes to read the section we would discuss, and then we come together to share through the study questions, but using the Bible as our guide. The book is in the form of lessons. We have covered two lessons so far (Reasons for Exhorting Young Men and Dangers to Young Men), and are now on the third lesson which is "General Counsel to Young Men." People have been showing interest in it, and sometimes we had to save a topic for a different day due to the heat of the discussion, since the book touches the practical lives of young men even today. I have seen some encouraging changes as we go through it, and have seen even some men sharing

quotes from it on their WhatsApp status. When we began, we were doing it only on Friday, until they asked me to make it twice a week.

With our main mission in Belong Together being to preach the Gospel to people, as we go through the book, I always try to bring these men to the point that being careless about your soul is the last thing a sane mind can do. Since God is real, his word is true, and his law is sure, there is no other possible way of standing before God except we be found clothed with the righteousness of Christ. I know that there are a lot of things these men need to learn, but until one comes to the full conviction of his sin, his need for Christ, and to trust in him fully, whatever religious knowledge he might have is useless. This is why we try as much as we can, to make the Gospel message be central in every topic.

By God's grace also, I am almost at the end of preparing a study guide we will be using for Belong Together meetings. I have used some other materials to help me prepare, but emphasized what is needed for us in our context -which is the basics of Christian faith- so that people might come to know what true faith is, and possess that faith, which is the ultimate goal of evangelism. The material will be fully in Kinyarwanda.



STEPS AHEAD

We are grateful to God to announce that we have begun working with a consulting firm in Rwanda to apply for Belong Together's legal status there! Being registered in Rwanda will give the ministry greater opportunities to grow, support the local church, and provide for the spiritual needs of people throughout the country.

With our registration in Rwanda, we will be pursuing a new project as part of Belong Together's mission to share the Gospel. We are excited to share our news with you in a few months and pray in thanksgiving for whom God has called to be part of the growth of the ministry!



PRAYER REQUESTS

At Belong Together, we want the base of all we do to be built upon prayer. Prayer is nothing small to us. Thank you for joining us to pray for our needs, and as the Spirit leads you.

Registration in Rwanda: The board reached a decision to partner with a consulting firm in Kigali to pursue our non-profit legal status in Rwanda. We are particularly grateful to be working with someone who believes the Gospel and understands our mission. Pray for unity between our team and theirs, for clear communication, and for God's grace to cover the registration process. Pray God be glorified in every step, and that it may be His will for us to be registered this year.

Sanctification: We are encouraged and excited to see two women in the ministry receive the Gospel and profess faith in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Please pray that God may guide our leaders to disciple them, for their maturity in the faith, and that through the study of God's Word, the Holy Spirit would continue His work of sanctification, conforming them (and us) into the likeness of Christ.

Endurance: We all long with eagerness to see the sons and daughters of God revealed, and in that, we also trust God's perfect timing. As we continue in the ministry of God's Word, please pray that we do not become discouraged, but keep joyfully planting seeds of the Gospel in the young men and women in our ministry, trusting the Spirit with every outcome.

Our Future: We are excited to share with you soon a project that is part of our registration in Rwanda. As we research and prepare, pray God would give us wisdom and keep our focus on the Gospel, that this project may be used for His glory and the spiritual benefit of many.



PARTNER WITH US

God is the one who provides for our needs and we depend on Him. We pray to God for our needs and He answers through supporters like you who love Biblical truth, who want to stand with us, and who have a desire to see the Word of God spread around the world and in Rwanda.

Currently, our financial needs are for *private health insurance coverage for a full-time ministry leader (\$42/month, or \$500/year)*, and for our *Rwanda registration consulting work (\$300/month)*.

***Recurring donations are a great help to
continue in our commitments in ministry!***

\$25
Month

*Provides for a meal and
transportation for one small
group Bible study*

\$50
Month

*Provides for 5
translated Bibles*

\$100
Month

*Provides for the meetings
of the ten men & women in
our Gihembe Camp group*

HOW TO GIVE

If it is God's will for you to be part of Belong Together in a financial capacity, we thank God for what He has given you, that you would share with us for the furthering of the Gospel in Rwanda.

To give, you can do so online through PayPal on our website

belongtogether.org/donate

Or, you can send your support via mail! As we are relocating our US office, please make checks payable to:

**Belong Together
6670 Gulf of Mexico Dr
Longboat Key, FL 34228**

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