



HAN Newsletter 8 January 2018

Hello to our dear Hands Across Nations supporters! This newsletter is actually an article that was written for the Chewelah Independent Newspaper in early December. May you enjoy the story of a young man's new life in Christ! A second newsletter will be sent shortly to give you insight into the Christmas traditions of Uganda. Carolyn is now back in Uganda, happy to have rejoined the HAN Uganda family!

Also, please take a few minutes to check out our fantastic new website at: www.handsacrossnations.com. Sherry LaVigne of Addy, WA, gave us a huge gift in developing a new site with updated style and organization. Michelle Lancaster, one of our HAN Advisory Committee members will be managing it for us. And my part will be sharing new information and progress happening here in Uganda. We would love to hear your comments and questions through the contact page!

Changed Lives in Prison and Beyond

One young man, Amos, was a dejected and lonely inmate in Lira Main Prison. He had committed a crime, and was convicted to several years in prison. He admits to having done many wrong things and deserved prison. We met him several years ago as he was trained to be one of our initial Literacy Teachers in Lira Main Prison. At that time, it was a way to have something positive to do. Through teaching the other inmates in our "Learning to Read to Read the Bible" classes, he was introduced to Jesus in the lessons and came to know that he is a unique creation by God, made for a special purpose. He also recognized that everyone is created by God for a unique purpose. Not only did he discover that He is loved by God, but that he could be forgiven for all that he had done that was wrong, and begin again. Amos eagerly dedicated himself to living the rest of his life in service to God and those around him.

After teaching literacy classes, Amos volunteered to become a teacher of English as a second language as he was fluent in English. Jean Homer, formerly Jenkins Middle School Principal, taught nine men how to help their fellow inmates to speak, read and write in English, Uganda's national language. For 6 months Amos and the other teachers diligently worked 2-3 hours a day, 5 days a week to teach over 50 men. With several other literacy and English teachers he was suddenly transferred to Erute prison, a small cotton farming prison on the outskirts of Lira. They had no literacy program but the Officer in charge and the welfare officer were open

to starting classes. The transferred inmates were the core of the Teacher Training Workshop HAN held at Erute prison, with 18 new teachers trained, and 78 inmates signed up for classes. There were only 128 total prisoners, so more than 75% of them became part of the new literacy program!

Amos was a model prisoner, making a significant difference in the future of so many men at Erute as he and several other literacy teachers also held Bible Studies, prayer meetings and church services, introducing other inmates to Jesus.



Amos was released from Erute prison in December 2017. HAN provided him with a new set of clothing after his long prison stay, and the cost of his transportation home. However, before heading home to his family and community, his first request was to be baptized.



Our head teacher trainer, Peter, HAN co-director, Keith Jones and a pastor, accompanied Amos to the one local pool to complete his dedication to Christ with his baptism.

In less than 2 weeks, Amos has organized the leaders of churches in his home community to start a literacy program. In several weeks HAN will hold a Teacher Training Workshop, and his community will be launched into their “Learning to Read to Read the Bible” program! The community members have called him “Saul renamed Paul” remembering Saul of Tarsus in the Bible who was killing new Christians in the name of God. He became a Christian himself, was renamed Paul, and wrote much of the New Testament in the Bible!

Today, Amos is just one example of the redeeming power of Jesus’ sacrifice for us on the cross. All of us can be forgiven and become a “new person” in Christ. The old, messed up life can be wiped away, and a new life started. In the Living Bible, 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!” During and after Christmas time, may we have new life in the Jesus whose birth we celebrate!

Feel free to write to us at keith.jones@handsacrossnations.com and carolyn.jones@handsacrossnations.com.

Sharing the love of Christ in Practical Ways, Keith and Carolyn Jones