



HANDS ACROSS NATIONS  
IT'S A NEW YEAR!  
25 FEBRUARY, 2019

Happy Belated New Year from Hands Across Nations (HAN)! You haven't heard from Keith and Carolyn, not because nothing is happening..... actually so much is happening we haven't had time to write it all down!

We've been back in Uganda for just over 2 months without a working car but with 2 wonderful well working motorcycles thanks to all those who helped to sponsor the motorcycles through the desserts at our annual Benefit Auction in 2017! We are in the process of looking for a used vehicle which can seat at least 10 people. We know God will provide the right one at the right time, and request your prayers in that direction.



Keith, our office manager, Lucy, and Benard, our trusted motorcycle taxi (boda) driver go out on Fridays to take Bojo (greens for cooking) from our garden to take to the beggars who come to town each week. Many of them are now members of one of our In-town "Learning to Read to Read the Bible" classes.

In the meantime, we are spending a lot of time closer to home and big advances are being made especially in how the prisons are affecting literacy among the inmates. More and more inmates have signed up for the "Learning to Read to Read the Bible" literacy classes, and after graduating in an astounding 4 months, are now entering English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. That has meant we

have needed to train many more teachers and have had our first classes to train men and women to become teacher-trainers themselves!



Our literacy and ESL trainers put on a 5 day seminar to train teachers for both programs. At the graduation of new Literacy and ESL Teacher Trainers, Keith acted out the story of the Leper who came to Jesus and said, “if you are willing, you can heal me”, and Jesus said “I am willing”. Then Keith changed the plea to an illiterate prisoner saying “If you are willing, you could teach me to read”, and several new teachers said “I am willing”! Their hearts are becoming open to helping “the least of these”.



Recently a class of 75 prisoners graduated from the “Learning to Read to Read the Bible” program at Lira Main Prison, and another group are already in the second primer book and will be graduating soon.





Many of the prisoners in the classes have become believers in Christ and are learning to live according to the Bible. A number of Muslims have believed in Jesus as well.



The Regional Prison Commander who is also a pastor, is especially supportive and willing to be a part of finding ways to expand the literacy program to other prisons. He cares deeply for those under his care, and is a prayerful man.



Our 3 classy women, Grace, Rachel and Lucy are immensely helpful with all the extra things that need to be done to make a graduation successful. Martin, on the right, a former prisoner and coordinator of 5 literacy groups which graduated in the Lira Main Prison, is now free, and coordinates classes in his village. His class of mostly disabled men and women, will graduate next week.

Outside the prisons, other changes are taking place as well. We are running to keep up with teacher training workshops, printing enough books for the classes, and attending graduations! Currently all but one of the Teacher Training Workshops in the last year have been initiated by former prisoners, and we are now starting to graduate their classes.



The one Workshop initiated by Agena Bonny, a high school biology/chemistry teacher and youth pastor who was not a prisoner, ended up with 7 classes totaling 220 men and women who completed all 72 lessons, with just over 52% passing the exam. Most of them had never attended school. Those who didn't pass are ready to start again this week!



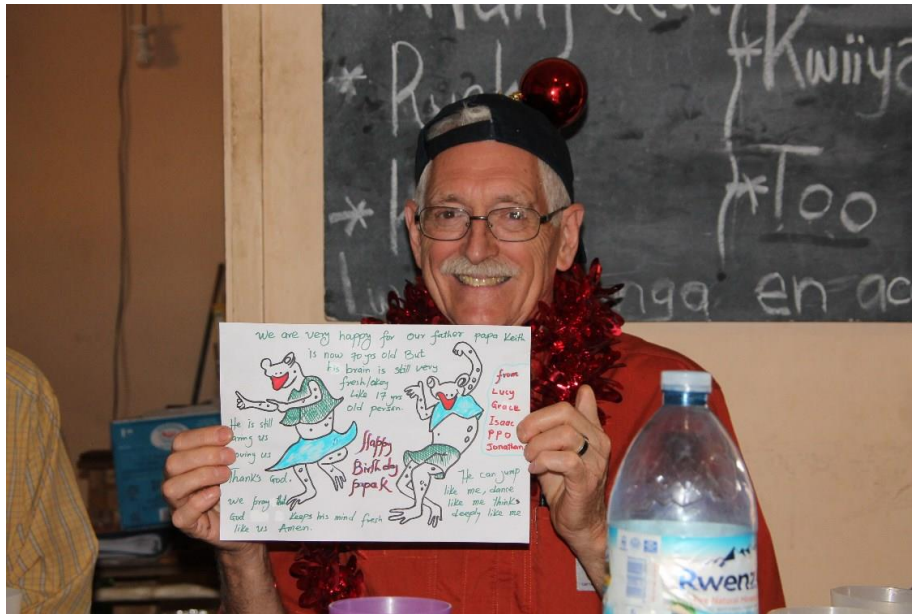


Bonny heard about our “Learning to Read to Read the Bible” literacy program through a beggar named Alex (in the photo above with our teacher trainer, Peter) who we had helped and invited him to join the Lira Lepers literacy class. Alex was despised and outcast in his community. He is now a Christ follower and is appreciated by the many who have learned to read because of him. Bonny has now taken the ESL teacher training and will be training teachers to start English classes in his village!



The top graduate of the 220 in Bonny’s classes, had only completed 5<sup>th</sup> grade a long time ago and is a disabled woman, partially paralyzed on her right side.

Keith passed a special milestone a couple of weeks ago.....



He celebrated his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday with his Ugandan “family” in high style!



Each of us expressed gratefulness and love for “Papa Keith” who has been the hardest worker of all of us, and has kept his sense of humor through it all. May he have many more years of health and happiness!

All of this has come to pass in the 2 months since Keith and Carolyn returned to Uganda! There have also been graduations of **13** teacher training workshops and literacy classes in that time! We wonder “How can this be”? We know it is only by our Lord flattening the mountains before us, providing the right people at the right time, and working in people’s hearts to sacrifice themselves for others.

Sila Nzongo, the pastor from the Democratic Republic of Congo who headed up our Primer Book development team in 2014, says “If you want to see God working, you must give up your own interests.” God is definitely working here!!

It has been so uplifting to have many of you texting (509-979-7448), emailing and messaging us! Feel free to contact us:

The best ways are by text and email:

[Keith.jones@handsacrossnations.com](mailto:Keith.jones@handsacrossnations.com), [carolyn.jones@handsacrossnations.com](mailto:carolyn.jones@handsacrossnations.com).

Please visit our website.....[www.handsacrossnations.org](http://www.handsacrossnations.org). If you would like a simple way to help sponsor the expansion into 10 more prisons awaiting literacy and ESL classes, the HAN website is it!