

Nuru News

The

July/Aug 2020 Edition

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The Pandemic



It goes without saying that everyone in the world has been affected in one way or another by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our remote and rural village/District of Kasenga is no exception. In mid-March, Zambia closed its borders. Because we are just across the river from Zambia, we lost access to some of our most important supplies such as corn flour (for the staple food, bukari) and bags of cement for construction.

At the same time, our area in southeastern Congo was experiencing one of the heaviest rainy seasons in recent history. The only road to the city of Lubumbashi was covered with several feet of water over many miles and cut off another critical area of supplies for Nuru Ya Mapendo (charcoal for cooking, groceries for the house, fuel, etc.). It was the “double whammy”- No one could leave Kasenga and no one could come in.

Initially we were discouraged. We knew that construction would be slowed on Galilee Church and that some of our other projects would have to be put on hold.

Every day we saw God’s provision in our midst. I had collected garden seeds during furlough. We planted them immediately and our plants started coming in just as food in the house was running out! On the road, we came across a man carrying 6 small bags of charcoal on his bicycle. We had no idea how he had been able to travel miles through waist-high water, but we relieved him of his heavy load and provided him with funds to help feed his family. In Kasenga, I have no means of outside communication with the USA except for text messages, but through messages I was able to stay current with the progression of the virus and was able to teach all the necessary precautions to our staff when leaving our compound and responding to visitors at the gate. As I continued to hear the horrific numbers of virus cases across the world from friends concerned for my safety, I realized that at Nuru Ya Mapendo, we were experiencing the mercy and grace of God’s protection. I could only attribute this to the prayers of others. The virus could not come into Kasenga nor go out. Life was challenging for all the people of Kasenga, but we were safe.

Nine weeks later, in late May, the road became (barely) passable and we were able to make a voyage to Lubumbashi to pick up funds and buy groceries. An 8-hour round-trip journey became nearly 10 hours on the washed-out road. Many trucks and buses became stranded in the mud and we were a taxi to more than a few passengers on the way home! Again, we saw God’s mercy as our strong Tundra made the difficult journey without incident.

The Zambian border remained closed through August 15, but the road to Lubumbashi is now open. For many months, the virus cases in Lubumbashi were contained at two, but today the count is higher. Still, it is so low compared to other places in the world. We are so grateful for God’s protection and grace.

Prayerfully consider a pledge of monthly ongoing support; Nuru Ya Mapendo is an approved 501(3)c non-profit organization.

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One of the things that God has impressed upon me during this time is that we are never in control of anything in our world. God is sovereign, and in our human frailty we are unable to understand His perfect plan. Human suffering, particularly of the vulnerable, can make the reality of God's unfailing love difficult to grasp. We must hold on to God's love in spite of our circumstances. Romans 8:35-38 tells us that nothing in all of creation- good or bad- can separate us from God's unconditional love.

"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow- not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. " –Romans 8:38 (NLT)

Galilee UMC Church Updates



After furlough, one of our first projects at Galilee UMC was to connect the highest section of the walls to the roof structure, a job of two and a half weeks. Once the walls were secured, we purchased almost all of the available cement in Kasenga and began plastering the walls. The walls are expansive, so the work took almost a month!

We needed two crosses for the church- one outside and one on the interior. We'd been trying to decide what material(s) to use for the crosses. Driving through Kasenga one day, we stumbled across a small business that had ornate types of cutout tiles for sale in various shapes. A tile caught my eye that contained lilies, the variety that some call "resurrection lilies". This was perfect, I thought! The contractor was with us, so we made a few calculations and bought the necessary quantity of tiles.



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We asked the contractor to continue and construct the two-level altar area. The face of each level will be covered with small, square tiles (when we find them) to add some color to the interior.



With a short break for to buy additional supplies, we continued our work at Galilee Church. Watch for the Nuru News again in September for more updates on the construction, the school, and our community work.



Garden Seeds- Saving Grace

Here in Kasenga there is always a shortage of seeds to grow food. During furlough, we took a collection at my home church and many generously gave seeds to re-supply our garden which supplies the house, the staff, pastors and neighbors.

The seeds became God's saving grace this year. We were so anxious for fresh vegetables that we planted seeds as soon as I arrived in Kasenga. It's difficult to imagine going nine weeks without a visit to the grocery store, but that is what we did! Just as our food supply was running out, the garden began to mature, and we were supplied with vegetables (as well as our papayas, passion fruit and bananas) to eat.

Some may have looked upon our seeds as "extras" to carry to Africa, but because of your gift, we received God's provision. The staff and I thank you for playing a role in God's good and perfect plan. Mungu amibariki (God bless you).

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Answered Prayers/Prayer Requests

- Thank you for your prayers during June/July/August. Although travel, regulations and restrictions were very challenging because of covid-19, I arrived safely in the USA after a two-month delay. I tested negative for covid.
- Pray for the teachers and the students at the Jane Wise School in Kasenga. ALL teachers in Kasenga were not paid by the government last year; they are considering a strike in September.
- Pray for the 15 pastors in the District of Kasenga, that they would feel strengthened/encouraged and their churches will bear much fruit. We pray for many to come to know the Lord Jesus.
- Although I'm currently in the USA, our work continues in Kasenga through our staff. Pray for them!



Twitter: "nuru ya mapendo"
Facebook: "Jane Wise" or "Nuru Ya Mapendo"
Website: www.nuruyamapendo.com
YouTube: Search "nuru ya mapendo"

Apology

We live in an age where technology is "king". Americans want information "now". One has difficulty imagining living days, weeks or months without a phone, internet, or television. But there still exist many areas of the world where these luxuries are not available.

I have chosen to serve in one of these areas. There is currently no internet, so I am unable to read or respond to e-mail messages when I am in the Congo. Phone calls are very expensive, but texting by phone is a reliable option for me. Our Secretary/Treasurer does a good job of screening e-mails for items needing urgent attention. We do our best to communicate with you using services like MailChimp.

Friends who know me well know that I am a good communicator. I enjoy writing e-mails and letters to keep people informed. But sometimes circumstances prevent this. We ask for your understanding. Since I am currently in the USA, you can reach me via e-mail (below), phone or text (937-838-1111). When I return to Congo, texting is the best option to reach me (+24385777390). Thank you so much.



Blessings, Jane

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