

DOWN to EARTH

Emmanuel International UK News
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Seeking First in Northern Uganda

Mike and Marianne Botting are a Canadian couple working with EI in Pader in Northern Uganda.

Neither of us ever thought we would one day be missionaries in Africa. Mike thought he would live out his days as an engineer like many of the other Botting men, and I (Marianne) thought I would be teaching secondary school students the joys of chemistry and biology in some Canadian suburb. However, the call came to both of us to switch gears and head to the mission field. We met in Malawi in 2008, where Mike had been working for EI for over almost 3 years already, and I was completing the practicum component of my Master's degree in Global Public Health. After our wedding in 2010 we felt the Lord calling us to search for our next mission field, with the one directive that we were to do our work "in Jesus' name." And so after a few months of searching and praying, we knew God was telling us to "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness" (Matt 6:33) among the Acholi people of Northern Uganda. And so here begins the story of the first field assignment of our married life...

We arrived in Pader, Uganda one year ago, along with our colleague (and your fellow countryman) Tom Edom. We work in a very tiny office with big ambitions. Our vision is "Deeply rooted Christian groups actively living and sharing their faith, knowledge and skills by the power of Jesus Christ to serve their whole community so that they can stand on their own." In 2013 we will put this vision into action through Jesus film outreach and community follow-up, training communities about HIV prevention and care, demonstrating improved agricultural techniques, doing football clinics, teaching young girls in schools how to make sanitary pads (to help stop them dropping out of school), training Christian

community counsellors, and through the Community Health Empowerment (CHE) Ministry. The common thread in all we do – and what distinguishes us from any other organization in Pader – is that we believe true transformation only comes as people meet Jesus. And so we try to weave God's word, evangelism, and discipleship into the structure of each of our projects.

Our role in the office is two-fold – offering support to the many ongoing activities (particularly in the area of planning and evaluation), and acting as facilitators and coordinators for the CHE (Community Health Empowerment) Ministry in the Diocese of Kitgum. So what exactly is CHE?



Marianne facilitating in CHE

CHE is...hard to explain! CHE is not a non-governmental organisation project. CHE is a "Jesus Ministry" – a model that helps the local church reach out to the community, doing the things that Jesus did in His own ministry, namely sharing the gospel and healing the sick (Luke 9:1-2). Why do we say that CHE is not a project? For two main reasons. First, the real work is done by church volunteers and not by EI staff. Secondly, all of the decisions about what lessons are taught and what projects are started are made by the communities themselves. This is accomplished by using a "train-the-trainer" structure, where we train TRAINERS, who in turn train local COMMITTEES. The committees survey their own problems, choose their own health and agriculture topics, envision their own community projects, and fundraise their own funds. The committees also select HOME EDUCATORS, who are trained once a week by the trainers in the topics chosen by the committee, and take the trainings into the home. In this way the CHE ministry can spread quickly and can continue long after the flow of donor money ends.



Bible sharing

So where are we now? Our first set of 25 Trainers have finished their 5 months of training, which consists of 3 separate weeks here with us in Pader (TOT1, TOT2, and TOT3) and homework assignments in between. They have been commissioned and sent out to begin the work. Most are at the stage of training their first local committee. Meanwhile, we have brought our second set of 25 Trainers through TOT1 and TOT2 and plan to complete TOT3 in March before they are commissioned and sent to the field.

As with most good things, CHE takes time. Specifically, it takes time for committees to be trained, communities to be surveyed, and home visiting to start. But that doesn't mean we haven't seen lives being impacted. Each time we meet our Trainers we hear uplifting testimonies of what God has been doing. Patrick, from our second set of Trainers, said that he went home after TOT1 and immediately started sharing what he learned with his neighbours about healthy homes. Those neighbours set to work putting into practice what Patrick has been sharing with them to improve their own homes. Charles, from our first set of Trainers, was reconciled with his neighbour following his time at TOT1. The neighbour initially refused to be reconciled, but after seeing the change in the way Charles was loving others and looking after their physical needs, the neighbour asked him, "What has made you do this?" He replied that he was transformed by the training he went to, and God convicted him that he needed to love his neighbour as himself. The neighbour's defences finally gave way, and he and Charles are now reconciled.

Small steps that lead to big changes! We cannot wait to see how these stories will be multiplied when CHE soon moves beyond impacting the lives of the Trainers, and is brought to whole communities!



In loving memory Mrs Dorothy Middleton

On the morning of 3 January 2013, Dorothy Middleton passed on to be with our Lord.



In 1975, George and Dorothy founded Emmanuel International. EI emerged out of the experiences of the Ethiopian famine, when George organised teams of expat volunteers

working alongside Ethiopian believers, together showing the love of Jesus to a great many suffering people.

Over the next 10 years, George and Dorothy tirelessly poured themselves out to establish EI as an organisation in Canada, the UK, the USA, and other countries. EI's ministries of disaster relief and long-term development eventually touched the lives of countless multitudes of needy people around the world. God only knows how many people have been uplifted - and how many have been introduced to Jesus Christ - over the past 38 years. Every one of them owes thanks to George, Dorothy and the Middleton family.

Since their EI days, George and Dorothy lived most of those years in Florida, continuing their compassionate ministry among people in Ethiopia and elsewhere. Recently, they moved back to George's home town of Orillia, Ontario. Then in January of last year, they returned "home" to Ethiopia to spend time among the people they loved - and who loved them - so dearly. They returned to Canada in September, settling in Williams Lake, BC, close to Mel & Sharon and Janet & Jim and their families. It was there, surrounded by loved ones, that Dorothy was called to her eternal home.

In Tanzania...



Toni Barraclough, Angela and Andy Sharpe (pictured at Heathrow above) left a rather chilly UK for Tanzania in the beginning of January. Angela and Andy returned to their work (in the EI Tanzania office and the Water Projects respectively) after spending a few weeks with friends and family. Toni went to Tanzania for the first time for a short term placement. She has just completed her A-levels with a Photography major. She is working closely with the team in Tanzania to photograph and video our projects and life in Africa. She will also be sharing some of her own impressions and experiences with us in a future issue of Down to Earth.

Tim, Rachel, Amisadai and Louisa Monger also returned to Tanzania after their furlough, which was time very well spent in the UK and Canada. They visited many churches and schools to talk about their work and raise support. They returned to Tanzania to start a new Fuel Efficient Stoves project in a new village.



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