



Sarah and Simon Cawdell

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Location: Uganda



What we do: Coming alongside local Christians, helping them to grow in their faith, teaching theology to local leaders and building sustainability.



Empowering people pushed to the edges of life to reach their God-given potential

Dear praying friends,

You will receive this in the darkening season, looking forward to the light of Christ among us as we celebrate Advent and Christmas. Here we are moving into the hot dry season. (So if anyone suddenly fancies some winter sun you are very welcome to come over – only a long flight and a seven hour drive!)

We find ourselves very blessed and continuing to make some progress in the various tasks God has set before us. Simon is overseeing the laying of irrigation in the diocesan coffee garden, with a drip feed into each plant so that they can be nurtured through the dry season. The young plants in the nursery are making good progress and looking nicely settled. The constant weeding and mulching is paying off. A local Pentecostal church with substantial grounds is a good source of grass mowings for mulching. Alongside that the maize and soya have brought in some income to continue to pay for weeding and care of the coffee plants. It is very much part of the vision of the bishop to have a centre which models good practice as well as providing a strategic resource for the diocese and wider region as he seeks to demonstrate the practical intent of the gospel to alleviate poverty.

Sarah has recently enjoyed a stimulating week courtesy of Tearfund, who gathered theological college principals together to promote their Church and Community Transformation programme. It was a delight to work with others to apply good academic theology to practical village development, and to hear stories of lives transformed by fellowship instead of competition, and sharing of resources instead of individualism.

In college the 70 or so lay readers are coming to the end of this year's training. We hope to commission the 32 second years on 4 December. At the same time we are able to graduate the 10 certificate students who completed their ordination training in April. The diploma students graduated from Uganda Christian University, Mukono, in November, after significant and prolonged negotiation. We are very grateful to God for this progress. The students from this diocese will be ordained on 26 November at a festival called Musalaba, which is an annual pilgrimage festival nearby commemorating the establishment of the first CMS mission station in the north of Uganda.

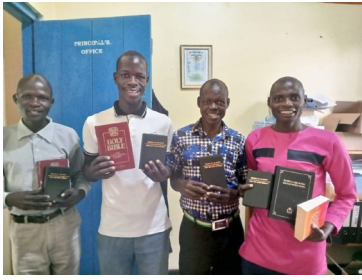
Our new classrooms are gradually going up, and we await funds only for the iron sheets and plastering.



*Simon in the coffee
nursery garden*

Support Sarah and Simon Cawdell:
churchmissionsociety.org/cawdell

**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**



Of course the next stage will be to fit them out with chairs, tables and blackboards. We very much hope and pray that the work will be completed by the time we leave here on 14 April. This time last year we began to make bricks for the project, and some of them are now incorporated into the structures. Those who toiled in the sunshine to make them can now see the good results of their hard work.

Simon is delighted to have received funds from the Anglican Relief and Development Fund for the establishment of a chicken project and farmhouse on the diocesan land and hopes to start building that when the

funds are released in January. Please pray that he finds an effective and honest engineer who can draw up good plans and will oversee the work.

Sarah continues to negotiate with Ndejje University (a Church of Uganda University in the Central region) to be able to teach their Diploma in Primary Education. Getting together the staff and administration for a new faculty in college takes time, but the people at Ndejje have been friendly and helpful and we hope to start teaching in the new year. Please pray that sufficient students will come forward to take the course, and that the staff will work together well.

Simon is delighted that the translation work on Rooted in Jesus Book 4 (the final main book of the series) is almost complete, and hopes that it will be printed in the new year. Plans are underway for a second Rooted in Jesus conference in the diocese in January 2027, which will encourage those who are already appreciating the material as well as stimulate new groups to start in the churches which have been planted since the first conference in 2024. From this paragraph you will understand that we are returning to the UK in April (although our time with the Church Mission Society will end in October) our connection with the diocese is more long standing and we will continue to work with the bishop, staff and college, though at a greater distance. It would be a pity to lose touch with the vibrant faith and the hopefulness of the Christians here.

I would like to share briefly some of what we have observed this year. Education here is a hard-won privilege, and often students can miss a year of school for lack of fees. So to get tertiary education of any sort is a greater privilege, and the costs are often borne by the wider family and community. It is not easy to get as far as achieving a Masters' Degree. Obviously the investment in such an education is therefore for the benefit of the whole community. In this diocese one lady recently got as far as graduating at Masters' level only to die in childbirth. Another bright and able priest has managed to graduate, but is struggling with long COVID and other complications. These setbacks affect the development of the whole diocese. Please pray for the health of our clergy as well as their access to good educational possibilities.

We look forward to seeing many of you in the new year as we plan to spend the six months from April to October visiting those of you who pray with us, and sharing some testimonies of the faithfulness of God.

We pray for you a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year.

Love from Sarah and Simon Cawdell



Photos from top to bottom: Lay readers receiving prayer books and Bibles; the lay readers after the student handover; the student team who led worship this week with Canon Willy Akena, college chaplain; Simon with Bill Clintom, his local community go-between



Empowering people pushed to the edges of life

It builds our faith when we hear stories from other CMS partners working with people pushed to the edges of life. We hope that you're inspired as you read about Elise and Jon in Thailand who are working to keep families together and children out of care. And about Makol in South Sudan whose life got dramatically saved during a peace rally. You can read their stories, and others, at churchmissionsociety.org/empower

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