



Sarah and Simon Cawdell

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Contact details:

sarah.h.l.cawdell@btinternet.com
simon.cawdell@gmail.com



Location: Uganda



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

Dear friends and supporters,

Thank you for your prayers and encouragement.

There is a prayer here that is often used at the beginning of an occasion: “Lord we thank you for the far you have brought us.” It seems very appropriate to use at this time.

Simon has successfully worked with members of the local community to harvest sunflowers and make a good start on the soya crop. All the produce has to be first taken from the plants and then dried, threshed in one way or another, dried a bit more, winnowed and packed before it can be sold. The local community are very used to subsistence-level farming, which is small scale. Trying to manage the drying of what has become 30 sacks at 60kg each of sunflower seeds with persistent rain has raised my admiration for any who deal in food production! Fortunately there is a machine that threshes the soya beans, though the persistent rain still threatens the process. Next week will see the start of the final seasonal crop – the maize. We are thankful that the former, now retired bishop can help point us in the direction of good dealers. The plan is for the money to be reinvested in the next harvest and hopefully help clear more land. Please pray for Simon to find a good person to mentor in managing this scale of farming, who can then take the project forward in the long term. The paradigm shift from subsistence farming to working at a commercial level is a big one. Having drying and storage facilities for larger scale production is also demanding. Fortunately the college classrooms are not in use because of the holiday. The immediate blessing is that as the local community work they receive wages, at least some of which can go on school fees for their children. Simon has also been working with the bishop to set up a diocesan coffee cooperative to grow coffee beans. So far subsistence farmers have pledged over 1,000 acres towards production, which, once begun, could provide a dramatic boost to family incomes across the region, potentially up to £1 million per annum collectively.

In addition, on 8 and 9 August, the inspectors from the National Council for Higher Education came to visit the college and help us on the journey towards registration. The six visitors, with their driver, were helpful and constructive in their criticism of the college. They are kindly holding up their report until Friday by



Us with the inspectors, from L to R: Sarah, Rev Norah, Simon, David, Bishop Godfrey, Rev Dr Cyrus, Canon Henry, Barbara and Emmanuel

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



which time we must have completed further paperwork, such as drawing up half a dozen curricula! The next National Council for Higher Education Committee meeting is in November, and I think that after that we can expect to hear whether we have been successful.

The second- and third-year students had to trek up to Arua for their exams, which was unfortunate and expensive but unavoidable. We hope that by next May, when exams come round again, the problem will be solved. The first-years, who had not been admitted or registered, took internal exams here, and will be the first to receive AJLTC certificates in three years' time. We are being encouraged to stand as an independent institution, rather

than rely on the Uganda Christian University in Mukono.

The clerical students have all gone home for their long holiday and we prepare for the influx of lay reader students in September. Last year we took on 63. These will come back for their second year, and a new first-year intake will also be welcomed. I hope not too many as now that we have refurbished the dormitories we can't accommodate so many residents. God will provide one way or another I am sure. So often this semester we have seen God's provision when the next step looked impossible.

One thing I discovered as we prepared for the visitors is that we are very short of classroom chairs. A new chair, which would be locally made of wood, will cost £15. We need about 30 so this is quite daunting. Some of the current ones we can repair, but we had already done a round of repairs six months ago.

Looking ahead we are excited to be welcoming visitors throughout the next few months: Cathie and John Rutter on their way north to Moyo in September, a vicar from a link church on sabbatical in October, a group from Bristol in November, and more planned for the New Year. We look forward to sharing times with friends and building relationships between the college and link churches.

Please pray for wisdom for us both in the months ahead. We are halfway through our first three years and need to work at succession planning for our roles if the work which God has begun through our partnerships here is to continue to flourish. Pray for companions in the work who can manage our roles during our six months' home leave in 2026.

Please continue to pray for the registration of the college. Pray also for the term of lay reader training which runs from September to December. Pray for the students who have a long placement in their home dioceses.

Please pray for God's gift of a good climate for Simon's farming work, and for insight and wisdom in finding further development projects.

We continue to pray for you and are always thankful for your partnership in the work of the gospel.

Love and blessings

Simon and Sarah



Photos from top to bottom: Winnowing sunflower seeds; removing sunflower seeds from heads; one of the latest kittens



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Jesus never gives up. Neither should we. We live in a fractured, hurting world. It can be tempting to give up: on hope, on people, on the idea that things can ever change. Yet, Jesus invites us to follow him on a journey to the edges. Find out more at churchmissionsociety.org/jesus-never-gives-up

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