

2022

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

“How do you build an international ministry out of a Bible study?”



Donell Peck and Carrie Miles preaching at a megachurch in Nairobi

This question from one of our Kenyan partners surprised me. “International ministry” sounds pretty grand. But then, when she asked me that, we had not yet held our roundtable with Kenyan stakeholders, and I did not appreciate that Empower truly has become an international ministry. All kinds of wonderful things are happening with Empower – but they are being done by Africans and Indians, not us. And as the story at the end will show, the ministry is truly theirs now.

Here is a brief summary of how your faithful support changed lives in 2022:

Uganda: The powerhouse team of Empower/Uganda President **Joyce Ouko** and her husband, Empower senior trainer Pastor **Julius Ouko**, conducted programs throughout northern Uganda.



Joyce Ouko, a happy New Man and Woman, and Julius Ouko



Arnold Phiri

Malawi: Pastor **Arnold Phiri** is proving to be an amazing force in Malawi, organizing leaders from throughout the country to teach Empower materials. This year, Malawi suffered a cyclone that left many people traumatized. Arnold and his team of regional Empower partners stepped in immediately with the *Healing From Trauma* seminar.

In July, the Reverend Dr. **Sally Bryant** made her 12th trip to Malawi, where she led a group of pastors through *New Man, New Woman, New Life*, followed by a three-day training on teaching children without electricity, books, pencils, or paper. Sally and her church, Saratoga Federated, have partnered with Arnold in several programs to build healthy communities that have had an amazing impact on many lives.



Sally Bryant and friends

Empower/Africa executive director, Bishop **Frank Tweheyo**, who has been traveling with the Oukos, as well as to Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, and Zambia, continues his weekly radio ministry in Kabale, Uganda. The show has become immensely popular. Frank told us that a prominent Muslim leader stopped him on the street to tell him, “Pastor, if all preachers presented the truth the way you do, the world would be a better place to live in.”

Burundi: Frank and I visited leaders in Burundi, where we have been working since 2007, but due to civil unrest, had not visited since January 2015. We were delighted to find that our earlier teachings have not been forgotten. One highlight was learning that Bishop **Seth Ndayirukiye** has created a “Fathers’ Union” that teaches men to be an involved and benevolent part of family life.

Kenya: Donell Peck, Frank, and I conducted the NMNW master class for an amazing group of pastors and trainers from the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. We also conducted a master class at St. Paul's University.

St. Paul's has trained clergy from many denominations, which kindled greater interest in the NMNW program. To meet demand, Frank developed a two-day program to train facilitators to lead seminars. He has already called on these trained facilitators to conduct program earlier this year, and plans to ask them to take part in large trainings in Rwanda and Zambia next year.



Kenyan Roundtable

Kenyan Roundtable: The next step for Empower involves taking the message deeper into African communities. At this, local leaders are far more effective than are Americans. Empower in Kenya has grown so fast, however, that when I proposed we meet with our Kenyan stakeholders, I did not know who they were. Fortunately, Empower/Kenya president Dr. **Zablon Bundi** organized a Roundtable of senior clergy and representatives of universities throughout Kenya, all enthusiastic about NMNW. As Bishop **Mboya Matui** said, Empower has now moved from "U.S. led to *us* led," adding, "This is what we have been waiting for!"

Rwanda: In 2011, Frank Tweheyo and I conducted a NMNW seminar at the church pastored by **Francis and Dorothy Mutabazi**. Due to civil unrest, we had not visited in several years. We were delighted to be able to return to preach there in September. Frank and I taught the overview of NMNW. As I taught about the Fall, I asked the audience of 200 if they believed that God cursed the woman in Genesis 3. Despite this belief's prevalence, no one admitted they had ever believed that! I thought perhaps they did not understand me, so I tried again. Still nothing. So Frank tried. At this point, we figured it out – we were "preaching to the choir"!



*Francis and Dorothy Mutabazi,
Carrie, and Frank*

After the service, I asked Pastor Francis about how this came about. Francis replied, "Somehow people had this idea that we are cursed by God. But I have always taught that we aren't cursed, we are blessed." Then he stopped, looked at me, and asked, "Didn't you teach me that?"

This is the goal of Empower: Culture transformed, with people knowing that God loves them, whether male or female, and knowing this love's meaning for how we are to treat each other. And this transformation becoming so ingrained that people understand it as a deep truth that they never needed to be taught at all.

During this Christmas season may you also remember that God loves you. Bless you for your support and interest in Empower. Your generous and faithful support makes all these stories possible.

Carrie Miles

P.S. Although we Americans may be traveling less, we remain committed to supporting our African and Indian partners. We have enclosed an envelope here if you are able to help. If you prefer to give by credit card or PayPal, please go to EmpowerInternational.org and click on the "Support Us" button.

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