

Clean Water For 500 Families!

Wednesday, 01 October 2008

On Saturday August 30th, Vail and I along with Bishop Roman and Susan Okware, traveled to a village area near Kayunga trading center, about ten miles from the Nile River, where we have three churches. One of the challenges for families living in this area is obtaining good water. The Nile is a long way, so during the rainy season, many families find ways catch the water in one fashion or another exactly as their ancestors did hundreds of years ago. Some years back, during a time of prayer one of the village elders who also served as a pastor in one of our churches, received a revelation about where to dig near the church property to find water. After he had dug down two feet, water began to seep through and as he continued digging, discovered what we know as an Artesian well. For a number of years this "miracle" well with a continuous flow of water has served the people year round.

When Dr. Steve and Denice Vickers visited this area with us and heard the story of the well, Denice in particular wanted to see it. Though she realized it was God's merciful provision for the people in the area, she was concerned that the water bubbling to the surface had to be dipped using a long pole, plus the water was mixed with sediment and small bush animals had access to it. She wanted it to be renovated and modernized to better serve the people and provide a source of clean water, so carried the vision back to the States.

As we began to share the need in Kayunga here in the States, people and churches began to respond and thousands of dollars were raised. In Uganda, Bishop Roman consulted with an engineer and others who had experience in projects of this kind, materials were purchased and the work begun. When Vail and I arrived that Saturday, we were able to be a part of the final cementing of the well area. I must admit they did it in a way different that I expected, but it was truly much nicer and more professional than what I expected. The people were so proud of their new well. They sang songs, danced, and re-told the story of how they discovered the well. It was a great day for the village!

Let me share a bit more about the really unique way they did this - they dug down eight feet, slowed the water flow with large stones and gravel, dug a deep trench, then placed a PVC pipe in the trench. They secured the source-end of the pipe in place, allowing the water to flow up and in and fifteen feet to where it exited the other end of the pipe. They constructed a vertical cement retaining wall out of which the pipe protruded, where a constant flow of perfectly clear spring water pours out about 5 gallons a minute. They also constructed another vertical cement wall parallel to the other, so there is like a cement walkway with steps going down to where the water flows out of the pipe which sticks out of the wall about 18 inches off the ground. (The picture does not convey the reality of what a great job they did and how beautiful it will be after it's completed.) The women and children of the village can now go into a clean area free of mud and other contaminants, go down the steps to the pipe, and access fresh clean water anytime. They are building something like a gazebo where people can wait their turn comfortably, which I believe will become a peaceful gathering place for the village women.

This wonderful project, which will provide clean water for approximately 500 families, would not have been possible without the gifts and prayers of so many people. Thank you to everyone who gave and prayed for this project to be a success! Special thanks to Pastors Mike and Stephanie Harrison and Church 212!