



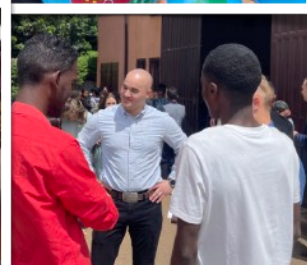
New Year, New Heights

We hope this letter finds all of our Northern Hemisphere friends staying warm and enjoying these wonderful winter days. As for us, we are enjoying the sunshine and clear summer days of the Southern Hemisphere!

The new year began with a bang here in Madagascar! On January 14th, we welcomed a group of twelve from New Heights Baptist Church for an intense eight day missions trip! After much anticipation and planning, we were thrilled when their “boots hit the ground” here in Madagascar! In this update, we’d like to share a glimpse into this action-packed week as well as tell of the many opportunities we had to share the Gospel with hundreds of people.

The week began with coffee (a necessity after 24+ hours of flying) and some special Malagasy banana bread in Sunday School. Throughout the morning, the team shared personal testimonies with our people. God used those testimonies to interweave His Word in the hearts of our people who expected all Americans to be immune to problems and hardships. Each testimony revealed the struggles and trials each member of the team had faced in the past and how God used those trials to demonstrate His grace and power in their lives. These testimonies greatly spoke to the hearts of our people.

Sunday afternoon was more relaxed with a general “get-to-know-you” session. Although there was a certain language barrier as well as cultural differences, this time allowed both groups of believers (American and Malagasy) to find a common bond in Christ.



After a few hours of sleep, Monday morning quickly dawned with more opportunities to preach the Gospel. Having twelve Americans who speak English fluently was an easy key to unlock the doors of two public elementary schools in our neighborhood. Each school allowed us to teach Bible stories and Bible songs in English. The second school we visited actually organized a general assembly (with more than 350 children in attendance). The team of twelve led an hour-long program full of songs, games and Bible teaching! We concluded by inviting the children to an event held later in the week (more on that to come).

On Tuesday, we set up a small tent near our local market and held a blood pressure clinic. Madagascar, of course, lacks CVS, Walgreens, Rite-aid, etc. where blood pressure machines are located. Therefore, providing a *free* blood pressure clinic was something of great interest to the community. We praise the Lord for the nearly 500 people who circulated through our little tent where our blood pressure machines never stopped! The group from New Heights did a great job greeting the people, taking their blood pressure and giving out a church invitation. Our church members then took each visitor to the side and prayed specifically for them and their needs. While this was a brand new ministry for us, it produced several contacts of which we are still actively pursuing.

Wednesday morning found us with more than 3,500 church fliers in hand. Together with our church members, we canvassed the four most populated areas around our church. In no time at all, the fliers were distributed to thousands of people. Truly, many hands make light work!

On Wednesday afternoon, though hot and humid, the team rolled up their sleeves and helped lead an outreach for children in a nearby open field. More than 500 children (with youth and adults watching from afar) were present. God's Word was clearly given to all who were present.

By Thursday, we were in two more schools, the first being a private high school. The team presented a captivating object lesson in four difference classes which clearly presented the Gospel. The youth listened and participated with great enthusiasm. Later that morning, we were in a public middle school which also organized a general assembly with 580 students in attendance. God blessed again by giving us an open door to present the Gospel and invite the youth to attend an event held on Saturday.

A cyclone made its way to Madagascar by Saturday nearly hampering our plans. While light rains fell from the sky, we made our way with 4,500 John & Romans in hand to a nearby town known for its Saturday market. God intervened and the rain stopped long enough for us to distribute the Good News. Amazingly, after just 45 minutes, all 4,500 John and Romans were distributed (that equates to 100 John & Romans per minute)!

By Saturday evening, with intermittent rain showers, the New Heights team led a youth meeting with 75 teenagers in attendance! Several of them have already returned to our normal Saturday evening youth group!

On Sunday morning, our two churches gathered one last time to thank God for the work He accomplished. Goodbyes were said, tears were shed and the family of God was strengthened! What an amazing week of God's amazing goodness!

The Browns to Madagascar

*"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;
Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."*

Matthew 9:37-38

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