

# REPORT: Madagascar '06 Outreach

31 March 2006

## ***Dear Friends in Christ***

I'm not sure whether I should shout "JIPEEE!" or "AAGH!", but the Madagascar '06-outreach is over and the team is safely back at their respective homes. We would like to thank you for your prayers and support and each one who made this outreach possible in whichever way (e.g. by praying for us, financial support or equipment).

Again, this outreach was a huge success thanks to the involvement of people like you, the willingness and sacrifices of the team, The Lord's blessings and the incredible love for people who don't know Him.

## **SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:**

### **1 Strategy**

As in the past the team flew via Anatanarivo to Tamatave on the east coast. However, this was easier said than done with flights that were cancelled, other flights that were full, luggage that got lost and the team who reached Madagascar on different flights (some of us via Mauritius).

From Tamatave we took the "bush taxi" north to a town where we climbed over onto a boat and went by river until the rapids forced us to get off and walk further. What differed from previous years is that the hike to our town of basis was relatively short and easy.



*ABOVE: The South African members of the team – l. to r. Werner, Juan, Buks, Vedette and Manie.*

### **2. Work with Children**

As the only new member to the team, Vedette leapt into the deep end and did wonderful work with the children. She made puppets beforehand and the puppet show delighted young and old alike. Behind the scenes Buks, Werner and Vedette gave life to the puppets and brought the Gospel and Biblical values to the children in such a way that they could understand it. With a story line that was adapted and improvised during each performance, Victor (Philadelphia's Project Manager in Madagascar who did the interpretations) had to do quick thinking to keep up. None the less, the puppet show was a huge success – for this we give glory to the Lord, but are also proud of the team who made it work.



ABOVE: Juan (left) watches the puppets while Victor is interpreting.

### 3 **Mimic shows and cassette presentations**

A popular and very effective way to explain specific aspects of the Gospel is short open-air mimic performances. The great deal of rain this year caused that we could not make use of this very often, but where it was done, the people enjoyed the teams' antics. Buks and Juan again proved themselves to be a formidable team as the sinner who got stuck on the painted chair and his friend who tried to free him.

The cassette presentations are Gospel messages in Malagasy which are used in combination with picture books. Buks, Wernet and Vedette used this a couple of times to share the Gospel with people.

### 4 **Leadership seminar**

To certain extent, the 4 day Leadership Seminar was the main focus of this year's outreach. The base town was chosen as it was easy accessible for the approximately 35 existing and future church leaders who attended it from a very wide area. Some of them had to walk through the bush for two days from sunrise until sunset and despite our starting two days later than planned, the Lord blessed it greatly. In the lectures the focus was amongst others on the current state of Christianity in the World, the unreached, Gift ministry as method to mobilize members and various aspects of leadership. Many leaders testified to great blessing, for which one can only thank the Lord while we must also pray that they will apply what they have learnt.



*ABOVE: Some of the leaders walked for two days through the bush (4 days' hike for us "normal people" to attend the seminar.*

## **5 JESUS film**

As always, the generator, film projector and other equipment were taken to the bush with the help of local carriers. Due to unceasing rains (literally almost day and night) and because we basically lost two full days due to the flights from South Africa, the JESUS film with a Malagasy soundtrack was only shown at one occasion. As in the past, some people hiked for kilometers through the bush to come and see it. As always, I brought a message beforehand to help the people to understand where Jesus fits into God's plan with humankind (remember that many of them have no Christian background). Before the end of the film the rain started to pour down and although many people stayed to watch, many left to seek shelter. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will do the after-care in each soul that heard and saw the Gospel and that He will lead them into a relationship with Christ. Also pray for Victor and his team who will do the after-care.



*ABOVE: Buks (left) change the roll of film while Juan and Vedette lends a hand. Moments later the down pour started.*

## **6 Floods in Tamatave**

The continual rains did not only influence our activities in the bush, but also lead to us having to cancel our two day seminar in Tamatave. With our return journey from the bush to Tamatave, one of the bridges were swept way and we had to transport our luggage in a wooden canoe in a river in full flood (in 2003 three bridges was washed away, so it has been worse). In Tamatave there were large parts where the houses, streets and shops were flooded and the rain continued. As most people were battling with the water and trying to salvage their belongings, it was decided to cancel the seminar.



*ABOVE: After we crossed the river, team members and helpers unload luggage and equipment from the tree-trunk canoe. Vedette still smiles in spite of the heavy downpour. Parts of the damaged bridge can be seen in the background.*

## **7 Invitations, co-operation and need for more**

This year three members of the “Christ Never Changes Revival Church” of the Midwest (another part of the island) were invited to participate in the seminar and to testify how the Lord used their members to reach thousands of the unreached with the Gospel. Their participation was greatly blessed and a result of this is that the different denominations decided to work together more closely in future. They also invited me to present a similar seminar to their church leaders in September. Please pray for the Unity of Christ’s Body in Madagascar and that the intended seminar will help in equipping the Church to glorify Christ and to reveal Him to the unreached.

After last year’s outreach to Madagascar, we mentioned in our report that the Lord showed us again that there are still hundreds of thousands (maybe millions) of people in that remote area who still have NEVER heard of Christ. We have decided to seek Him to enable us to do more to bring the Gospel to them. Since then we have prayed and conferred on this often, but until now nothing actual has come into being. Therefore I want to ask again that you pray with us urgently that the Lord will give us a clear vision and strategy in this regard, and also the people and sources to fulfill such a vision. (We will keep you posted on how this matter unfolds.)

Of course I cannot add EVERYTHING that the Lord did during this outreach, but this gives a basic idea. Again I want to thank the team – a superb group of people – for each one’s commitment, adaptability and unanimity. May the Lord give that it is possible for each of you to go on the outreach again next year!

Finally I want to ask you to continue to pray for the work in Madagascar (but also for Philadelphia’s work in Zimbabwe, Malawi and shortly in Mozambique). Pray for the new converts, but also for Victor and his team who will have to handle all the follow up work over the next few months. Please pray for Victor as Philadelphia’s Project Manager specifically, and also for the 50 church leaders he is training. Yes, and please continue to pray that the Lord will lead us on the expansion of the work in Madagascar to become more effective.

Greetings in Christ and once again, thank you for your involvement!

**- Manie**