

October to December 2025  
APF Prayer and Newsletter



African  
Pastors  
Fellowship

# Impetus.



## Under the Trees and Beside the River: Church Growth in Karamoja

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

From the CEO

Just Trees  
Christmas Campaign

Highlights  
and updates



## From the CEO

Welcome to the autumn edition of *Impetus*. As I write, I'm sitting in my small garden in rural Kent, enjoying the last of the summer sunshine. By the time this edition reaches its close, the shortest day will have passed, and Christmas will be upon us.

In this issue, we're delighted to introduce Martin Hayter, the newest member of the APF team in the UK. Martin and his family spent 18 years living and working among the Karamojong people in Uganda, one of the most remote and marginalised communities in the country. You'll discover more about the remarkable growth of the church in Karamoja in the article written by Martin on pages 3-4.

At APF, Martin will be strengthening links with eVitabu contributors, encouraging engagement among users, and



helping to coordinate online fellowship between APF partners across Africa. Before Martin's time in Uganda, he worked in charity compliance, so he brings a wealth of very relevant experience and expertise to the team.

### Our Christmas 'Just Trees' Campaign

We're also launching our *Just Trees* campaign. For this Christmas, we're inviting you to donate the cost (or even part of the cost) of a Christmas tree to help plant seedlings in schools and church campuses in Uganda.

Tree planting brings benefits that last for generations. Beyond providing shade and beauty, trees improve soil quality, protect water sources, absorb carbon, and support biodiversity. In communities across Uganda, they also offer fruit, firewood, and long-term livelihood opportunities, truly making them a gift that keeps on giving.

Read on to find out how to plant hope this Christmas and give the gift of a tree.

Blessings,

Revd Dave Stedman

Cover photo: CC BY-SA 2.0 Rod Waddington 'Karamojong Women, Uganda'  
[flickr.com/photos/rod\\_waddington/53882309873/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/rod_waddington/53882309873/)

# Just Trees Christmas Campaign



**Walubo Jude, a long-standing friend and APF partner, has a vision to plant one million trees across Uganda. So far, with support from APF and other organisations, he has overseen the planting of more than 68,000 trees.**

**Jude's trees are making a real difference. A school received umbrella trees to create an outdoor classroom, a hospital planted a micro-forest of fruit trees to improve patient diet, and another school used acacia trees as a living fence to protect against storms.**

Dave writes, "It has been my pleasure to help plant many trees with Jude over the years, more varieties than I can remember. Jude won't let me leave Uganda without at least one tree-planting effort!"

Tree planting offers many benefits, from improving food security and environmental protection to providing much-needed shade and shelter. To help Jude fulfil his vision, APF is launching *Just Trees*, a Christmas campaign to raise funds for seedlings in Uganda. For just **£25** – far less than the cost of an average Christmas tree – you could buy nearly 50 seedlings in Uganda.

To support the *Just Trees* campaign, you can donate at [africanpastors.org/just-trees](https://africanpastors.org/just-trees) or by cheque or bank transfer clearly stating the gift is for 'Just Trees'. Thank you!



# Under the Trees and Beside the River: Church Growth in Karamoja



**Martin Hayter, the newest member of the APF UK team, brings a wealth of experience from his 18 years serving the Karamojong people in Uganda. In the following article, Martin draws on his firsthand experience with church leaders in the region to share about the remarkable growth of the church in Karamoja.**

**It could perhaps be mistaken for a scene from a biblical blockbuster but is instead a baptism service held in May earlier this year. A church in the Karamoja sub-region of north-eastern Uganda held a baptism service in the local river where they baptised 200 new believers. In addition, through the preaching of the gospel and the testimonies of those being baptised, a further sixty people also gave their lives to Christ on that same day.**

Such baptism services are now a common occurrence in Karamoja where the gospel is spreading fast. New churches are regularly being planted, often meeting and praying under large trees that offer some shade from the sun, though less protection in the rainy season. In recent years, climate change has brought heavier rainfall, and last month floods destroyed the crops of many local people.

Whilst most of Uganda became Christianised at the end of the nineteenth century, until recently, the Karamojong, a pastoralist people related to the Turkana in Kenya, continued to follow traditional beliefs. However, following the translation of the Bible into their own language in 2010 and the adoption of culturally appropriate mission practices, things began to change, and the gospel spread rapidly amongst the Karamojong.

Everything ground to a halt when the Covid pandemic hit in 2020. The Ugandan government enforced strict lockdown rules and all churches were temporarily closed. Without the option of providing online services, the pandemic was a huge challenge for the pastors of churches that were still full of relatively new believers. However, this was only a hiatus, for when the lockdown came to an end, the gospel began to spread rapidly once more.

Pastor Stephen is the Secretary of the Pastors Fellowship in Namalu, a small town in the south of Karamoja. Pastor Stephen says that the church in Karamoja takes very seriously the need to reach out to the unreached, disciple new believers, and open new churches. According to Pastor Stephen, the pastors themselves face very many challenges, although, before continuing, he quickly interjects that no challenge can stop the move of the gospel.



These challenges include the cost and difficulty of travelling to remote areas, a lack of public address systems to speak to gatherings of thousands, struggling to support their own families, trying to put up basic church buildings, and helping the needy in their churches, especially as there are so many orphans in Karamoja, which is the poorest and most marginalised region of Uganda.

The needs of these pastors, as articulated by Pastor Stephen, are familiar to all who seek to stand with the African church. Having lived and served among the Karamojong, I've seen firsthand both the challenges and the incredible faith of the church there. My experience also showed me the vital need for resources like Bibles, which APF has previously provided to churches in Karamoja. It is a real joy to now be part of APF, bringing my background to our shared work in Karamoja and across Africa, as we work to equip African church leaders, pastoring the pastors, as they serve and transform their communities.

# Highlights and updates

## Formal theological training

APF is proud to support several key initiatives across East Africa. In Kenya, we've provided a grant for Revd Abraham Koech, an African Inland Church pastor, theology lecturer, and chaplain, to attend a national chaplains' conference in Mombasa. Revd Koech recently served as a keynote speaker for over 1,000 women leaders from the AIC in Kenya.

In Rwanda, we've granted two clergy from the Diocese of Kigeme, Vianney Ntitanguranwa and Tharcisse Twizeyimana, funding to continue their Bachelor of Theology degrees at the East African Christian College (pictured). With Kigeme located near one of Rwanda's largest refugee camps, their theological training will be especially valuable in supporting both local congregations and displaced communities.



Additionally, APF has provided funds to St. Paul's College in Kapsabet, Kenya, to enhance internet access and furnish its campus resource centre.

In Uganda, the Atirir Bible School has received funding for subsidised tuition fees and to enable Principal Revd Esomu Francis to provide basic pastoral training to rural pastors from the north-eastern sub-regions of Teso and Karamoja.

## Informal formational training

Our Africa Training Partners have been busy delivering in-service training workshops across the continent. These workshops introduce new groups to eVitabu, using the app's resources to encourage and equip church leaders and their churches. This year, we've funded training workshops in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

We're also excited to announce a new partnership with Oasis International. Together, we have secured a consignment of Africa Study Bibles for distribution in Uganda by our training partners, Revd Peter and Dr Rose Mugabi (pictured). Our long-term goal is to offer the Africa Study Bible in a digital format within eVitabu, making it even more accessible.



## Church and community initiatives

Thanks to the generous support of online Christian bookseller 10ofThose, we have been able to provide bicycle grants to Morobo Diocese in South Sudan, Masasi Diocese in Tanzania, Word of God Ministries in Malawi, and Renewal Ministry Fellowship in Kenya. As their Charity of the Year, hundreds of bicycles have already been distributed with more to come. APF's partnership with 10ofThose has also provided two motorbikes to



Deeper Life Church in Karagwe, Tanzania to strengthen its rural pastor training programme.

Numerous pastoral grants have been distributed, including support for Faith Babies Home and Love and Care for the Children Kindergarten, both in Uganda. We give thanks for the leadership of Grace Kaziba (pictured) from Faith Babies Home, who also serves as the Baptist Union of Uganda's Youth Representative to the All Africa Baptist Alliance. Grace is prayerfully seeking support to attend conferences in the Central African Republic and South Africa later this year, opportunities that will further strengthen her ministry.



In partnership with Operation Agri, the Growing Greener sustainable agriculture project is flourishing in



Malawi, together with a compost training programme in Zambia (pictured). Rooted in the ministry of local churches, these initiatives not only equip communities with practical agricultural skills but also bear witness to God's love in action. Since their launch, thousands of people have been empowered to improve their livelihoods, with local African churches at the heart of this transformative work.

## Golf team visits Uganda

Back in late September, a team of eight APF supporters headed to Uganda to visit projects, meet Africa Training Partners, spend time with local communities – and even squeeze in a few rounds of golf! The trip was a wonderful mix of fun and fellowship, while also raising vital funds for APF and giving supporters the chance to see the amazing impact of our partners' work firsthand. Off the back of such a great experience, we're looking forward to planning more cross-cultural engagement tours in 2026 and beyond. If you'd like to find out more or even join a future team, drop Dave a line at [dave@africanpastors.org](mailto:dave@africanpastors.org)

**The vision of APF is to enable African Christian leaders, of all denominations, to minister effectively in thriving local churches that serve flourishing communities.**

## **Giving to APF**

*giftaid it*

If you would like to donate to APF, please visit [www.africanpastors.org/donate](http://www.africanpastors.org/donate) where you can make a one-off gift or set up a regular donation. Alternatively, post a cheque to our address or use one of the services below:

**stewardship<sup>®</sup>**  
transforming generosity

 **easy  
fundraising  
.org.uk**  
feel good shopping



 **Give as you Live<sup>®</sup>**

**Please consider donating £2 to cover print and postage costs. Thank you.**

### **African Pastors Fellowship**

Station House, Station Approach, Adisham, Canterbury CT3 3JE

[www.africanpastors.org](http://www.africanpastors.org)

Tel 01227 681186

Email [admin@africanpastors.org](mailto:admin@africanpastors.org)

**UK Registered Charity Number 282756**



**African  
Pastors  
Fellowship**

African Pastors Fellowship is a member of:



**micah**



**Global  
Connections**