

Anthony and Sara Sytsma

March 2025

# Word and Seed in Uganda

Working With Pastors and Farmers in Soroti

Resonate  
GLOBAL MISSION



## Prayer Requests

Praise God:

- For fun painting classes for kids and the relationships Sara was able to build with neighbors through these classes
- For friends with whom we got to enjoy rest and celebration over Christmas
- For safe travel and productive HWHIA trainings around Africa

Please Pray:

- For Anthony to have good reconnections with people in Soroti during his break from travel
- That Sara would be able to find new farmer groups, as she is wrapping up meeting with two groups now
- For an encouraging visit from a pastor friend in May and for good opportunities for him to learn while here

## Teaching Art to Kids isn't easy!

Whenever Sara paints on the wall around our property, some people stop by to watch or ask her to teach them to paint too. This inspired her to offer a painting class for neighborhood kids during their short school holiday last September. She had 12 students plus youth helpers come to our house to learn how to enlarge and copy a small picture as a painting on a piece of plywood. It wasn't as easy as it seemed when coming up with the idea, though that first group of kids was all around the same age and they were deeply interested in making their paintings perfect - they spent the whole 6 sessions diligently painting!



Some kids preferred to paint on the grass

One class wasn't enough, though, so Sara planned another one at our house in December, then one in January hosted by her friend Jane. With those two groups, there were more younger kids who were easily distracted and thought they had finished their painting in one or two days! Sara did lots of research watching YouTube videos about how to teach art to kids and came up with other fun drawing exercises for each day. She also got some big cardboard boxes and let the kids paint on those when they were finished painting for the day (maybe waiting for their painting to dry). Some of them seemed to be more enthusiastic about

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Painting students from the training at Jane's house



## HWHIA Travels

After a whirlwind of travel during the past several months, Anthony is happy to get some time in Uganda to not only sleep at home, but also to preach and encourage local pastors.

During his travels, he got to visit lots of interesting countries for Helping Without Hurting in Africa trainings, though he wasn't able to spend much time touring the countries while there. Nevertheless, he and Jonny enjoyed their experiences in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zambia. There are many similarities between discussions in each place, but also interesting cultural differences which make every training unique and edifying for both the participants and facilitators.

In Nigeria, a missionary couple from Sara's church in Michigan participated in the training and had Anthony over for dinner. In Ethiopia, he got to visit a friend from when we were at Calvin College who is now teaching at a Bible college in Addis Ababa. And in Zambia, he and Jonny got to spend time with our Resonate colleagues, Ryan and Jody.



Discussion group in Ethiopia



Everyday food in Ethiopia

Anthony had a fun time trying lots of new foods in different countries like spicy (but tasty) food in Nigeria. He also loved Ethiopian food but unfortunately got food poisoning for a couple days. But Jonny stayed healthy and was able to teach his lessons.

## Teaching Art Cont....

drawing and painting on the cardboard box (that they didn't get to take home) than working on their own painting. It seems that excitement over large cardboard boxes is pretty universal among children.

One of the fun art class activities was making a suncatcher

with extra canning jar rings Sara had. The kids colored in a design with crayon, rubbed cooking oil on the paper to make it translucent, cut it into a circle, and glued it into the ring. Many of them were especially thrilled to use it as a (giant) necklace!

Another interesting drawing idea was having kids pick an animal name out of a hat and a word describing a characteristic out of another hat. For example: "chicken" and "beautiful". Then, they had to creatively draw a "beautiful chicken" or an "angry elephant". There were some very entertaining drawings and kids enjoyed doing that activity while they waited for other students to show up for class.

Each group of kids chose beautiful designs for their paintings and all of them finished the class happy with their painting and excited to take it home to show off to their parents.



The process of enlarging pictures



Lots of natural artistic talent!

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