

Anthony and Sara Sytsma January 2026

Word and Seed in Uganda

Working With Pastors and Farmers in Soroti



Pastor Book Club

One of Anthony's ministry joys is the pastors' group which keeps him engaged locally with churches of many different denominations. The group includes 43 pastors from around Soroti. A couple of the pastors enjoy it so much they copied the model and are now leading book groups of their own with other pastors in different areas.

They are currently reading through the "Healthy Church" series of 16 books, donated by Christianbook and Crossway. It will take a few years to get through. They meet each month and the pastors are learning a lot from the books as well as the discussions. Together they talk about how to apply Scripture passages and practical advice from the books in their real life churches.

For example, there was vigorous discussion from a book on church leadership since almost every church had a different practice. Some have elders and no deacons, others deacons and no elders, others have elders who are just called that because they are elderly. That book helped them think more about what the Bible says and how to put it into practice.

The pastors testify, though, that the biggest impact of the group is their new relationships with pastors of different churches. They appreciate the new friendships and

Continued on page 2...



Boat ride at the pastor conference

Prayer Requests

Praise God:

-For two successful marriage conferences: for bishops & wives and for pastors & wives

-For rest and time for fun together over Christmas

-That God already provided a car for us to use in the US this summer

Please Pray:

-For peace during and after the Ugandan presidential election on January 15th

-For the pastors and bishops to grow in their marriages and ministry after the conferences

-That Sara and Jane would have more opportunities to teach together in churches during 2026



Conrad and Felistas Mbewe - conference facilitators

Family Counseling Ministry

Sara continues to enjoy working with her friend Jane to prepare training topics and to teach at churches about family and relationship issues. One day, they had a very meaningful meeting and conversation with church leaders who wanted a training at their church. However, during the discussion, the leaders brought out their own questions, asking for advice for their families. Sometimes church leaders don't get support and counseling because they feel like they have no one to turn to. It is an important need for such people to be heard and cared for as they also care for others.

Another time, Sara and Jane returned to Irundu for a conference for couples. This time, the theme was taking care



Jane leading discussion in Irundu

of the family. They taught about building your relationship with God so that love for him spills out into relationships with others. They reviewed responsibilities of parents and talked about ways to relate well with your family members. And they brought *chaya* - a nutritious food to help feed the family.

They also heard a great testimony from a man who learned about parenting in their teaching last year. He has greatly improved his



Jane and Sara at Jane's house

relationship with his wife and children - by spending more time doing fun things with them.

Pastors Continued...

connections, as well as the new opportunities in life, work, and ministry that those relationships create.

Through this pastor's group Anthony and our friend Tim hosted a preaching conference last May on the book of Galatians.

Additionally, we were able to take about 30 of the pastors and their wives for a marriage conference in Jinja with Conrad Mbewe as the main teacher. The pastors had read one of Mbewe's books and it was a delight to meet



Painting with the dogs

the author in person and learn from him for those few days. Thank you for supporting these pastors and their wives by giving financially and praying for this conference!

Updates in Soroti

We have a friend who worked for Peace Corps in Kitgum (north of Soroti) who has visited us several times. We will miss him as he soon heads back to the US. Sara has been able to work on painting more murals in our time off over the holidays. Anthony is able to get fish for us to enjoy eating now and then. Kids and other visitors always like to see him throw the net into the pond, even times when he doesn't catch fish.

A lizard Anthony saved from a fence



Mail: Sara and Anthony Sytsma, PO Box 280, Soroti, Uganda

Email: ssytsma@crcna.org, anthonysytsma@crcna.org

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