



June 2007

Artists in Christian Testimony

Bill and Julisa Rowe— Telling the Story through creative and performing arts

www.ethnodrama.com

The Rowes' Rovings

*Cairo...Abou Kortas...Ichartunyani...
Mombasa...Nairobi...* We have certainly been roving a great deal in the last few months!

Many of you prayed and contributed to make a training trip to Egypt possible. As you can see from the pictures, we went! We spent 2 weeks in Egypt and trained a total of 9 drama teams and 5 worship teams.



Enjoying a free morning at the Pyramids!



Nathaniel getting comfortable with friends on the train headed south to the conference

We thoroughly enjoyed our time in Egypt, although it was very busy. We both had 3+ hour training sessions almost every evening in Cairo, and then a 4-day conference in Abou



The drama track attendees at the 4-day conference in Abou Kortas



Drama workshop with the "Vision" team—the oldest Christian drama team in Cairo

Kortas (a 5-hour train ride south of Cairo) where Bill taught a Worship track and Julisa a Drama track the entire time. A babysitter watched the boys during this very grueling

moved by the teaching and artistry that came through— gaining salvation through works, or praying as the way to gain blessing, is a very common misconception here. A personal highlight for Julisa was performing a monologue on Mary Magdalene with translation by Jackee, a very gifted dramatist in one of the teams (on Julisa's left in above picture). She performed it twice more in Cairo to other drama teams.

The people are hungry for training. Worship teams and drama teams are formed by people from many churches with the purpose of presenting worship concerts and drama concerts that will evangelize.

There are some professional teams, but all are in need of continued and deeper training, not only in the area of artistic skill development, but also in the area of theology and how it applies to the arts, outreach and discipleship.

Every team we taught wanted more, and everyone asked us to come back again. For some of the dramatists, the idea of God being strongly interested in the arts was a surprising concept. They act because they enjoy it, but had not been taught from Scripture about God's delight in artistic things.

AWEMA, the organizing group, has invited us to continue teaching with them, both in Cairo and other strategic areas. Please be in prayer about the fulfillment of this request.



Bill is given a Maasai name

GOING SOUTH...

"Your name is Ole Sophia." That is, Bill Ole Sophia, an elder of the Maasai community.

A week after returning from Egypt, Bill went with a small team of visiting faculty to Ichartunyani, a Maasai area in southern Kenya to hold training for pastors. Dr. Mark Fackler focused on leadership training, Dr. Rick Horner led

sessions on drama and Bill gave some basic training in worship to about 20 pastors and church leaders in the region. Since Rick was there to do drama training, Julisa stayed in Nairobi with the boys to help them re-settle after the time in Egypt.

The need is great in the Ichartunyani area. There are 30 churches in the area with only 15 pastors. These pastors are ministering in the rural setting and have few resources at their disposal. They have a heart for the ministry but lack the training. There are a few experienced pastors in the area but they are quite busy with the responsibilities of their churches. The church Bill visited had about 450 members with a very small staff.



Some of the pastors receiving training

Please pray for these pastors and the work of the Kingdom in the Transmara region. We thank God for the good spirit of community that exists among them, but they are too few. Please pray that others will be called to pastoral leadership and be equipped to do the work that is so needed. Please pray also regarding the next step we take in becoming involved in training sessions. Finances may be a problem for the group in working with CMT, and we cannot afford to go on our own.



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PRAY FOR OUR FINANCES

• PRAISE! Thanks to so many of you for increasing your support, or sending in occasional gifts, or committing to our support for the first time! We now stand at 77% of our total needed. It would be higher but, unfortunately for us, a weakening dollar has resulted in what amounts to a 7% cut in what we receive.

• Our actual support received has also fluctuated drastically in the past few months. Part of the problem may be that some of you have not received receipts from ACT in awhile. They are tracing the problem, but be assured that your donations are getting through to our account. If you are waiting for a receipt before sending your check, you can send it in anyway, and it will get to the right place. Thanks!

• We do have to pay taxes for last year. Pray that the money will be provided for that as it could be several thousand dollars. Daystar continues to work on the best possible long-term solution for its missionaries.



PRAY FOR OUR MINISTRY

• A week after coming back from the Maasai, Bill went to Mombasa for a week of teaching. Please pray for the Mombasa courses, that the training will reach the intended audience. Pray for Florah, who is marketing the courses in the Mombasa area.

• Pray for the scheduled "Drama in the Church" course July 9-20. There is much interest, but we need to see that translated into committed registrants. There is also much interest among the churches for individual consulting and training with their teams.

• Pray for Bill as he works with the choir at Nairobi Baptist, training leaders and conducting. He is holding weekly sessions in music reading and worship leadership. Pray for Julisa as she plans the next several months of drama for NBC.

• Pray for Bill as he prepares two chapel services for the Nairobi campus in June. Pray also that we will be able to help the chaplain and university students in preparing and conducting more effective and nourishing chapel times.

• Nairobi Baptist wants to target its 8:30 am Sunday service to young professionals (a group that is largely missing from our congregation). There have been many obstacles in creating this service; pray for us as we begin meeting with the planning committee to give advice and help on issues of communication, worship planning and creativity.

PRAY FOR OUR SURROUNDINGS



• Pray for the spiritual focus of Daystar. The administration is working hard to renew the vision of Daystar to be a truly Christian university, but there are many obstacles. There is always the concern of financial viability for the school and this often seems to drive decisions more than the desire to make a difference for Christ. One major item for prayer is that the University Council (the top level of leadership that has final "veto" and governing power) will embrace the vision of the university as a change-agent for Christ, standing as a light for Him, being willing to do whatever it takes to bring Christ to Africa and the world, no matter the risks, or potential risks.

As an example, the Arab Christian organization we worked with in Cairo wants to move its theological training institute to Kenya, under the auspices of Daystar. The university as a whole has embraced this opportunity to help that part of the world in its impact-making, but at the last minute the Council has opposed the move, citing security risks. While it is true that Muslims are aggressive in Kenya and have threatened organizations that oppose them in any way, including bombings or threats of bombings, our concern is that the Council is so focused on the risks that they are forgetting Who we serve and are not weighing the response in light of God's commission. Please pray for wisdom for all in this and that God would be glorified and upheld.

• You may have heard news about the Mungiki sect in Nairobi and the current clash with the government and police. The violence is largely confined to one of the slum areas and areas just outside of Nairobi, so we are not affected. However, it is an issue of concern for Kenya. The Mungiki operate like the Mafia and are trying to raise trouble for the government right now. Please pray for a peaceful and swift resolution. Other acts of crime continue sporadically, such as a bombing in downtown Nairobi this week.



PRAY FOR OUR FAMILY

• We asked for prayer to balance family, work and rest. It is still a difficult balance to strike and will be harder during the boys' upcoming school break (July and August) which is our busiest time of teaching. Rest often becomes the last thing to happen! However, a wonderful couple at church were led by the Lord to give us a night away at a lovely B&B. We praise God for blessings like this! Of course, they never want to hear us talk of being tired again after that! :-)

• Please pray that good activities and opportunities will be available for the boys during the July/August break, and that we can find good times to be with them while meeting our work obligations.

April was a very active time for drama at Nairobi Baptist Church!



April 6: “Meditations on the Cross”



“Surely, this was the Son of God!”

On Good Friday, the dramatic worship service that Bill and Julisa compiled was presented under Julisa’s supervision by the church’s university students. Direction was beautifully done by one of the members of the drama team. *Meditations on the Cross* had a powerful impact on the congregation, taking them through Passion Week and helping them reflect on their own need for Christ’s redemptive act. The service took 1 1/2 hours and was done through congregational singing, prayer, drama and narration. Julisa, in combination with the Young Adult singing team, helped guide the service from the piano.



April 8: Easter Sunday

We put together a dramatic and musical Easter celebration service. Many people travel upcountry on this weekend so the choir turned into an ensemble for the day! Bill conducted and Julisa pitched in as an alto. The drama team provided narration, dramatic monologues and readers’ theatre that all helped the congregation determine why the resurrection is relevant and important today in our lives.



April 29: “Brothers”

Julisa directed members of the Adult Drama Team in the play “Brothers” — a play based on the book of Philemon. It looks at Philemon’s possible response to Paul’s letter and the issue of reconciliation and forgiveness, particularly among members of the family of God. The 40-minute play was presented in place of the sermon at both morning services, and has been requested by a sister church at the end of June.

