

November 2022



Josh joining in a traditional Sunday school dance

Dear friends,
We're truly thankful for your prayers, and kindly ask if you might lift up the following things concerning Uganda Martyrs Seminary Namugongo (UMSN) to our good and gracious Lord.

UMSN Alumni

How do you and your church leaders enjoy spiritual refreshment and encouragement in life and ministry? There are things that all believers have access to in this: abiding in Christ, being strengthened and equipped by the Holy Spirit, and things that most of us also enjoy: fellowship with other believers, corporate worship and devotion, freedom in prayer and Bible study, and more.

However, there are other such blessings that many UMSN alumni who are leading churches often in poor, remote setting across Uganda might not have access to as many Western Christians do: Christian literature, retreats and conferences, fellowship as 'equals' with other Christians (rather than always being the leader), sitting under Bible teaching (rather than an expectation to teach on every occasion). At UMSN **we recognise how easy it is for ministers to struggle spiritually in those often-lonely years following their training**, and how quickly they can lose hold of some key ministry skills in the absence of ongoing in-service training, not least Bible handling and teaching skills.

Because of this we have a **Crosslinks School of Biblical Training**, including a team of UK Christian leaders, joining us from 21–25 November to facilitate a week-long conference (alongside UMSN staff and Ugandan teachers and preachers here) for over 100 UMS alumni. Check out this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udGAILqPstA> to see highlights of the 2019 conference. As well as Bible teaching and discussion in the mornings, each afternoon alumni will be in small groups sharing their ups and downs from the past year of ministry, and what they are hoping to focus on and implement in the coming year. Church leaders here very rarely get an opportunity to openly share their stories with others who understand what it's like, and they deeply value it. **Please pray for the conference facilitators to preach and teach clearly, faithfully, relevantly, and helpfully. Pray also for the alumni to be encouraged, refreshed and energised for the year of ministry ahead.**

New UMSN programme

Big news from college this week: for the first time in our 45-year history, **UMSN are launching a bachelor's degree program!** Our certificate and diploma in theology courses to train church leaders before they get ordained and placed in churches will, of course, be continuing. But this week we also



Chloe with a goat she found in the garden

advertised our new 'Bachelor's in Biblical and Christian Leadership Studies'. This will be aimed primarily at UMSN alumni in ministry who wish to upgrade their training and develop their ministry and leadership approaches and attitudes. They will come back for six weeks each semester for intensive classes, and then have reading and coursework to do in their home settings after that. We're now recruiting for the first cohort to start in January.

The college already has record-high numbers (over 260) and this will add to it, but in the Lord's strength we believe this is possible and wonderful! **Please**

pray for those alumni and other Christian leaders who are currently weighing up whether to apply: we

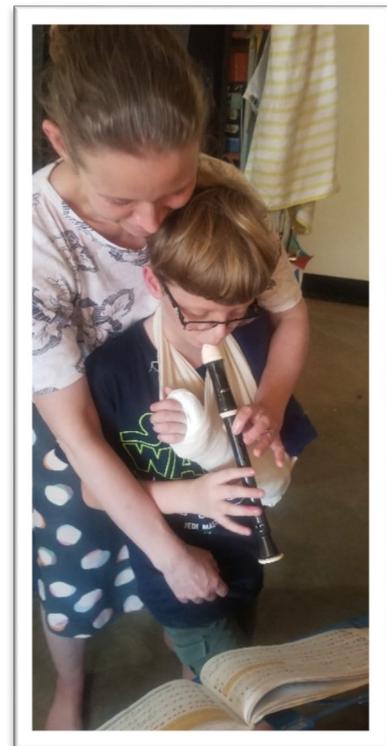
have advised them to do so prayerfully, wisely, and in honest discussion with their families and diocesan leaders. **Please pray for me (Chris) as I write new lectures and help co-ordinate fellow staff to do the same. Could you also pray for me as I lead the process of rewriting our certificate and diploma courses to keep them up-to-date and renew our accreditation with the academic authorities?** It's a lot of time in front of a laptop, but crucial in determining what happens across the college classrooms on a day-by-day basis.

General News

It's been a rotten few weeks of health in the family. **Please pray for healing:** Danny broke his arm (playing football!), we all got hit by Covid (and Ros' ongoing Covid-related symptoms have increased again as a result) and we've had some horrible bugs that have knocked us flat. But we're afloat, and **give thanks to God for his ongoing mercies:** home-schooling continues successfully (most of the time!), more and more children are coming back to the Sunday school after a massive dip following lockdowns (we're now back up to about 500 altogether), and Josh, Dan, and Chloe continue to thrive. Within 90 seconds of waking up, they've unlocked the front door and are out digging, climbing, running, carving and swinging until minutes before bedtime (eating and home-school aside). We're thankful for the life they live here, and how this has enabled Ros and me to join in ministry here for so many years (over 11 now!).

With warmest greetings and love to you all,

Chris, Ros, Josh, Dan, and Chloe x



Recorder practice continues – broken arm or not!