

BLACKIEONAMISSION

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Greeting our CBC Team...

It was so fun being on the other side of arriving in Rwanda. My church team arrived on Saturday 5th September and I was able to bake them some cookies and make them some little welcome packs to place on their beds before they arrived.

Change of Accommodation...

I learnt pretty quickly that a house is not a home, and while my house in Kimihurura was the perfect dwelling, some of the life choices that happened inside were not what I wanted to be living with. So after a particularly bad night of listening to threats, with the wise counsel of special family and friends from my church I moved that afternoon and spent two weeks with the team at the guest house they stayed in. I felt much love and embraced by each of them.

Living in Gisozi...

A friend graciously took me in until I can find some more permanent accommodation. She lives in the same community as the school and so it has been great being able to just walk to the school and save on transport. I have been looking around and it seems to range from \$2500USD per month - \$450USD, so somewhere in between there will suffice!



It's not all work and no play!

Each year the CBC team come over, Fruits of Hope Academy are always quick with a challenge of a game of soccer - and well, we Mzungus are often out numbered, so yes even in skirts and the wrong shoes one must take one for the team and support where one can - I was pretty much as good as useless though, and this photo captures so much more than actually happened!!

Bugesera Community Centre - Hope Academy

Bugesera is a church plant and a school plant from Fruits of Hope. The team visited one Saturday and I was desperate to go back with children there. They needed some sports equipment so a few balls and skipping ropes and their morning break time was filled in.





Teacher's Dinner...

To say thank you to the Teachers for all the disruptions and change of plans at the school our visits cause and to simply connect with them a little more each year, the CBC team takes them out for dinner - and this year they came to the guest house where we were staying and we had some great 'swallowship' together as Fred would say.

Who needs water anyway?

Being the end of the dry season and with the rains not receiving the memo that they should actually start arriving sometime soon we have had days when you turn on the tap and guess what - nothing - nada - zilch - and it always seems to be on hair wash day! Except for this morning when I thought I would be going to church with my hair in a dirty bun - praise God there was plenty of water - and it was hot even - so happy days! Think of me next time you have a hot running shower and remember those even less fortunate living in the villages with no clean water.

I found the perfect house this afternoon...

I found the perfect house this afternoon with guest rooms to host mzungus when they come over, a veggie patch and heck even a rabbit hutch - or was it a chicken coop Fred wasn't real sure! Only problem is it's about \$500 over budget a month - yet it is fully furnished - and nicely done too! That's 25 people donating \$20 a month for two years - anyone up for the challenge?

Getting to know the locals...

The longer you stay here, the more you go out for coffee / meals / catch ups, which also means the more you truly get to be absorbed into the culture and the history of the place by listening to stories. I have felt completely humbled when one of my close friends recalled the story of the day he received his first pair of shoes, and the whole village celebrated because he was the first boy to have a pair of shoes. He was nine years old at the time and he wanted to join his father as he told the family of the young man who wanted to marry his sister how many cows he must pay for her. His father told him he could not visit the other family without a pair of shoes on his feet - apparently his mother now 76 and still in the village does not own a pair of shoes. (I think she may but she chooses not to wear them!)

Meanwhile as I had another lunch date with another good friend he told me that he could remember the first day that he went into a shopping mall, "I was twenty!" He said, as he watched his own kids running through Simba, then he went on to say, "Look at these guys they will never know life without a shopping centre!"



And here is my own Mum in Rwanda, waiting with the nursery children before they have their health assessments by the team Doctor. So loved having my Mum here to play 'mother bear' when I moved out and to celebrate my birthday!

So what have I been doing anyway?

Because I have actually moved house three times in three weeks I feel like I have just been reacquainting myself with what's where and who's in this community. Because I have moved further out from the centre of town I need to rely on taxis much more and from this end of the world they are way more expensive.

How big is your bottom?

So seriously why is it that my brain remembers some words that are far from important or even useful when speaking another language in another culture? I have learnt a few words this week, and two which may or may not be at all helpful are Akabuno and Icabuno.....what do they mean I hear you ask - well funny you should ask, Akabuno means the one with a small bottom and Icabuno - you guessed it - means the one with the big bottom! So when I texted these words to a friend (Bishop!!) he replied with "you have an Icabuno" - so I bought fresh fruit and veggies the next day!! I do take heart though because I have been informed that only children are referred to as Akabuno and adults are all Icabuno - no matter what the size!

Safe to say I have been learning some language!

I start work tomorrow...

Yes I officially start work at Fruits of Hope tomorrow, so my friend will now become my boss and he tells me we are going to spend Monday in a five hour brain storming meeting! I told him that might finish in about 5 minutes! I have emailed an agenda for this five hour meeting and we will see how many points we get through tomorrow and how many will need to wait until the sixth hour.



For those of you not on facebook - next time you're not loving your job or you think it might be monotonous, think of this lady who for at least twelve hours that I knew of carried cement bricks on her head from where they were made to where they were being laid. And she even smiled for the camera - again talk about perspective!



And then there's this little clash of cultures where the white mzungu princess finds herself relaxing on a Sunday afternoon - and just quietly plans to make a little bit of a habit of it!

Although it always passes through my mind that the Teachers annual wage is less than my fortnightly wage - perspective. It would take a teacher two weeks to earn what it cost me to swim in this pool. If you think like that too much you will go crazy, so when you are here you live how you feel comfortable.

I have one friend who has booked her ticket for February and another one talking about it - when will I see you in Rwanda?