

Celebrating Church Partnerships



Dear Friends;

For Partnership Week at Nzige, the following activities/ items will be paid for:

1. A 5,000 liter water tank to collect rain water.
2. A new uniform for each child. Most of them have only one uniform, others haven't any.
3. Nails, timbers and other required supplies to build enough desks for the children.
4. More chickens so each child will get 2 or 3 eggs a week.
5. A wheelbarrow and two pots to increase porridge.

I will be sending you photos during this partnership week to show you how it happens. With joy for the fruits of Pearce and Nzige partnership,

Ephaste

Most of us experience sponsorship as a 1:1 relationship of sponsor and child. At ICCM we often talk about changing the world one child at a time.

But we need to change it faster! One way to do this is for a church to sponsor multiple children in the same place. Church partnerships are emerging as a very exciting form of sponsorship.

For example, Pearce Memorial Free Methodist Church in Rochester, New York, now partners with Nzige FMC in Rwanda. Working with our office and ICCM's Regional Coordinator Vickie Reynen, Pearce sent an exploratory team. They met the pastor of a church in rural Rwanda that had been recommended by Rwandan ICCM and FM leaders. Pastor Wally Fleming and the Pearce team fell in love with the people of Nzige. They came home and presented the idea of a long-term relationship with Nzige to their church, and the idea caught fire! A partnership was born.

Now 80 children at Nzige are sponsored by people from Pearce. Women at Pearce sewed outfits for all the children and one member hand-delivered them. Children from Pearce's preschool drew pictures for the Nzige kids and the Nzige kids sent their own drawings back.

Conversations are being sparked about future teams and resource sharing. Educators at Pearce are exploring a Teacher Training trip. Pearce medical personnel and their Rwandan counterparts are discussing Community Health needs. Volunteers from Pearce and Roberts Wesleyan College may share in the Rwandan pastors' continuing education program.

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Twice, ICCM Rwanda's National Coordinator Ephaste Niyigena has recorded Skype greetings for use in worship at Pearce. They're all dreaming of the day when he will visit New York. Meanwhile, Nzige and Pearce have become partners. They pray for each other. They enjoy being known by each other. They are becoming family!

Photos, left to right:

- ⇒ ICCM National Coordinator Ephaste with Pearce member Ruth Stewart.
- ⇒ Children with chickens donated through sponsorship support.
- ⇒ Nzige children in clothes sewn with love by their Pearce partners and brought to Rwanda by Ruth.



More Partnerships Available!

Several other churches are enjoying the mutual benefits of partnering globally through ICCM. LifePoint Church in Lake Stevens, Washington, sponsors all the boys at Anukamp Hostel and all the girls at Devicode Hostel in India. The church has sent several mission teams to India over the years and has formed deep bonds with their Indian brothers and sisters. The pastor at the boys' hostel has preached at LifePoint. Church members have made quilts for all the children; wrapped up in them on cold nights, the hostel children feel "snuggled." Beautiful, large group photos of the children adorn the lobby of LifePoint Church. Even visitors see the connection — the church obviously cherishes this global-local partnership.

The FM church in Colville, Washington, partners with ICCM's Jubilee Kids project in the Philippines. At the request of the Jubilee Kids' pastor, Colville has now sent funds for a basketball court. Pastors Dick and Sheila Dickenson plan to visit one day. Filipina Pastora Tessie Chua treasures the developing sense of belonging between Colville and Jubilee.

Others could be mentioned. Philadelphia's Storehouse Church has deep ties with the little school in Bitu Genet, Ethiopia. Pastor JR Rushik was on the exploratory team that camped out on a mountainside and envisioned a church plant and school on that mountain one day. Now his church supports many of the children in the school.

ICCM's Director of Church Relations, Jen Finley, would love to talk with you about new possibilities. Opportunities exist for all sorts and sizes of churches. For instance, a church might choose all 35 children at one of our schools, and challenge 35 church families to each support one child. Right now, ICCM schools in Haiti, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya, Togo, Rwanda, and India are hoping and praying for partners.

If sponsoring multiple children is not realistic, Jen can suggest some projects that don't involve the long-term commitment of sponsorship, but need monthly support. The Light & Life Child Care Center in Myanmar is one such project. The Green Light Project child care center in Athens, Greece (a partnership of the Set Free Movement with the Salvation Army) is another. A Free Methodist ministry to street children in Addis Ababa is another project needing a partner.

Presently, we have more than 3,000 children waiting to be sponsored. If we rely solely on individuals to choose one child apiece, these children will likely wait for a long, long time. But if churches or groups catch the vision of partnering together, our children stand a much better chance of finding a sponsor.

Will you consider beginning a global adventure? Email jen.finley@fmcusa.org or call 800-342-5531 ext. 228 today.