



# STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION

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## CONFIDENT HOPE IN TROUBLED TIMES

*"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with **confident hope** through the power of the Holy Spirit."*

Romans 15:13 (NLT)

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Little did we know as we stepped into **2020: A Year of Confident Hope** that we would be facing a challenge such as this, a worldwide pandemic. Yet this word is precisely for such a time as this! When all around us there is not just a virus pandemic but a panic pandemic it is time for us to remember in Whom our hope lies, and to let that hope spill out to others who may be in difficulty and distress. The reality is, God is still in control and He continues to fulfill His plan to reconcile all things to Himself.

Perhaps you yourself are in difficulty and distress at this time. We want to stand alongside of you in confident hope that God knows exactly where you are and all about your situation. He truly is Emmanuel, God with us! We pray that He will reveal Himself to you in this time and that His peace, protection, and presence will surround you and yours.

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## CONFIDENT HOPE IN RWANDA

On our recent Journey Out to Africa, which was abbreviated from three weeks to three days, we had the opportunity to meet for two full and fruitful days with our Rwandan Servant Leadership Team. It was such a great joy to be with them and hear their great passion for the work of reconciliation in their country. They have recently added two new young members to their leadership team and all of them expressed how the need for reconciliation in their country, particularly among the young generation, is even greater than it was right after the genocide. So many of these young people have grown up without parents because of either death or incarceration, and the wounds that they carry are beginning to manifest in many unhealthy ways. Their commitment to intentionally and creatively reach this generation with the ministry of reconciliation is inspiring!



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## CONFIDENT HOPE IN UGANDA

Our recent Journey Out to Africa was planned to coincide with the official PCR Uganda Launch Celebration which was scheduled for this coming Saturday March 21st. However, due to the current situation that official launch has been postponed until this fall, however, the ministry launch has not been delayed! Our emerging leadership team is doing an amazing job of bringing this unique message of reconciliation in fresh and familiar ways. In addition to our 3 Day Healing and Reconciliation Retreats they have also extensively deployed our 1 Day Heart of Reconciliation Retreats. They are also making substantial inroads into schools using our Way of Reconciliation materials with the intent of starting reconciliation clubs. With 75% of the population 25 and under, reaching this young generation is essential!



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## CONFIDENT HOPE IN SOUTH SUDAN

This theme of confident hope emerged last fall while we were in South Sudan and had the opportunity to bring a message to the entire nation through national media. Recently, after many years of civil war a peace treaty was at long last signed and both the president and his main political opponent spoke together publicly of the need for healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation for the country after all these years of conflict and trauma.

Our PCR board member, Dr. Monica Yugu, has been there since December training and mentoring new leaders and hosting multiple retreats. The doors are wide open for this ministry of reconciliation and the movement is already growing rapidly. Please pray that God will guide and provide for this work so that we might see an entire nation transformed through the power of reconciliation!

Testimony from South Sudanese Retreat Participant

*"The healing you brought worked! Now people in the village are peaceful and friendly to each other. You need to come back. The Holy Spirit led us to ask forgiveness from one of the ladies from the neglected camp, and she was changed. We did not know that because of bitterness she used to frequently start verbal fights among the women. After the retreat she started visiting women in their homes and apologizing and speaking encouraging words. Now she is changed. She is a new person. People asked, 'What did those people do to her at the retreat? She is different. That is not her.' The cool thing is that one month after the retreat she was recognized as a women's leader for the whole camp and another month later was employed by a local CBO. Now she has income!"*



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## CONFIDENT HOPE IN THE UNITED STATES

Recently I had the privilege of preaching the first two Sundays in Lent at a church here in St. Paul where we have done a Retreat and our Way of Reconciliation course. Their Lenten focus is "*New Beginnings*". The first week of Lent the message was "*Preparing for New Beginnings*" and the Lectionary scripture was Jesus' temptation in Matthew 4. The first question we explored was, when do new beginnings begin? Counter-intuitively, I believe that new beginnings actually happen before we even see a blade, or blossom, or bloom. New beginnings begin in the winter season, the times of waiting, when we are in the wilderness. Times and seasons like we are walking through right now! I do have confident hope that out of this difficult and distressing time in our country, God is going to bring something new that will transform individuals, relationships, and communities through His loving ministry of reconciliation!

Towards this end we continue to pray and labor together with you and our partners all over the world. As the words of the prophet Isaiah exclaim:

*"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.  
See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples,  
but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you.  
Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn."  
Isaiah 60:1-3*

## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Pilgrim Center Spring Social** April 23 at Colonial Church - **POSTPONED**

**Healing and Reconciliation Retreat** - May 15-17 **CANCELLED** - next General Retreat -  
October 9-11 at Koinonia Retreat Center near Annandale, MN.

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