

# NEW CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH

## Newsletter

APRIL 2013  
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5

### COME DOWN LORD-PART ONE ISAIAH 63:3-64:12

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We live in an interesting time. Everyone is talking about revival. Churches are praying all over the globe, intercessors are in fasting, pulpits are full of talks on how to hasten revival but it seems no one is really sure about what Revival really is.

What is Revival? When does it come? Who brings Revival—our prayers or God's own initiative? Can one determine when Revival should come?

One of the great privileges of our time is that we get to know things that most of God's people did not have the chance to know. One of those is found in Isaiah's prayer. Please read with me to Isaiah 63:3—64:2

Isaiah was a prophet living about 600 BC. He prophesied during the time when the northern kingdom of Israel was about to go into captivity by the Assyrians and the southern kingdom of Judah to the Babylonians.

In his particular passage, Isaiah was given a revelation of his people's future. He could see the enemies of God's people—the Babylonians, coming in, ravaging the land, taking the people into captivity some of whom would never see their homeland again while others would not return until 70 years later.

He could see the people languishing in captivity and yearning for their temple and their homeland as year after dreary year passed by.

Finally he could see the people restored and he could see that restoration as a symbol of the coming messiah who would establish an everlasting kingdom. So Isaiah prays a prayer that he anticipates that **in the future** his people would pray when their situation was at its worst. He could see them in that great moment of need and was moved to pray the prayer that would be on their lips and in their hearts at that dreadful time.

The heart of this prayer is captured in 64:1, **"COME DOWN LORD"** Everything else seems to lead to and flow from that one petition. We find the prophet arming himself with arguments to persuade God to return to his people in blessing power.

I very much believe that we are in no better situation than the children of Israel and that we certainly can learn a lot from this prayer. In this prayer, the prophet captures the **meaning of**

**Revival.** He makes at least **seven great statements** as to why God should come down to his people and I believe the church needs to know them today if we are to understand the need and nature of Revival today.

**COME DOWN LORD** Because.....

1. We miss you (Isa 63:15-16)
2. We need you (Isa 63:17—64:2)
3. We wait for you (Isa 64:3-4)
4. We will meet you (Isa 64:5)
5. We have wronged you (Isa 64:5-7)
6. We belong to you (Isa 64:8-12)
7. We beseech you (Isa 64:9)

#### COME DOWN LORD BECAUSE WE MISS YOU

Isaiah tells us that one of the signs that Revival is near is when God's



people begin to miss God. They realize that for a time they have lived in routine and tradition but now want to see the presence and hand of God at work in their lives.

If you have missed someone you love or who at one time has meant much to you, you understand what Isaiah is saying. Usually when you miss someone, you begin to remember little things they did for you, you visualize their smiles, their gentle touches, their gifts, the things they liked to do with you and many more. This is the picture Isaiah paints as he opens up his prayer. He tells us what Israel was missing about God.

- His smiling face (*Look down from heaven*)
- His helping hand (*Where is your zeal and strength?*)
- His caring heart (*Your tenderness and compassion are withdrawn*)

from us)

First Isaiah, says, **"Lord**

**we miss your smiling face"**.

Isaiah remembers

a time when God was among his people and the might wonders he did among them, like opening up the red sea (63:12-14)

He remembers too, that God's people have sinned against a Holy God and He has turned his face from them. They miss those things that they once enjoyed in fellowship with God and Isaiah says, *look down from heaven Lord! Let your face once again shine upon us.*

Second, Isaiah says, **"We miss your helping hand"**. The prophet looks into the future and it is clear God is withholding his power from Israel. He sees how his people with a defeated nation, a fallen temple—in fact a heap of rubble, a desolate and exiled and at the mercy of foreigners would cry to God in that time of desperation and it breaks his heart. He prays that God at that time would show his zeal and strength again.

What do we do when God withholds his power from us and there is nothing to show for his presence? Church might have attractive promotions, big worship teams, and entertaining preachers but if the power of God is missing, it is only praying hide and seek with itself.

Today's church is relying on its own abilities, her wisdom, huge numbers and education. It thinks these can look like God's power at work but NO! The world is not buying this lie. They are still asking, **"Where is your God?"**.....

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Third, Isaiah says, “**Lord we miss your caring heart**”.

The prophet seems to be asking the inevitable question, “*If God turns his face away from his people and withholds his power from them, does this mean he no longer loves them?*”

He then reminds us that God’s nature is unchanging. While Abraham and Jacob their fathers in the flesh might not be willing to recognize them as their children because of their great sin, God still does recognize and love them (v. 16). Our redeemer from old is His name!

These opening words of Isaiah’s prayer teach us how we should live our lives as Christians.

We should always yearn for the smiling face of God, seeing his power at work among us and bask in the sunshine of his love. God may never stop loving us when we sin but he does withhold the expressions of his love to bring us to repentance.

We should also remember how terrible a thing it can be to live without these things from God. This should bring us to our knees always in repentance, seeking forgiveness from God and desiring the expressions of his love among us.

We as God’s people need to learn from the prophet; to call upon God daily for his Revival. The word “revive” wears its meaning upon its forehead; it is from the Latin, and may be interpreted thus—to live again, to receive again a life which has almost expired; to rekindle into a flame the vital spark which was nearly extinguished.

It refers to a spiritual reawakening from a state of dormancy or stagnation in the life of a believer. It encompasses the resurfacing of a love for God, an appreciation of God’s holiness, a passion for His Word and His church, a convicting awareness of personal and corporate sin, a spirit of humility, and a desire for repentance and growth in righteousness. Revival invigorates and sometimes deepens a believer’s faith, opening his or her eyes to the truth in a fresh, new way.

It is initiated by a prompting of the Holy Spirit, creating an awareness of something missing or wrong in the believer’s life that can only be righted by God.

The Holy Spirit further more

- Makes men aware of how great and majestic God is.

- Convinces men that God is perfectly holy.
- Impresses upon men that God hates sin.
- Shows and convinces us that we are sinners.
- Encourages us to detest sin.
- Teaches us to be deeply sorry for our sin(s).
- Causes men to see that the message of the Bible is true.
- Overwhelms men with the realization that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior.
- *Impresses upon us that the Lord Jesus has done all that is necessary for our salvation.*

Please note: We must always remember, that contrary to what most churches teach today, Revival cannot be whipped up. Seasons of refreshing are sovereignly given by God. We can and should pray that God will revive his people and awaken unbelievers. But we must never forget that we are completely dependent upon him. Without him we can do nothing... **(To be continued)**

## From the session

### ***On behalf of the session, Elder Michael Enis explains why and how the Pastoral Team was formed.***

The Pastoral Team was an idea generated in a Session Meeting held 26 March. That Session met to discuss the way forward for NCCC in view of Pastor Gerald Sseruwagi’s call to another ministry in Rwanda and NCCC being without a pastor. NCCC is blessed with an abundance of excellent expository preachers in the congregation. The Session decided to invite some of those men to a Session Meeting on 2 April to discuss the idea of a Pastoral Team. In addition to the Elders and Deacon Nico Van den

berge that Session Meeting was attended by Pastor Tim Hoke, Daniel Matovu, Rodgers Atwebembeire, and Bruce Sinclair. Eric Kamoga had been invited but was unable to attend due to teaching responsibilities. Phillip Greene had expressed a desire to observe a Session Meeting and was also in attendance.

At this Session Meeting each of the invited guests had an opportunity to tell the group how they envisioned themselves serving at NCCC. Bruce Sinclair, Rodgers Atwebembeire, and Daniel Matovu each expressed a desire to play a role that included preaching, teaching and counseling

(shepherding). Bruce Sinclair shared that he had participated in a Pastoral Team when serving in another country and that it was a very successful ministry.

After the Session Meeting Daniel Matovu, Rodgers Atwebembeire, Eric Kamoga, and Bruce Sinclair were invited to form a Pastoral Team and meet to plan messages from the pulpit. The Team is meeting this week. NCCC should be excited and eager to see what these men will plan to lead the church in worship each Sunday.

**Elder Michael.**

**“Do you have any questions for the session? Please contact us”**

## INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

*Jaja Anna Namazzi is a 73 year old devote NCCC member who comes from Kifumbira with her 13year old granddaughter Sifa. After one of the church services, I spent some time with her, coffee and cookies in hand, I asked her a few questions.*

*Jaja, how did you join NCCC?*

**Jaja:** Some members of NCCC used to come to Kifumbira every Tuesday and Thursday and we would have fellowship. One day, one of the leaders asked the elderly women in the area to come and visit NCCC church. They offered to provide transport to and fro. So, I was among those who came. On getting here, I loved everything and therefore, I started attending every Sunday and I am still here!

*NCCC is an English speaking church. How do you understand what is going on since you have confirmed to me that you neither speak nor understand English?*

**Jaja:** Every Sunday I come with my granddaughter, Sifa. We seat close to each other, so she translates for me, and that way, I am able to follow everything that is being said. She really does a great translation job.

*What do you love most about NCCC?*

**Jaja:** I cannot explain it, but my heart just fell in love with this

church, and for that reason, I cannot go elsewhere.

*Any favorite hymns?*

**Jaja:** Yesu Ya'nyamba and Yesu, Gyangu Gyendi (*I could not find the exact translations for these songs, but literally, they mean, My help comes from Christ Jesus and Jesus, come where I am*).

*What do you do for a living?*

**Jaja:** I do not do much, all I do is weave my mats, which I sell and earn food for the day.



*Is there anyone that you stay with at home?*

**Jaja:** I mostly stay with Sifa, my thirteen year old granddaughter. Once in a while though, my other granddaughter comes to stay with us, but for a short time. I am a widow. My husband died a long time ago, and even the seven children we gave birth to have all passed on. So, it is just Sifa and I. (*she almost tears at the remembrance of the loss of both her husband and 7 children, It is sad, and I am at a loss of words but I sympathize with her*).

*Jaja, is there a place that you would love to visit if given a chance to?*

**Jaja:** My girl, at my age, the only place I love to go to is church, apart from that, I cannot think of

a place that I would really want to visit.

*Birthday:*

**Jaja:** 02/February/1939.

*Imagine you were stuck at a desert island, and I had to pick one item from your house, what would that be?*

**Jaja:** My Bible.

*Say I invited you to my house, what food shouldn't I miss on my menu?*

**Jaja:** (*She beams as she answers this question*). Matooke and meat. Oh, I enjoy these two dishes.

*On concluding our time together with Jaja Anna, she asked that the church pray for her. She has been having excruciating pain in her right hand and she says she has no medication. In addition, she is grateful that the church embarked on building her house. She continues to pray that funds can be got so that it is completed as she has no windows, and the only door she has is being eaten by ants.*

And to you my dear NCCC family, this week, I share a word from Hebrews 10:24. "...And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds."

*Compiled by*

*Maurayne N. Katongole*

# New City Ministries

## Women's Ministry

The ladies ministry is meeting every second Saturday of the month. We meet at the church office in Najjanankumbi, off Stella stage. Meeting starts at 10am. All ladies are welcome.

Leaders: Jalia Matovu  
Victoria Sentamu

## Men's Ministry

The men's ministry is starting soon.

Leader: Daniel Matovu

## Student's Ministry RSO

RSO is our university student ministry. Small group meetings are held at different universities. Inquire from the RSO-staff when the small group at your university meets.

Every Saturday night, RSO has coffee bar at the clubhouse, Najjanankumbi, off Stella stage. Coffee bar is open from 7pm—10pm. Come for fellowship, games, singing, a snack and a cup of coffee.

Every first Saturday of the month, RSO-students volunteer at Sanyu Babies Home. Every student is welcome to join us.

For more info contact Naomi.

## Music Ministry

The music ministry, leading the worship on Sundays. We practice every Saturday 2-3pm and early Sunday morning.

Leader: Robert Wamala

## Hospitality Ministry

Welcoming people in the family of the Church.

If you are interested in this ministry contact Nkugwa Esther

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## Member's Info

- Pastor Gerald and family are in Rwanda where they are missionaries for the next 2 years.
- Mr. John Wiltbank will be leaving Uganda for good in June to join his wife, Mrs. Alison Wiltbank in the USA.
- Elder Simon left to visit his wife Mary and their son Simon jr. in the USA.
- A daughter was born to Kennedy and Victoria Ssetamu. Her name is Katelyn.
- Pastor Tim and Cheri Hoke are heading back to the USA for 3 months.

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## What to pray for

- Pastor Gerald and his family
- Pastor Tim and Cheri Hoke
- Session members
- Families. The family is the cornerstone of a society. Pray for stable and godly families.
- Singles. We have many singles in our midst. Pray that they may be faithful and depending on the Lord in everything they need.
- Children. Pray for the children of our church, the Rafiki children and all the other children. That they may grow in loving the Lord Jesus.
- Ministries. There are many ministries represented in our Church: Rafiki, ABU, ACFAR, Cornerstone, EIM, Life Ministry Uganda, Westminster.

**Do you have any prayer requests? Please contact us.**