

# BISHOPS' LENT APPEAL 2024

Faith in Action - Prayer and Giving  
Transforming Lives in Kagera



Lent is a wonderful season for considering how we can follow Jesus more purposefully. The way we can do this is in our service and support of our neighbours, near and far. Our brother and sister Christians in our link diocese of Kagera are far away from us geographically, but they are close to us in Christ.

The aim of the Bishops' Lent Appeal is to support farming initiatives and good practice in agriculture, training of evangelists and clergy at Kagera Christian Theological College (KCTC), and resourcing of pastors in their parishes. We will also continue our support for healthcare in the region through the Diocesan hospital.

**Faith in Action - Transforming lives in Kagera**  
**Wednesday 14 February to Sunday 18 February**

Week  
**1**

This year the booklet is different. Instead of daily challenges, there are weekly themes to think and pray about. You'll read stories of different people in Kagera and the ways that Kagera Diocese, with financial support from our own Diocese, has helped to transform their lives. If you can, you might like to respond by putting aside some money each week to help the Diocese of Kagera continue this work. Or perhaps your group or church could work together to raise money to buy some of the items in our weekly shopping lists.

For more information or to donate visit  
[cofesuffolk.org/bishops-lent-appeal](https://cofesuffolk.org/bishops-lent-appeal)



Lord Jesus,  
Give us the trust, confidence and courage this Lent to give up those things which keep us from you and to take up those things which draw us closer to you. Through the prayers, service and generosity of our brothers and sisters in Kagera, enable us to know more of your way, your truth and your life. In Jesus Christ we ask.  
Amen



Anglican Church  
of Tanzania  
**KAGERA**



Kagera Diocese is part of the Anglican Church of Tanzania. It covers around four times the area of Suffolk and is home to nearly one million people. Since it was established in 1985 church growth has led to the formation of two further dioceses in the region.

In Kagera Diocese there are 245 churches, 88 pastors, and 263 lay evangelists. Kagera is a beautiful region of mostly hilly savannah in the northwest of Tanzania. However, it is remote and poor, a long way from the more prosperous parts of the country.



Many of the population live in small isolated villages with no electricity or running water, typically living on less than £1 a day, mostly through subsistence farming. Parts of Kagera have some of the highest under-five mortality rates in the country. Malaria and HIV/Aids are major problems. Lack of education and low investment in the area has led to poverty and a culture of dependency on external aid.

Kagera Diocese works hard to address this culture and realise its vision of 'Life in its fullness' for all its people' (John 10:10) The Diocese is focussed on caring for its people:

- mentally – education and pastoral care
- physically – healthcare and agricultural support
- spiritually – worship, prayer and bible study

Priests and lay evangelists lead their churches in lively worship, biblical teaching and pastoral care. They also demonstrate the gospel in a practical way, working with their communities and running projects to build self-sufficiency.



Father God,  
May every step we take be guided by you.  
Be with us as we walk together with our brothers and sisters in Kagera,  
and give us grace and power to build your kingdom,  
so that all people everywhere may have life in its fullness.  
Amen

The Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP), led by Thomas Shavu, gives people the skills and motivation to become self-sufficient and lift themselves out of poverty. It changes mindsets and gives people hope for the future.



Dixon of Nyamiaga says:

"I used to irrigate my crops with basins or pots, a method that was hard and time-consuming.

However, since learning about and acquiring a foot pump, my life has changed. The foot pump is a simple and affordable solution that has made irrigation much easier and more efficient. I want to express my gratitude to CCMP for providing the skills and knowledge that enabled me to adopt this technology. Now, I can tend to my crops more effectively, leading to better yields and improved livelihood".



Veronica, of

Kabalekela Village says:

"Gratitude overflows from my heart to CCMP for building me a

1,000 litre rainwater tank.

As a widow, the lack of water was a constant challenge. I had to walk three kilometres with my daughters to find water, but since this tank was built, I get enough rainwater and thus have time to rest instead of going far to find water. Thank you, Church of England, for being a beacon of hope on my journey."



Chris visited Kagera last September. He says "I was so impressed by the work of CCMP in the villages. People learn to discover and work with the resources they have, rather

than relying on handouts. I saw people grafting and planting avocado trees and building water tanks. I saw communities of all faiths and none helping each other and coming together. There is so much we here in Suffolk can learn from Kagera."

<i>Shopping List</i>	
5,000 litre water tank	£350
1,000 litre water tank	£130
Foot pump for irrigation	£130
Bag of cement	£10
Pipes, taps etc	£85

Dear Lord,

We give thanks for the way Dixon and Veronica's lives have been transformed, and pray that Thomas Shavu and all those working for CCMP may be empowered and equipped to reach more villages in Kagera.

We pray that CCMP may continue to inspire communities to find new ways of working to improve their lives in the face of climate change.

Amen

CCMP helps people across the region with training, and by providing seeds for drought-resistant crop varieties to manage better in the face of climate change. Two of the recipients share their stories of how their lives have been changed.



Feresta says: "Before we started planting the improved maize and cassava seeds, life for my family was a constant struggle. Our yields were low, and we often faced uncertainties due to unpredictable weather and pests. Everything changed when we were introduced to better maize seeds by CCMP. The harvest is increasing every season. Last year we harvested seven sacks of corn instead of the three we used to harvest. We hope to harvest more this year because the seeds thrive even in challenging weather conditions. The knowledge and skills I gained have enabled me and other farmers to become resilient farmers, and we are grateful for the positive changes these seeds have brought to our lives."



Jesca says: "Receiving the better seeds from CCMP for tomato and eggplant was a turning point for my family. In the past, our harvests were uncertain, and we struggled to make ends meet. But with these improved seeds, things have changed. The tomato seeds we received are hardier and more resistant to diseases, ensuring a high yield. We not only had enough for our family but also surplus to sell at the local market. The eggplants are bigger, more resilient, and in demand."

These better seeds have not only given me better harvests, they have given me a better life. I feel empowered as a woman and provider for my family. I am proud of the knowledge I gained in growing these crops, and I have been able to share my expertise in my community. I don't just plant tomatoes and eggplants, I am creating a better future for my family."



Lord, we honour you, for you multiply whatever is sown.  
We pray for every seed sown today across the world.  
We pray for every sower and ask that you feed them with hope.  
We pray especially for Feresta and Jesca and ask that you continue to bless them and their families. Amen

Another CCMP activity is the establishment of self-help groups. By pooling together weekly contributions, members are able to take out low interest loans to establish their own small businesses. And the groups are much more than that, as these two stories show.



Joanitha says

“Being part of a CCMP self-help group has been a transformative experience, demonstrating the power of multi-faith co-operation. Our diverse backgrounds, beliefs and traditions have not divided us; instead, they have become stronger threads in the fabric of society. This experience has shown me that when people of different faiths come together with a shared goal, the result is not only progress but a good bond of unity. Our self-help groups, born out of a church initiative, demonstrate the strength that comes from celebrating our diversity while working toward a shared future and success.”



Ruboha says

“I’m a proud member of an Umoja self-help group established by CCMP, and the journey has been truly empowering. Self-help groups have brought people of different faiths together, and it has been an inspiring experience. In our group, we share dreams, goals, and support each other regardless of our religious backgrounds. Not only have we learned to work cohesively, but we have also witnessed

tangible improvements in our lives such as improving our farming, starting small businesses, learning important skills, and strengthening our financial skills. The impact on my life has been remarkable. Through the self-help group, I’ve gained not just economic stability but also a network of strong, supportive individuals. CCMP’s vision has transformed us into a community that stands together, faces challenges head-on, and celebrates our collective successes.”



Holy God, we thank you for the life in all its fullness that these groups bring to their members.

We pray for Joanitha, Ruboha and all those who take part in self help groups.

We ask that all your people will grow together in unity, even as we celebrate and value our diversity.

Amen.





The Diocesan hospital at Murgwanza provides vital healthcare to the area, serving around 365,000 people. The nearest referral hospital is an eight-hour drive away, so Murgwanza is working hard to train local specialists. Our Diocese sponsored Dr Christian Ruzige through his training as a general surgeon. We are now sponsoring Dr Elia Ethan, studying for a Master's degree in Ophthalmology at Kilimanjaro Christian University Medical College.

Elia sends us regular updates on his progress: "Praise the Lord. The hands have started to coordinate with brain. Nice moments. I did three cataract surgeries today. I thank God, my surgical skills are becoming better day by day. God bless you for sponsoring my studies." Last year with a generous donation from a couple in Ipswich we were able to buy him a specialist 90D lens which he was able to put straight to use. He wrote: "The lens is working nicely and beautifully. Many thanks to my donors."



With money from previous Lent appeals we were also able to buy some specialist equipment for the hospital, including a blood analyser. Charles explained to Bishop Martin how to read the results.



Evelyn was trained in Murgwanza and now works at a local Health Centre where she provides basic medical care, district midwifery, pharmacy and nursing.

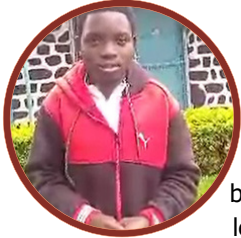


Dr Sarah Gull from Bury St Edmunds visited Murgwanza Hospital with Bishop Martin in 2023. She was impressed by the staff there: "They work under difficult circumstances and deserve our greatest respect and our prayers. Their practice is strongly linked to their faith, showing kindness and resilience."



We pray for all doctors, nurses and healthcare workers.  
May they rejoice in the skills you have given them which enable them to bring hope, healing and wholeness to those in their care.  
May they know your guidance and support in times of pain and difficulty.  
Bless each one of them, that they may be a blessing to others.  
Amen

Kagera Christian Theological College (KCTC) runs courses in theology and practical skills. As well as preparing priests for ordination, the college trains lay evangelists, who play a vital role in parish life across the diocese.



Obed, a Diploma student at KCTC says "Life here at KCTC is very exciting in different areas, it enriches not only our spiritual life but our physical life also. We learn how to use the bible in

different areas of life, preaching, teaching and caring for people. We also learn environmental conservation skills like agriculture, tree planting and animal keeping – I will use these skills when I leave college. I give great thanks to those who have supported me and pray that God will bless them."

With money from the last Lent Appeal, Kagera Diocese was able to buy five motorbikes for priests. Bishop Darlington blessed them at a special ceremony, saying how much transport helps with outreach. After the blessing, a loud Amen was sounded with the horns. The Revd Jotham Kabirigi says his bike will really help him spend more time ministering to his people rather than spending so much time walking the dusty roads between parishes.



Last year the college planted 4,000 trees on nearby land, and plan to plant at least 6,000 more.

Environmental sustainability is their aim as they mitigate the impacts of climate change. Newly trained evangelists were given more than just their certificates when they graduated from KCTC. They were also given avocado seedlings from the CCMP nursery to plant on their own smallholdings. Avocado is a good cash crop, so as well as food, the plants will provide income for the new graduates to help support their families.

*Shopping List*

- Evangelist's course (one year) £240
- Priest's three year Diploma or certificate course £880/year
- Motorbike £900, Helmet £12.50, new tyre £32
- Avocado: seeds bag £25  
100 cuttings £3

Lord, we pray for priests and lay evangelists both here and in Kagera. We thank you for all those who have answered your call to serve your people as ministers. We pray that all your people will be open to hearing and following your call, wherever it may lead. Keep them safe as they journey in your footsteps, Keep them comforted in hours of loneliness, discouragement, and pain, And keep their place at your right hand when their task is done. Amen

# Thank you for thinking and praying about our brothers and sisters in Kagera.

If you would like to help the work in Kagera you can make a donation online at:

[www.cofesuffolk.org/bishops-lent-appeal](http://www.cofesuffolk.org/bishops-lent-appeal)

or you can pay by Bank Transfer (BACS) using:

Sort Code: 16-22-17

Account No: 12190112

Account name: St Eds & Ips DBF, please use the reference: Kagera Lent

or pay by post to: Kagera Appeal, Diocesan Office, 4 Cutler St, Ipswich IP1 1UQ

Please make your cheque payable to: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich DBF and write 'Kagera Lent Appeal' on the back.



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I confirm that I wish the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich to treat all donations for the last four years, today's donation, and all future donations to the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich as Gift Aid donations until I notify them otherwise.

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4 Cutler Street, Ipswich IP1 1UQ  
Charity number 248919

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