



# ***JUBILEE PARTNERS REPORT***

## **Fall 2025**

***“I will call to mind the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember  
your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works  
and meditate on all your mighty deeds.” Psalm 77:11-12***

During the last few months at Jubilee, the summer brought its usual rhythms of blueberry picking, watermelon slicing, early morning garden work, and weekend swims in the pond. Two separate volunteer work groups visited the community, which helped us get started on the construction of a new house on property. Meals at the community’s Koinonia House became slightly quieter than normal as several families took trips to connect with loved ones in different parts of the country. Now, some cooler weather is just starting to make an appearance as summer rhythms shift towards fall, with pears ripening, summer produce being processed and stored, and children returning to school.

One group of children enrolling for the first time in Madison County schools belong to Masemo Ruharuka and his wife, Aimee. Their family first came to Jubilee Partners in early 2015 as newly arrived refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. After participating for two months in Jubilee’s refugee ministry, learning English and adapting to life in a new country, the family continued their resettlement journey – first moving to Clarkston, Georgia, and eventually to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Now, a decade later, Jubilee has been excited to welcome them back as community guests while the family seeks to settle more permanently in rural Madison County, Georgia.

One of the gifts that sometimes comes when offering hospitality here at Jubilee is the opportunity to develop deeper relationships and to hear personal stories – both stories of hardship and difficulty and stories of God’s sustenance and faithful provision.

Both Masemo and his wife, Aimee, grew up in the eastern province of the DRC. They were from the same city, in fact, although they did not know each other while living there. In the early 2000s, fighting and violence in the region forced them to flee to neighboring Tanzania in search of safety. Unfortunately, more than two decades after Masemo and Aimee left their homes, conflict and violence in the eastern region of the DRC continues, fueled by ethnic divisions and in no small part by competition for control over the region’s valuable mineral mines and precious metal resources.



**Abel assists a camper in building a birdhouse at the Movers and Makers Camp with the Perch this summer.**



**Friends with wheels! Carmel gets a ride from Robyn at an afternoon community picnic.**

After fleeing from the DRC, Masemo and Aimee each made their way to a refugee camp, where they eventually met each other, decided to marry, and began a family. As their family grew, they spent the next decade living in refugee camps in Tanzania, awaiting refugee resettlement.

When thinking back on the story of his family's selection for relocation to the United States, Masemo recalls several instances of being in the position of waiting expectantly, hoping and trusting that God would provide and care for their family.

First, there was the surprising experience of being approached on three separate occasions by different strangers, each sharing the same message with him. They assured him that his family would eventually have the opportunity to leave the refugee camp. And, each messenger said, they would depart as a six-person household. At the time, Masemo and Aimee had only two children, with a third on the way. But after the healthy birth of their third child and then the conception of their fourth, they began to look ahead expectantly. "Let's see what God is going to do!" they thought.

They waited in hope, and God provided. After being passed over for resettlement by the United Kingdom, the family was selected for resettlement to the United States. However, the ensuing wait for a departure date was stressful, since Aimee's pregnancy prevented them from qualifying for travel. Resettlement is an unpredictable process, impacted by numerous factors outside of one's control. A missed opportunity might mean months or years of additional waiting, or even the possibility of missing one's chance at resettlement entirely. Masemo remembers praying to God, "Remember your promise!"

They waited in hope, and God provided. Although Masemo had worried that they might lose their opportunity for resettlement, each time a departure list was announced, the departure date was subsequently postponed – meaning that his family had not yet missed their chance. Finally, after months of waiting in limbo, Aimee delivered a baby boy, and shortly thereafter the family received its final authorization for departure.

Next came the experience of preparing for arrival to a new country. Masemo found himself full of questions: "Who will we meet there? How will our life be there? How will we live?" It felt intimidating thinking about moving to a foreign country to start a new life, especially not having any close family connections there.

Masemo remembers having many worries and doubts. But as he read his Bible, he saw story after story of God's people acting with a sense of trust that God would be faithful. "The same hope that these people have, I have to get it!" he told himself; "I have to believe in God. God knows what will happen where I will go." During prayer times with his wife and children, he found himself saying, again and again, "Where we are going, we will meet good people. Because this God who



**Aimee, Evelynne, Rebecca, & Christina lead us in song at Sunday worship.**



**A glimpse of Masemo and Aimee with others in the community in front of the Khouse when they arrived in 2015.**

we are living by here is the same God who will connect us to other people there.” Although he did not have any biological family living in the United States, he trusted that whomever they would meet would become a new sort of family; that they would not be alone; that God would provide new connections.

They waited in hope, and God provided.

“When we arrived here, it was true,” Masemo recalls; “We met good people. Yes, we met good people.” Thinking back fondly on the time spent at Jubilee after his family’s arrival, he remembers how any time they had a question, there was always a kind person willing to be of help. And as they worked to learn English and improve their ability to communicate, supportive teachers were there to encourage them.

Now, ten years later, Masemo and his family have arrived back in Madison County, and it feels like a continuation of God’s provision and care. Masemo is grateful to return to Georgia. He feels a sense of connection to this part of the United States that first welcomed him, a sense of home. He feels happy about a slower pace of life outside of the city, and he hopes it will be a place where his children can focus on school and have a good future.

Ultimately, he hopes that the move to Madison County -- facilitated by living at Jubilee Partners temporarily while finding a house to buy and finding work in the area for himself and Aimee -- will allow the family to settle for the long term. “The hope is we will succeed once we get a job and get the home where we are going to live. Because where we are going is now where we will live our entire life. We will never move again,” he says. ~~~

We at Jubilee Partners continue to seek ways to offer welcome and hospitality in the spirit of Christian friendship. The changes in government policy at the beginning of the year ended the possibility – at least for now – of welcoming newly arrived refugees. But we continue to provide extended hospitality for refugee families in challenging situations, to walk alongside former Jubilee residents and other refugees living in nearby towns or cities, to visit individuals in prison or on death row, support the work of community partners offering mentoring or tutoring, facilitate Bible study / discipleship groups for Karen youth and young adults living locally, work on garden projects that help reconnect people to the land and to give away produce and plants to the wider community. And we continue to find new opportunities to reach out to our vulnerable neighbors with the love of Jesus. We recently began offering English classes in a predominantly Latin American neighborhood in Athens, for example, and also welcomed another refugee family to Jubilee who are in need of transitional housing after the birth of a child with medical complications.



**Above, Masemo and Russ, and below, local Karen youth, work together on duplexing the Blueberry Hill house.**

As we do these things, we also wait in expectation for God's guidance and for God's provision in this time of societal changes. And in that we join so many people around the world who find themselves in a season of waiting. Unlike us, many of them do so in the midst of extreme hardship. We wait and we remember...

- ~ those who are internally displaced in the DRC, and elsewhere around the world, hoping for an end to the latest round of violence carried out by militia and military forces;
- ~ those living in refugee camps, longing either for an opportunity to return to their homeland or for an opportunity to start a new life in a foreign land that will welcome them;
- ~ those waiting for the return of loved ones from captivity;
- ~ those seeking food and shelter, and waiting for an end of bombardment;
- ~ those who are undocumented and awaiting their next court appearance, the granting of asylum status, the possibility of work authorization, or a path towards a documented legal status.

In a world that continues to be full of violent conflict, full of domination and exploitation, we wait and pray for compassionate responses towards vulnerable people fleeing their homes for fear of violence and persecution. We wait for the day spoken of in Isaiah when the wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat, and the calf and the lion and the yearling together. We wait for the day spoken of in Micah when everyone will sit down under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid.

We wait, and we act, in hopeful expectation, trusting that God holds the future and believing that Jesus calls us his friends and walks beside us along the road.

*from the people  
of Jubilee*



**Blake leads the children in lighting candles as they offer prayers of thanksgiving.**



**Left: Jubilee kids enjoy a tour and safety lesson at the local Fire Department.  
Above: Talent show fun! The resident bunnies race in a homemade (from recyclables) racetrack.**





**Above: After-supper volleyball and soccer have been among our fall festivities.**

**Right: Jubilee folks join in on the Nurturing Communities Network regional gathering in Tennessee.**

**Below: Al says, Hey!**

**Bottom right: Eunjung amazes us with her culinary gifts!**



Who we are  
Jubilee Partners is a Christian service community in rural Georgia. Our primary work is to offer hospitality to refugees who have experienced violence or persecution. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization; donations are thus tax-deductible. Your donations and support of our work are most appreciated.  
Jubilee Partners Box 68  
Comer, GA 30629  
706-783-5131



***View Jubilee's newsletter in color online at [www.jubileepartners.org](http://www.jubileepartners.org)!***

*Jubilee Partners*  
*P.O. Box 68*  
*Comer, GA 30629*

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage is  
PAID  
Athens, Georgia  
Permit Number 14



**Fall 2025**



Masemo and Aimee are back! First arrived at Jubilee ten years ago, we have been blessed by their return as they seek out life here in Madison County.