East African Revival

A Day to Remember

June 26

Resources for Parishes



[**Dr. John “Joe” Church**](https://dacb.org/stories/rwanda/church-johne/)**(1899 – 1989), and wife Dr. Decie Church.** He was a British medical missionary doctor who, arrived at [Gahini, Rwanda](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Gahini,+Rukara,+Rwanda/@-1.8448478,30.4769325,15z/data=!4m13!1m7!3m6!1s0x19db6a81311a340b:0xa8bff33af4ba957c!2sGahini,+Rukara,+Rwanda!3b1!8m2!3d-1.8423784!4d30.4847242!3m4!1s0x19db6a81311a340b:0xa8bff33af4ba957c!8m2!3d-1.8423784!4d30.4847242), in June of 1928, to work at the hospital. He became a significant leader in the revival. Joe Church wrote again of an account that took place on June 26, 1936, in Gahini:

*In huts, in church, in the school and hospital were continual visitations of the Spirit in a way they had never seen before. People went through experiences of dreams, visions, falling down in trances. In the Girls’ School the situation was more alarming: Four girls went to pray at 9.30 p.m. (Sunday); they were convicted of their sins and then began crying aloud. Others came in to see what was happening and, as soon as they entered the room, they too were convicted by an invisible power and started weeping and confessing their sins. This went on until 11:00 p.m. and for three days, Monday and Tuesday girls were seen scattered all over the compound weeping and collapsing. It could be explained away as being hysterical, but the girl’s lives were completely changed as a result of this experience.”*

**East African Revival**

The date given for the start of the revival is often June 1936 but it was bubbling quietly away before that with Christian staff at Gahini hospital praying and witnessing to their fellow workmates and attending prayer meetings. Unlike revivals in Europe and the United States, the revival began to emerge without any spectacular signs. It spread through small fellowship meetings in homes and villages, in which all participants shared freely their testimony of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

*“I do not think I have ever felt nearer to God than at [Gahini](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Gahini,+Rukara,+Rwanda/@-2.0527199,30.109161,7.58z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x19db6a81311a340b:0xa8bff33af4ba957c!8m2!3d-1.8423784!4d30.4847242).”*

Bishop of the Church of Uganda, [Cyril Stuart](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyril_Stuart), 1930’s

The Revival’s heat increased over the years and by 1945 as the revivalists preached, many repented, and this gave birth to a new kind of African Christian—the *abaka*(those on fire). At Gahini, the revival had now fully emerged. It was then that teams of revivalists carried the flame through the region, as well as to neighbouring countries. These *abaka*were also called the *balokole* (the saved ones). The name *balokole* gradually took on a meaning that described the people and the movement itself.

**The Pattern of the Home Fellowship Meetings:**

1. Singing, "Tukutendereza" and a hymn
2. Prayer, Kneeling
3. Testimonies - confession of failures and thanksgiving
4. Bible reading
5. Hymn related to scripture
6. Prayer
7. Grace, adding "be with us all, and with all the brethren."
8. Announcements, news, and introduction of visitors.
9. Meeting ends singing "Tukutendereza"

*“The East African Revival …. is one of the truly remarkable movements of the Holy Spirit in the Christian Church In terms of changed lives, the Revival Brethren have a reputation of high moral character to whom great responsibility may be entrusted by secular employers.”*

**Revival Song**

One of the most distinctive features of the revival is the song “Tukutendereza”, which is sung joyfully across East Africa among revivalists.

Tukutendereza Yesu, We praise You Jesus

Yesu Mwana Gw’endiga Jesus the Lamb

Omusaayi Gwo Gunaziza Your Blood has cleansed me Nkwebaza Omulokozi I thank You, Savior

**Strengths of the East Africa Revival:**

* it remained within the churches.
* was evangelical in emphasis
* was evangelistic.
* bought reconciliation.
* promoted lay involvement.
* marked by fellowship
* helped overcome nominalism in the Church

**Bible Passages Often Quoted in the Revival**

* Matthew 28:19-20
* Deuteronomy 10:16b
* Revelation chapter 20 verses 12-13
* Joshua 1:8
* Joel 2:25
* 1 John 1.7
* Galatians 2.

**A Prayer by Dr Joe Church 1936**

Lord bend the proud and stiff necked

Help me to bow the neck and die

Beholding him on Calvary

Who bowed his head for me.

**Results of the Revival**

* Millions of Christians have been touched by the revival, and it was influential in raising up a new generation of leaders to carry the church forward—with African leadership.
* The revival, though having started with the Anglican Church of Uganda and Rwanda, spread to all the denominations.
* The public confession of sin was one of the pillars of the revival.
* The revival went global in its influence. Beginning in 1946, and through the 1950s, revival teams began making ministry trips to various nations, sharing what they witnessed during the East Africa Revival.
* Reconciliation: As the message of the revival was shared across denominational boundaries, members of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Moravian, Lutheran and Anglican Churches were brought together in bonds of love.
* Hostility between ethnic groups eased.

**Prayers for Revival**

Heavenly Father, we seek revival in East Africa and Gippsland. Thank you for the East African Revival and its unique gifts to your church. Renew our hope for worldwide revival. May the East African Revival continue to unite the Body of Christ and open its spiritual gifts to all.

Lord, we acknowledge your love and faithfulness, confess our sins, and ask for forgiveness. Fill our hearts with your love and passion for your Word. Pour out your Holy Spirit, awakening and transforming lives.

O God our King, by Jesus' resurrection, you conquered sin, defeated death, and gave us hope of everlasting life. Redeem our days, forgive our sins, banish our fears, make us bold to praise you and do your will, and help us await your kingdom. through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.