

## Nobody will stay hungry...all-age worship on 27 December 2009

### Intro:

Sisters and brothers, in the front here you can see a huge famine hanging, or a meditation cloth, if you like. The hunger in the world, the life situations of people in Uganda, and biblical stories are put together to a beautiful piece of art.

It was painted by the Ugandan artist Stephen Kasumba.

“Nobody will stay hungry...” was the title that the German Christian Aid organisation “Brot für die Welt” gave to Kasumba and asked him to paint a picture of how he found this theme significant in his country.

We will help you interpret and understand the big painting with its many small pictures.



### Pictures 8 & 9 (left side top & bottom)

#### About the climate...

I can see a glowing sun. The sun is as black as coal, or as black as death. I can see a cactus plant – all that seems to grow in such heat. Why is it so hot? Hot as in the desert?

The answer lies in factories and cars pumping out their exhaust fumes. The world climate is changing. The earth is warming up. Green house gases are putting our lives and our future at risk.

Below this I can see the picture of a flood. One person stands on a small hill still reaching out of the water. Next to him a cow struggles to save its life. Another human being is already waist deep in water. He throws his arms up and seems to cry for help. A person in an ark-like boat comes to save what can be saved. He will take the drowning by the hand and bring him into the shelter of the boat.

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The person who comes to rescue is a Christian – we can tell by the sign of the cross on his shawl.

### **Pictures 11 & 12 (right side top & bottom)**

#### **About the food...**

I can see a fishing net, full of fish. So many fish that the net cannot hold them all. The fishermen try hard to get the net into their boat.

#### **Bible reading from Luke 5:1-7**

##### *Jesus Calls the First Disciples*

*Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.*

*He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, «Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.»*

*Simon answered, «Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.»*

*When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink.*

There could be enough for all. Enough fish...but above the fishing boat we can see a helicopter taking the fish away – exporting it from Uganda in Africa where it could feed the hungry population, to Europe and selling it in the rich countries of the first world to those who have already enough but who refuse to curtail their greed.

The fishermen stay behind with empty hands. No food for their families, nothing to sell on the markets. Hunger and starvation for all.

And below I can see two men, maybe father and son, coming home with food. They carry their harvest: fish from the sea and fruits of the fields. They will be able to feed their family. This today is only a dream of the small farmers in Uganda. They hope and pray that one day they all will have enough, that their will be no more hunger, no more fear, no more pain, but mutual understanding and sharing among them all.

#### **Song: And God said....**

### **Picture 7 (bottom left, next to the flood)**

#### **Enough water...**

I can see two women. One is carrying two water jugs on her head. On her back she carries her child. She looks tired and sad. She holds something in her hand. Maybe money. Does she have to pay for the drinking water? I can see a second woman. She is risking her life by trying to get water from a torrential waterfall. To get enough for a family for one day is under such circumstances almost impossible.

I realise that millions of people in this world have no direct access to clean drinking water. Often they have to walk a long way. In the dry season many

rivers have dried out, and the way then is even longer, or access to water is not possible at all.

But water is life, and where there is no water, there is no life... people are condemned to die from thirst and hunger. A well for every village, sufficient drinking water in every town of the world – that is what people in Uganda dream of.

The world community must learn to share. The rich countries must support the poor. Resources and skills must be available to everyone.

### **Picture 1 (bottom middle)**

#### **Enough food...**

I see a crowd of people. They stand in a line. They are holding empty bowls in their hands. They look sad and worried. I can see a soldier, peacefully standing in line with all the others. I can see the eyes of the bold man who clearly is very ill; maybe HIV positive. And I can see the child with him – probably an orphan soon. Every day life in many African countries... There is also an old man with a stick who needs to be cared for. They all are waiting for food that is distributed by a young girl with a basket full to overflowing. Some have already had something to eat, some are still waiting, but there is enough for all of them.

#### **Bible reading:**

##### **Mark 8: 1-9**

##### **Feeding the Four Thousand**

**In those days when there was again a great crowd without anything to eat, he called his disciples and said to them, «I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat.**

**If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way – and some of them have come from a great distance.»**

**His disciples replied, «How can one feed these people with bread here in the desert?»**

**He asked them, «How many loaves do you have?» They said, «Seven.»**

**Then he ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute; and they distributed them to the crowd.**

**They had also a few small fish; and after blessing them, he ordered that these too should be distributed.**

**They ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. Now there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away.**

This is how God wants life on this earth to be – enough food for all.

#### **Song: For the fruits of this creation, MH 97**

*(Children are invited to collect pieces of fruit from the back of the church, and fill the basket in front of the altar)*

### **Picture 6 (top left next to the black sun)**

#### **Passing on our faith...**

I can see two people. One tall and one small. An adult and a child, if you like. The child holds a heavy book in his hands. The adult points toward a certain passage in the book. With the other hand he points out into the world...

I understand: it is the task of the older people to pass on their knowledge and their skills to the younger generation. ...to pass on our education, but also our

faith... But every person is an individual. We see things differently, we live different lives, we have different talents and we don't all look the same. This is what makes our world rich. If only people would learn and understand.

It is God who has given us our diversity: young and old, great and small, black and white, male and female – and we should give him thanks for it. God's love is the common ground on which we live, is the bond that binds us together, and the source of our being.

Let us tell each other the stories of our faith and by doing so encourage and support each other.

**Bible reading: Matthew 28: 16ff**

**The Commissioning of the Disciples**

**Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.**

**When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.**

**And Jesus came and said to them, «All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.»**

**Pictures 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 (middle & top middle )**

**Living in community...**

In the middle of the meditation cloth there is a basket filled with food. Around it sit a group of people and they eat in the old African tradition. We can see a bright orange papaya, fish and corn, green mangos and spinach – all traditional African food. 7 people share what is there. They share amongst themselves but they also reach out to others outside the circle. They pass on some of what they have to an old man on crutches, and to an old woman. Sharing everyday food for the artist becomes an image of the communion that we celebrate in the name of Christ.

A bit outside the circle we can see two people sitting closely together on a bench. They help and embrace each other, but are not closing themselves off from the outside world. They share what they have got with the two people - parent and child – who are approaching them.

At the top in the middle of the painting we can see a church and three people. The building is a church on Sundays, a school on weekdays, and every now and again a social centre or an advice bureau – a typical situation in African villages. The people in the building may be the Sunday congregation and a pastor, or pupils and a teacher, or a nurse or doctor and clients or patients.

And next to the church we can see a small picture with containers for food storage, a bird flying towards them and an old lady with a stick. She desperately needs some food from inside these containers.

But what happens is: one of the people sitting in the circle round the basket turns round & reaches out to the old lady with his or her two hands. These hands are filled with food that is offered to the old lady. At the same time the circle of friends in the middle of the picture opens up for her and lets her in, lets her

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become part of that community in which people have enough and enjoy their lives and celebrate its fullness.

This is the vision of community we Christians have. Given to us by an unconditionally loving God who showed us how to live and love in his son Jesus Christ.

Because we want to follow him, we manage to live together in community in spite of all our diversities. Because we want to follow him we can love each other even though we often don't know each other all that well. Because we want to follow him we can open ourselves and welcome the stranger in our midst. Because we want to follow him we can care for sisters and brothers, for grown-ups and children, and baptise them in the name of the father, the son and the holy spirit. Amen.

**Song: Beauty for brokenness TS 37**