

# **October 2009 Newsletter**

## **... September Mission Trip Report**

### **Famine Relief Impacting Kenya**

Eastern Kenya has had little or no rain in 3 years. Where maize and other crops have grown in the past, Matt Price and I saw bare fields. Streams and rivers are beds of sand with no water. When drought and famine come the first step is to feed the hungry. We have purchased several bags of maize and beans that have been distributed. The local church leaders have initiated the "Food for Work" program. Famine relief money is paid to people who haul sand, carry water, make bricks, dig wells, etc. so they can then purchase food. This approach has given people a hand up, rather than a hand out. Church and school buildings are getting built and work is provided for unemployed. The program allows people to maintain self-esteem and have pride in being able to buy food and provide for their family.

In addition to shortage of food, the lack of quality water is a problem. Often the water the people do get is dirty or contains disease-causing bacteria. The two boreholes we helped complete are providing clean, disease-free water and saving lives in Kenya. The \$4000 donation from Healing Hands International is providing for the development of 2 more water distribution points from our wells. As more distribution points are added more people will benefit. The walk to water and the wait at the well will be shorter. During our visit to the borehole we met 13 year old Jacinta Muthui. She walked 12 miles (2 ½ hours) to the well, waited in line 3 hours to fill her 4 containers, loaded the containers on her donkey, and then started the 12 mile walk home. Getting water for her family consumed her whole day. The geological report of our school land shows two recommended borehole drilling sites. A deep well on our property would provide additional water for the community as well as the school.

Our Christian brothers and sisters at Masaani normally get water from shallow wells and the river. Today their water comes from digging sand pits in the dry riverbed until they reach water. The sandy water contains bacteria that cause typhoid and other diseases. Mumbe Joseph walks 12.4 miles every day to get water for herself and her 5 children. Water filters available through Healing Hands International will remove the solids and bacteria from the water. A \$50 filtering system would allow a family to have clean water. We hope to raise money to provide a filtering system for each family at Masaani and add a borehole at Kavonge with more distribution points.

### **New Partnership Formed**

Nairobi Great Commission School, Healing Hands International, and Caring for Kenya during the September mission trip agreed to work together in expanding the preacher-training curriculum at NGCS. Healing Hands International is making plans to return next summer to Kenya to provide a 5-day hands-on food production and food preservation workshop for NGCS students. Caring for Kenya will assist with the workshop. The NGCS students will be involved in on going work throughout the year with compost piles and growing plants on raised planting beds using drip irrigation.

The preachers will be able to use their new knowledge and experience as an outreach tool in the communities where they preach. In addition to the workshop at NGCS another 5-day hands-on food production and food preservation workshop is being planned at Ilako Mututa Secondary School near Tulia. The 80 workshop participants will be committed to using what they learn and teaching others. Increasing food production and providing more sources of quality water are long-range solutions to dealing with future droughts. We have worked with Ilako School already. We sponsor 2 students there and Matt and Lewis set up a small computer lab at the school with computers donated by Healing Hands.

## **Nairobi Great Commission School Graduates**

December 5 Justus Mutua, Peter Kangangi, and Jeremiah Kitheda will graduate. Justus plans to go to Day Star University to complete a dual major in Bible and Community Development. Peter and Jeremiah hope to plant new congregations. Vindi Kavuti, Erastus' oldest son, has been accepted to begin his training at NGCS in January.

## **CONGREGATIONAL UPDATES**

### **Kavonge Church of Christ**

Erastus, Abel, and Lewis all work with this congregation. When Matt, Chris, David, and I attended September 6<sup>th</sup> 90 children were in the Children's Bible Class and 175 people attended the worship assembly. They are planning to divide the children into 3 classes in the near future. Their Wednesday evening study and home studies are going well. They are planning to lengthen the building and add classrooms. Through the "Food for Work" program they have made 10,500 bricks for the building expansion. In the future their plans include converting the present building into a pre-school and primary school and then building a larger auditorium.

### **Mwingya Church of Christ**

James and Justus Mwendwa work with this congregation. It is now a little over one year ago. Matt and I worshipped with them September 13<sup>th</sup>. 60 children attended the Children's Bible Class and another 60 people attended the worship assembly. They are renting a meeting place but have purchased land and through the "Food for Work" program now have made 11,000 bricks for the construction of their church building. They are ready to bake the bricks and then begin the building process.

### **Masaani Church of Christ**

Abraham and Michael work with this congregation. They have 55 children for Bible Class and 40 people attend the worship assembly. They are completing their church building. Members through the "Food for Work" program have carried rock and sand to make concrete. The work of mixing and pouring the concrete floor and plastering the walls will be done by the church members. They have planted trees at the edge of their property. They plan to build a water storage tank on the property and then during the rainy season pump water from the river to fill it.

## **Nzawa Church of Christ**

Josphat preaches at Nzawa. They have 15 children at Bible Class and an average of 26 at worship assemblies. They are digging terraces to catch the water when the rains come in late October. They hope to buy land and build a building in the future as the church grows.

## **Zombe- Kavaani Church of Christ**

Jeremy preaches and he and his wife Moli teach 50 children at the church pre-school program. 40 attend the Children's Bible Class and an average of 76 attend the worship assembly. They are planning to use "Food for Work" funds to complete the two classrooms that are under construction. The ladies are using the 3 sewing machines we purchased to make shirts and school uniforms. We purchased 6 different colors of material for them during this trip.

## **Kavaki Church of Christ**

Matthew preaches here. 20 to 25 children attend Bible class and 12 to 14 attend the worship assembly. They have purchased land, dug holes to set posts, and are preparing to build a church building. We suggested that the "Food for Work" funds be used to assist with the construction of the building.

## **Mobile Medical Clinic**

In addition to weekly trips to the various congregations to treat patients, James refers cases to the hospital at Kitui. After an exam and treatment Juliana was able to have a baby. Penniah was treated and operated on to remove a goiter. Eunice was examined and scheduled for surgery to remove a fibrous growth, and an boy with AIDS was treated. During this trip Abel's mother-in-law was taken to the hospital with pneumonia and malaria for treatment. James filled a prescription for a church member with typhoid and malaria. The medicine to cure both conditions cost \$15.00. During the drought, it seems that contaminated water is resulting more disease problems. Water filtration systems like the 3 provided by Healing Hands International would be extremely helpful in reducing disease. Surface water in streams and rivers is most likely to be contaminated. Adding additional water distribution points to our deep wells and drilling a well on our school property would provide a greater supply of clean disease-free water and thereby improve the health of the people

## **Student Sponsorship Program Changing Lives**

Beginning in 2006 some famine relief funds helped assist poor families with school fees for their children. During the January 2007 mission trip Annastacia Ndinu requested assistance with school fees and Wayne Bailey's commitment to help. This was the beginning of the student sponsorship program.

Without a secondary school education, Kenyan boys become shepherds and girls become house servants. In 2007 22 American families became sponsors. In 2008 45 students were sponsored and this year 61 families are sponsoring students. Currently we are seeking 4 additional families to sponsor a student. One of the local community

leaders says, “when you provide an education for a child you help the whole family.” Several students and family members have become Christians as a result of coming in contact with caring Christians through the sponsorship program. As an example the first student, Annastacia, along with her mother and grandmother are now Christians.

Some of the first students helped have now graduated. Enoch is an AIDS orphan who graduated number one in his class. He is now employed as the school clerk and will begin his university work next year. Jasmine, another graduate, is now a primary school teacher and has been accepted to begin university studies October 12<sup>th</sup>. Vindi Kavuti has been accepted into preacher training at the Nairobi Great Commission School beginning in January.

During the September mission trip 50 of the sponsored students were visited and given a packet of school and personal hygiene supplies. Lewis and Erastus will see the other students and give them their packet. When sponsored students are visited, school administrators are always very complimentary of our interest in education. On several occasions we have been asked to speak to an entire student body. At Kavaani Secondary School we have 6 sponsored students. The headmaster (principal) said, “your sponsorship of these students shows an interest in our students and our school. Would you be interested in becoming our school sponsor?” They would consult us when major decisions were made like school expansion. This request illustrates the high regard school administrators have for the church and local Christians.

## **Kavonge Secondary School Construction Plans and Timeline**

In 2007 when we saw the need for quality education to provide hope for young people, we began to dream of building our own secondary school. We identified an ideal site and agreed on the price. One year later the 16.5 acres was purchased for 1,000,000 schillings (\$16,500). Currently the hand dug well on the property is 10 feet in diameter and 25 feet deep. The digging has slowed because of a layer of rock. During our trip, tools were purchased to help break through the rock. A geological survey has been done resulting in two recommended sites for drilling a well. Three drilling bids are being sought to determine the best price for a borehole in the future. September 15<sup>th</sup> Matt and I met with the local committee that is making plans for the construction of our secondary school. In the beginning the school will be a day school while later on some students will be boarding students. The Kenyans are seeking community involvement in the building and use of the school facilities. Once the drilled well is completed the water will be for both the school and the community. Eventually Erastus hopes to also build a reservoir on the property.

The committee agreed that the next step was to complete the hand dug well. Erastus said his goal was to be dipping water from the well by the beginning of March and have 10,000 bricks made by the end of March. Phase 1 of the building would be in the summer of 2010. Team members from the U.S. will work with the Kenyans to build 3 latrines, 2 classrooms, a kitchen, and an administration building (office and staff room). The brick walls will be plastered and the wooden trusses will have steel sheets on them. The goal is for the freshman and sophomore classes will begin in January, 2011. During 2011 Phase 2 of the construction will be two more classrooms, a library, a science lab, and a workshop area. The workshop will include areas for teaching carpentry, welding, motorcycle mechanics, home science (tailoring and food preparation & preservation).

The land area for teaching agriculture will be developed for crop production and raising chickens, goats, rabbits, and fish. The goal, with the completion of Phase 2 of the construction, is to start the junior and senior classes in January 2012. In order to reach these goals sometime in 2011 a container will need to be shipped containing books, computers, laboratory equipment, etc. Another U.S. work team will be needed to assist with construction in the summer of 2011.

The local school committee will be working with the Public Health Department and the Minister of Education to be sure that all requirements for the construction and operation of the school are met. Steven assured the group that he would make the necessary contacts to bring electricity to the school. The committee indicated that because of over-crowding in the schools the government would be supportive of our desire to start a school. They also indicated that there is a surplus of trained teachers. The committee said that in addition to teaching the basic subjects, our school would be special because the students would be learning life skills and receive occupational training as well as being taught the Bible. They said students will want to go to our school and enrollment will not be a problem. Pray that we are able to meet this projected timeline. Donations are also needed to help make this dream come true.

For the Cause of Christ,  
Carl Burkybile