

Kenya Mission Update

.... May, 2008

Current Struggles

In my last update I wrote about the disputed presidential election and the violence that followed. The agreement between the two presidential candidates to share power seems to be working and has ended outbreaks of violence. During the political unrest over 1000 people were killed and over 100,000 people were left homeless. While most of the violence was in large cities and Western Kenya, our brothers and sisters in Eastern Kenya find supplies more scarce and more expensive. Inflation and a decrease in the value of the dollar (lower exchange rate) mean that their money doesn't buy as much as it did in the past. The dry season is beginning so the coming months are the time of year when they have difficulty raising enough food for their families and must buy food at the market place.

School Land Purchase

We have purchased the 16.5 acre tract of land to build a non-boarding secondary school. A school board is being formed and building plans are being developed. Over time we plan to have 4 classrooms, a teacher's work room, a principal's office, a kitchen, a library, and a dormitory for students who become boarding students. The dormitory could also be used by Nairobi Great Commission School Extension students and other adults who come for classes while the secondary school students are on break.

As I mentioned earlier each dollar is exchanged for less Kenyan schillings than in the past. Because of this situation the land cost \$1220 over than we had projected in July, 2007. In June the Kenyans will begin to make bricks and clear the land where the school building will be built. Our next step is to raise the money to build the school. Can you help? We need funds to purchase building materials.

Sponsored Secondary School Children

We have 45 families from 16 states sponsoring the education of orphans and children of poor families. We need two more sponsors. Many sponsoring families have received one or more letters from their student. One of our students is Number 1 in her school. The students and their families greatly appreciate the opportunity that education brings for a better life. Lewis (recent NGCS graduate) writes, "It is so good to hear more sponsors are willing to transform Africa through Education. God bless them." Carlyne (college student) writes "I am always glad to see the children you have sponsored going to school. To many of them it was a dream come true and I will be happy to see them finish school. We will join hands together to build our society. Greet your family and the members in your church for me and tell them that we love them and we are grateful for their support." Nicodemus, one of our students writes, "I come from a poor family composed of 2 sons and 4 daughters. Our parents left us recently making it a bit harder to get school fees." He also says, "Because of your sponsorship, I will try my best so that in the future, I may sponsor needy students. May the Almighty bless you." Another student, Jasmine says, "I want to thank you for your concern about my life. I appreciate everything. As you have promised to support me next year, I promise to work hard to

accomplish my goals and fulfill my promise. May God bless you and his grace be upon you. Greet all the other people.”

Nairobi Great Commission School Students

Peter Kangangi and Justus Mutua started the 2 year preacher training program in January. Prior to starting school Justus wrote, “I’m still a child who needs to be fed with milk, but my prayer is to see myself become a grown up Christian who will be able to feed on hard food. My desire is to see other people become Christians.” In a recent e-mail from the school George (NGCS Extension Program Director) wrote “Peter and Justus are doing fine. In fact, the duo is a gift to NGCS in two different ways. Peter is a highly gifted preacher. He ranks as one of the best young preachers in this county within the Churches of Christ circles. Justus is a member of the school’s song birds. He composes songs.” Another young man, Matthew Muli, will complete his training this year at the Mombassa Biblical Institute. He preaches at Kivaki when he is not in school. Michael, Lewis, and Justus Mwendwa graduated from Nairobi Great Commission School in early December and are now working with the Masaani and Kavonge congregations.

Leaders Meeting and Evangelism

The leaders from the six Kenyan churches meet monthly for prayers, Bible study, and to support and encourage each other. They discuss plans for bringing souls to Christ. They work together on evangelistic efforts. They use the portable generator, laptop computer, and LCD projector that we took to Kenya to show DVD films on Jesus, Joseph, etc. Abraham reported that last week the preachers from Kavonge and Masaani joined together for three days to evangelize the area near the Nzawa congregation. Each night they had 200 to 300 people at the film showing. They follow the film with a sermon and set up visits and Bible studies. Six were baptized,

In March the preachers joined together to evangelize the area near the Mwangya Shopping Center. On March 9th the Mwangya congregation met for the first time with 18 children and 22 adults in attendance. Since then they have averaged 10 children and 20 adults per Sunday. James (our medical missionary) and Justus Mwendwa (recent Nairobi Great Commission School graduate) are leading this congregation. Justus wrote, “I thank God who is above all for granting me this chance. I believe and trust you have been well under God’s mercy. I have experienced God’s power working in me since I finished school. I look forward to evangelizing and helping many people know Christ. Always my prayers are for the Kingdom of God to expand as we join hearts and hands to preach the word of God to all generations. Greet your wife and all the brothers and keep praying for the work of God to continue spreading rapidly. God bless you.”

Lewis wrote, “First I must serve God and I have one great dream for the service. To make the Church of Christ widely known around; then the true Gospel will reach to so many. I dream of a family that will be a testimony to all people. God help me. I’m trying in all means to touch people’s life in every way I can.’ I just received an e-mail from Lewis praising God for the 3 young people he had baptized.

Diagnostic Lab for the Medical Clinic

We continue to seek funding for a medical lab. The ability to do lab tests of various types would help with diagnosis of diseases and would expand the good that could be

accomplished through the mobile medical clinic. The initial supplies and equipment would cost \$2500 and a part time lab technician would cost \$135/month. Two rooms (a waiting room and lab room) would cost \$170/month. James continues to treat patients at each congregation one day per week. The community health care workers that James has trained treat patient minor health problems during the rest of the week. James also teaches the health care workers and young people about AIDS and AIDS prevention. If you or medical personnel that you know would have an interest in helping in this area please contact us.

Kavonge Congregation News

They held a marriage seminar in February. They are making plans for the new secondary school and NGCS Extension site. Erastus, Abel, and Lewis continue to be heavily involved with evangelism and have added 5 new souls to God's Kingdom. They have helped plant the new congregation at the Mwangya Shopping Center. They host a monthly leaders meeting with the preachers from all six congregations. Erastus and Lewis distribute the school fees for the sponsored secondary school students, counsel each student, and meet with their parents. Erastus says, "May God bless and reward those in America who partner with us in God work."

Masaani and Nzawa Congregation News

The Masaani pre-school has 13 students. They have added Grade 1 primary school with 13 more children. Last year some of the young children did not go to primary school because of the long distance they had to walk to school. Not only is the long walk tiring but it is risky for them to cross the river during the rainy season. The students, parents, and the community are thankful that the church is providing this opportunity. At present the school meets at the church building but in the future the community may provide a meeting place. Josphat, Abraham, and Michael work together to teach and preach at Masaani and Nzawa. Several baptisms have resulted from renewed evangelistic efforts.

Josphat reported that he sold his three bulls that he used to plow his garden to pay school fees and medical bills. We have a donation to buy him a bull and are seeking a sponsor for the secondary school education of one of his children.

Felister, the pre-school and Bible class teacher, is a widow with two children. We have some support for her but she too is experiencing financial problems.

Abraham reports he visited a widow who is caring for two orphans. They were abandoned by their parents. Their grandmother is old and sick with the whooping cough. The church is reaching out to assist the family. They have worked together to plant their garden. This is another example of being "the church that cares". Through meeting their physical needs we pray that there will be an opportunity to bring them to Christ.

Michael reports that he is working to get more farmers to utilize drip irrigation. Michael is a progressive farmer who has demonstrated drip irrigation on his own land. He knows first hand how drip irrigation can dramatically increase production during the dry season. As we have reported in the past, one \$12 drip kit with 10 gallon of water per day can be used to raise enough vegetables to feed a family of 5 during the dry season.

Zombe and Kivaki Congregation News

Jeremy reports 6 baptisms and 1 restoration. The Kivaki congregation is hoping to buy 1 ¼ acres to build a church building. At present they meet in a school classroom. At Zombe they continue to construct a classroom for the pre-school and Grade 1 primary school taught by Moli and Eunice. The tailoring room is also being constructed. The women, especially the widows, are learning to sew school uniforms as a way of earning a living. Jeremy says, "I pass my greetings and love to those who support me and the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ in Kenya".

Conclusion:

God is doing great things in Kenya! May we glorify Him. Thanks to all the new supporters and sponsors of God's work in Kenya. I will be contacting Erastus in the near future to explore the possibility of bringing him to the U.S. sometime between late July and early September for 2 to 3 weeks. I will let you know in the next report if the details can be worked out for the visit.

For the Cause of Christ,
Carl Burkybile