

Providing Encouragement and Planning for the Future

...2023 July Caring for Kenya Trip

Our six member team left for Kenya July 6th: Carl Burkybile and Daniel Sani from Illinois, Gary Masters from Florida, Lauren Bynum and Zeke Bynum from Arkansas, and Charles Chesshir from Texas.



During the trip the mission team was able to speak at five congregations and visit with church members, providing encouragement to Kenyans and the team members. The trip gave the team the opportunities to see ongoing projects and evaluate proposed projects.

A visit to the church sponsored Kavonge Primary Academy helped set direction for the future. Next year the school will also include Junior Secondary students (grades 7, 8, and 9). We will be starting a primary school sponsorship program for \$300/student, which will build up school enrollment and help parents who are struggling because of drought conditions, inflated prices, and tax increases. If you haven't been a student sponsor we encourage you to change a life through education.



The team was pleased to visit 13 secondary schools meeting with and providing school supplies to 34 of our 65 sponsored secondary school students. Jacob will meet with the other students and deliver their packets. We were thrilled to hear many stories about the impact that the sponsorship is making on the students. Several of our students including Mary Syango are number one in their class and have become leaders. The sponsorship program began in 2007. Over 450 students are now high school graduates as a result of the sponsorship. Each of the last three years 65 student have been sponsored. In 2024 we will continue to seek day school sponsors (\$250/year) and boarding school sponsors (\$600/year). During the trip four more students were added to the program. These bright students were being sent home because school fees had not been paid. Several of our sponsored students have been able to go on and obtain a university degree. During the trip two of the university graduates came to say thank you for changing their life. We are aware of teachers, nurses, counselors, business leaders, etc. that were part of the sponsorship program.



Discussions about the value of vocational training continued with a visit to Soaring Eagle Vocational School near Kitui, Kenya. Currently they teach tailoring and cosmetology and are planning to add carpentry training. During the trip funding commented for Beatrice to complete her cooking and restaurant management training.

The team visited several of our nine existing water wells and became aware of repairs/improvements that need to be made at three locations. Also the Kwambelu land near the Kavonge Primary Academy School is being developed raising vegetables and planting fruit trees to help the school with food costs. When the proposed well is drilled a reliable water source will make it possible to develop a community garden to help area families raise their own food.



During the visits to five gardens, we were pleased to see vegetables growing in the dry season as a result of training and the use of drip irrigation. Partnering with Healing Hands, a survival gardening workshop for 75 Ilako Mututa students and area farmers was conducted. Five drip irrigated raised planting beds were developed and the school plans to expand with more raised beds. As visits were made requests were received to conduct four more workshops. Justus Vundi is preparing to conduct workshops for Caring for Kenya.



We looked at the sand dams built by volunteers under the direction of Caring for Kenya Community Development Director Justus Mutua. Their purpose is to hold back sand and water during the rainy season. The sand is used for construction purposes and the water held back raises the water table.

A 200 member fruit tree cooperative has now planted over 600 fruit trees, some of them along the river utilizing the water retained by the sand dams. Adding fruit to the maize and the vegetables they grow will help balance their diet.



Celestine and James were thankful to receive basic medical supplies. A wheelchair was purchased for a man who was unable to walk. A bicycle was also provided for man to make it easier to get to work and go to church.



In addition to the medical supplies a simple eye exam was done and reading glasses were provided for over 40 people.

Pillow case dresses for girls were given to Celestine to distribute to young girls.



The leaders meeting provided the opportunity to identify problems and discuss solutions. A computer and the internet have been set up at the mission center to improve our communication with Kenyan leaders. A zoom meeting was conducted with our team and family members back home. Donations to Caring for Kenya make this work possible. Thank you.