

# Pray for Kenya

## April 2018

Dear Brethren,

The Lord was so kind to both Priscilla and myself in the recent visit to Kenya and Ethiopia. He saw it fit to keep Priscilla together with Matthew and to enable me to fulfil the very full schedule without any problems. May good for the kingdom of God be the result!

The travelling to Nairobi involved a taxi to the station by my neighbour, train to London, then a lengthy taxi to Heathrow. The advantage of such a taxi ride is that there is a captive audience for the gospel! Daler is an Iraqi Kurd who has given up on all religion. At Addis Ababa for the change of planes I met up with AO who then accompanied me to Nairobi.

The two big purposes of the visit, to teach in the TPC, and to step down formally as Elder of TBC Nairobi, were both fulfilled.

### **Trinity Pastors' College (TPC)**

There were six full days of teaching *The Doctrine of Scripture* to the 12 students plus a few others who wanted to sit in. Thank you for your prayers for this, that the men go back with an unreserved commitment to the Bible as the word of God. One of the discussions I always have with them is the statement, 'A Christian may drink alcoholic beverages'. It is almost axiomatic in Kenya that to do so is to sin. They bring text after text but, when examined carefully, it is seen that it is only drunkenness that is sin. Of course, we talk about the many reasons why it is probably unwise to partake at all, but the main point is that the Bible must be our final authority, both in what we must not do, and what we may freely do.



Of the 12 official students, 5 are members of TBC Nairobi, with 2 in their 2<sup>nd</sup>. year, and the other 3 having joined in January. The Lord has entrusted to us many capable men who are zealous for ministry of the word. 4 others are from churches initially planted through TBC but now independent. The remaining 3 are from churches that are 'reforming' and we trust that the training will further advance that process of Biblical reformation.

We conducted a 5 minute 'interview' with each of the students and we hope the videos, or at least extracts, will become available on the soon to be launched website for the TPC.

Geoffrey Thomas (UK) and William Emberley (Canada) will come to teach them *New Testament: Gospels & Acts*, Lord willing, in May.

## **Four Decades!**

Trinity Baptist Church, Nairobi started meeting in our home in 1978, with just a handful of people. Easter 1979 the church was constituted with 10 members, including ourselves, John & Ruth Muketha who continue as members to this day (John is a deacon), Naphtally Ogallo who is pastor of Grace Baptist Eldoret, Joseph & Teresia Mutua who we visited in Kiatuni where Joseph is pastor of Bethesda Baptist, and Haile Tamrat who went to North America.

We left Kenya in November 2015 but I continued to be officially an Elder of the church. This is because the remaining two Elders wanted my age and experience to balance their relative youth and inexperience. Not being actually present on the ground this situation could not continue indefinitely. So it was decided that on the Sunday I was to be present in Nairobi (18<sup>th</sup>. March) I would formally cease to be an Elder/Pastor of the church.



The two Elders with their wives:  
*Murungi & Charity Igweta*  
*Eric & Jedidah Abwao*

They covet your prayers as they go forward without me in a growing church that has so many forms of ministry. Murungi is full-time, and Eric also works outside the church.

What an encouraging Sunday the Lord gave us!

09.10 As people come we sing the hymns for the day and favourites, and then some voice the memory verse(s), which this year have to do with Evangelism.

09.55 There are various Sunday School classes, including one for adults. For the month of March it was being taught by our long-standing Deacon, John Muketha, on the subject of 'Friendly Fire', i.e. how to deal with attacks that come from other Christians.

11.00 The auditorium was full for the Morning Service. We use a projector throughout. There are usually 5 hymns, including one in Kiswahili. There is a consecutive reading from the Scriptures, today 2 Samuel 24, with comments leading to prayer. The 3 new Deacons were solemnly set apart with the reading of the relevant passages from the Bible and our church constitution, and special pleading with God for them. I preached on the cross from Galatians 6:11-14. I was getting a little concerned about the passing of time, but I need not have done as others may 'have watches, but Kenyans have time'! We finished at 13.00.



Morning Service



The Diaconate (7 of the 8)



At the door most people greet the preacher and there is much joy and hugging as so many of us are reunited in the flesh. There is no time to sit, but one and another must be spoken with until 'lunch is ready' is announced.

It was a special lunch because it was in honour of my formal stepping down as an Elder. What made it special? Most people stayed. The young men were the cooks and servers, quite unusual in this society. Apart from the water melon, there was even a dessert (extreme left), a home-made yogurt.

15.00 It was a rush to get in to the Members' meeting which was held basically for my stepping down. A statement was read from the Elders, various members had their contributions, mainly reminiscences, and then I was invited to respond. It was a joyful occasion of thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness over the decades.



Members' meeting



TBC members

16.15 The Evening Service started 15 minutes late, and I finished my series of 24 sermons on Galatians 6:15-18 begun in February 2015. I wished to finish my ministry emphasizing the fundamentals of the gospel. Despite the long day, many of the younger brethren hung around so there was opportunity to talk to more. But I did not realize that meetings had not ended!

19.00 There yet remained a 'Tea Plot' at the church premises. After some beautiful singing of hymns, and light refreshments, questions were posed to me and AO (from Addis Ababa) on various subjects having to do with our experiences. I suppose there were 25-30 crammed into the Nursery room, and I praise God for such a serious and devoted group of Christians.

20.40 The day was fitly completed by supper at the Abwao home together with their 3 responsive children. I count it such a great privilege to have been part of this church. I am sorry that Priscilla was not able to enjoy this day with me.

## **WEDDING JOY**

(1) N & H. Friday 16<sup>th</sup>. brought tears of joy to my eyes as I witnessed the joining together in Christian marriage a 50ma11 couple. This is a rare event! Both mature persons, H came from North America to be with N, after they had met on Facebook as Christian witnesses to their

own people. N ministers to hundreds of his people through an internet chat room from his phone in his small apartment. H had been forcibly married at a young age and after many years divorced. Being in a country where single women were not recognized she went from one country to another until she finally found resettlement. It is there she became a Christian. We pray that together they will be able to encourage each other to do far more for the spread of the gospel amongst their own people.

(2) Catherine & Alfred. There were two weddings involving church members on the Saturday. It was decided that I should go to be with Catherine whom I have known since she entered the world. In fact I taught with her father when I first came to Kenya in 1968! She has waited a long time for a suitable marriage partner. The heavens opened with a deluge before the ceremony got under way so it had to be held indoors – with the usually bright weather many are held outdoors. Catherine is a lawyer working with nuclear energy and there was an interesting opportunity seeking to witness to a Pakistani from Vienna who works with the IAEA who visited for the wedding.



Alfred & Catherine

Kevin & Joy



(3) Kevin & Joy. I rushed down through heavy traffic to get in on the tail end of their reception. They have long planned to marry but decided to wait until parents were fully on board. It was a huge wedding with many hundreds. It was officiated by Pastor Murungi, and it is always a good opportunity to preach the gospel.

### Evaluation & Prayer

There is so much for which to be thankful to God. The church has continued to grow in the last few years. A great need is for at least one additional Elder. I spent a lot of time with Murungi discussing the situation and I am sure we shall continue to be in close fellowship. As the only full-time Elder he does feel the awful weight of responsibility, although he is getting much support from Eric. There are always difficult situations with individuals, and sometimes with small groups, and they will need wisdom to consult and do what is right before the Lord. Especially pray for the ministry of the word to be powerful.

In Christ's service,

Keith & Priscilla Underhill

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