

Prayer Letter from the Underhills

2026/2, 6th. April

Dear Brethren,

I returned home on March 16th. after the two weeks' planned visit to Kenya. One of the purposes was to visit the Pokot region on behalf of our charity TRAIN(Kenya) together with a fellow trustee, Alan Wigley. But I will first begin with Kisumu.

1. An Urban Church

The final weekend was spent with Grace Baptist Church, Kisumu, and the family of the pastor, Tonny Karwa. The church was started about 25 years ago when TBC Nairobi sent two couples there to labour in the gospel. There are now two elders and deacons, and you can find out more from their website <https://www.gracebaptistkisumu.church>. I felt very much at home spiritually as we worshipped and fellowshiped the whole day. I was particularly encouraged by a lengthy and practical adult Sunday school study on peace as a fruit of the Spirit. In the service of worship I preached on John 17:11-16 and the importance of Christ's prayer that we be kept from the world and the evil one. After lunch was the 'Meditation Hour' which turned out to be two hours! One of the leaders had prepared questions about the morning ministry to see what was remembered and understood. There was a very spirited response with questions also being asked.



Greetings after the morning service

This is an urban church, Kisumu being one of the most populous cities in Kenya. The church is made up mostly of younger people many of whom have found the truth of the doctrines of grace on social media. It is not always easy to find work and many go to the big city (Nairobi). Older people tend to relocate away from town to the rural area where they have land and have built a house

for retirement. One of the great struggles is with false teaching that abounds especially Pentecostal/Charismatic related churches. One of the most influential throughout the country is the Repentance & Holiness Altar founded by one who blasphemously styles himself 'the Mightiest Prophet of the Lord.'

One of the great blessings of visiting where I have spent 40+ years is to meet with brethren whom the Lord has kept faithful, and who are serving Him and so spreading the gospel more widely still. There are brethren who themselves are engaged in training. Eric Ngala in Bumala runs the Reformed Theological Seminary. Elly Achok in Mumias has founded the Wisdom Training Centre with its many locations. George Omondi in Kisumu produces Bible study materials for the 230 staff of the charity Agape that works with disadvantaged children in Kenya. Of course, there are the Pokot brethren and the new Bible Light College.

2. Rural Churches

The mountainous area of the north of the county of West Pokot, where TBC churches are located, has only dirt roads/tracks, and only one bridge over the Kanyareng river on entry to the area. This posed challenges for driving especially at one point when we had to cross what is normally a dry river bed. When we needed to cross it had become a raging torrent because of all night rain and we had to abandon that part of the journey (to Kasei). We were able to visit 5 places where there are churches and schools, and ministered the word of God in each.

In comparison to Kisumu, the struggles here are the following. The church members are mainly illiterate women. Being first generation Christians such have no spiritual background apart from their traditions. Cattle-raiding from neighbouring tribes was endemic (Turkana of Kenya, Karamojong of Uganda). We are told that the men used to return from a successful raid saying that now they must face the 'enemy' at home, their multiple wives. Polygamy and drunkenness have been the order of life. On becoming Christians many of these women repented of this beer-brewing and the drunken bouts with their husbands. Not a very attractive life! Even after having been Christians for 20 years some still exude such joy when the word of God comes to them, that very word about Christ that first saved them from their sins. With the establishment of schools almost all young people are now being educated. But there are almost no jobs for them locally, except to become teachers themselves. So there is of necessity an exodus of young educated people looking for work in the towns.

One recent struggle for the brethren has been gold mining. People are flocking to an area about a day's journey north, and they are even coming from outside Kenya! You can imagine how attractive this is, supposedly quick money, for those who consider themselves poor. And some people are getting good money. But how disruptive it can be spiritually, and one only has to imagine the physical and moral conditions where there is such a 'gold-rush'.

Sunday morning service at Chepkinagh



We had a lengthy meeting with the three leaders, Joshua Sitet, Andrew Chemolok and Thomas Lokerisa. One of the main topics was the support of leaders. At present we only help these three, partly because we do not have the funds to widen it, even if we wanted to do so. The needs are obviously there, with serious inflation, but there is also the danger that they become dependent upon outside



sourcing for ever. We told them that funds could be freed if we do not support so many teachers (more than 30 at present). As many of the teachers we support are trained but not yet employed by the government, we agreed that when one does become so employed they will not be replaced.

Two particular encouragements came out of the time there.

(1) Adult literacy. On a couple of occasions I seriously challenged the illiterate, who have been Christians perhaps for 20 years, why they still cannot read. Don't you want to read the word of God? At Apur were these ladies, all dressed in white and blue who had walked down from the hill of Tarakit (behind). I recognized some from when they gave their testimony and were baptized in 2006. Yes, they wanted to learn to read. Then, amazingly, one of them was a young lady, set



to go to university later in the year. She would teach them in the coming months! We have been able to purchase some primers and the work of literacy has started there and in Wasat.

(2) Bible Light College. Because of the raging river we were not able to visit Kasei. The College was not in session anyway, but Alan was not able to see the construction of facilities. We were able to meet some of the students and made short videos of the interviews. The students met for teaching the following week on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. These are reports received. "Glory to God that has enabled us to complete our month of March session successfully. Though one second year student Jackson Narema was absent. He was attending a sick child. The learning flow was encouraging with the new white boards in place. We used one of the rooms of unfinished BLOCK B as 1st Year New classroom." (Joshua Sitet) "The BLC class was lovely as we were dealing with the Holy Spirit as a person, His character, His work, the nature of the Holy Spirit, and many more as triune Godhead." (student)

Alan has written the following as to his first-time observations. "The time spent in rural West Pokot achieved so much of what I had hoped it would: the opportunity to meet the men TRAIN (Kenya) work with, and visit the various churches and schools that we know and support so that a list of names and needs would become tangible bonds of love in Christ, and I was not disappointed, and at points struggled to keep up!

What a joy to see what the Lord has done in the hearts and lives of many in Pokot: from the simple joy of meeting the believers who had travelled down the hill to meet us in Apur to worship with us under the trees, to hearing the testimonies of those saved from a life of violent cattle-raiding, drunkenness and ancestor worship.

What is apparent is that there is so much more work that can be done: there are men completing their studies with the Bible Light College ready to be sent to other villages and towns, some with little true gospel witness, and the ever present question of how this can be funded. Keith has mentioned the issue of adult literacy—most of us can barely comprehend not being able to read our bible, and



as some of these believers become able to read, there will God-willing arise a need for bibles and other good Christian literature in the Pokot language... perhaps I am looking too far ahead but this picture is the first class of believers in Wasat with their adult literacy books.

There is also the ongoing pressure on the three brothers: Andrew Chemolok, Thomas Lokerisa and Joshua Sitet—these men live in remote regions, healthcare facilities are a long motorcycle ride away, they have families and school-age children to support, several churches apiece to minister to, teaching responsibilities at the Bible Light College, before even considering practical tasks like church buildings, and they need much prayer and encouragement.”



3. The Unreached

On our return we had a lengthy layover at the Nairobi airport and met with a sister in Christ who is much involved in Bible translation and especially in the Nuba and Darfur regions of Sudan. The humanitarian situation as a result of the conflict there has been described as the worst in the world today with more than 10 million displaced. Amazingly in the area of the Marra Mountains west of El Fasher, where 2-3 million have fled for refuge, there is peace as the leader of the area has rejected fighting. We hear that many people are questioning Islam as both sides in the conflict are Muslims. This leader had actually invited Christians to come and refurbish a disused radio tower which would enable the gospel to be heard in the towns of El Fasher and Nyala. And there are now Darfur Christians as those who have fled to refugee camps have come into contact with the gospel for the first time and many have professed faith in Christ. This is an amazing opportunity. There is need of a studio to be set up in Juba (South Sudan), of repairs to the radio tower, and of the purchase of thousands of radios for people to listen.

4. Ministry

In the next few months, I have the following ministries.

- 12/4 Kingston Evangelical, Hull
- [20-23/4 Banner Ministers' Conference as an attendee]
- 3/5 Lordshill Baptist, Snailbeach
- 17/5 Bebington United Reformed Church (morning)
- 23/5 Preaching at the wedding of Simon to grand-daughter Carys
- 24/5 & 31/5 Belvidere Road (evening)
- 12/6 To Kenya until 30/6, visiting Nairobi and Mombasa

In Christ's service

Keith & Priscilla

- kunderhill@digitalsavannah.co.uk
- priscilla.underhill@gmail.com
- +44 7842698151 (Keith)
- +44 7912079482 (Priscilla)

Other websites:

- <https://www.keithunderhill.com>
- TBC Nairobi—<https://www.trinity.or.ke>
- TPC—<https://www.tpc.or.ke>
- TRAIN(Kenya)—<https://www.trainkenya.com>
- Trinity Grace Church, Ramsbottom—
<https://trinitygracechurch.net>