

# Pray for Kenya

## November 2018

Dear Brethren,

Cliff and I spent from September 21<sup>st</sup>. to October 1<sup>st</sup>. in **Pokot North**. This report, which is for your thanksgiving and prayers, is centred around the appointment of 6 leaders. I hope that the 6 pages will not daunt you but will give you further insight into this ministry.

### Leadership

The final event for our 10 days in Pokot North was the setting aside of 6 brethren as the first Elders/Pastors in the churches (September 30<sup>th</sup>). It had taken 18 years to get to this point, although they have been functioning as *de facto* leaders! Three are local Pokot brethren (3-



Isaiah Patricko Joshua Thomas Andrew Samuel

5), and three are 'missionaries' who are not native Pokot speakers (1-2,6). They have been appointed in the three most established churches, at Chepkinagh, Kamketo and Kasei, two for each, one local man and one missionary. I spent an hour or two with each of the pairs as this development marks a big forward step. Now that there is an Eldership the 3 churches will work more separately and unity in the leadership will be vital. It is not easy for a local person to work with a person from outside as an equal. Yet by the

grace of God it happened in Antioch. The missionaries need to struggle to be proficient in the Pokot language.

The Sunday itself was a big, big day! It started with the usual morning worship. As is the custom in our churches there is consecutive Bible reading, today on 1 Samuel 16:1-9. I preached on Saving Faith from Luke 18:35-43. People kept coming until the building was full



pulpit looking left



pulpit looking right

with no room even to sit on the mats on the floor. There must have been at least 400 if not 500 present. 100 students from the Secondary School were there, together with those in the Primary School who board. Brethren from various churches under the banner of TBC were

there, including more than 50 who had walked for hours the previous evening from Wasat and had been soaked in a rain storm. Inquisitive people from the community were there, as I do not think such an occasion has been celebrated in the area before.

After a short break it was my opportunity to tell those assembled what such appointing of leaders means, that it is according to the Bible, that it does not elevate them to some superior spiritual status, that it is specifically for the work of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. I remarked that they are not going to be wearing special white collars and black suits, and this was obviously helpful to some. After perhaps an hour of speaking (through translation), I got the 6 to kneel in the front and I prayed earnestly and at length for them according to what I had been speaking.

In typical Kenyan fashion it was then time for gifts, first for Cliff and myself. A Pokot stool, beaded leather belt and wrist band, and a large container of honey, these from various churches represented. Then the 6 men were each given suits (thankfully not all black!!) and their wives were given 'lessos' (wrap-arounds). One person brought a large tub of raw honey which was lifted up by the men and spontaneously they began singing that 'the word of God is sweeter than honey'. All the time there were the women singing and stepping in as they gave the gifts, along with much ululation. So that no one was left out the leaders of other churches in our fellowship, with their wives, were given many lessos. It was an exuberantly joyful time, impossible to convey by words alone. There was the usual cake cutting and lunch of rice and goat meat for all. While the Biblical pattern of prayer and fasting ought to be adhered to, is it not also a time of rejoicing as Christ gives gifts to His church?

These men have very big responsibilities and they are by no means fully supported financially. We expect the local churches to do something, but in practice they do very little. What they get comes through Nairobi TBC for support, to help with school fees for their children, and to run the motorbike which has been provided for each of the 3 churches, but it means they also have to generate extra income themselves. These are their responsibilities:

(1) Other Churches. There are a total of 13 organized local churches. Chepkinagh also cares for Apur, Kapkoghun, Kapyomot, Kwirir, Nasorete, Tarakit, and Wasat; Kamketo for Kasepa; and Kasei for Kapkewa and Kapterema. To make the work easier all the churches get together for a joint service monthly. There are also separate retreats for men, women and youths. One very encouraging development is that many of the church members are taking advantage of the Adult Literacy programmes the County is putting in place all over the area. Surely every true Christian ought to desire to read the word of God for him or herself.



Kapkewa local church



Kapkoghun members meeting in school classroom





Kasepa members



Chepkinagh greetings after service



Josiah

David



Ibrahim

William

Peter

Many years ago I found David reading the New Testament in English outside his hut, much to my surprise. Together with his 2 wives he has started showing a spiritual interest after the recent Men's Retreat. His son Josiah will soon be the first College graduate from the area.

Ibrahim was recently baptized together with 53 others from the area. He proudly told me that he was fully immersed because the Lord Jesus had so many sins of his to wash away! William is the leader in Kwirir and testified how much the gospel has changed the area.

## (2) Outreach. There are calls from yet further places for ministry:

- ★ Kapenguria. This is the main town of West Pokot County. Our brethren must travel south the 80 or so miles to here for its many administrative functions. When there is a preacher available a Sunday meeting takes place in a lodging (pictured). As many people from Pokot North now live here, because of work, business or farming, there is a great need for church planting. For a report from the Association go to <http://trinitybaptistkenya.org/kapenguria-church-planting>. The brethren in Kamketo are taking responsibility.



- ★ Turkwell. A family from the Kapterema church moved east to near the town of Turkwell which serves the large hydro-electric dam. Together with their neighbours they are requesting for a church to be planted. The brethren in Kasei are taking the responsibility.



★ Nakuyen. About 50 miles south on the border with Uganda these people have also called for help. Having heard what TBC has done elsewhere they want school sponsorship and church planting. The school only reopened in 2010 after 20 years of closure due to insecurity. We suspect this is what they really want so we need to go ahead with caution. The brethren in Chepkinagh are taking responsibility.



(3) Secondary Schools. The 3 well-established churches each have the responsibility of a secondary school. Kasei Boys' Secondary has 280 students; Kamketo Trinity Girls' has 180; and Chelopoy Trinity Boys' at Chepkinagh is just completing its first year with 12. The 3 'missionaries', who have now become official church leaders, have a particular responsibility



Kamketo Trinity Girls



Chelopoy Trinity Boys

functioning as Chaplains. They have many opportunities to bring the gospel to these students. From Nairobi a team is sent annually for a 'Challenge Weekend' where the whole school hears the word of God. In this visit we had unfettered times to preach, as in the pictures above. Please pray that many of these young people will be converted. We support two teachers at Kamketo and Chelopoy, but the great need for the latter is two permanent classrooms to be built.

(4) Primary Schools. TBC sponsors such schools in each place where there is a local church.



Preaching at morning assembly – Chepkinagh



Kapkoghun





Open-air classroom – Wasat



Early Childhood Development class - Kwirir



Classrooms – Kamketo



Classroom and students - Kapkewa

Perhaps a couple of thousand students are involved. Although the schools are run by the Government, as the sponsor TBC has opportunity in each to bring the word at assemblies, a designated class once a week, and to boarders after classes. Everywhere we went we were given the opportunity to preach to the students. We are praying that as the years go by the Head Teachers will at least be sympathetic to the church, if not members, and we will have helped to train genuine Christians to become teachers.

(5) Bible School. The work is growing and the labourers are few. Very few men are able to do the TPC in Nairobi because of their lack of knowledge of English. So there is a plan to start training locally in Kasei from January 2019, Lord willing. All the 6 leaders have gone through the TPC themselves. May God raise up men through this means to lead the churches.

## Water

With little surface water and no supply pipes residents have traditionally depended upon the few springs or digging in the sand of the usually dry water courses for their water needs. This often involves long journeys back to home carrying the heavy jerry-cans. What a blessing that there are now two more places that have bore holes and a constant central water supply.

The final work of putting the pipes 70 metres down. Soon after water flowed in Kasepa, so that they no longer have salty water or travel 4 kms. for pure water.





Kwirir hand pump at the bore hole. The yellow containers are the 20 litre jerry cans people use all over the country with which to collect and store water. It is usually the work of women to carry them on their heads or backs. They are so heavy!

### **Kisumu**

I have been invited to be the main speaker at a Family Conference in Kisumu from December 10-14, 2018. There will be 12 sessions on 'The Church', of which I shall take 7, and Barnabas Olare from Mombasa the remaining 5. This is not a Conference that TBC or RBAK organizes, and this invitation is specifically designed to encourage closer ties between different Reformed groupings in Kenya. May the Lord be pleased to enable it to accomplish that end!

### **Summary for prayer**

- Newly appointed leaders – Andrew Chemolok & Samuel Waswa (Chepkinagh), Thomas Lokerisa & Patrick Odhiambo (Kamketo), Joshua Sitet & Isaiah Juma (Kasei).
- Thanksgiving for the 54 recently baptized.
- Opportunities for preaching the gospel in the sponsored schools.
- Bible School in Kasei set to start next year.
- Financial needs for support of church leaders, especially the missionaries, infrastructure, and around 40 school teachers.
- Church planter needed in Kapenguria.
- Kisumu Conference next month.

In Christ's service,

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