

# Pray for Kenya

## April 2019

Dear Brethren,

It is just a few days since I returned from Kenya, so it is time to write to you first to thank you for your prayers. The Lord was merciful in giving me good health and strength throughout so that I was able to accomplish everything as planned. The only delay was of a number of hours in Addis Ababa on my way to Nairobi due to the cancellation of my flight as a result of the plane crash two days earlier. It is a salutary reminder that our breath and all our ways are in our God's hands. I took the same route just two days later, and perhaps it was scheduled to be the same plane. When our Lord was given a report of such a disaster He replied, "Unless you repent, you will likewise perish".

### ETHIOPIA

The purpose of spending the weekend in Addis Ababa was to introduce the few former members of Trinity Baptist Church Nairobi to the Addis Baptist Church. A year ago I had encouraged them to start studying the 1689 Confession with a view to eventually starting a church. Then in December 2018, at a day conference, I heard a report on the Addis Baptist Church by someone who had recently visited.

So on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>. March I was taken to the appropriately named 'Holy City Mall'. We had to wait in the ground floor coffee shop as people had been delayed by a road race. The Church meets on the 4<sup>th</sup>. floor in a large recording studio. See below a picture of the congregation, and the 3 Elders. You may also visit <http://www.addis-baptist.com>.



The TBC Nairobi members were all present and they greatly appreciated the meetings. I was encouraged as it was a little taste of what I was used to in Nairobi, meeting the whole day! It began with a Bible study using the booklet, *The Doctrines of Grace in the Gospel of John*. Then the worship followed where I preached through translation on The Conversion of the Thessalonians from chapter one of the first letter. Then there was lunch together and most of the 40 or so stayed. Then in a number of groups there was discussion about the sermon of last Sunday afternoon and mine of the morning. This was followed by the Lord's Supper and the second service where I took the same passage to emphasize man's response in conversion, having dealt with God's work in the morning. Throughout the day I understood absolutely nothing. I could not even mouth the words of the hymns as I have no knowledge of the Amharic script. Nonetheless it was a precious time knowing I was with brethren in the Lord.

It is a church largely made up of young people. I think the only 2 over 40 years are two of the Elders. Pray especially for Gedion Agzew (right), who is full time and also runs a theological course. This is a country where the Biblical Reformed Faith is hardly known. Almost two-thirds of the population of over 100 million profess to be Christians, and the other one-third are Muslims. Of the Christians 7 out of 10 are adherents of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which is hardly evangelical. Many of the rest are Pentecostals and Charismatics, and the largest Protestant Church, the Lutherans, have been deeply affected.

One unexpected person I met was Yared. In the early 1990s he fled to Kenya when the military dictatorship was overthrown, as his father had been high up. He spent a few years with us, became a Christian and then sought resettlement in South Africa. He has been there more than 20 years but still does not have permanent residency. He was back home as his father had died, and I met with him, his mother and other family members. It was the 40<sup>th</sup>. day after his death, and for the Orthodox, a special day (there are many other such days). It was an opportunity to bring the gospel of our hope in Christ. The father had professed Christ in his imprisonment and I am told became an avid Bible reader. In God's providence refugees from many countries passed through our hands, and we believe that much spiritual good was done in many of their lives.

I stayed the weekend with AO and his family in their newly acquired flat. Addis is replete with these high rise buildings, catering for the vast influx of people from the countryside. We also visited his little office cum recording studio from where he sends gospel preaching to be broadcast to his own S0mal1 people wherever in the world they might tune in.

## NAIROBI, KENYA

(1) TPC (Trinity Pastors' College) <http://trinitypastorscollege.com>

The number one purpose for the visit was to teach these 8 men 2 courses in their 3-year programme – Preaching, and half of The Work of the Holy Spirit (Conversion). I found them a lively and interactive class of men. For the first time they had all completed their assignments after the lectures in January.



The 2 men in the right photo joined the class in January as new students. **Aloice Oginga** (left) is a mature man of almost 60 years of age, a Pastor near Kisumu, who not so long ago embraced the doctrines of grace. He is not highly educated but is open and full of questions, and so will benefit much. **Paul Ruhiu** (right) is from a Presbyterian Church in the city and came to embrace the doctrines of grace through the internet. Of the other six students 4 are members of TBC Nairobi.

## (2) TBC Nairobi



I preached on Prayer in both services. This is the larger morning congregation where I sought to encourage from Luke 11:5-13 on 'Assurance in Prayer'. In the afternoon I took Psalm 74 as an example of 'How to Pray in Spiritual Trouble'. Many people attend, the membership is growing (now at 130), and I was told by all that there is unity.



Many Reformed Baptist churches are predominantly of younger people, and TBC Nairobi is no exception. Yet because we have been in existence 40 years there are a good number of older brethren. It will probably be to their embarrassment but I thought I would focus on the older ladies (there are others not shown). How faithful they have been over the decades, the stability of the church when we have gone through times of difficulty. Some have demanding jobs and husbands who are not spiritually cooperative and in such the Lord has kept them pursuing holiness. They are a great example to the younger ones who so easily start with zeal but are not able to finish, and who do not seek to control the church by their much speaking and are a great joy to the elders by their unwavering support.

The picture on the left is of the Women's Fellowship that meets every Thursday morning, led by Sister Margaret Njure (left). They usually study a book, and sometimes devote themselves to prayer. The last book was Machen, *The Christian View of Man*, and now they are starting Hughes, *The Disciplines of a Godly Woman*. It is encouraging to see some of the younger women desiring to be homemakers and able to participate.

## (3) Visits

After teaching during the day I sought to visit every evening. It was refreshing for me to meet up with brethren, most of whom I have known for many years, and to see the continued grace of God in their lives. Let me select a few who the Lord is leading, we trust, into fruitful fields of service in the kingdom.



**Tonny & Olivia Karwa** with son Junior. It was Tonny that I first met in 2014 in hospital, I with my prostatectomy and he with serious injuries from a bus attacked by a terrorist bomb. As a result they became part of TBC and Tonny has completed 2 years of the TPC. He has now been called to be pastor of the Grace Baptist Church in Kisumu beginning in April 2019. I shall miss Junior on my visits to Nairobi as he is so eager to greet his 'Grandpa' with a hug!



**Dominic & Jackie Kabaria**, with baby Nila. Since completing his TPC studies, Dominic has been in charge of the Sunday School and Youth ministries. He has now been proposed for Eldership in the Church. They are one of many young families in the Church who are proving faithful as their responsibilities are added. Please pray for a unanimous decision by the church members.



These two young men are from Korr (Rendille). **Diba Isaaq** (left) has his widowed mother in Korr and is very concerned to provide for her. We have put him through a food technology course but jobs so often require Sunday work. We are wondering about him ministering the word amongst his own people. **Maka Daballen** (right) is a son of one of the evangelists in Korr, Godana. He recently professed faith, will soon complete at the University, and we are also considering how he might be used for the gospel.

In Christ's service,

Keith & Priscilla Underhill

27 Inwood Road, Liverpool L19 6QA

[kunderhill@digitalsavannah.co.uk](mailto:kunderhill@digitalsavannah.co.uk) & [priscilla.underhill@gmail.com](mailto:priscilla.underhill@gmail.com)

+44-151-222-3749 (land) +44-7842-698151 (Keith), +44-7583-375522 (Priscilla)

<http://www.trinity.or.ke>, <http://www.trinitybaptistkenya.org>

<http://www.trainkenya.com> (the Charity), <http://www.trinitypastorscollege.com> (TPC)