

Message 9- Tanzania Sunday School Teachers- 8-11 January, 2020

On Wednesday the 8th, Agneta Injairu, Roselyn Amugune, and I travelled down to Tanzania. As we entered Migori County we found rain and had to walk across the border through rain. However, when we left the Tanzanian border patrol station, we found a beautiful rainbow, a sign of hope.

We reached the home of Esinas Mwita in Tarime and found her not home. She had spread her shucked maize (corn) out on her courtyard to dry. We saw a big storm about to start so we gathered up the maize and then sheltered in her smoky kitchen until the storm passed and she returned to her home. She welcomed us warmly and the first two Sunday School teachers, Joseph and Paul, two local young men, arrived and greeted us with joy, sharing about what they are doing with their children. Then three older women arrived. Instead of welcoming us with the usual song and prayer of thanks for safe journeys, Mary immediately started quarreling us why weren't we having everyone to stay in a hotel or guest house! I explained we were trying to help them learn how they can start teaching others in a way that was self-sustainable, not using sums of money just to sleep. I also explained that I would prefer sleeping in a home with people I know than being alone in a hotel room by myself with strangers and having to worry about people trying to steal. We all finally agreed to sleep at Esinas's house, as we were all very tired.

The next morning, Margaret, one of the women was willing to stay and help Esinas cook the food for us all, and we began the classes. I found Margaret busily that night carefully trying to copy the notes taken by the others for the classes she had missed, which showed she really wanted to learn. Dorcas Otieno came the next day and was able to cook and let Margaret go back to class.



Agneta teaching the top class



Evelyn teaching the 2nd year students

Because we had only the five students, we were able to teach them more quickly than usual, and were able to finish by Friday afternoon. We then had them discuss among themselves how there were going to start teaching others in their country. In the evening after supper they reported their plans and had a lot of fun telling stories, laughing, and learning from each other. I enjoyed watching them share one smartphone video together, and thought of the mosaic in the Hillsboro Center Congregational Church back home that shows a group of people all trying to share one music book to sing. These days, cell phones have taken the place of hymn books for many.

The money we had saved from finishing early and not having to buy food for another day, was then given to them and Margaret was appointed as the new treasurer of the group.



Joseph, Catherine, Margaret, Mary, & Paul behind. Singing at night at end of training Dorcas in center

Yesterday, we were able to leave early and cross the border and get to Migori by 9am. It took five plus hours to reach hot, hot Kisumu, and then I accompanied Agneta to her home in Malava. We took a piki to her home and got caught in the heavy rain, having to shelter enroute.

Everyone was glad we had brought rain, as it had gotten hot and dusty in the area this past week. I was able to meet Agneta's youngest son, Edigar who is a teacher at Buruburu Institute of Fine Art in Nairobi. He had brought his adorable daughter, Linda and his wife.

Edigar and family and I travelled on pikis on the back roads this morning, greeting women on their way to the local churches this morning. Edigar was on his way back to Nairobi and I to Ekwambwa to Elizabeth's. Now I will wash clothes and prepare reports, plus spend some time resting before the next journey.



Edigar, Fridah, and little Linda

Folks are complaining it is cold this morning (between 65-70 degrees F.) I have responded that any place in the US where it is this warm in January, is making headlines as a heat wave (or global warming). Thanks for all your messages and prayers. Marian