

Message #3 2 Nov. -8 Nov. 2020 Kaimosi and Malava

Monday, Agneta and I travelled by pikis (motorcycles) on back roads to Kakamega. During this Covid 19 pandemic, riding on the back of a motorcycle, seems a good way to go shorter distances and get lots of fresh air at the same time (as long as we only use older, cautious, trusted drivers). We spent the day doing errands.

Tuesday I stayed at Agneta's while she returned to open a bank account with her local agricultural cooperative project. An enormous bundle of black nightshade greens were brought by a neighbor and I spent much of a morning plucking the tiny leaves off this plant (locally called Lisusa), that we feasted on in the evening. Later in the afternoon, Judith Nandikove stopped by to see us and make further plans about the oral history project of QREC Kenya. She then hurried back to Nairobi, as it was expected that the government might lockdown all traffic to and from Nairobi. Instead the decision was left up to each provincial governor whether to lockdown again due to another outbreak of Corona. Supper's ugali (cornmeal cooked like mashed potatoes) was made by Ruto, one of the smaller orphans for supper. The huge cooking stick was almost bigger than him. A lot of posho was made for the three adults, and four grandchildren, plus the cat, three dogs, goats, and chickens at Agneta's.



*Ruto making the posho.*



*Elizabeth Milimi in front of her purple gate.*

Wednesday, I took a piki to Ileshi and Agneta's son drove me to FTC (Friends Theological College) in Kaimosi. The campus was very quiet and clean (no students present, as all are doing online courses). I stayed in the Guest House and immediately two women came to welcome me to Kaimosi. I walked with one into Cheptulu to purchase a few foods for a late lunch and breakfast for the following days. Then was invited to Robert and Nancy Wafula's home for supper- fresh salad- a rare treat here. We all watched TV until late, concerned about the US elections. Due to the solar power at the college we had power, though most of the village did not. All the staff are well, and they are careful about allowing anyone to enter the campus.

Thursday I went to the home of Elizabeth Milimi, the new representative from USFW Kenya to the USFWI Board. She had a purple gate (first I had seen in Kenya), and we spent the day getting to know each other more, as well as touring her shamba (garden).



*Papaya tree, onions, beans, collards, and other greens*



*One of Elizabeth's bananas*

Friday morning, I delivered a suitcase of books for the college, plus some things for the archives. Then held a meeting of my Kenyan support committee in the FTC board room. We had a good time to prayer and worship and sharing together how we were all coping with the pandemic, as well as with the loss of Eileen Malova, one of our team and other leaders and family relatives. It was the first time for several to get outside their own village and we all felt the support of each other. We shared ideas of how we can still be active as women even when the normal very large prayer meetings and other gatherings have had to be cancelled. All were encouraged to use the time to encourage younger women to help the older ones learn how to use smart phones to communicate in newer ways. We also agreed that I would spend a week in the north (kitale area) and meet with those who usually travel with me to Uganda, a week in the south (Vihiga area) and meet with those who usually travel to Tanzania with me, and a week in Kakamega and Lirhanda area before returning to Nairobi. In each area there are several to interview for the Oral archives project of QREC here. Then we feasted at FTC, hosted by the college and Robert Wafula, dean of the theological college joined us in the meal. We all travelled from there with joy in our hearts.



*With our masks normally*



*Without masks, right after eating*

Today I went back to Kakamega to do some errands and got caught in a heavy rain storm in Malava. Since I still had a half hour piki ride in the rain to Agneta's, I bought a child's blanket to wrap around me, so I arrived safely and not soaked. Thanks for all your support and prayers, especially with the travel on pikis, as well as in cars when available.  
Marian