

Message 2. October 26-1 November 2020

Greetings. Good news- I have not seemed to carry any Covid to Kenya.

I am sitting here in Agneta's house surrounded by her grandchildren watching me use the computer.

My first week in Kenya has finished . In Nairobi, I was able to call a number of friends and Edigar, the youngest son of Agneta came over to see me at Judith's one day. Midweek, the mother-in-law of Judith came who is from Namirama and we spent the evening laughing, as we shared stories about Friends in Namirama. During this Covid pandemic, laughter is a big relief to us all.

Judith and I worked hard for the new QREC office in Nairobi that is part of her compound on second floor. In the photo you can see the computer and printer set up in the new office. We also got the new smartphones up and working ready to take voice recordings of people that the Sunday School teachers here want to interview and then create the stories about Quakers whom we should be sharing with the next generation of Kenyans, and hopefully then get them transcribed, translated if need be. Then copies will be sent to the Africa Quaker Archives in Kaimosi at FTC. We also, with the help of a local technician figure out how best to load the interview we had made of last year onto the new computer and set up a system for keeping track of each interview completed.



*Judith in the new QREC Africa office.*

I wondered how to get up to Western, as I was carrying too many bags to go by plane. It turned out that an aunt-in-law of Judith's up in Namirama had died the beginning of the week and she and her husband Clauder had to go to it. Thus on Saturday morning, we awoke at 4AM and with the help of a cousin , Kennedy who is a professional driver, who drove us in Judith's car to Namirama and then to Agneta's. I stayed in the car in Namirama as I did not know the person who had died, and I could see a crowd without masks. However a couple of my former students who I had taught at Namirama years ago, came running up, put on their masks and greeted me enthusiastically.

Since Malava has had only one death and very few cases of Covid, they seem to be unaware of its dangers. We drove by a soccer match where a large crowd of close to 1000 people were gathered without masks or distancing. Then in Kalenda, we found a wedding crowd. Agneta's

husband James met us on the road outside with joy and then fetched Agneta who was inside with the wedding cake she made. (She earns money to help her ministry by making cakes locally so that local people do not have to take a day getting to the city of Kakamega to buy one. It is a challenge when Agneta makes them without a modern oven. Since the bride and groom were late to the wedding, she was able to ride down with us, pray a welcome, feed us tea and sweet potatoes, plus ripe papaya from her garden before getting a ride back up the hill to the church.

Today, we rested and prayed together rather than going to church. Meanwhile, she had to have her enormous eucalyptus trees cut down to prepare to get electricity to reach the house. She had timbers(lumber), and firewood made of it and had employed a local fundi (carpenter) to make a set of new sofas out of some of the timber.

After church two of the older women, (my age) came and greeted me and we had tea together. Here they are admiring the new sofa that fits all around the living room. When they saw my mask they quickly put one on and I shared with them the importance of the masks especially for us older people.



We had fun cleaning out under the old sofa, finding lots of dust and treasures. My corona mask was very helpful to keep me from sneezing as I helped sweep the room, Agneta's grown son Abner washed the floor, it dried quickly and the new sofa was installed.

Tomorrow I will be going in Abner's car to Kakamega to go to the bank, buy some yogurt and fruit, and send off this message from an internet café that usually is not crowded.

On Wednesday, I will go to Kaimosi to deliver a suitcase of stuff, and then meet with my support committee the following morning to plan out the itinerary for this month.

Word has spread that I am here, so I get frequent calls from Friends here.

Thanks so much for all your prayers and support.

Marian