

Message 7- Dec 1-7 Kakamega and Njoro

On the first, Roselyn Amugune and I visited Beatrice Ngana of Central YM (Lirhanda). She had written one of the parts of the USFW International Blueprints. It turned out to be her birthday and she was delighted to receive her printed copy of the publication. On the way back to the main road by Mukumu, we found this ancient tree, covered with ferns and moss growing on its branches, under which four young men were enjoying its shade. Due to use for cooking firewood, large old trees are not as common in Kenya these days, and in Nairobi the cutting of many old trees in order to build more roads is adding to climate change.



In the afternoon, we visited Jessica Shivutse, who was a major writer of the Kenya national Sunday school curriculum of Friends. As she showed us around her shamba (gardens) she was glad to learn that I loved the traditional cooked greens of Kenya and preferred them to meat. Along with the woman leader of Ikonyero, her local meeting, we gathered a bunch of the more bitter greens for me to take and share with Agneta. Agneta and I feasted on them my last night in Western Province.



Plucking vegetables

Roselyn, Gladys, and Jessica

The second photo shows them standing next to a shrub that has purple flowers, then changes to pink and then white, the “yesterday-today-tomorrow” plant.

On Wednesday, Walter Malenya and Pastor Rueben Mavia collected Agneta and I and we drove to the home of Dinah Andete, the only surviving daughter of Yohana Lumwachi, the first Friend in Lirhanda. She welcomed us singing *Buyanzi buyanzi* (Luhya for “Joy, Joy”) chorus and we all joined in. We then interviewed her. She showed us a picture of Yohana (taken at a studio) and shared about Yohana and the way he helped so many people in Lirhanda. Agneta did the interview in Isukha dialect of Luhya and also translated Dinah’s answers into English. When sharing about her experiences in Sunday school—teaching it by age 9—she burst into singing choruses like *Londa, londa, kulonda na Yesu* (Follow, follow, Jesus). We were about to leave, but she wanted us to stay, and we hadn’t given a full introduction of each of us. When she learned who I was, she burst out “*Misbega*, there are many named in our village after a white teacher at Lirhanda.” (*Misbega* was the Isukha understanding of Miss Baker). She also was excited to see that both Agneta and Walter were distant relatives of hers. We were then given a feast of chicken, thanking us for making such an enjoyable day for her. I am finding that either calling or visiting any individual Friend during this time of pandemic is often the happiest day of the year for those visited.



Yohanna Lumwaji



Dinah Andete Lumwaji singing



Agneta interviewing Dinah with her nephew Reuben

On Thursday, I returned to Elizabeth Malenge’s home as her daughter Marian had planned a surprise birthday party for her mother. About ten of us gathered in their large living room/dining room—spaced accordingly—with masks on. Elizabeth and two of her sisters and Marian made a singing procession from their bedroom to the living room and we all joined in singing, prayers of thanksgiving, and feasting. Abner Injairu came to fetch me and escort me to Kaimosi to collect the huge nest of Turkana baskets I am taking to USA for FUM, then returned to Kalenda for a final meal and time of prayer with Agneta and family.

Very early on Friday morning, I boarded a vehicle to go to Njoro. It was a Blueline shuttle that separates the passengers every other seat and requires masks and seatbelts and had been recommended by many. The brakes failed and we had an accident, but praise God and thanks to prayers of many, no one was badly hurt. (I had only rarely used matatus this year; only the higher-cost ones that observe Covid precautions.) Pamela Ngoya came and rescued me and I rested up with minor scratches and bruises. I will be using the slow Easy Coach Bus to Nairobi and private cars from there on until I fly back to USA on the 11th. Praise God for miracles and the prayers of many supporters. I call Easy Coach the tortoise and the shuttles the hare, for those who know the traditional tale of the tortoise and hare. Slow but steady wins the race.

In Nakuru I gave the sermon at Njoro Friends Church and met with a number of individual Friends. Due to my camera being lost in the accident, I expect to send the details and photos of my time in Njoro and Nairobi in my next message from New Hampshire, after I arrive home (trusting that no Corona restrictions delay my flights.) Thanks again for all your support and prayers. Marian