

Message 8. Njoro and Nairobi and home 8-12 Dec. 2020

In Njoro, I visited Pamela's shop where she sewed up two matching skirts for us both, just outside the shop near a blooming Nandi Flame tree. On Sunday, I was asked to give the sermon at her church



Pamela rescues me after accident with hot tea. Pamela sewing skirts Sitting in front part of the church

Njoro Friends church had a clever station with soap dispenser and water dispenser, all operated by foot pedal, so no one touches the soap or water spigot. Then they take your temperature and register all attendees with their contact info. The choir sang with joy (It often receives many prizes in choir competitions).



Peddle operated washing

Temp.&Registration

Njoro Choir outside meetinghouse

After meeting we took photos of the Quaker men, women, youth, choir and children. Their three Sunday schools meet outside the building. Then Pamela taught a Book 2 membership (catechism) class. In Kenya, Book 1 are those wanting to be associated with Friends, and book 2 are those who are full members and can hold leadership positions. All have to wait one or two years between the two classes and be observed by their teachers/elders to see if they are acting like Quakers. They enjoyed learning more about Friends from England and New England. They were fascinated with the story of Elizabeth Fry (early Quaker in England who started prison reform and who is pictured on the British 5 Pound Note of currency).

The next day, we visited the assistant clerk of USFW group at Egerton University.



Book 2 Membership class outside meetinghouse

Njoro mamas who distributed food to needy early during Covid crisis.

On Tuesday, I took the slow but safer Easy Coach Bus to Nairobi and went to Judith Nandikove's. We held a zoom meeting of the Oral History Project of QREC Africa and I downloaded all the recordings we made this year onto the computer. Also visited the Dunholm Friends Young Friends group/choir that wants to correspond with YF's of New England YM. The mother of Judith who is being nursed back to health by Judith, didn't want to see me leave and wanted to travel with me to USA. I explained how long a journey it is, how cold it was in USA now, and that during Covid, that is impossible.

Judith then took me to AMREF (a major medical research center that deals with all infectious diseases that is located next to Wilson airport,(the largest prop plane airport in Africa (for flying doctors, researchers, and tourists). Without an appointment, I was able to register, pay, and get a complete Covid test (where a swab is taken inside the nose, but also one into the throat!). We sat/stood 6 feet apart and the process took less than 2 hours. The results were emailed to me within 20 hours, (a much more efficient system than what I experienced in USA). They would not let any of us enter the main airport without the negative certificate plus masks. I was given 3 seats on the plane and could stretch and sleep, switched planes in Netherlands, and flew to Boston. Took the bus to Concord, and Wade, my neighbor came and fetched me. He had me sit in the back seat 6 feet away, and then opened the windows to avoid Covid. Corona is much more common in USA than Kenya. At every store or office I went to everyone sanitizes hands and has their temperature checked and wears masks in order to enter.

I found snow on the ground in New Hampshire, and it was raining (much needed after a lot of drought). After a cup of hot tea and a shower, I went early to bed and slept 10 hours and was able to join my local meeting for worship via zoom this morning.

This year's journey was refreshing and a special blessing. I got to visit old friends,(some after 40 years), met with the team of Kenyan women who usually travel with me to Uganda and Tanzania to plan future ministry, and recorded four more oral interviews of elderly Friends while training a few Sunday school teachers how to conduct the interviews.

Kenyans are doing far better in coping with the pandemic than many of us in USA, and they take the pandemic seriously and with curiosity of what God is trying to tell us while all our "normal" busyness has been halted.

Thanks to all who prayed and supported me, and to all who hosted and welcomed me. You all are a blessing.
Marian

