

Message 1- In Kenya- Nairobi and Kaimosi-12-19 October, 2021

Greetings from bright sunshine of Kenya. I flew to Nairobi via Paris. At the Paris airport gate, there was a large crowd of men dressed in white and blue hazardmat suits from head to toe. We were grateful they were not headed on the same flight to Kenya. Judith and Claude Nandikove welcomed me warmly and hosted me in Nairobi right next to the airport. Judith is in the process of converting the old primary school buildings into a Friends Guest House/(B&B) as a way to support her travel in ministry. She is getting close to finishing stage one, the structure for the ground floor, the plumbing, and parking area. She's in the midst of installing a large plastic water tank to collect water off the roofs to enable watering of a garden that provides fresh organic fruits and vegetables.

The first morning, as I walked out to see the site, I was greeted by a huge flock of geese, a flock of turkeys, and a flock of many hens and roosters. (They likely thought I was Bryan, the young man who usually brings them food.) Judith is collecting their manure for composting the garden. She also has four rabbits.

The first day was spent resting, getting cell phones working, and contacting East Africans to let them know I had arrived. We also began making plans for a gathering of Sunday school teachers, oral archives work, and plans for Judith and Joyce from Nairobi to lead a hands-on workshop with the Tanzanians USFW women on how to make more re-useable sanitary pads. We will deliver the colorful ones that North Carolina USFW sent with me, as well as some made by Nairobi women that can be made by hand in more remote rural areas of Tanzania.

On Friday, Edith and Samson Wekesa came to visit me. Edith is the new pastor for USFW Kenya who works for the Kenyan Bible Society and who has helped us in the past with some Bibles in various languages when they are requested. Samson is the chair of the new Mission Committee of FUM Africa Section. They were very interested in learning about the work that USFW Pastors had been doing in Uganda, Tanzania, Turkana, and Samburu.



Edith Wekesa, Judith Nandikove, & I.



Bryan@all four rabbits.



Geese in yard. (garden is behind fence)

On Saturday, Haggai, (son of Agneta Injairu) came to see me with his youngest daughter, Kirsten. It was the first time for Kirsten to see a real rabbit (instead of Bugs Bunny on TV). When she touched its soft fur, it wiggled and surprised her. Kirsten enjoyed making chapatis with Judith, while Haggai and I caught up on news of his new law practice in Thika. Patience, his wife, and their two daughters had come from Uganda, where they had been stuck since the Covid pandemic started.

In the evening, Judith and I took part in a QREC (Quaker Religious Education Collaborative) training for how to make better use of Zoom. Judith has been coordinating over 100 Sunday School teachers in East Africa, helping them join international Zoom gatherings of Friends Sunday School Teachers.



Haggai helps make a peanut butter sandwich



Joy of the rabbit

Sunday morning, Judith drove me to Ngong Road. I tried to visit the three Friends meetings there, but the unprogrammed meeting is only meeting via Zoom, and the two programmed services were combined together. Strict Covid protocol was followed. It was held in a meetinghouse that holds 1500, but with everyone in masks, with temperatures checked and hands washed before entry, plus seating 6 feet apart, there were far fewer in person; others watched via Facebook. I spent the night with Roselyn and Moni Wekesa, two lawyers who live within walking distance of Ngong Road whom I have known for 45 years since my teaching days at Namirama Friends Girls High School.

Monday morning, they took me to the Easy Coach bus station and traveled slowly but safely to Kaimosi. FTC staff welcomed me. On Tuesday, I attended their morning worship and following that delivered all the gowns I had collected. They also opened a box of them that Katrina McConaughy had brought to Kenya. We had a total of close to 60 gowns. The red ones they will likely use for the head student of the three major groups—the diploma (Bachelors) graduates, the certificate graduates, and the chaplain graduates. They were excited to get them and the many blue ones I brought will add to the color of the ceremony. Thanks to all of you who donated gowns of various colors. I had not realized that the two gowns with stripes on the sleeves were only for Doctorate degrees, but they will use them for their faculty who have that degree.

Abner Injairu then drove me to Agneta's in Malava. I was warmly welcomed with the newest grandchild—a son named after my brother, Wilson.

Wednesday was a national holiday, Mashujaa (Veterans Day), that honors the original freedom fighters as well as other recent heroes including the well-known marathon runners, and even a young girl who rescued people during floods in Ahero area. We all rested at Agneta's. In the afternoon, Agneta and I went to pray with one woman in the neighboring village and bought some sweet potatoes at the market in Samitsi. We had some roasted termites along with our meal, as well as the usual cooked greens, posho, chapatis, and cooked mung beans (green grams). We snacked on fresh oranges and mangoes.

Today I am going to Elizabeth Malenge's in Kakamega, after taping a talk by Agneta for the Africa/South America Women Pastors Conference, to be used as back-up in case of internet interruptions on the 30th. Meanwhile, I am working with several women preparing for the gathering of pastors at FTC on the 30th, and doing some work on the Africa Quaker Archives Oral History Project with Judith Nandikove and Agneta Injairu.

Thanks to all of you who have been supporting my ministry. Marian



Holding the new grandson Hadada ibis- one kept its head in the ground!



Agneta on left buying the sweet potatoes.



Grandson Austen playing with clay oxen he made