

Message 4. Africa Quaker Archives workshop/Baptisms/Funerals Nov 9-16

This week has been full of both great joy and great sorrow.

On the 9th of November, I travelled to Kaimosi to FTC for the first Africa Quaker Archives Workshop. From the photo you can see that half were women, half men, and there were a good number of younger Friends who are QREC Sunday School teachers. Jane Matasio, a Quaker from the National Archives of Kenya, was the major instructor. Her testimony on the first night, about how she felt God called her to do her Master's thesis on how Kenyan Quakers can develop an archives (before many people had thought of any archives), moved us all. The next morning, I explained how the Oral History project was started by the QREC (Quaker Religious Education Collaborative) Conference held at FTC in January 2019 and how it is a collaborative volunteer effort of several Friends Organizations, (as it is intended not just for Kenya, but for all of Africa). Jane gave us a professional slideshow presentation on the importance of keeping proper records and preserving the most important materials in the archives. Participants asked many questions and added suggestions to the Archives Committee that had planned the workshop.

The second day, Judith Nandikove explained about the QREC Africa and the method they had researched and tested out during the Covid pandemic for conducting oral interviews with older Friends. Participants were very excited about seeing this project, get started.



First Africa Quaker Archives Workshop



Jane Matasio shows her thesis to Judith Nandikove

Immediately after we finished, all staff and students at FTC met in the chapel and were told that Martin Simiyu, the well-loved chaplain of the college who had been master of ceremonies at the recent graduation, had suddenly died of a stroke. A great loss to many.

On Saturday, I feasted on a very sweet papaya, collected fresh from Elizabeth's garden. It was so ripe, the inside was almost red in color. Yesterday, I was given fresh corn on the cob. Staying in the rural area is so much better than in the cities.



Fresh papaya for breakfast



An interesting bird flew into the chapel!

I then travelled to Malava to Agneta's for a day of rest. Instead of going to meeting for worship, we visited the local Pentacostal church, to witness the dedication of Agneta's newest grandson, Wilson.



The Turkana pastor dedicated Edgar and Fridah's son Visiting the family of Isaiah Bikokwa

Yesterday, Agneta and I travelled to Kitale to visit Isaiah Bikokwa, who started the Friends work in Samburu. We enjoyed taping his memories of Samburu, the semi-arid part of northern Kenya where he had served for over 20 years.

Today I will go to the birthplace of Agneta in Lusui. Her three sons are honoring her brother with a cow. In African tradition, the uncles play an important role in the family. Then on Thursday we will be travelling back to Uganda to assist the leaders in Uganda YM in becoming more self-sustaining. Prayers are needed not only for safe travel , but also for getting the kind of Covid test that is accepted both by Uganda and Kenya border guards.

Thanks for all your support and messages.

Marian