

Message 6. Thanksgiving/ Kenya Visits. Nov 24-Nov 30

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, Marian, my namesake made two cakes for Agneta's graduation celebration while I busily wrote up reports and made plans for the next journeys.



*Left- the graduation cake*  
*Right- Agneta cuts up the Happy Thanksgiving cake and serves a piece to everyone present.*

Shirugu Friends Church had wanted to celebrate her graduation (It's not common here for a woman over 60 to go to college). A large tent was borrowed from Samitsi Friends and by mid day we had 56 people gathered. It was interesting to have six of the pastors from other churches come by to congratulate her – an ecumenical affair. Both the women and the pastor of her church graced her with leis. Women also came at the end with envelopes (financial donations). There were many songs sung joyfully.

After the cake, we all gave thanks and everyone feasted. Agneta had purchased an enormous Tom turkey and it was enough to feed all the people as we had pumpkin, beans, rice, posho, chapatis, greens, and tea, scones, and sodas donated as well.



*Getting lei from pastor*      *Receiving gifts from women*      *Part of the crowd singing with joy*

On the way back to Kakamega, we found a chameleon on Abner's car! Abner gave it a piece of sugar cane, so it could climb onto it and be placed back in a safer environment. We think it dropped out of the tree under which the car was parked. Many Kenyans seem to fear them, but as a biologist, I find them interesting. They have trapezoidal shaped eyes and change color to blend in with environment.



*The chameleon is changing from green (seen on the head) to tan on the body to match the stick of sugar cane.*

On Saturday, I celebrated Thanksgiving with Elizabeth and Marian plus their neighbors. In addition to the chicken, stuffing, peas, squash, Marian had cake, fruit and yogurt for desert. We were stuffed!

Sunday I arose early and travelled to Tigoi to visit Eramba Friends Church where Pauline was pastor. Pauline is a young woman who had gone with me to Turkana 2 years ago. The service was entirely in Luragoli, so all I understood was what Pauline said, as she spoke in Swahili. Midway into the service, our hymn singing was interrupted by a procession of people coming in singing. I did not know if they were a wedding party, a visiting church or what. The church was full of elderly people, with no young people (they usually prefer services in English or Swahili). After the service, I joined the choir of women who then formed a singing procession to a nearby house where we were fed a full meal instead of a cup of tea! Then travelled with Pauline to the home of a woman clerk in Tiriki land and met with Zelikah Galavu, former USFWK Clerk, who continues in ministry to Turkana.



*Choir of Eramba church with Pauline on right. Pamela, Pauline, and Zelika with USFW Calendar behind.*

Then Pauline took me to her home- high up in the Tiriki hills that cannot be reached via piki-they are so steep and rocky. We walked down one mountain and up another to reach her home, much like climbing Thompson Hill in NH or on Mount Elgon in Uganda. From some rocks, you can look down on Kisumu and Lake Victoria around one thousand feet below.



*Pauline's home View out back door across the hills Many rocks and trees*

In a typical visit to a rural home, I was taken around to meet all the neighbors, in laws, parents, etc. Enjoyed singing with Pauline's two girls in the evening. Yesterday, I hiked back down and up the hill to a road and returned to Kakamega. It seemed to be rare to have a white person visiting in that area- I was even greeted as a Wahindi (confusing a white with a person of Asian descent!)

Today after doing errands in Kakamega, I rested at Elizabeth's. At lunch time I was fed a meal from her garden- Arrowroot (the pink items in the photo) and irio- a mixture of potato, boiled corn, peas, spinach and pumpkin leaves. Yummy.



*Elizabeth showing an arrowroot.*



*Meal of irio and arrowroot*



*Arrowroots growing in a ditch.*

Due to the high cost of required testing to prove you are not carrying Covid, I decided to not go to the Uganda USFW and the Tanzanian USFW Conferences, but instead will enable four Kenyan women visit each of them instead. Yesterday morning, I met in Kakamega with the four going to Uganda when they gather to get their Covid tests and sent them off on their way. This week I will try to visit a couple of the Kenyan USFW Conferences and encourage them to support their women who minister in Uganda, Tanzania, and Turkana.

With the new concern about another variant of Covid in southern Africa, we are trying to keep close tabs on which flights are still running. So far, my flight back to USA have not been cancelled or rerouted. Meanwhile, except when outside, we try to wear our masks regularly to avoid problems for ourselves and others.

Thanks for all your messages, prayers, and support,  
Marian