

Message 7. Tanzania Dec 1-12, 2022

On the 1st of December, Agneta and I travelled to Migori, on the Tanzania border and encouraged Dorcas Simiti, our hostess who had lost her husband Fanuel earlier this year. Hosting travelling ministers is an important ministry.

On the 2nd, we visited Esinas Mwita in Tarime, Tanzania who had lost her grown son this year, and then travelled the rest of the day by bus to Mwanza where Dorcas Otieno met us in the dark and escorted us to her home. The next day Dorcas took us on a ferry to see her daughter, Mary who is in medical school. Then we took a piki, a bus, a ferry and a tuktuk to Usagara. I watched a kingfisher dive down 10 feet to catch a fish. The hyacinth is a major pollutant problem in Lake Victoria.



Kingfisher



Water hyacinth -



Mwanza-a city with houses built in between hills of rocks.

There we got a bus to Kahama. We arrived in that city at 10pm and were welcomed by the pastor of the brand new Friends meeting. I helped Elizabeth, a member of that meeting who is an English teacher make chapatis for breakfast, and then we attended Kahama Friends Meeting.



Elizabeth, Pastors wife, Dorcas, and Agneta



Agneta and I with the pastor in his office.

The temporary meetinghouse was made from plastic tarps and iron sheets. The pastor was interested in my travel minute that shared my concern to encourage women and youth in all forms of ministry. The meetinghouse had over one hundred people present, mostly youths and women. They loved to sing and dance to act out the songs. The music and all preaching and teaching was done at full volume with microphones. After the service, we met with the women and they decided to form a USFW group, and also met with the youth. We then travelled by bus back to Mwanza and arrived at Dorcas and Nicholas' home at midnight.



Dorcas speaking to the women



Women and youth dancing with joy during the worship service

On the 5th, we visited Kigereshi Meeting and met with a few of their members in their temporary meetinghouse and had some interesting discussions- including sharing the value of learning English and other languages, so they can communicate with Friends from outside Tanzania.



Agneta and Dorcas listen to their questions at Kigereshe



Pastor Peter listens to Agneta's teaching.

On the 6th, we travelled to Buhongwa meeting, on the southern edge of Mwanza, and the pastor was delighted to see us. We spent the day sharing with him and several members. One young man was using one corner of the church building to tutor students in mathematics (during school holidays), and a large community women's group met in another corner. Their Sunday school teacher whom Agneta had trained, welcomed us and shared about her recent wedding there. They were fascinated to learn how my home meeting had helped a couple get married far more simply, and much less costly.



Prayed with 90 year old member



Mangoes galore!



Buhongwa meetinghouse with tutor and womens group

The USFW Conference of Tanzania was held in Rorya, a brand new church near Tarime, mostly members of the Luo tribe. The women danced a lot with joy. When I taught entrepreneurship, the part they understood best was the European proverb, "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a woman healthy, wealthy and wise." They even went to bed earlier and got up early the rest of the conference! Linet taught giving and



Dancing in joy to both Swahili and Luo music



Leaders of Tanzania USFW



Linet taught giving.

answered many questions from the attenders afterwards. Dorcas taught liquid soap making, and we then had soap to use to clean the dishes, and others reused empty water bottles to carry some home. Margaret preached about some women in the Bible. (Dorcas, Mary, and Deborah)



Soap making



Banner at the site



view from the church-fertile land

I was impressed with the simple banner they had made, that can be used each year. Far cheaper than the expensive multicolored huge banners that are dated with photos of speakers that many are spending much money on, and throwing away after the event. Their land was fertile and they provided local food, cassava, Greens, beans, and fruits. At first others complained not to have bread/chapati/mandasis, but I saw several women took small shoots of cassava home, as they found it to be tastier and filling than the modern white bread that is not as healthy for us. The members of Rorya Meeting are hard working. Nicholas Otieno had helped the men finish the roof a couple days before the conference. With the heavy afternoon rains, it was vital. A highlight was the honoring ceremony of older women. Three were honored and given modern solar lamps. It was a joy to witness the first Luo be honored. The local women wove large hats that Gladys all four of us from outside received with gratitude. They are skilled in handsewing.



The meetinghouse



Agnes, the first Luo honoree.



Enjoying the gift of local hats.

Dorcas, Linet, and I then spent Saturday late morning preparing the vegetables for lunch and washed all the accumulated dishes, so that the local women could attend the lessons, and the main speaker, and learn about Quakerism and about USFW. The following is the photo that resulted in a lot of hits in the media, to see women visiting from outside, humbly helping wash dishes so the brand new church members could attend the conference. It showed a new way to reach out and welcome new people to Quakers and to USFW.



Washing dishes with pastor and Linet.



Dorcas Simiti, ,our hospitality minister on Tanzania border.

We then travelled back to Kenya and arrived safely. Thank you all for your prayers for safe travels. This coming week, a team of us will be helping at the Uganda USFW Conference.

With much gratitude,
Marian