

Dec 22-January 2. Mombasa and Happy New Year



*Connie, Agneta, and I on Christmas morning*

*Shirugu Sunday School singing and acting out Psalm 139*

On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, I travelled to Malava to Agneta's house. On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Abner and I drove to Kisumu to collect Connie Kinaid-Brown, a New England student at ESR who came to Kenya for the East African Pastors Conference. On Christmas eve we had fun putting a geographic picture puzzle with Agneta's grandchildren, took a walk around the land down to the river, and sang Christmas carols in Swahili. On Christmas morning, we went to Shirugu Friends. The crowded Sunday School children sang and acted out "We are fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God". Abner then drove us all to Kisumu where we flew to Nairobi to Judith's in Syokimau.

Early in the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup>, we boarded the train to Mombasa and joined the 1000 other Quakers who had gathered for the 10<sup>th</sup> African Friends Pastors Conference. To feed such a crowd, long ques (lines) formed.



*Tanzanian delegates singing*

*Connie, Judith, and Agneta*

*Long lines*

The conference was held in Mombasa, Kenya's port on the Indian Ocean. The city is beautiful, but the climate was much too hot for my pale skin. We sweated heavily day and night. The main sessions were held in a large room up 6 flights of stairs. The speaker that received the most applauding was Esther Mombo, who spoke on the role of women in ministry. She gave an excellent sharing about historic Kenyan women who pioneered in prison ministry, hospitality ministry. She shared that Friends in Africa follow a ngoho theology.(like roosters that crow and lead while the hens are more in number and do most of the work for chickens). Since Kenya has the largest number of Friends in the world, she had all the women present stand up, and said this is the face of Quakers in the world.( Due to the heat, less women wore the white headscarves than usual.) The women pastors numbered around 800 while the men were 200, and the majority of men were seated in the front of the hall. We rejoiced the next day when the team of pastors chosen to plan the next conference included two women. History is being made!



*Esther Mombo*



*The face of Quakers in the world according to Esther Mombo*

During the conference in the afternoon, I had one gathering of the QWTeam members who were present, helped the Ugandans plan out some outreach in northwestern Uganda, and the team of women going with me to Samburu this week met with Daniel, the director in Samburu, to plan the details of our journey.

A number of us went across the Likoni ferry each day and slept in a hostel run by a Baptist minister that runs Likoni Aid 4 Children Center, an orphanage for AIDS orphans. I was immediately greeted with five young children with hugs when we visited them one afternoon. They were making chapatis to celebrate the end of the year. The girl making faces, turned out to have the name of Marian! We had fun singing with them and they recited verses, and the pastor shared about the history of their orphanage They are renting a place, but have received land, and hope to be able to build their own facility to bring stability to the lives of the children.



*Making chapatis*



*The children with their helpers.*

We boarded a train back to Nairobi which landed us in Nairobi around 4AM. We then slept a few hours at Judith's. I spent most of the day cutting up fruits and vegetables, cleaning rice, while Agenta grated carrots, chopped meat, and cooked maize and millet ugalis. Five other women prepared all the other foods that were used as a feast to celebrate the end of the year and to say farewell to Judith's eldest daughter who will leave tomorrow to attend university in Australia. We held a prayer service with her, and several friends of Judith were able to attend via zoom from USA. Natalie will be welcomed in Australia by her brother who graduated during Covid, and is now doing his internship. It was a moving ceremony with each person present giving advice and encouragement to Natalie followed by Natalie kneeling while all present prayed for her safety. I encouraged her to get in contact with fellow Quakers in Australia for support.



*Judith organizing the buffet*



*Prepared by many busy women*



*Natalie with her grandmother at end of day.*

The first of the year, Agneta and I travelled by Easy Coach back to Kakamega. I found that Elizabeth had gone to rescue her brother who had a stroke and other serious illnesses. I repacked and have prepared to go to Samburu before leaving for the US on 10<sup>th</sup> January. Pray for a safe journey to Nakuru and Samburu and then to Nairobi to fly home.

Thanks for all your messages, prayers, and support.  
In gratitude as we start the New Year.

Marian