

Message 5 from Tanzania 1 to 12 December ,2023

This has been an interesting week. I first visited the home of the late Gladys Kangahi to see her sister, Mary who had helped Gladys and her husband in their last years. Each house I visited this week usually had electricity, but due to buying cheaper transformers from China instead of Europe, they had blown and not been replaced, so I could not charge my phone or computer. Mary was very happy to see us and plans to find any writings of Gladys that could be helpful to the Africa Quaker Archives.

I then went to Kaimosi, FTC, where I charged up all my electronic devices and bought a Swahili Bible for the work in Tanzania. While there, I was invited to a tea party of the students in Jim Fussell's class on New Testament. They were very appreciative of my short summary and explanation of the Friends Core Values (or Testimonies), which included the Biblical references.

The Swahili version I had was especially cherished. When they heard I was leaving for Tanzania the next morning, they prayed for me, as Tanzania has had some controversy in their last Yearly Meeting Sessions. When I attended the early morning worship at the College the next morning, they all sent me with blessings for the journey.

Then met Pamela Ngoya from Nakuru in Kisumu, and we travelled through Homa Bay to Migori and Sirare, where we crossed the border. Arrived in Tarime about 5PM as rain was starting, and were told to walk to the church to start the conference. We walked the kilometer and then sat waiting for others to arrive. By the time it was close to dark, we took a tuk tuk with Esinas to her home.



*Esinas Mwita*

*Dancing Kisangura Friends*

The next morning, we were warmly welcomed by those who knew us from previous visits, and by the dancing chorus from Kisangura who act out the meaning of the songs.

I discovered that the men during their YM sessions had chosen all the leaders of the women (that is normally done by the women themselves). The new clerk was from Kyela, near the Malawi border who had travelled 4 days by bus to reach Tarime. Pamela and I called the new and old leaders together urging them to support each other, and for the new ones to watch carefully how the old leaders were organizing and leading the conference. They realize they will have to all have cell phones in order to plan together, as physically meeting together outside of their annual conference across a country (three times the size of Kenya or of New England) is impossible, and only one Friend in Tanzania owns a vehicle (and that one was not working properly). We shared lemon tea with them that hot afternoon.

Each afternoon, they held a crusade, with the dancing choirs from several parts of Tanzania danced and attracted a crowd at the local market. Then the son of Mary Joseph would preach. I enjoyed watching the children who gathered.



Kids watching the crusade at the market



New leaders of USFW Tanzania

Pamela and I taught everyone the Faith and Practice of Friends and I taught on Leadership and Integrity, and together we taught the Core Values of Friends (called Testimonies in USA). We found they need teaching, not preaching, and even the men leaders who visited told us They needed more teaching. They were excited to hear that I had written up a short version of the core values which I had in Swahili, so I am sending them a copy so they can use it like the Leaders of Uganda have used it to teach others.

Then I was surprised when they honored me as one of women of substance. We lined up in white, and danced in procession into the meetinghouse, singing the whole way. They gave me a certificate, a purple Masai type blanket, and a blue dress, which they have chosen as their official uniform. The other two Tanzanian mamas were given solar lamps, as they are role models for the younger ones. Pamela also received a dress that matched.



Processing into the building



The certificate (all in Swahili)

We then travelled back to Kisumu, with delays due to one vehicle that broke down, and then there was very heavy rains as we neared Kisumu. Finally ran thru the rain to catch a bus to Mbale to see Margaret Musalia who lives close to the major highway.

Yesterday, I did errands in Kaimosi and Kakamega and reached Agneta's home, where I rested, washed clothes and repacked ready to go to Uganda tomorrow.

Thanks for all your prayers, and support.

Marian



*Pamela and I*



*Tanzanian women in their blue dresses*