

Message #3 Kenya and QWTeam Gathering Nov 6-10, 2024

On the 5th of November, I took the hour long piki ride on the back roads to Kakamega town. Suddenly a heavy rain poured down, and I was told that it had rained all day in Malava, and it was unsafe to take a piki back to Agneta's. I ended up spending a night visiting Roselyn Mutsami in Lubao. She is a widow whose mother-in-law had just died. Her three grandchildren were delighted to see me. I plucked the vegetables with the two youngest and dried out by the jiko (charcoal stove) as Roselyn cooked a chicken and greens for supper. The youngest girl followed me around like a lamb!



Plucking the vegetables. Roselyn with grandkids. Agneta with Mary Amalemba. A tuktuk behind me!

On the 7th, I travelled with Agneta up to visit Mary Amalemba, sister of the late Gladys Kangahi. She was delighted to have us visit and gave us two chickens and a big bagful of fresh greens to take to the QW Team Gathering.

Each November, I meet with a group of Kenyan women who actively travel in ministry to Uganda, Tanzania, Samburu, and Turkana. They have formed a group called QW Team (Quaker women travelling in East Africa Ministry). On the 8th, it was amazing how God helped the two Ugandan women arrive at Kitale bus park just five minutes before we arrived, and then after being collected by Evelyn Mukonambi, we arrived at the gathering right behind a car of women arriving from Kaimosi. Our gathering was held at the home of Edith Wekesa, the pastor of USFW Kenya. When I arrived, I was concerned that our coming would be too taxing on Edith, who had been quite ill, and who had just returned from the 4 day journey down to Tanzania YM sessions held in southern Tanzania. However, by the end of our visit, she was able to stand and was filled with joy of our prayers for her and her family. Her husband was an excellent example of a servant leader, who welcomed us and he and their children and grandchildren worked hard, cooking for us.

Each of us reported about our recent ministry. It led into a number of deep discussions about issues such as the immense distances between the Friends in Tanzania, (which is three times larger than Kenya), and the need to help Ugandan and Tanzanian women to be able to be speakers at their conferences instead of relying on women from Kenya or USA, especially on women's issues in their culture



Edith. Margaret. Sylvia, Evelyn, Agneta, Zelika, Rose, Nancy, Linet, Elizabeth Wekesa, Amudavi, Wopicho Mukonambi, Injairu, Galavu, Wamboka, Wafula, Tokiko, Mulimi

The next day, Getry Agizah (from FUM) joined us and shared her experiences about all four areas where we travel. All of us were grateful to have an active Quaker woman on the FUM staff. We ended the meeting with prayers for each other and for Edith and Samson. We decided to hold next year's gathering in Mbale, Uganda, as we had seen the value of seeing the homes of each other.



inside during one session



Clerk of QWTeam,

What a joy to have all of these hard-working women to travel with. Several others missed due to illness, graduating with a PhD on the same day, having to deal with funerals, or other church responsibilities the weekend we met.



Appreciating our host.



The many children and grandchildren who helped us all.

After the Gathering, I met with Agneta, Isaiah Bikokwa, and Dorcas Liru in Kitale concerning the collection of interviews and other materials for the Africa Quaker Archives. I find the active elders love to share their memories of Friends in East Africa, when it was only one meeting instead of the 24 or so at present!

This morning, we visited the early service in one of the North Yearly Meeting churches, and I headed back toward Kakamega. Next week, I will be travelling with Margaret Musalia in Tanzania. Prayers are always needed for the long journey southward to the Friends in the Serengeti region of Tanzania.

Thanks for all your support. In gratitude,
Marian