

Happy World Quaker Day. Agnetta and I travelled to Kaimosi to Friends Theological College on Tuesday the 30th. We found Melinda Wenner Bradley and her husband Matt had just arrived. After sharing with Robert Wafula a while, we went to the guest house and settled in after a welcome cup of hot tea. We leaders then went over final preparations for the workshop.



Participants in 2025 QREC Africa Workshop



Henry, Agnetta, and I organized the logistics

The next day, most of the Kenyan Sunday School teachers gathered in time for supper and an introductory session. We had 19 teachers from eight different yearly meetings attending.

Over the next three days, Melinda taught about the Sacred Stories (Biblical stories from the Old Testament), the parables of Jesus, and then the Quaker stories. Each teacher chose one of the stories and tried out the Godly play method of teaching- sitting on the floor (at the level of children) telling a story and then looking up to let the children share the importance of the story and their wonderings about the story. We found that each did a mixture of Godly play method plus the African method taking time to look up to make sure their students were engaged. We also did a lot of singing and praying out loud. The last day, Melinda and Nancy who only knew Swahili told the story of the life of Jesus with pictures portraying Jesus as an African. They really enjoyed connecting the different stages of Jesus's life with the other stories each had taught. Then they divided into three discussion groups. I have included a brief summary of each, as I thought you would be interested.

1. The first group shared the type of worship service found among Kenyan Quakers. They often have three services on a Sunday. from 7-8 am They have morning devotion, where they gather in silence, and then individually pray while sitting or standing or walking around, they reflect on what has been happening to them over the previous days, and also sit quietly and talk to God. The second service is from 8-9 am- Which is in English and includes Bible study which they do with a group of youth, of men, or of USFW (women). They also sing the traditional hymns. The main service from 10-1PM Includes starting with Praise and Worship (using a keyboard or a drum or a choir, often with modern choruses). This is followed by announcements and any reports or business to share, plus testimonies and prayer for people needing prayer (e.g. those who are sick).

Then there is a sermon, usually by a pastor or other member. This service is usually trilingual (mother tongue/Swahili/English).



Two tell the story of the deep well



Nancy and Melinda tell the life of Jesus as an African

Sometimes there is open air preaching outside (crusades), sometimes there are follow-up visits with members who were absent. There is an offering collected plus tithes, but often at a low level. They are proud to be Quakers who sing hymns in a calmer, more reverently pace than other Christian churches. They are also proud of the many (hundreds) of Quaker schools, and the two Quaker hospitals, and FTC which trains pastors, chaplains for the schools and hospitals, as well as courses for clerks, and other leaders.

2. The second group discussed what they felt children needed to be taught about Quakers.

They share the Biblical, Christian basis, and the core values (called testimonies in other parts of the world). They share the importance of prayer, and of listening to God in silence. They also felt that the structures of local, regional, and yearly meetings should be taught as well as

the "spices" (simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship or service).

They also want to be able to share the history of African Friends (not just the early white missionaries). They suggested that AVP (alternatives to violence) also be taught.

3. The third group discussed the role of Africans in their history as Quakers. They summarized that the early missionaries landed in Mombasa, took the railroad up to Lake Victoria and then walked through Maragoli to Kaimosi, to the hill of vision in 1902. The first convert was Daudi Lungaho, who also went back to his home village in Lirhandu to spread the word in 1906. There Yohana Luwachi was the first convert and who then went to Malava, where Ngaira was the first convert. Then Ngaira went to Lugulu and Ngoya was the first Friend. Meanwhile Amugune went to Vihiga (Kidundu) and Joseph Litu was an early convert who helped translate the Bible and hymn book into Luragoli language. Charles Wakhisi from Lugulu was the first African to go preach in Nairobi, (as many left Western Province to get work in the capitol city) in 1959. In 1972, Herman Otioko went with the white missionaries to Turkana (northern desert), and later Isaiah Bikokwa from Kitale spread the word around Turkana and began all the Friends work in Samburu. More recently Oscar Mbale was the first African to begin work in Belize. They are eager to learn more of their history and several have been conducting oral

interviews gathering their history (as most African history is passed to the next generation via oral, not written stories).

We closed with non-verbal prayer using actions with our arms, (help, thanks, love of others, and wow). Melinda handed out certificates, and all left with joy. They have formed a Whats App group to continue to share with each other.

Meanwhile, Matt Bradley, a headmaster of a Quaker School in Philadelphia area, was escorted around to visit several schools within walking distance of FTC, and then to three Friends schools in rural Malava. The participants had fund dancing in during the last session to honor Matt with a hat, and they wrapped beautiful blue Kenyan cloth around Melinda as a thank you note.

After the workshop, Melinda, Matt, and I travelled to Agneta's farm outside Malava to rest.

Melinda teaching - Always in a circle in Godly play format.

Matt and Melinda after being thanked. worl



On Sunday, (World Quaker Day) we joined Shirugu Friends -both their Sunday School which is taught by two who attended the workshop, and to the English service for adults. After a quick lunch, Agneta's son Abner, drove Melinda and Matt to Kisumu airport to begin their journey back to USA. Meanwhile, Agneta and I relaxed and rested.

Monday, we washed our clothes by hand (interrupted briefly by a rain shower), and I got a chance to write up this report on Tuesday. My computer keyboard and touchpad did not work, so I had to buy an external keyboard and mouse to write this report on Tuesday. Then it wouldn't charge, so I got delayed sending it. I had to travel back to Nairobi to get the computer fixed.

On Thursday, I visited Absalom Mukangai for whom I had helped pay school fees back in the 1970's. His family is now in Mautuma, near Lumakanda. Then on Friday we went to visit Edith and Samson Wekesa. Edith is the pastor of all of USFW Kenya, but is ill and unable to walk. They were glad to have us visit and encourage them.

On Saturday, we went to the USFW Kenya Prayer Day held in Soy (between Kitale and Eldoret). I could not count how many thousand women had gathered. There were tents all around a large football field. They spent the day in prayer, plus some dancing with joy.

Then got a ride direct to Nakuru where Pamela Ngoya had arranged for me to be the main speaker at a Nakuru USFW worship service and fundraiser for their meetinghouse project in Gilgil. They had made a Nairobi style poster to announce the event, (which I find too fancy for Quaker testimony of simplicity). I then travelled on to Nairobi and finally today got the battery, keyboard, and charger repaired/replaced at Mac and More Repair shop in Westlands, Nairobi. What a relief to be able to get this report done and sent to you all before I return via bus to Kakamega tomorrow morning.



Facebook photo of thousands of Quaker women



Nakuru poster showing Pastor Pamela, Anne Tanya and I.

What a joy to deal with positive events, rather than the confusion and violence back in the United States right now!

In gratitude to you all for prayers of safe travels,
Marian