

Greetings from Kenya in the name of our Lord!

25-Dec

Our family was able to take a one-week trip together to Maasailand just before Christmas. With the girls' school schedules and most of the work needing to be done outside of Nairobi (in Maasailand), it is often difficult for us to take these trips together; so I was grateful Dori and the girls could accompany me on this trip. We left immediately after school closed on Friday, 16-Dec and spent the week at Olkoroi, working on a project that was started there last month. As I often feel, I did not get near done what I had hoped to, but we were able to have some quality time to build relationships with the people in this church and community. We were invited for chai (Kenya tea with milk & sugar) in 3 different villages plus to a celebration of the circumcision of the pastor's son. Dori and the girls reminded me that our work here is not only about what I "get done"; but that the Lord has brought us here to build relationships with people.

* Please pray that I (Lynn) will continue to learn that relationships are often more important than what "gets done" on the project and construction checklist.

"Kiangazi mengi sana kila mahali nchi ya wamassai" - Much drought everywhere in Maasailand. It is even dry in the Mara and areas around the Mara; as it was in Olkoroi. These are areas that typically do not have drought problems; however at Okoroi they are cutting the upper, tender branches and leaves of Olive trees to feed cows, as there is not enough grass. At one village, we received chai "bila maziwa" (without milk); typically a very non Kenyan way to drink chai perhaps due to lack of milk from the cows and goats because of drought. A pastor from Kajiado District, typically a much dryer area anyway, called today asking us to pray and to ask you, our friends and supporters to please pray for rain. Cows are dying there and they feel that very soon, people in that area will also be dying unless the Lord brings rain.

"Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who makes the storm clouds. He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone. The idols speak deceit, diviners see visions that lie; they tell dreams that are false, they give comfort in vain. Therefore the people wander like sheep oppressed for lack of a shepherd." Zachariah 10:1-2

* Please pray for broad general rains in all areas of Maasailand now. The short rains, which have usually started by now, have not yet begun and usually conclude by the end of January. Ask the Lord to provide an abundance of rain in the next few weeks by the end of January; even enough to more than make up for that which has not yet come. Pray that Maasai churches and believers remain strong and faithful and God will use this situation to draw those outside the Body of Christ to Jesus, the source of Living Water; that the people would look to Him for life and relief and not to the laibon (witch doctors).

"So everyone who acknowledges me (Jesus) before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven.; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven." Matthew 10:32-33

Again, God has allowed us to see firsthand examples of how seeds planted and watered by CMF missionaries and the Holy Spirit over many years in Maasailand have borne fruit and furthered the Kingdom of God. Pastor Cosmos Yenke announced in church at Olkoroi last Sunday (18-Dec), "I am having my son circumcised this week, but not in the traditional way. It will be done at the clinic and as a dedication to the Lord"

* Thank the Lord for Cosmos's boldness on this issue and pray that many more men will be encouraged to change traditional practices that run contrary to God's Word. We actually discovered that there are 2 issues here: the spiritual implications of the traditional way of circumcision and also health issues and fear of HIV/AIDS infection associated with the lack of sanitation. Sometimes, traditions become so strongly rooted in a culture that people are not aware of healthier ways of doing things. The clinician told us that there were comments among

some of the men in the community such as, "We did not know that this (circumcision) could be done at the clinic; it's much healthier and sanitary than the traditional way." Pray that one man's stand for the Kingdom will result in much growth for the Lord's church in Maasai.

* Cosmos and 4 other men; James Kipes, Enoch Parnwala, Josphat Napikwe, and Joseph Malit begin classes at the Nairobi Great Commission School on 9-Jan, studying towards a 2-year associates degree. Pray for divine wisdom and guidance as they study; God's provision and protection as they are in Nairobi; and that they and their families remain strongly bonded to one another as they are separated for extended periods of time.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:19-21

We returned home from Olkoro on 23-Dec to discover that we had been robbed Tuesday night or early Wednesday morning (20-21 Dec). Joseph, our outside worker and gardener who had been living on the place and was responsible to watch it when we were away, was gone and not answering his phone. This situation and most of the evidence discovered by our security company and the police, points to him as the prime suspect. He has worked for CMF before for several years, being reliable and honest; but it appears he has reverted to some former patterns. Dori and the girls were grateful that they were out with me when this happened, even though it may not have happened had they been here. The theft was nearly all cash with a small bit of property stolen. Kenya is still mostly a cash society, so it is necessary to keep some around for living and to fund the various work projects I'm involved in. We had to really push the police to dust for prints and now are waiting for the results of the report.

Note: If you have sent us a Christmas card or any mail since the first of the month (postmarked anywhere from Dec 1-14), we may or may not have seen it. During the robbery, our mail received from the week we were out (sitting on the table) was taken, gone through, and then burned in the yard.

* Please pray that we give this situation to the Lord and continue to praise His name irregardless of our circumstances. Pray for wisdom as we deal with the police and that the investigation will continue with integrity (the police force in Kenya is still rated as one of the most corrupt government agencies). Pray for Joseph's family; we know that he has a wife and 4 children in Western Kenya. This situation actually seems a bit small to us in light of the circumstances of those dealing with drought.

Thanking God For:

* Approval in November of the national church registration of CMF-planted churches in Kenya-Maasai & Turkana. The new national church is officially "Community Christian Church." Thank God for the efforts of CMF teammates and the national leaders and for breaking through the red tape to finally bring this to pass. Pray for the young national church and leadership to make wise decisions as this organization matures. Pray that Maasai and Turkana church leaders are able to work together in a spirit of love, cooperation, and grace.

* Crystal has been accepted at Illinois State University!! She improved her ACT score significantly this fall over last spring and still has her heart set on the University of Illinois. Pray for God's grace upon her application, that He would grant the desires of her heart, and that she will accept and follow His perfect will and path for her in this area.

We continue to be grateful for those who have joined us in this ministry by praying for us, encouraging us and meeting our financial needs.

May the peace of our risen Lord Jesus Christ be with you and your families as you celebrate His birth and look forward to the new year.

Grateful to serve the Lord in Kenya with you.

Lynn for the Caziers

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