

Prayer Letter from the Underhills

2023/8, 24th. November

Dear Brethren,

Visit to Kenya October 27th. to 6th. November 2023

The Lord was very gracious to me, upholding me throughout, enabling me to do all that was planned. I had three dear brothers with me all the time – brother Abdi from Ethiopia, Barnabas Olare my host, and Ibrahim Katana who made sure he was always present! What a great encouragement to me in the Lord they were by His grace! I believe I was also an encouragement to them, as I had asked you to pray.

(1) Mishomoroni (Mombasa). The first full day was Saturday, with what was dubbed a 'Salvation Conference' in this part of Mombasa. About 50 attended, many of them from outside the area to give support to our brother Ibrahim Katana. Brother Barnabas first preached on the need for salvation from Ephesians 2:1-3. I then preached on Ephesians 2:8-9, and then on 2:10, to show that while salvation is not by works, it is unto good works. The work is in its infancy because when brother Katana received the Biblical teaching at the WTC and sought to bring it to his church it emptied! The influence of the so-called prosperity gospel is so huge.



(2) TBC Boyani. We visited this church on Sunday, which is about 25 miles inland from Mombasa. It is led by George Mwanjisi along with three other Elders. George was trained at the TPC in the late 1990s and the Lord has used him to build up a church of about 90 members. A great difficulty is that there is basically no work available in the area so men in particular go to town for work during the week and it can be too expensive for them to return weekends. Men were conspicuously few this Sunday. They continue to meet in what should be the living room of George's house (see picture). They have been able to purchase a nearby plot for the church but there are difficulties in getting the transfer to church ownership, probably due to corruption. So no building is possible yet. Although this general area was one of the first to be evangelized in Kenya from the 1840s, traditional religion and Islam remain strong. George has a very supportive wife (Irene) and I had the privilege of marrying them in 1995. One son is an Elder in the church with his father, and another a Deacon.



(3) Wisdom Training Centre (WTC)



You can read of the beginning of this training programme in Mumias through Elly Achok at <https://wisdommediaoutreach.com/wisdom-training-centre-wtc-gods-own-story/>. Both Elly and his older brother Barnabas were trained at the Nairobi TPC 2010-2014. Elly's book at <https://wisdommediaoutreach.com/product/the-charismatic-manifesto-book-1-a-roadmap-to-chaos> will give you a taste of their spiritual journey. It was my privilege to teach this class of about 35 students for 4 days on the Doctrine of Scripture, with an introduction on Systematic Theology and the importance of a clear doctrinal system. They gradually warmed up and began to ask many questions, the sort of interactive classes that I so much appreciate. With their charismatic background you can guess that so many of their questions had to do with things such as prophecy and tongues.

(4) Malindi



About 80 miles north of Mombasa, Vasco da Gama called in at Malindi in 1498/9 and set up a pillar of commemoration! But it was only recently that brother Barnabas was called here to begin a chapter of the WTC. Out of this has grown the 2 day Conference, where I preached on the 5 Solas. There were not so many people as expected, perhaps because on the Friday it rained throughout. As with the WTC in Mombasa, most people

attending have a Pentecostal/Charismatic background. So you can imagine what the questions are about! What was encouraging is that most began with, 'Since we know that salvation is by grace...!' The spiritual need is great. Near here, Sakahola, was the sect that recently got hundreds to starve themselves to death. There is also a 'church' where thousands throng because they are promised that the preacher will 'restore their lucky stars'.

(5) GMA Maweni



This is the church in the north of Mombasa where brother Barnabas Olare has been the pastor for many years (you can view in Google Earth Pro by typing Gospel Missions Agency Church, Mombasa). Through the influence of his brother Elly and then training at the TPC 2012-4 he rejected the prosperity teaching which he had been promoting for more than 15 years and embraced the gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ. Reforming the church has been a struggle, with many leaving having rejected the new Biblical teaching, and requiring a patient teaching of Christian basics rather demanding immediate and total change. There are now 27 members with many more attending. One very interesting lady was recently baptized though in her early 70s. She has been through Catholicism and Pentecostalism and the Lord graciously revealed Himself to her through the simple gospel. Her husband is from a Muslim background, one of the local people of the Coast, the Waswahili. He has now followed his wife to where the truth is to be found. On this last Sunday, first brother Barnabas took us through 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20. It was a message for me to consider those who are my "joy and crown" who I was now meeting again. I preached on the gospel, and contending for it, from Galatians 2:11-16. Then after a lunch together we celebrated the Lord's Supper together (left picture above).

There are three 7-12 minute videos of brothers Katana, Mwanjisi and Olare speaking about their work. They are available on the website of Trinity Grace Church, Ramsbottom, at <https://www.youtube.com/@trinitygracechurchramsbot2901/videos>



The time for parting had come at Mombasa airport as on Monday Abdi and I made our way to Ethiopia.

Please continue to pray that the work of reformation against the prevailing false teaching will continue to advance.

Visit to Ethiopia November 6th. to 8th. 2023

The last three days I was able to spend with brother Abdi and his family in Addis Ababa. Being at a high altitude it was cold, as low as 14°C. On the first night I was awoken by chanting after midnight that went on until morning. It was not the mosque, but the Orthodox. Please continue to pray for his two weekly radio broadcasts for his SOmal1 people and the translation of good reformed literature. He also seeks to train Muslim background church leaders in Ethiopia and beyond with brother ZE. Sometimes he calls his contacts to be where he is, at other times he seeks to visit them to teach and encourage them in places where there is little open Christianity.

In Christ's service,

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Other websites

TBC Nairobi – <https://www.trinity.or.ke>

TPC – <https://www.tpc.or.ke>

TRAIN(Kenya) – www.trainkenya.com