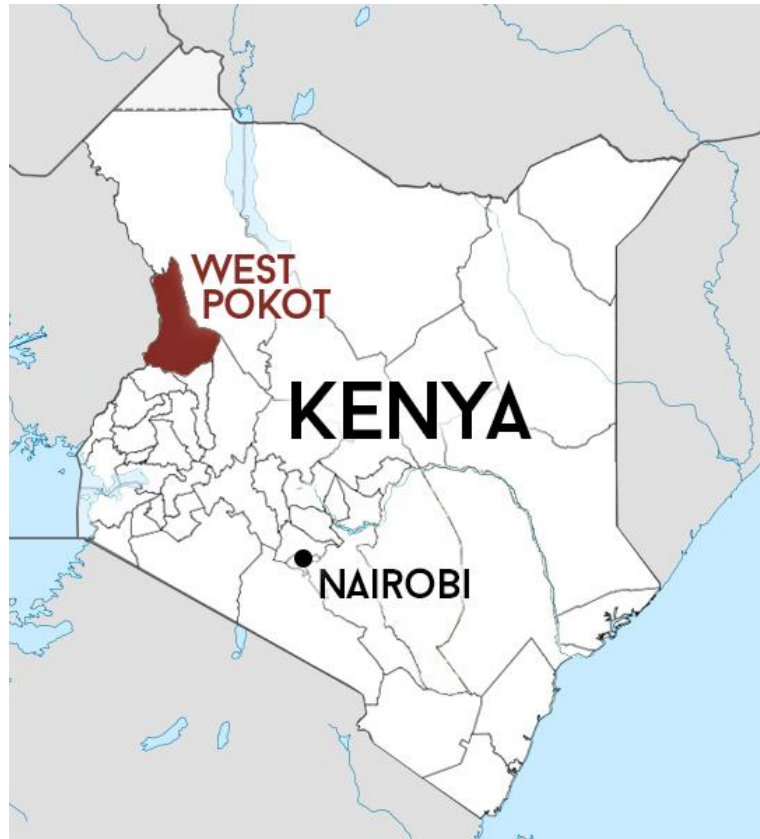


Diary Of A Pokot Traveller January 2024

Introduction

West Pokot is located in the north western part of Kenya, on the Ugandan border. We were visiting the northern part of the region. You can see the location on the map below.



The region is extremely remote and very mountainous. Since my first visit there in 2006, electricity has reached some parts of the area, but most homes cannot afford to be connected up. There is no running water, no sewage system and little development in most of the settlements.

Through the ministry of Trinity Baptist Church in Nairobi, fourteen churches have been established in the area. For the past 20 years, there have been three men trained in Nairobi and set aside to preach and teach in the churches, focusing on three main centres. You will meet them and visit these centres, along with many of the churches, as you travel with me in the coming pages.

In addition to planting churches, the leaders have been deeply concerned for the well-being of their people, especially in relation to schooling and literacy. Much has been done over these two decades in sponsoring schools and encouraging education. Again, in the diary, you will be able to travel with me and visit many of these schools.

Whether in the churches or in the schools, the greatest concern must always be the ministry of the word of God and the preaching of the gospel. The primary reason for our visit was to see how the work is progressing, encourage the leaders to persevere in faithful ministry and assess how best we might be able to help them in promoting the glory of Christ through the work of the gospel.

I travelled with Keith Underhill, who spent more than four decades ministering in Kenya and is now in his 78th year. Our companion was Elly Achok, who ministers in Mumias (south of Pokot). We had many blessed hours of discussion and fellowship as we travelled the many hours from place to place.

I trust that, as you read this diary, you will be encouraged, challenged and stimulated to pray with conviction for the honour of Christ amongst these desperately needy people. Please email otas@stormguard.co.uk if you wish to know more, and visit the Kenya page of our website, www.trinitygracechurch.net

Tuesday 16th

Keith Underhill and I travelled for 27 hours from Monday afternoon, but all went well and there were no big problems or delays. We called in to see Tonny Karwa in Kisumu. He is the pastor of Grace Baptist Church in this city of Western Kenya on Lake Victoria. He was converted in the hospital ten years ago, when Keith was in the next bed being treated for prostate cancer. The bus in which he was travelling had been bombed by Boko Haram in Nairobi, with significant injuries that led to his hospitalisation. God providentially overruled such an evil act for Tonny's good through Keith's testimony. They are doing well and were delighted to see us with their two children (Junior and Levin).



We then travelled up to Mumias and stayed with Elly Achok, with whom we are travelling up to Pokot. Elly is the minister at Gospel Missions Agency and supervises the Wisdom Training Centre where men are trained for the ministry. He is a devoted brother who has written some books, especially on the dangers of the prosperity gospel and charismatic chaos! He suffered a setback recently when his out-building burned down with machines and supplies in it (see in pic). As with most men serving across Kenya, Elly has to generate much of his own income to support himself. He is clearly a gifted and hard-working entrepreneur and you can see some of his maize crop in the pic.



We head up to Kitale to see Nickson Teka over lunch, tomorrow before making the final leg up to Pokot. Probably about six hours of driving today all-in. It's worth noting that



all three of these men (Tonny, Elly and Nickson) trained at the college in Nairobi and I had the privilege of being Mwalimu (teacher) to two of them.



You can see how green it is in the pics. The rains have been very good this season for the first time in many years. They are very thankful.



Wednesday 17th

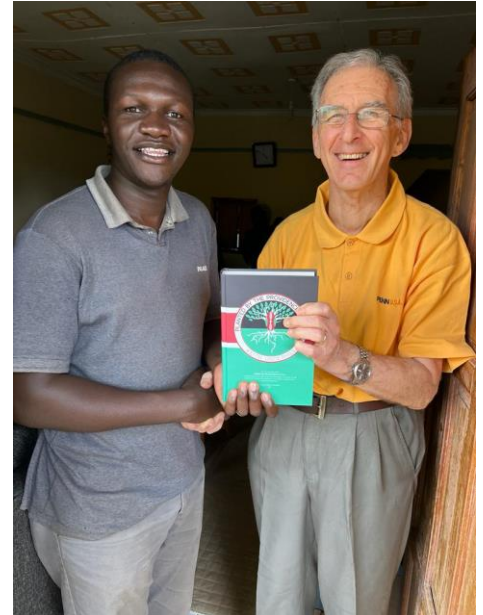
We travelled another six hours from Mumias, almost due north to Pokot. We stopped at Kitale along the way. This is one of the larger towns in Kenya, where there is need for a Reformed Baptist church to be planted. One of the men trained at the Trinity Pastors College in Nairobi (Nickson Teka) has been sent there to plant a church. He has



been labouring for three years and it has been hard work, with very little fruit. They have about 8 adults and 25 children each Lord's Day, but not sufficient committed mature believers yet to constitute. Many "come and go" in the town in relation to work, so the population tends to be unstable.

Teka, as we call him, (it is common here to use the second name in a familiar and friendly way), is a young man

(perhaps late twenties), married with a small child. He needs much prayer, encouragement and support as he strives to see a biblical church established in the town. Another former TPC student (James Mwirigi) is staying with Teka at present, seeking to encourage him. We spoke together of our time in the TPC and were thankful for the Lord's many blessings in our fellowship together. In the pic you can see the two men, Teka's wife and baby, along with two of the faithful attendees of the fellowship.



One of the things I am seeking to do on this trip is to make available Keith's book as far and wide as possible. At present, unfortunately, it is not being printed in Kenya, so I have bought a number of copies for the men here. You can see the mutual joy of both author and student in the picture.

We arrived in Kamketo around 5:15pm, and enjoyed tea with the leader here, Thomas Lokerisa. It was immediately noticeable how prominent thanksgiving is amongst the believers here. No quaffing of any chai until a significant prayer of thanksgiving has been offered up! Kenyan chai is made from hot water and hot milk (about 50-



50), infused with black tea and often some herbal flavouring. Plenty of sugar is also added, and they find it most amusing that I prefer to drink without any sugar at all.

Thomas was trained at the TPC in the early 2000s and has been ministering here for over two decades. After warm conversation as dusk settled, we ate goat's meat with rice, maize meal and fried cabbage. Then Keith gave an exhortation from John 17 about the Lord's keeping grace before we went to bed! In the pic you can see the goats clamouring to get in at the door. They are almost part of the family amongst these pastoralists. Elly was most impressed with the health of the goat population – perhaps even a little jealous that these folk had so many fine animals!



Thursday 18th

Breakfast was chapati (flour and water with salt and sugar) and chai. Kenyan chapati is different to Indian in that it is cooked

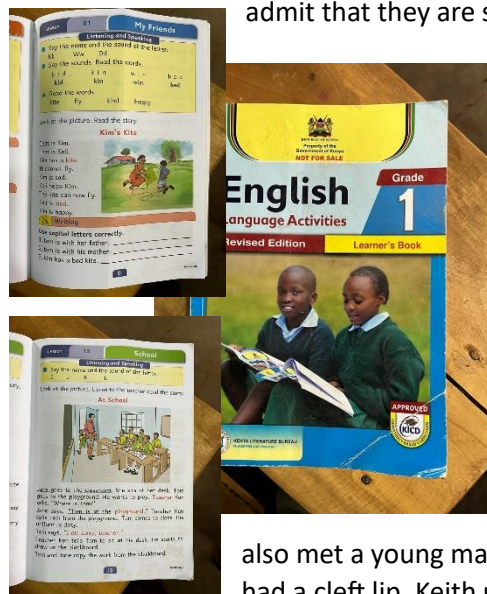
with plenty of oil and often layered into a soft stack of yumminess! For the chai they use camel's milk here, which is very flavoursome without being too strong. Thomas had a two-week old camel, which you can see in the pic. The goats reminded me of my dog, Winston – they know how to relax!



We spent the morning at Kasepa primary school. It is one of the newer schools and presently has children on register from nursery age to 13 years. Many children were not present, some because the government provision of free school food had not yet arrived for the term, some entering Y7 were still trying to obtain books and uniform etc., while others were still with their parents across the border in Uganda where there is better pasture for their cattle. It was sad to see so many of the children absent. Also half of the teachers were absent, including the head teacher, away registering in Kapenguria (3 to 4 hours travel). It's difficult to see how a school can function effectively with such a high level of absence from children and staff.

However, with the 53 children who were present we had a blessed time, as Elly spoke to them about their need of a saviour to forgive their sins. It is amazing how resistant even small children are to admit that they are sinners! They have a new

building, sponsored by World Vision, which is quite grand. The charity of which I am one of the trustees, TRAIN(Kenya) sponsors two teachers here since the govt. only funds half the required teachers. The acronym T.R.A.I.N. stands for Truth Reaching Africa In Need, and the extent of that need is right before our eyes here in Pokot. Keith



also met a young man, probably in his 20s, who had a cleft lip. Keith remembered that he had

taken him in his car to the hospital in Nairobi when he was a small boy. He cried at the time since he had never travelled in a car or been outside Pokot in his life. Now he seems really well, has finished his education and appears to be thriving. It was a moving moment to see the fruit of Keith's kindness all those years previously. Who can tell what blessings flow from small kindnesses over the years.



After lunch we began a marathon meeting with the three long-standing leaders here that lasted (on and off for tea & supper) until around 9:30pm. You can see them in the pic, from left to right: Joshua Sitet (Kasei), Thomas Lokerisa (Kamketo) and Andrew Chemolok (Chepkinagh). Many matters were discussed at length including support for teachers in schools, the best way to promote the gospel in the schools, the need for a missionary to help with the work, the establishment of a Bible school in the area, moving the churches towards self-sufficiency and encouraging them to progress with govt. registration as independent churches. While it was encouraging to see the massive gospel opportunities that are open here, the sheer magnitude of the task seems overwhelming. These three men have been labouring for over two decades, and while there has been progress in many areas, the challenge of cultural conformity in the churches, especially in relation to marriage, family and relationships between men and women, remains very great. As they seek to prioritise the work of the gospel, they face so many setbacks, not least the endless demands on their time to help with so many things that are pressing in a practical way, and distract them from their ministry. I have found myself saying to them many times: "Brothers, keep the main thing the main thing! Keep on ministering the word of God, and don't let anything distract you from it." The advice is easily given, and really vital, yet hard to enact. How we need to pray for them!



After the marathon meeting, about 20 members of the church gathered for an evening exhortation that I gave from Revelation 1, encouraging them to look up to our great God in heaven for encouragement, hope and strength.

Friday 19th



We began the day with a short walk from Thomas Lokerisa's house to the primary school in Kamketo. They have recently changed the system of schooling here so that the primary / junior schools take children from age 5 to age 15, incorporating what we would know as nursery (5-6yrs, called ECD or Early Childhood Development), primary (7-12yrs) and junior (13-15yrs); while there are now only three years in the secondary school (16-18yrs). This means that the primaries are getting bigger and the secondaries smaller. At Kamketo primary we were greeted by a very energetic deputy head called Fred Masai. He was very formal in a Kenyan way, but also extremely welcoming and well-informed. There are two TRAIN(Kenya) sponsored teachers here, and they were both present (both Christians and members of the church). One of

them takes the whole-school PPI lesson (Programme for Pastoral Instruction) on Friday mornings, when the gospel can be preached. Again, only 125 of the 394 children enrolled were present - see previous report on Kasepa for the reasons. He also explained that there is no water on site, and the children have to walk to the town centre (a few hundred



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yards) every day for water. He said that this exposes the older girls to what he called “predators” — not animals, but sexual predators. In this culture, many girls are married young (14 or even 13 years) and there is a big problem with sexual abuse. After meeting all the teachers and praying with them, we went over to the main hall where all the children were gathered. You could tell that Fred knew the children well — they were bright, happy and obedient. They listened really well to Elly’s engaging message, delivered in Swahili. It was an encouraging time! Fred proudly told us that the 13yr olds had an average mark of 293 last year, where the pass mark is 250. What a great gospel opportunity! To assist with the PPI lessons, we left with the leaders an excellent curriculum produced by the Rafiki Foundation (a Reformed Christian educational resource provider) that will take the children through the Gospel of Matthew in a year, bringing out the message of salvation in Christ in every lesson. I was so impressed with it that I have asked for copies that we might use here in the UK.

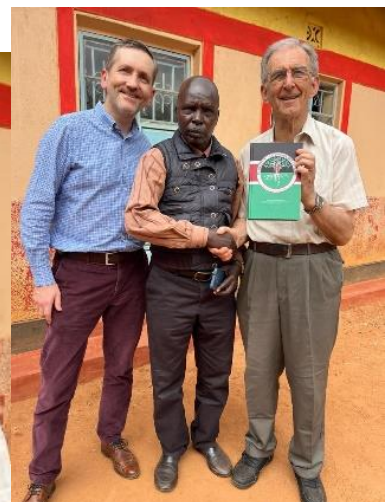
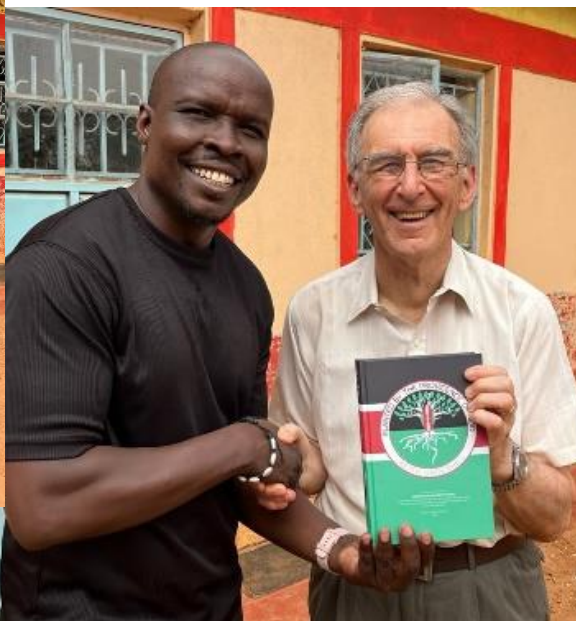
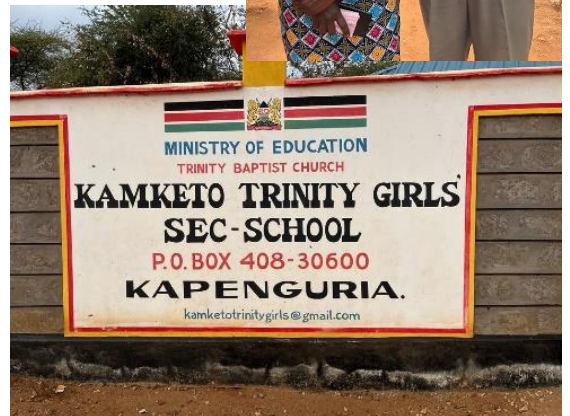
We then walked across to the girls’ secondary school and were welcomed by the principal, Evelyne Maket. There were 47 out of 68 enrolled children present. One need she mentioned was of a matron to care for the girls’ health and well-being and their safety. Again she spoke of the challenge to the girls, how many are married early before finishing school, and others have early pregnancies. Some girls even return to school after having babies. The walk to get water is a big concern for them. She was a delight! From an RC



background, but very supportive of the church. All secondaries are full boarding for various reasons and the facilities here are excellent. Keith spoke to them about the priority of their souls. As Evelyne said, “All we need is to get more girls into school.”



We then went back to Thomas’ house and I presented more books to the men, much to the delight of all concerned!





In the afternoon we drove up the steep hill to Kasei, an ascent of 1000 feet to the 5000-foot ridge. The views on the way were stunning. The mountainous terrain is full of drama and the vegetation is green and



rich – it explains why the goats look so healthy! We had lunch at the primary school here, then Elly spoke to the children again. Afterwards, we travelled the short distance to the church building. Joshua Sitet is the minister here. Two services were held with between 30 and 50 attending. I preached from Luke 7



on the devotion of the sinful woman to Jesus and Elly (after the meal) on striving to enter through the narrow gate! We spoke with the two young men

here who are training for the ministry at the Trinity Pastors College in Nairobi, Geoffrey Muketi and William Siwanyang. They face many challenges and need encouragement. The need for trained and godly and committed men serving in the ministry here is critical!



One of the biggest cultural challenges is polygamy, where even young men are strongly encouraged by their parents to take several wives. Although the teaching in the

churches has been clear for 20 years, it is still a massive problem, with fathers who are members of the churches failing to give a strong lead. Being converted themselves after they had already taken more than one wife, the requirement of the churches is that they promise not to take further wives and never to seek office in the church. However, more is needed from them in terms of teaching and training the younger men to pursue a biblical lifestyle with one wife for life.



More than this, they also need to take their responsibilities as men seriously, loving their wives and manifesting genuine concern for the spiritual, educational and practical needs of their children. Despite the clear teaching given and example set by the three leaders, there has been little progress in this area. Over the past 20 years, we know of only one marriage taking place in the churches, and even in this case the man appears to have taken a second wife. It is not difficult to see why the ministers can be discouraged. Please pray for the impact of the gospel and the transforming power of the Spirit in the lives of the believers here.

Saturday 20th

Breakfast was very tasty! We had our first serving of Pokot honey, which is very rich, along with pancakes. Honey has been scarce because of the drought and the plants yet to flower. They hang the cylindrical hives in the trees and harvest the honey comb-and-all. What they give to us is sifted and clear, but they often chew on the combs and get all the honey they can out of them. Considering that they don't eat any cake or chocolate or desert of any kind, this is how they enjoy their sweetness, and it's really good for you.





The morning was spent at Kasei boys secondary school. Only 86 boys registered and 22 present! The school began under the sponsorship of the church in 2012 and reached peak numbers of 308 enrolled in 2019. Government policy on COVID restrictions have caused awful damage and now only a fraction of the children have returned. Of an expected intake of 58 new boys this term, only 1 was present! The principal, Chrispin Omondi, is expecting a few more of the 58 to come over the next couple of weeks, but nowhere near the full number. The boys were gathered and were very attentive as I spoke to them about the parable of the lost sheep, encouraging them to be

right with God on the day of judgment rather than trusting in their own righteousness. There is much freedom in the schools to preach very directly. It was evident that the principal was discouraged, but seeking to press on. Over lunch, Keith asked him about his own spiritual life. He said he was Roman Catholic, but just wanted to do what the Bible said. Needless to say, Keith left off eating his chicken and shared the gospel with him. Pray for his conversion.

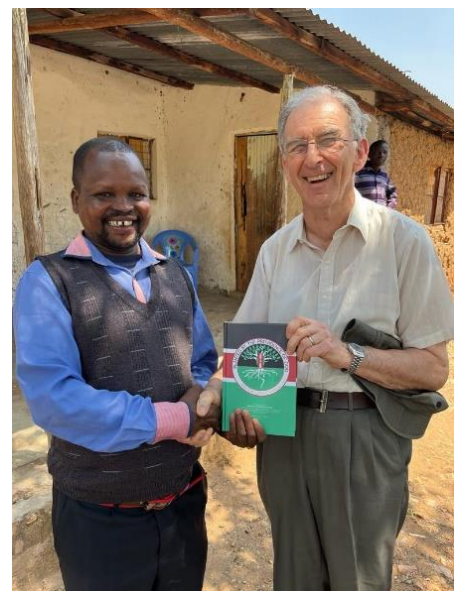


We had final greetings with the ladies and the older men (called wazee) at the church building. We sat under the tree, in the shade from the sun and shared words of encouragement and farewell. They are so keen to send us all Christian greetings and for the church back home to know how much they appreciate our fellowship and support.

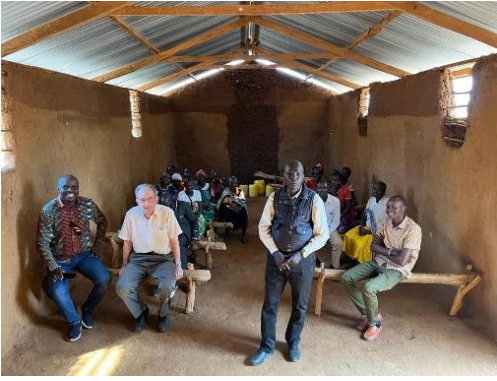
Their lives are hard in this tough environment, and the cultural pressures are very great, especially in relation to family life and relationships between men and women. Young men are actively encouraged to seek multiple wives in order to build large and strong families, grow their wealth and establish themselves in the community. Even after more than 20 years of work in the churches, this is still a challenge.

While it was a lovely thing to give and receive greetings, it was sad to think of the ongoing challenges they face. One lady present had been married to a Christian man for 30 years, but recently he has added a second (much younger) wife. This is happening in the church and it is so sad. Her life is now very hard and there is nothing she can do.

When we said farewell to the pastor, Joshua Sitet, it was evident that he was burdened and troubled. He feels the weight of responsibility and the challenge of pressing on in the face of so many discouragements. He was encouraged to receive a copy of Keith's book, and especially to see a photo of himself 20 years younger in the section on Pokot. Pray for the impact of the gospel to be felt and seen in the transformation of many lives and the overcoming of ungodly cultural practices for the honour of Christ. Pray for the leaders to be strengthened and encouraged to press on. Pray for the young men to train well and to be bold and to love the people for Christ's sake, and that their ministry will be effective.



The journey to Chepkinagh was long and difficult. The road was, at times, almost impassable! Without the off-road 4x4, we had to get out and push a few times. I have tried to give an idea of the terrain in the pics, but it does not do it well. Elly was looking very concerned for his car at times, especially when the central part of his rear bumper was torn in a gully!



We called in at Nakorete, which is 18km from Chepkinagh. There is a small church plant here. Around 30 ladies and 5 men gather each Lord's day in a small building. David Chemolok, son of the leader in Chepkinagh, makes the journey by motorbike each Lord's day to minister God's word. He is preaching through Luke's Gospel. I preached to them a short message on the wonder of a transcendent God revealing himself to us in the person of his Son. They listened well, then an older lady stood up and appealed for help. She said that, because they were mostly women, they had few

resources and needed help. Would we pray that they might be able to have a solid floor and chairs for their small building? See the pic and you will see the need. My heart went out to these dear ladies. The lack of faithful men in the churches is a significant cause of the ongoing difficulties, as this massively restricts the resources available to the churches. Please pray that God would work in the lives of many of the men, beginning with those who are already members of the churches, to serve their families faithfully and have their lives directed, not by the ungodly culture, but by the word of God.



Sunday 21st



It was a slow start. We waited as folk from Kapyomot walked down the steep hill to join the services. This gave time for a relaxed breakfast. You can see in the pic the spread of pancakes, bananas, Pokot honey and of course the ubiquitous chai! You can also see in the background Andrew's wife Eunice who works endlessly to cook, clean and do all things necessary. Life is hard here, so everything takes so much time. No running water or electricity in the home (although electric supply is available, but too costly for most folk). The water is 1km away and takes 40 minutes for the women to collect. They still do most of the practical duties! So much reformation still required.



We walked a couple of hundred yards to the church building for the first service starting at around 11:45am. I was asked to preach evangelistically and spoke from Hebrews 13:20 on the only way to make peace with God. We are at war by nature, but the God of peace has done all things necessary for us to have peace with him. Then we had a second message from Keith on the love of God towards us as seen in the sending of his Son, 1 John 4:10. We are then called to love one another in like manner. There were about 30 men, perhaps 60 or 70 women, and numberless children! It was noticeable how many more teenage girls were present than boys. After these messages, there was the traditional greeting outside, as everyone lines up in a circle and greets personally with a handshake and the Pokot greeting, "karram neu man". The response is





“serre neu who”. My attempts to pronounce these phrases with the required rolling of the “Rs” and the dramatic emphasis were met with universal enthusiasm. Whoever we are, we appreciate visitors making the effort to enter into our language and cultural particularities. We chatted with two wazee, older men. Very few of them have professed faith and left the traditional life. They spoke of their old lives, drinking, being harsh towards their (multiple) wives



and living in a state of conflict. In Christ they now have peace, and it has transformed their lives. For a while, their old friends tried to persuade them back to the traditional life, but after much resistance, they eventually gave up. We encouraged them that the church was now their community, these are their people, and they must press on! It was such a blessing. After a very late lunch, we had another service with Elly preaching on Philippians 3:10 and our fellowship with Christ in his resurrection and sufferings.

Immediately after the service, we were presented with Pokot shukas, lovely large shawls to drape over the shoulder. It was a moving ceremony and we shared greetings and gave thanks. You will also see in the pics the new building that has been erected with money from TRAIN(Kenya). It’s a large edifice and could seat perhaps 300. There is still the need for a floor to be laid and glass put in the windows.



Monday 22nd



After another wonderful breakfast of pancakes, honey, and chai, we walked across from Andrew's house to Chepkinagh Primary. We were met formally by the head teacher, Benjamin Birgen, who had been at all three meetings of the church the previous day. He clearly had everything ready and in order for us. There were 120 "learners" present, with 354 on register; same problems and reasons as in other places for low numbers.



He was thankful for the "spiritual nourishment" provided by the church and said that having Christian teachers was transforming the school and the community. The children sang: "Lord protect your elect; protect our homes; protect our parents; protect our schools." It is noticeable in this school, as in many, that more than half of the teachers are male. Elly spoke to the children on the story of Zacchaeus.

We then met with the head and all the teachers — all 11 were present, which was a first! The



head was very thankful for the 3 teachers and matron supported by TRAIN(Kenya). He



asked for further help: water bore hole, more teachers, desks etc. he then said something very interesting: "Some of us, when we first came here, were 50-50 spiritually, but now we are clear that we are following him. Thank you for the ministry yesterday! We are very appreciative."

A third meeting then took place with two local assistant chiefs. The secondary school is not functioning because the government-supplied principal is not present, not doing the work needed and failing to respond to requests. A long discussion followed, which highlighted the massive problems they face practically and politically. It was encouraging to see the commitment of the chiefs, but the problems here sometimes seem insurmountable!



After lunch we loaded the car and left for Apur. We arrived around 3:15pm to the warmest welcome yet! So many gathered to receive us with joy and genuine thanksgiving. Such things are from the heart and it was clearly very genuine. We walked down to the small building used by the church and the unregistered school (nursery to Y2). I spoke to 60 little ones about sin and salvation. They were so engaged! Then adults from three Pokot churches (Apur, Tarakit and Kapkoghun) along with three men from Nakilesia in Uganda gathered and heard me preach on peace with God from Hebrews 13:20 (Andrew's request) and Keith on following faithful leaders from v7-8 of the same chapter. The level of attention and interest was moving. There were about 20 men, 50 women



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and numberless children. We were then presented with personalised bracelets they had made, and it was quite amusing when mine broke as they insisted on trying to force it over my hand! As we greeted them at dusk on our departure, Keith was very moved, almost to tears. We spent the evening driving to Wasat, arriving late for food and hearing Elly give a devotional message to about 30 folk on the necessity of the new birth from John 3. It was a late night. What a day!!!

Tuesday 23rd

I will begin my report on the last day in Pokot with some general observations that may help you to appreciate what life is like here.



First, let's talk toilets! Many of the folk just use the bush for toileting purposes. I am really not sure how the ladies manage, and did not get the chance to ask... However, each of the churches and schools must have toilet facilities, but what do you do when there is no sewage system or running water? Answer: dig a pit latrine! They need to be 15 to 20 feet deep in order to let everything "do what it needs to do" far enough away to cause no problems! All sorts of interesting creatures live there: I have met spiders, geckos, ants (big beasties) and even on one occasion a bat! He flew down the pit



as I entered. Needless to say, I did what had to be done asap and scarpered.

Second, cleanliness. The people are NOT dirty. They live in a very dusty and grainy environment, but they wash frequently, helping one another with a slow flow of water from a small container. They wash before eating, or even drinking tea. Washing in the morning is a challenge, with a can of water and a large bowl. Do the best you can!



Third, lateness. Everyone is always late. There are three timings: late, very late and ludicrously late. Often we wait and wait, start late and finish even later! Learning to go with the flow and be patient is vital. Part of the problem is that life is tough, nothing is accomplished quickly or easily, and everything takes time. Even making pancakes or preparing tea can take much longer than it does with us. Patience is required. "Hakuna matata" (no problem).

Fourth, thanksgiving. They give thanks for everything, even a cup of tea. Prayer is offered before everything and seems very sincere. It is a great testimony.

Finally, hospitality. They love to give! Since the life is hard here, they go to a lot of trouble and delight when you enjoy what they give. For example, my enthusiasm for their honey always makes them smile. At the end of everything, formal greetings are shared and thanksgiving offered.



We had to be up early to clear everything away since we were sleeping in one of the classrooms. We had our devotional reading together in Leviticus 16 (we had read selected sections from Leviticus 1 onwards each day), and prayed for one another, and the many needs we had observed. After breakfast we waited for more than two hours to be called to the school for a meeting, but the call never came. We inquired and Peter Nalunyit (the pastor here in Wasat) got the 70-or-so children together. Elly spoke the gospel to them and they heard what we had made known so clearly in all the schools: that we have been made by God; that we have sinned



against him; that we are under his condemnation; that Christ alone can make atonement for our sins; and that we must repent and put our faith in him. What a wonder it is that the gospel has come to such remote places, and there are believers here making Christ known.



After the meeting, unlike in other schools, there was no invitation to the school office or any kind of formal welcome. We learned that the head teacher was unwell and away in Eldoret for treatment, and that the deputy had left the site (reason unknown). We were troubled by this and asked the teachers present to gather. We spoke with them, but



it was very awkward, especially when the deputy returned as we were about to finish and seemed quite unhappy with our presence. TRAIN(Kenya) supports three teachers here, but one has



been replaced without our knowledge — the other two were present. We had no confidence that the PPI Bible lessons were taking place. What a contrast with the primary schools in Kamketo and Chepkinagh.

After this we made the 45-minute walk in the middle of the day to Kwirir (inaccessible by car). It was hot and I had to borrow Andrew's woolly hat to keep the sun off my head! He wears it when the temperature drops below about 15 degrees (freezing for these folk), which happens in Wasat when the skies are clear in the evening / overnight. We were greeted by a

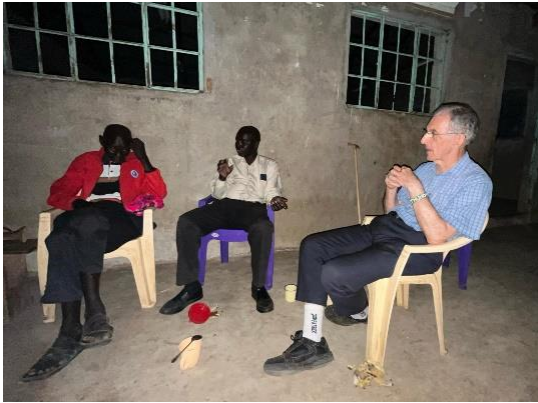
small group of (mainly) ladies seated under a tree, waiting to hear God's word. Keith spoke on Romans 6:23, and one older lady in particular listened intently. After some tea, we made the walk back.

A late lunch under a healthy old tree gave way to an afternoon open air meeting in Wasat. The church here has the biggest membership, over 60, and



on this Tuesday afternoon there were about 30 women, 10 men and of course all those children! I preached on John 3:16 and enjoyed much liberty in making known the wonder of God's love in Christ for a sinful world.





As we sat for a break under the veranda of the school building, dusk settled (around 7pm) and Keith spoke at length to a mzee. His wife was a believer, and he confessed that being a Christian had changed her and transformed his family life. Keith asked (through Andrew's translation) what he thought had led to the change. He replied that it was the result of keeping Christian rules and laws. You can imagine what happened next! A great opportunity to share the message of salvation by grace through faith in Christ. Keith used the example of a Pokot man paying the fine for his friend who had been caught stealing a goat. He then asked Geoffrey to pray. I wondered how many times Keith had done this over these 20 years, and what fruit there would be in heaven.

After supper (about 8:30pm), there was one final session with church members in the almost-dark (just a mobile 'phone light). Elly spoke from Acts 2 and Keith from Hebrews 11, using the example of Moses as an exhortation to reject the world, persevere in Christ and attain the prize. Sleep was welcome after our last day of exhausting activity in Pokot North.

Wednesday 24th

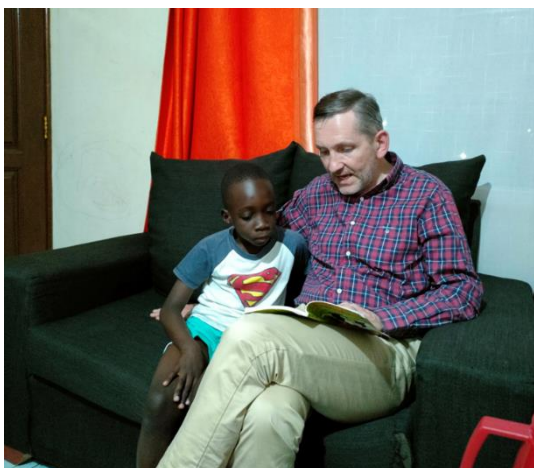
After our devotions we loaded the car and enjoyed our last breakfast of pancakes and Pokot honey. It really is fine stuff! Then there was the formal thanksgiving and farewells — they know how to say goodbye! Elly prayed and we got on our way. I wondered which of us might return? Was this really going to be Keith's last visit? It was an emotional moment, but praise God that we are in HIS hands and can trust him for all things.

We parted with Andrew after a short while and then with Geoffrey in Kapenguria. Four cups of chai at the Royal hotel in Kapenguria cost us the shocking sum of... £1 GBP. Yes you read that right: one pound! No wonder Keith has a shock when he sees what they charge for a tea at Costa.



The journey was without incident as we made our way south to Kisumu, back to Tonny Karwa's home. There Elly left us and journeyed back to his home in Mumias.

We had a lovely evening with Tonny and his family (wife Olivia, and sons Junior (9 yrs) and Levin (3 yrs)). Praise the Lord for the good work he is doing here. I was greatly encouraged in sharing with him to see how he had taken on



board so much of what he had been taught at the TPC and was putting it into practice in his ministry. It was a joy and privilege to read a Spurgeon story to a very attentive Junior!

Tomorrow morning, we leave for the airport and the journey back. It has been a time of many encouragements, punctuated with a keen awareness of the fragility of the work in Pokot and the massive needs and challenges that remain. Praise the Lord for his wonderful promise: I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The work is his, and as we leave, we know he remains. Amen!

Please Pray

1. That we might all have wisdom to know how best we can help and support the work of the gospel in this needy region. It was such a privilege to be sent to minister by my home church (Trinity Grace Church, Ramsbottom), and also to represent the charity TRAIN(Kenya) as we raise funds in the UK and channel them to the region. How much wisdom and discernment is required. We desire to help, but the best way to do so is often far from manifest. Please join us in praying for a better understanding of the needs and the best way to promote the cause of Christ.
2. That the 3 ministers, Andrew, Joshua and Thomas, may be faithful in every part of their lives, to resist the pressures of the culture and do all things according to the word of God. Please pray that they will keep the main thing, the main thing, and seek to preach Christ above all other priorities, in the churches, the schools and the communities.
3. For the sanctification and maturation of the churches, as the members are transformed by the word of God, through the Spirit of God, to be Christlike in every way. Pray especially for radical and counter-cultural transformation of marriages and families; pray that the men in particular would be convicted of the need to be conformed to the law of Christ in their home lives.
4. For the 2 young men from the region who are currently training at the Trinity Pastors College in Nairobi, William and Geoffrey, and that the Lord would be pleased to raise up other such men.
5. For those who teach the PPI lessons on Friday mornings in the schools; pray that they would make good use of the Rafiki materials on the gospel of Matthew, and make Christ known to all the children each and every week; pray for the conversion of many more like William and Geoffrey (they were both saved through gospel preaching in the schools).
6. For our ongoing fellowship with Elly Achok, Tonny Karwa and many more faithful brothers across Kenya who are labouring for the glory of Christ through the ministry of his word. May our fellowship together be richly blessed and work out for the furtherance of the gospel.
7. That the whole land of Kenya might be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. This great land belongs to Christ Jesus, so let us pray that his gospel will reach every corner of it and his name be glorified in every place.