

An Update from the Dunkard Brethren Mission in Kenya

The Chepkorniswo Church

*Chepkorniswo
Church -
attendance 75*

The town of Chepkorniswo is in the plain about half an hour north of the Mission Compound. It contains several schools, a medical clinic staffed by one nurse, and a small town center. Some of the surrounding mountains are fertile and productive, but the flat land below is semi-arid and unpredictable for farming. The people are almost exclusively Pokots. This tribe maintains a very strong community. Orphans get assimilated into the extended family. Strong social and judicial pressures keep crime low. While traditional practices still continue, the Christian faith has freed many from such things and has had a positive effect on the community.

People generally reside on family land. Most earn their living from farming either in whole or in part. Maize and beans are the primary crops. Keeping cows, goats, and sheep also provide income and food. Other opportunities for income are limited to small business or working for the schools. Historically, the men have watched the animals and provided security while the women grew the crops, cared for the children, gathered firewood, and fetched water. Many men still do not well utilize their time and ability to work which leads to poverty. In contrast, families headed by industrious husbands generally enjoy an adequate living. Hunger is an annual problem with no apparent resolution in sight. Relief food is good; it gives temporary help but has never brought long term improvement. Providing free seed and fertilizer helps more by requiring the recipients to work for the benefit. Still, that approach has not had a significant impact. Addressing the underlying

ing issues of idleness, lack of job opportunities, and poor financial management takes much more time but has actually brought people out of poverty. This year's drought totally ruined the maize crop in this area, and so relief food will be needed. The men of the church are currently encouraging the people to find other ways of bringing in income.

The Chepkorniswo church reflects the demographics and problems of the area. There is a large group of unmarried women and women whose husbands have left them. Please pray for purity in this congregation; it seems to be an area of struggle here. The congregation contains a number of strong families, which should be a valuable asset to building a strong church.

Brother Francis Kedireng has held the role of pastor for many years. His wife, Loice, is an enthusiastic singer and a great encouragement to others. Francis paid a dowry of eight cows for her and her price is far above rubies. Through her faith and obedience, her husband ultimately came to Jesus Christ. Francis is a farmer with a herd of cows and many goats. He recently purchased a vehicle which operates as a matatu (taxi). All of their children are grown, and the local ones are part of the church. Francis and Loice have many opportunities to interact with their children and grandchildren.

This church has an obvious hunger for the Scriptures. Sound, expository teaching is always welcomed, and the ensuing discussion reveals a sincere



*Bible School in
Chepkorniswo*



interest and depth of thought. These believers are especially gifted in enthusiastic singing. Their testimonies reflect a living, personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Brothers Philip Lokapel and Christopher Kapsilot work as interpreters and teachers at Chepkorniswo; and on alternate Sundays, they accompany Brother Ray Noecker to interpret and help teach at the Ortum church. Philip is a shopkeeper, school teacher, and farmer. He is a gifted and animated speaker and interpreter. Christopher farms, buys and sells animals, and works other occasional jobs. He is always willing to help in the church.

There is much hope for this church. The outlying area offers many opportunities for church planting and evangelism. Many of the people have a burden for outreach. Pray for us all as we face the various issues, and look for ways to expand the work.

Brother Jeremiah Johnson and
Brother Steve Clapper



New Arrivals: Meet the Johnson's

We are the Jeremiah and Debra Johnson family. Coming here in September of this year is the fulfillment of a lifelong call for us. We were dating 14 years ago when the first visits were being made to Kenya, East Africa. We knew then that this was to be our life-work – missions.

We served here for eight months between 1998, and 1999. We were introduced to the work, and learned to love and respect the people here, but mostly we felt we were being taught and ministered to. We came back for a year of service in 2002 and 2003. It felt like another stage in our preparation, and we didn't feel released by God from the work at Hart, our home congregation. But we truly enjoyed the work, and our time serving with the Noecker family.

A year ago we began to feel a go-ahead from God, a release from the Hart work, to come here for long-term service. We had learned so many things in God's training school: teachers, books, and experiences, and we felt we had something to share. A lot of our vision for the work began with the Kenyan people themselves. We want to fulfill the Great Commission, making disciples of all nations, working with God reaping His harvest. We want to equip the Kenyan people and beyond, with the vision and resources they need to reach the world for Christ. Practically, we want to ignite (or re-ignite) the fire for evangelism in them, and give them the tools or teaching they need to reach out and plant churches wherever God leads. Eventu-

ally we hope this will be through a training school.

Currently, Jeremiah (and our family) is rotating each Sunday between the four established congregations. He preaches then, and at the weekly Bible Studies of Chesubet and Chepkorniswo. Jeremiah takes every opportunity to build

relationships with the people locally, and in those churches. Even in Makutano, or at the water pump in our yard, we have opportunity to touch lives for eternity by kind deeds and words, by our smile, or by the light of Jesus in our eyes. We feel a burden for the churches here; that they become the salt and light that the church is called to be, and that their hearts are pained by the things that hurt God's heart – lost souls dying and going to hell.

I keep busy with mothering 7 children, 5 of which I also teach, and overseeing the household operations. Besides that, I have a burden for the work and people, and enjoy being with the women to encourage them – informally, or in Bible Studies in the churches or homes. I enjoy writing a daily journal of our lives here, to keep people informed of the work so they can pray more effectively, and specifically. I'm very thankful for my sister's help with the household responsibilities.

Our children are a blessing to us here, and we are thrilled to introduce them to the Kenyan culture, as well as training them to be little missionaries. They enjoy and have close friendships with the Noecker children, but they are also building relationships with the native children. Our oldest is Hosanna who is 12 years old. She loves spending time with friends and continues to be a big help around the house, especially with washing our clothes by hand. Our three oldest all love to read books. Micaiah is 11, and he is learning to play soccer the "real way" – barefoot, with knee length pants. He has good friends

among the boys, wanting to be a part of their lives as much as he's allowed, and is a bookworm besides. Jerusha is 9, and is very out-going also. She has a contagious personality and loves the people here, but also likes writing letters to the homefolks. She's good with her little siblings. Matthias is 7, and wants to do whatever his big brother does. Self-discipline in school is a challenge for him; but he does love to learn, especially science and history. He's more timid, but hasn't had any trouble making friends here, and he especially loves using the Swahili he knows. Cherith is 6, learning her letters, and doing well with it. She likes dressing up, and playing house with Courtney Noecker or Edisa Ambundo especially. Judah is 4, and loves life here. Helping Hosea's family round up their animals from around the compound is one of his favorite things to do. He pays attention to what the Kenyan boys wear, and wants to be like them! Our two-year-old, Tabitha is adapting herself to life here quite easily. Though not quite as sociable as most of the others, she doesn't mind all the attention of the Kenyans, and easily greets them or shakes hands with their children. Her Swahili is progressing along with her English.

We thank God, as well as each of you, for bringing us here again. We praise Him for our salvation which gives us purpose in our lives, and Life to offer to others. We are so glad for the opportunity to serve here, and are grateful to you for your support which keeps this mission operating day by day. May God bless you for giving to Him in this way, and being a part in reaching Africa for Christ. We also thank each one who has sent cards and letters of encouragement. Most of all we thank you for your prayers for the work here. When we each do our part, here or at home, we will see God reap in His Harvest.

Sister Debra Johnson

Summer Kenya Trip 2009

I had many different thoughts and expectations before going to Africa this summer. This would not be my first trip, but it was going to be the first one where I was given a significant amount of responsibility. I was a little unsure of myself for a while, but as things progressed God really helped me to see that He was in control, and He worked things out better than I could have imagined. Even though I had been there before, I still had a lot of questions. What had changed since I was last there? What will we be doing besides Bible schools? How hard is it to learn to drive on the other side of the road and to shift with your left hand? What is God's plan for our group? In time those questions were all answered.

When I got to the mission it seemed as if I had never left. Many of the people I had met on my previous trips still remembered me, and it seemed as if I was able to pick up where I left off with them almost 6 years ago! I remembered working on the foundation for the church last time I was there, and it was really neat to be able to see the finished product.

We taught our first Bible school in the church at Makutano and we had a great turn out. It was a little intimidating for me at first, because I did not know what to do when, and I felt like I was responsi-

ble for everything that could go wrong. Ray was there and I kept asking him questions to make sure things were going ok. I taught the first lesson, about Moses as a little baby. I am a teacher, and I have been trained to teach secondary Mathematics; but this was in no way a Mathematics lesson. It was very different for me to teach a lesson at a preschool level; I was worried that I would not be able to talk on the children's level. But, God was definitely with me and our group; I felt excitement as the day went on, and I was able to see interest and happiness in the children's eyes.

Besides the Bible schools, we did several work projects. We spent a few days working at a children's home in Kitale installing a well pump. We helped Abel build a house, and we built a house in Ortum. We did some ministry and evangelism. We worked on the drive way at the Chesubet Church (it really needed help!). Besides that, we did several other small projects at the mission and some of the churches. We were kept busy and didn't have any dull moments.

I learned that it is not very hard to drive on the other side of the road. However, it is not very fun driving on Kenyan roads. When driving in Kenya you do not take your

eyes off the road for a second. In fact I don't think you would even want to blink for too long! There are people, bikes, cycles, taxis, busses, animals, and (of course) potholes everywhere. Driving was never really relaxing, but it was always exciting!

I can't fully express the way I felt while I was there, and what I felt when I knew it was time to go home. I could see a lot of needs; I felt blessed from the work and ministering that we were able to do. I felt happy, sad, peaceful, worrisome, but most of all I really felt a burden for the youth. I strongly felt that they could benefit from someone with willingness, time, spiritual maturity, and knowledge of the Bible to help them grow. There is so much potential in the young people I met, but they need a lot of encouragement and spiritual teaching/training, so they can be who and what God has called them to be.

I didn't know what all God had planned for me or our group, and to be honest I still don't know what all He has planned. I just know that He was with us through the whole trip, and everything worked out exceedingly and abundantly above all that I was able to ask or think. God's word is true; He keeps his promises, and I was truly able to witness it during our time in Kenya this past summer.

Brother Andrew Miller



Great Mercy's Well



Group Photo



Building a House in Ortum



My Name is Corina Marks

My name is Corina Marks. I am from the Hart Dunkard Brethren Church, and the daughter of Ronald and Nancy Marks. I am hoping

to do a 2 year term of service here at our mission in Kenya. I am helping my sister Debra and her husband, with housekeeping and their family as they serve here. I want to be an encouragement to them in their missionary call, and I have a passion for the work here also. I have been to Kenya two other times as a visitor, and I loved it; but I never guessed God would send me here on an extended mission trip.

My story begins the beginning of 2009. This is when I started seriously praying for God's will in my life. I was growing tired of the normal, and didn't have much purpose. Meanwhile I looked for ways to be used of God. Sometimes I would help Debra sort and organize as she was thinking about packing to come here. I figured that this was a good time to make memories, because 2 years is a long time to not be able to talk! In one of our discussions, Debra mentioned she was praying about someone to go along and help out with the children. I thought "Yes, that would be a good thing for someone to do. I'll pray about it for her too." A flicker went through my mind, "What about you?" I thought, "No, that's impossible", and that's as far as it went.

A few weeks later we were at a retreat, and one of the speakers talked about making the most of your life as a youth or single. She talked about volunteer work and mission work. That's when the bomb dropped, when a small voice said, "That's you. Go to Kenya and help Debra with the children." It was a real shock to me. Shortly after that I mentioned it to

Debra, and we both prayed about it for a month or so.

When I was certain that this was God's will, I told my family, which was very hard. They supported me in this new calling; I can't thank them enough. After several months, paperwork, and being accepted by the mission board, I prepared to go. I was excited, but trembling as I started on this journey of faith. Even up to the time that I boarded the airplane, I wanted to run the other way; but I knew I would miss the blessings here if I didn't comply with God's will.

Now that I am here, I am at peace and can't imagine missing out. God has lessons for me here, and I pray I will be a good student in His classroom!

Sister Corina Marks

FINANCIAL SUMMARY	
AFRICAN MISSION BOARD	
Income and Expenses	
January 1 - June 30, 2009	
Income	
Investment Income	\$ 11.44
Donations	\$ 32,251.67
Total Income	\$ 32,263.11
Expenses	
Operating Expense - Banking Fees	\$ 40.70
Newsletter Mailing Costs	\$ 372.20
Total Expenses	\$ 412.90
Other	
Transfers to Kenya Mission Account	\$ 15,000.00
Total Transfers	\$ 15,000.00

Contact Information:
 Dunkard Brethren Mission
 P.O. Box 658
 Kapenguria, Kenya 30600
 East Africa

 Phone:
 011.254.546.2043

 Noecker's email:
eph2.10@swiftkenya.com
 Johnson's email:
jeredebra@gmail.com

Contribution Information:
 If you would like to contribute to the Dunkard Brethren Mission in Kenya, please make your check payable to "African Mission Board" and send it to:

 African Mission Board
 c/o Verling Wolfe
 115 Club Road
 Bethel, PA 19507

Receiving Information:
 If you desire to receive this newsletter by email, or your congregation would like to receive a printed version of it, please contact Sister Lorraine Lorenz at raeofhopepsa71.5@comcast.net

 If you are interested in receiving Sister Debra's journals, please contact Sister Nadine Marks at madam2004@juno.com

Look for this newsletter on the web!
dunkardbrethrenchurch.com