

## Ministry in Kenya

### Eric's Report 2006

The priesthood body in Kenya is still small with a growing number of membership, and especially where some members are scattered across the country. In some places you find one family or an individual member removed from any of the congregations. These members do not get regular fellowship with the saints and to some extent have not had regular priesthood visits. One such family is the family of Esther who lives at Kadel near Homa-bay in Western Kenya. Esther's reaction when we reached her home with Patrick told it all. She was excited, she was shouting, "Welcome" and she was crying. It was the very first time a priesthood member had visited Esther's home. We shared there with her and her sister and her children and her sister's children a total of 6 youngsters ranging from ages 17 to 24 years old. At the end of the visit we asked for Penina's daughter Judy who appeared to be having some growing-up problems at home to return to Nairobi with us. Judy was able to stay with my family for two weeks, and received our family ministry.

There are other families like Esther's that do not receive regular ministries. A particular concern has been the children not growing up in the Church, which does not allow the Church to grow where the seed has been planted. From Esther's we travelled to Katito to visit with Risper and her children. Risper lost her husband some years back, then she lost her eldest son and daughter within one year. In an environment prevalent with HIV Aids cases, Risper has been concerned about her surviving sons and daughters growing away from the Church influence. We organized for a communion service for Risper, Judith and Aska, all of them had not taken the sacrament for a long time. Their homes are far apart but we were able to transport Risper and Salome to Aska and Judith's place at Olando. The ladies spent two days together sharing in their experiences and praising the Lord. We taught them at night and on Sunday morning before we served the Holy Sacrament and administered to Risper and Aska. Our topic that Sunday morning was on the Church ordinances and importance of priesthood.

From there we drove to Kisumu town where we had an appointment with Linnet, a single mother of five. We shared together with her family on the topic of the church ordinances and the importance of priesthood and shared on the Lord's Table. The following day we hit the road for Oyugis where our mission was specifically to visit with Priest Elly and family, to share with them about their ministry as a Priesthood family. We shared with them about the Church ordinances and the importance of priesthood.

We then travelled to Kisii town to bring ministry to Elder Tom who works and lives there, away from his family and the saints. Tom had invited us to give him support in ministering to one of his work mates Lydia, a lady who has received the Church missionaries in town in the past and with whom Tom has been sharing this gospel. Lydia's family received us well. Before we left for Kisii we had been praying for the Lord to give us the right approach and the right words to use in ministering to this lady who is of the Seventh Day Adventist persuasion. Actually the first day we set for Kisii town when we got about half way the journey we found the road blocked ahead of us by a long truck that was trying to make a turn on the road. The driver was not able to make the turn and the lorry (truck) could not move forward or backward and had completely blocked the road. Our car was the first to reach the lorry and it was getting late. We

prayed, asking the Lord to let us know what His will was. At the end we turned and drove to Korowe where we spent two days sharing with the people there.

When we finally made it to Kisii we were told that day Lydia had some serious family problems that would not have afforded a good environment for the meeting. We thanked the Lord for ensuring our time was not wasted in travelling the long distance to Kisii and missing to share with Lydia and her family. We were all blessed and I trust the Lord provided the right approach and words for Lydia's family. As I am writing, I am told Lydia travelled to Nairobi for some business and would like to come to our house and visit with us.

We had transported Betty from Nakuru to Sotik town to join with the Sotik group for the period we were there. Betty is formerly of Sotik from where she transferred to Nakuru town where her family has a home. Betty felt like she was missing the kind of fellowship she used to enjoy at Sotik. Nakuru town has a small group that is still young. The closest family to Betty's stays quite a distance from Nakuru town. Ben is a newly ordained Priest in the Church, he and his wife Hellen are strong Church members but they also miss regular ministry and Church families to fellowship with. Ben is still struggling to balance his priesthood duties with his teaching job responsibilities. At Nakuru during the evening we had visited with a small group comprised of Betty's family. In the morning we brought Betty with us to the home of Ben and Helen where we shared in the gospel and served the holy communion.

At Sotik town in the Rift Valley, brethren received us with much joy. They had invited their friends to the home of Priest Nelson and his wife Elizabeth. I was particularly filled with joy as I could see the atmosphere in the Mutahi's home was that of anticipation of good things from the ministry we were bringing. The brethren had been engaged in some doctrinal disputations with some men of other denominations in town and two were there that night as we shared the restored gospel. The Lord blessed us with such wonderful spirit as we spoke. We felt rewarded when the following day at the Sunday service one of the men attended with his wife. At the end of the service he had kind words for the message the Church has, which he said is different from what the other Churches are preaching. He and his wife committed to be attending our Sotik group meetings.

Elder Tom joined us at Ahero for the Sunday service with the group there. We transported Linnet and Aska from Kisumu and Olando respectively to join the Ahero group for the service. The Ahero group was small that morning but we were greatly blessed with a good spirit during the service. I shared in class on the ordinances and Elder Tom preached a good sermon on the Vicious Circle of Spiritual Poverty. The spirit with which the prayers were offered at the close of the meeting gave testimony to the presence of the Lord at the meeting. The saints present greeted us with joy and faces exhibiting appreciation of what the Lord did through us that morning.

In December Teacher Joseph and Elder Tom accompanied me to Ahero. Our concern was the declining attendance of the congregation's Sunday services. I had held classes there for two consecutive weekends and was concerned at the low turnout and lack of punctuality by those who turned up. We were accompanied to the members' homes by two Priests from the local congregation Paul and Anthony. We started by visiting Priest Eric's home. He is the Priesthood in charge of the Ahero congregation. We shared with the family the gospel and administered to five members of the family who had different needs. The Lord blessed brother Eric's family that day as his son who had been away

from home for three years, and whom they had been praying for to return home had just arrived home a day before our visit. His daughter who was having marital problems also arrived home just as we started sharing with the family. We were able to administer to her also. Our brother shared with us how 2005 was a bad year for him and his family, how he had struggled with temptations and even at one time thought he was going to die. We prayed in their home and stood the Lord in their lives.

We next visited homes where husbands or wives have been attending the Church but not their spouses. We were blessed as each place we got just the person we needed to share with. Actually the two weekend classes I had shared had been taken home to these non-member spouses by their children. The Lord had prepared them for our visit. We obtained promises of attendance from these homes. In these homes we got testimonies of healings through administrations and prayers some months ahead.

At Victor's home, his wife gave testimony of his healing after he had been attacked by a strange illness that made him weak and dizzy; that had forced him to travel back home from his place of work. We had prayed for Victor two weeks earlier. Victor's sister-in law had been administered to by Elders Steve and Huron in their last missionary visit. She bore testimony of her healing through the brethren's ministry. The following Sunday we got information that more people turned up for the group worship.

In Nairobi the group has been getting stronger in the gospel. The immediate challenge is to attain with the brethren the level of sainthood that can give testimony to the message of the Restored Gospel. We have been trying to consolidate, to assist the members to be consumed in this message, to have this gospel deep inside them, in their bones, so to say. This Gospel must be tangible to the saints; they must see it, have it, use it, live it and then be able to share it with others. It must be all to them and life to them. It is their testimony with this gospel that shall be the greater ministry than any missionary work we could ever do amongst the people. We are now able to minister to those who work during Sundays and are not able to attend our normal services. Peter was one of the very first people to become members of the Church in Nairobi, but for awhile his growth was slowed down by his employment that required him to be at work on Sundays with his wife.

The Kayole group of Nairobi has members that meet most of the evenings of the week. Hulda who is their, mothers the Church. Hulda does a lot of missionary work to strengthen the members and to bring more into the Church. In fact in many cases Hulda asks for priesthood to go and finish what she has put many hours in. Her testimony of this gospel and good understanding has been of great help to the priesthood and the members in Nairobi. What I spend time to share with Hulda quickly gets to be received by many around her. She is like an added hand to the Priesthood. Her testimony is that she was dead but was given life back to bring others to the Lord. The group members are close to one another and easily come together whenever they have left work. They look for one another at the slightest opportunity. Nairobi has been blessed with quality fellowship. The work has benefited greatly from the ordination in August of two more men into Priesthood. Patrick, who is Hulda's son in-law, was ordained to the office of teacher. Patrick has been very active working with his mother in-law, to strengthen the saints. The Lord also blessed Patrick's family by giving him a job at the Creamery where I used to work. This is a testimony to Patrick's family that the Lord provides for them that dedicate their lives to his service. The Lord rescued Patrick from wrong path.