

**Palmer Trip Report to Hillcrest  
August 2018**

Summary

Once again God richly blessed our trip with good health and travel mercies. The worst experiences were a flat tire, and a long bus ride that ended up stranding us on the road for a couple of hours while Elaine had a headache and nausea. All our workshops and campaigns went well, as described below.

**KENYA**

Kenya National WBS Workers' Conference (Nairobi)

Following the suggestion of WBS leaders in Kenya back in January, a major conference was held for volunteer WBS workers from around the country. 40 were invited with some (but not full) travel compensation. A general invitation was also extended to participants who could come and lodge at their own expense, with WBS providing lunch and tea for up to 100 people. Actual participants ended up numbering 57. The agenda included an hour of prayer in small groups, reviewing WBS goals and recruiting tools and methods, area reports, planning strategies for the future, and handing out supplies (Enrollment Forms, Short Intro Lessons, flyers, etc). We also reviewed how Swahili WBS is to be used.



**Some of the Kenya National Conference Participants**

Thika Worskhop



**Thika area churches workshop**

A workshop for 5 congregations in the Thika area (2 hours north of Nairobi) met at Ngelelya Church of Christ. Delayed arrival prevented our doing public recruiting after the workshop, but church leaders and members were equipped and eager to do that later. Recognition should go to the Greenville Avenue Church of Christ in Richardson, TX, and minister Ray Christopher for backing a dynamic work which has multiplied sound congregations in just a few years, and continues to do so, while giving effective training to their ministers. Some of the earliest members, such as Philip Munyao of Thika Town, were WBS students.

### Kenya School of Preaching (KSOP) Workshop

We were well received by the staff and students at KSOP in Kisumu. Valuable talks about the status of WBS in Kenya were followed by orientation and distribution of recruiting supplies. Five teams then dispersed in the neighborhood of the school to recruit. The response was great, and the enthusiasm of the students exciting. In 1 ½ hours over 80 people were enrolled and some Bible studies set up. The husband of one woman who enrolled was away on business, and called the KSOP office within an hour to ask to also be enrolled! A visiting evangelist from where the husband was working took lessons to give him.



**A KSOP team recruits in the neighborhood of the school**

### Baringo Campaign

Mogotio Church of Christ hosted our 4-day WBS campaign which included mostly Baringo County but some Nakuru County congregations and schools. Thanks to Yohana Langat, Symon Koech and Nelson Keitany, whose persistent communications with schools and congregations allowed the campaign to be a success. 12 congregations of the Lord's church were represented in 2 WBS workshops. Many evangelists participated and took home supplies to continue the work. We visited Kipkigei Church of Christ in Sirwa and Cheptalilik Church of Christ near Saos. At 5 schools, in some town neighborhoods, and in meetings with several denominational church leaders, over 300 new WBS students were enrolled, with plans made to reach many more.



**130 Enroll at Mogotio Girls' High School**



### Molo Campaign

The Molo campaign, in a hilly area on the north end of the Mau Forest, was affected by several days of heavy rain. Some congregations we meant to visit had to come by foot to the Saturday workshop and Sunday worship at the newer congregation at Marwa Primary School on the main road. God bless them! Washed-out footbridges made them use alternate routes that doubled or tripled the distance. Reportedly, weather caused attendance to be down by 50 –75%. Even so, 44 attended from 6 congregations. Thanks to Eric Too, Samuel Sambu, Benard Koskei and others for running the campaign.



Our second WBS Workshop was at Maigoya Church of Christ, attended by 16 church leaders from 8 congregations. We also did a teaching seminar at Londiani Junction, and recruited at 5 schools, where we presented WBS to hundreds of students and staff. (Most registered after we left, so the numbers will be reported later).

**Sister Too (on right) slipped 3 times in the mud on the hour-plus, rain-drenched walk to the meetings. She is a stalwart member, mother of 3 preachers of the Lord's church.**

### Sondu Campaign

The Matiret congregation in Sondu had requested a campaign back in January. With time to prepare, a busy schedule of WBS training, recruiting in teams, school visits and evening classes was planned. Also, the Gospel Chariot came for most of the campaign, showing the Jesus film one night. Well over 300 new WBS students were enrolled, with a good number finishing and returning the Intro Lesson answers before the campaign was over.



**Part of Sondu Campaign Team in front of the Gospel Chariot**



**One of 5 baptisms in the Sondu River at Matiret**

Some 20 people from 4 congregations attended the meetings, mostly church leaders. Seven schools were visited. There were 2 baptisms on Saturday and 3 more on Sunday.

## UGANDA

### Parombo Campaign

In the far northwest of Uganda, north of Lake Albert and against the Congolese border, is Parombo Town. A 15-year-old Restoration Movement in Uganda's West Nile Province has about 30 congregations (3 across the border in DRC) among the Alur people. Our campaign was held at Ayela Church of Christ and Parombo Town Church of Christ. It consisted of a good mix of a Bible Seminar, market and neighborhood recruiting, public (market) preaching, and school recruiting. Attendance at Parombo was 37, and at Ayela was 45, from 8 congregations in Uganda and one in Congo. There were 7 baptisms during the Ayela campaign and 3 during the Parombo campaign. One inspiring highlight was the presence of 10 men and 2 women from the Congo who walked 17 hours one-way to attend 3 days of the campaign. They already

have a vibrant French WBS work, thanks to lessons provided by Lake Houston Church of Christ in Humble, Texas. They brought about 25 finished courses with them, since there is no postal service in their home area. During the campaign we visited 4 schools. About 450 new WBS students were enrolled during the campaign, including a good number of muslims.



**These Congolese brethren walked 17 hours one-way to attend the Parombo WBS Campaign**



**Preacher's daughter Bridgette (in orange) helps her fellow students enroll in WBS**

Kiryandongo Campaign

Three years after our last campaign there, the Yabwengi Church of Christ again hosted the WBS campaign. Daily teachings at the unfinished church building were from the *Steps Toward Salvation* workbook. We visited 2 schools and a Nurse- training college, and we did marketplace recruiting in three centers. After 4 days, we had enrolled 318 in WBS. Attendance and participation by area Christians was down because of the timing of harvest and the coming of the first rains. Most members are very poor subsistence farmers, and the window for harvesting and fresh planting is narrow.



**Phil with Bweyale School of Nursing and Midwifery (Kiryandongo) principal Aciro Balbina. She enthusiastically supported our recruiting at her school**

Kakuma Refugee Camp



**Young church of Christ in Kakuma Refugee Camp, hoping to use this plot to build a building**

Contacts with Rashid, a Congolese refugee in the Kakuma Refugee Camp (towards the S. Sudan border in far northwestern Kenya), led me to invite him to the Nairobi WBS Conference. He is using both English and Swahili WBS to evangelize, and there is a church of 12 or more there. The Kenya authorities were threatening to shut down any activity by people who did not have a Kenya church registration, so I sent Richard Karima from Nairobi to evaluate and provide the Kenya Church of Christ document if warranted. He did so, and while more grounding is needed there, I believe a viable work is under way now in that camp. In the future, I want to see

about doing more WBS work in Kakuma and also the huge Nyarugusu Refugee Camp in western Tanzania.

### East Africa Summary

Bro. Patrick Lazarus in **Juba, South Sudan**, reports that there are now 1,250+ people studying paper WBS there. They desperately need more books, which have to be air-freighted because of no postal system. If Study Helpers will take students from there (receiving scanned answer sheets for grading) and give \$1.50 per lesson for shipping, that work can continue to expand. The personal contact of hand-delivery to students is resulting in a high rate of retention and conversion.

The only thing now holding up the printing of the **last 2 Master Series courses in Swahili** is funding. \$9,000 is the total needed: \$1,300 of this has already been raised.

Lessons continue to be scanned regularly from **Tanzania**, mostly later courses sent to Westover Hills in Austin.

### Observations

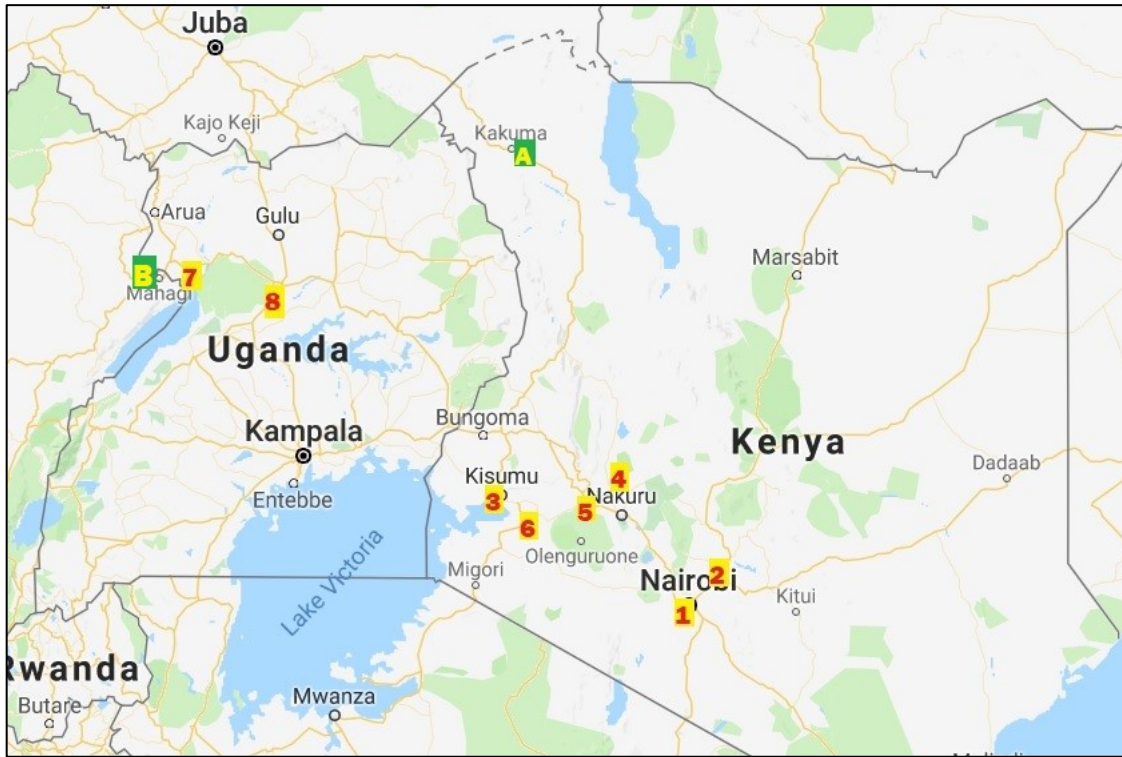
Our bane continues to be **delayed or lost mail**. Eastleigh Office Director Richard Karima and I visited the Postal Manager in Nairobi to see if there is any explanation. She believes the issues are with unpaid box-rentals or something else at the branch offices. For re-sorting of international mail (such as Alpha Mailing bulk mail to other countries), she says no mail from Alpha Mailing Solutions, nor any in solid brown envelopes like WBS uses, come through their international sorting facility. (She recently moved to the Manager's Office after 2 years at the International Sorting facility). Most Kenyan recipients believe there is tampering with mail from the USA. One high official in the Electric Company whom I met flatly said the Kenya Postal system is broken and doesn't work. In Uganda one instance came to light where our WBS worker had had issues—the contracted "Post Office" was run by a crook for 7 years, who sold stamps, then removed them and tossed the mail while pocketing the sales money. The Kampala post office did not even have a record of that town having a Post Office. Things are better now that a new PO has been put in there.

### GBEA in 2018

In March about \$1,000 was spent on two Friday ads in a national English newspaper in Kenya. While I feel the results were not sufficient to warrant a repeat investment, some denominational preachers responded wanting several hundred courses for their schools and church members.

There is a lot of enthusiasm to repeat local **WBS Day celebrations** in Kenya in early December this year. I am weighing what to "promise" as a participatory gesture by us. This is meant to be an incentive, so making any assistance dependent on recruiting results seems necessary. Another incentive I have suggested is for us to fund **display tents, billboards and tract-racks** for locations that meet specific recruitment goals.

I am not currently *planning* a trip again this year, though being in Kenya in December during the WBS Day celebrations may be valuable, and the Kakuma Christians want a seminar that month. If not, I will plan another trip in January which should include S.Sudan and Tanzania visits.



- 1** Kenya National WBS Workers' Conference
- 2** Thika Churches Workshop
- 3** Kenya School of Preaching Workshop
- 4** Baringo County Campaign
- 5** Molo Campaign
- 6** Sondu Campaign
- 7** Parombo Campaign
- 8** Kiryandongo Campaign
- A** Kakuma Refugee Camp
- B** Churches in DRC (Congo)