

August
2022

KEEPING UP WITH KENYA

Monthly Newsletter

WHAT IS GOD TEACHING US?

Rachel

When I arrived in Kenya, I decided to start a new chronological Bible reading plan. I spent the first 3 days in Genesis and the rest of my time here, I have been in the book of Job. I have read the book before, but what has stood out to me this time is how many different characteristics of God flood the book. Just to name a few: God is love, powerful, approachable, redeemer, and worthy. He is also the source of wisdom, understanding, rest, security, and renewal. What a good God He is!

"With God are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding...

With him are strength and sound wisdom." Job 12: 13, 16a

"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth." -Job 19:25

Tori

I am reminded that calling God by names that show His character, places so much more trust in my heart. I can look back and see God working in those ways in different seasons of my life. When I have needed a father, God has been ABBA (Father) to me. When I have needed provisions God has been Jehovah Jireh (The Lord will Provide). And my God is always Jehovah Shammah (the Lord is There). I know that they Lord has been there for me in my past, so I lean on Him.

"And those who know Your name will put their trust in You,
For You, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You."

-Pslams 9:10



WE'VE OFFICIALLY BEEN HERE FOR ONE MONTH!

We spent the first three weeks living with the Waruhiu family. We are all getting adjusted to just being in tight quarters and around people all the time. The first picture shows all 8 of us (5 adults and 3 kids) crammed into the Waruhiu van. This seating arrangement in the car has been a common scenario for us to get around. Ashley is squeezed between Anaiya and Zeek's car seats in the back, and I sit on a duffle bag and pillow between the captain chairs of Ezra and Tori. We have had many fun car rides full of laughter and singing.

You can also see the black and white picture of us three girls crammed into the back seat of an Uber. We did this for the first week but have now become comfortable with one of us sitting in the front seat.

Lastly, we had to get our priorities straight.

On day 2, we found a coffee spot and enjoyed some iced coffees. Java House will be our coffee shop in Kenya, and we visit it often. We are hoping to build relationships with some of the employees.



Moving into our apartment is a story we hope we can laugh about later. We were supposed to move in on a Monday, and then it got pushed back to Tuesday. We got to the apartment on Tuesday morning, and Tori's bedroom floor was partially taken out, there was dust everywhere, and it still had not been painted. They wanted us to wait a few more days to move in, but we told them that wasn't an option. We had lots of furniture scheduled for delivery that day, and we were ready to have a place of our own. We decided we were going to make the most of it. The first picture shows the three of us in our small office room, killing time as we waited for them to finish the work. We played cribbage and had KFC delivered while we waited for the work to get done and the furniture to be delivered. We got to the apartment at 11:00 that morning and the last worker left the apartment around 9:00 that evening. It was a long day to say the least, but we were so excited to have a place to call home!



The second picture shows us at Carrefour (the Kenyan "Walmart") with three shopping carts. We loaded the carts up as we bought all the things needed for our new home. The last two pictures give you a glimpse of our apartment. We originally thought we needed to wait four weeks for our couch, but we were willing. Thankfully, it was ready early, and it was delivered less than two weeks after we moved in. It is a great feeling getting settled into our apartment. We have been cooking dinner together and enjoying evening movies!



MERCY NAIROBI UPDATE

MERCY *Nairobi*

We are still working on getting our NGO for the church; however, that is not stopping us from being a "church". We are steadily looking for spaces for Mercy House and setting up routines like staff meetings, prayer times, and space to worship together as a team. All while we are eagerly awaiting for the Kolman family to arrive at the end of the month. We are all very excited for Jordan to join our team here on the ground!

In the meantime, we will be spending this month helping Mercy House get started and preparing to start a bible study next month. Once we can find a building for Mercy House, we will set up our office there as we continue to prep for our big launch around Easter of 2023. As of now, we are working on the logistics of where we can work while also being in the community. While we have our meetings in the Waruhiu's garage, we have decided to find local coffee shops to become regulars in so we can minister to people while working on different tasks. Through working in coffee shops and the bible study, we hope to find people of peace and start individually discipling people soon and searching for our "one" that is close to us but far from God.

Mercy Nairobi will start a bible study on September 7 at the YMCA near the University of Nairobi. The Bible study is 12 weeks long, going through the book of John. We pray that going through this book of the bible will allow people to catch hold of the vision God has laid in our hearts and step up to be core members of Mercy church.

MERCY HOUSE UPDATE

We are still waiting on a few logistical things for Mercy House to get started. Allan is currently working with an attorney to establish the NGO (Non-Governmental Organizations) for Mercy House. He originally thought Mercy House could fall under the umbrella of Mercy Nairobi's NGO.

Once Allan and M'Lynn got on the ground in Kenya, they realized it needed to be a separate NGO.



We are also still waiting on a building to use. There have been some potential buildings, but they haven't worked out yet. They were either too expensive or parts of the building have been rented out to other tenants. We have decided that the building we are looking for will be operated as a soup kitchen daily and provide small services like laundry and showering once a week.



One morning, we put together 100 care packages for the women we will be serving. These backpacks include a blanket, toothbrush, toilet paper, soap, socks, and much more. It was such an encouraging time getting items ready for the women and children God has for us.



KENYA ELECTION 2022



Many of you have been praying about the current elections in Kenya. Kenya has been an independent nation since December of 1963, so it is still a young county. Voting took place on Tuesday, August 9th, and the electoral commission has until August 16th to finish counting the ballots. Currently, there are two candidates in the lead. To win the presidency, a candidate has to get 50% plus one of the cast votes and at least 25% of the votes in 24 of the 47 counties.

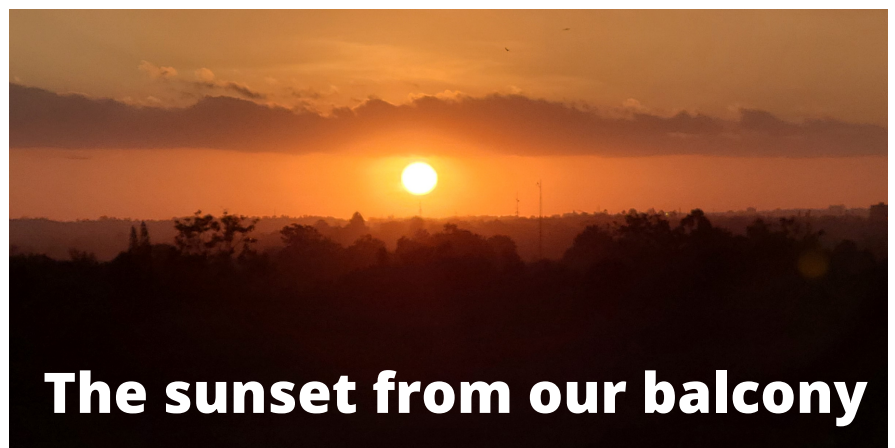
Many Kenyans went on holiday (stop working) the Monday before the voting happened and are now, five days later, starting to return to work. Kenyans are airing on the side of safety due to voting disputes in the past. In 2007, at least 1,200 were killed, and a few hundred thousands fled their homes after it was reported that the election was rigged. This year's vote has been peaceful so far.

They still have not announced a winner yet, with the race being so close in votes. The votes are expected to be close enough that they hope for a re-vote for the two leading candidates. If that is the case, the voting will happen again before September 8th.

As a team here on the ground, we feel very safe. Allan and M'Lynn have done a great job keeping us informed and taking us places that we need to go.

TORI'S PERSONAL UPDATE

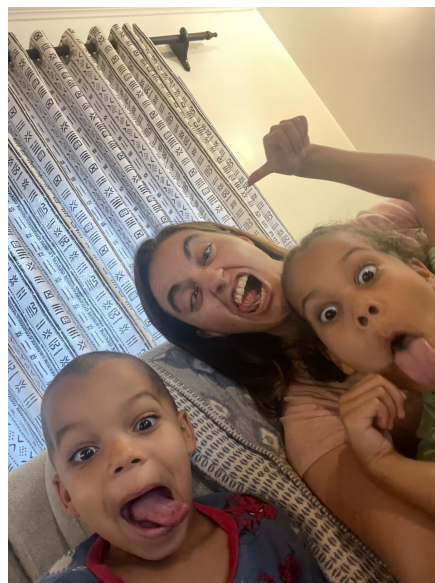
Letting go of independence in this season has been the hardest to overcome. Not being able to jump in my car and go to a friend's house or even a store without a plan has been hard to wrap my brain around. Sitting in a season of rest (due to elections) is not something that I am used to either, but I see God growing me in my trust in Him to have everything in control and with his perfect timing. Like when we were standing in line at the store getting items for our new home! I noticed a gentleman (James) struggling with his oxygen reader with a friend (Yosef), trying to ensure that he got the right batteries. I was able to help James and ended up having a great conversation with Yosef about God and why we were here. I also invited him to our upcoming bible study! A few days later, while walking through the mall, I hear someone yelling, "HEY, I KNOW YOU!". It was James. He shared that his oxygen levels were great, and he was so thankful for my help! Things may be a little slower here, but God is moving in Nairobi, and I am so excited to be able to partner with our Yahweh!



RACHEL'S PERSONAL UPDATE

Life is slow here. I knew that the slower pace of life would be good for me in the long run but that it would take time to adjust. Our team motto is "if you get one thing done today...it is a good day". Many of you know that I would get 10-20 things done on my to-do list in the states.

One of the things I started doing to help me find joy in the little things is taking a daily picture with Anaiya and Zeek when I see them. They get so excited and sometimes even ask, "is it time for our daily picture." I'm so thankful we have kids on the team to help provide some energy (even though sometimes they have more energy than us adults know what to do with, ha).



Ask me what my favorite color is, and I'm going to say cheetah print. Well, guess what?! In Africa, there is access to lots of cheetah. I have had so much fun picking out cheetah decor for my bedroom. It brings me so much joy having an entire cheetah on my duvet cover and cheetah print curtains. It is starting to help me truly feel like this is home.





Caleb's perspective
3:30 pm



My perspective
10:30 pm

I would like to give you a little glimpse into my personal life. I have prayed for an opportunity to live in Kenya on missions for 10 years. I have also prayed for 10 years for a godly man to date, marry, and to serve God with. Well... God has a funny sense of humor, because he answered both requests at the same time. This was not the situation I had in mind when I was praying for these two things. But, God is teaching me that His plan is better than any plan I could create myself.

Caleb and I met in November 2021 and started developing a friendship immediately. Due to me moving to Kenya, we both focused on building the friendship. As the friendship grew, so did our feelings for each other, and we decided that dating long distance was worth it. I am so thankful that we have made that step and are continuing to grow our relationship with each other. To be transparent, Caleb and I are dating with the intention of marriage. He points me to Christ each and every day and is such a blessing in my life. I don't understand God's timing and at times it can be frustrating trying to grow a relationship with 8,000 miles and seven time zones between us. Still, God is faithful and has given us a great foundation in Him for our relationship as we continue dating with the intention of marriage. Caleb is currently looking for teaching opportunities in Kenya so that he can move here and we can serve the Lord together.

But for now, we are thankful for the gift of technology as we are using Facetime to keep up with each other. I am so thankful that Caleb has a job with an hour lunch break that aligns with my evening availability. Finding the joy in the little blessings is keeping our spirits up!

PRAYER REQUESTS

Rachel

-Praise: Tenants moved into the home I own in the states on July 30!

-Patience as I adjust to a much slower pace of life

-Safe travels for the Kohman family (Jordan, Lee, and 3 daughters) as they arrive in Kenya on August 30

-relationship with Caleb

-Kenya job opportunity for Caleb

Tori

-For my one (close to me, but far from God); to start investing in

-To care well for those around me in work and home

-Getting settled in our new home

-For learning a new culture and language

Mercy Nairobi Church

-Bible study is starting at the YMCA on September 7

-To find core members for our launch

-To find a Music Director

-The process of establishing an NGO

Mercy House

-For a building to use for the soup kitchen

-The process of establishing an NGO would be a smooth and fairly quick process

-The hearts of the women on the streets to be open to receiving help and the gospel