

October/November  
2023

# KEEPING UP WITH KENYA

*Monthly Newsletter*

## WHAT IS GOD TEACHING ME?

*Getting sick with mono and COVID honestly wrecked my routine in the Word. Both of the viruses took away most of my mental energy and capacity. But God is still with me in these difficult seasons and our relationship continues to grow.*



*In the past two months I was still able to read Genesis 12-50 and the book of Exodus. I will admit that I did not read daily but I am glad the Holy Spirit still taught me as I read these two books.*

*God has been teaching me a lot about letting go of my own control and trusting that He is in control. This is still a very challenging area of my relationship with the Lord (and people), but I am thankful that my trust is growing more and more and that God has been patient with me.*

“We must get up and go to Bethel. I will build an altar there to the God who answered me in my day of distress. He has been with me everywhere I have gone.” ~Genesis 35:3

“The people believed, and when they heard that the LORD had paid attention to them and that he had seen their misery, they knelt low and worshiped.” ~Exodus 4:31

# MERCY Nairobi



November 6-10 was Vacation Bible Study at one of the local primary schools. The children from Mercy House were able to attend as well as many kids from the surrounding area. We had 16 church members also volunteer their time to help.

Some students that attended this VBS have started to come to church on Sundays. Continue to pray that God will open their hearts to hear the Gospel message and save their souls.



God is continuing to grow the Mercy Nairobi Church family. We have had 5 more baptisms. We have also added more covenant members to the church family. When we launched in April, we had 21 committed members. We now have 47 members. Wow! We have double in size in just half a year. I know that God will continue the amazing work He is doing through Mercy Nairobi with salvation, baptism, discipleship, and church growth. Please pray specifically for our new believers to be disciplined well by strong believers in the church.



Caleb is one of those 47 members. He went through a membership interview with Allan and has committed to serve the church at Mercy Nairobi as long as God calls him there.

Caleb has always enjoyed playing the bass in church in order to serve the body with worship. It took some time to get everything set up for him to play but he has now started playing bass on Sundays.



Allan has been leading us through a Genesis series over the last 9 weeks. He knew that every chapter wouldn't be covered but it was still a great series. There were 8 weeks of sermons and then we always do a recap Sunday the last week of the series.

I have always been in larger churches so I have enjoyed the recap Sundays in a smaller church. Allan is truly encouraging us to find the answers in the Bible ourselves and to encourage our brothers and sisters with that. He is trying to change the mindset of just trusting the pastor at his word and not having Scripture to support it. During recap Sundays, people have an opportunity to share what they learned during the series and also to ask questions that are still unanswered.

If you would like to listen to the Genesis sermons, please use this website:

<https://www.mercynairobi.com/post/stories-from-the-beginning-genesis>

# MERCY *house*



In my last newsletter I shared that resident A. left with her three children. About a month later, she agreed to her consequences and new plan and has returned. We were all so excited to see her return. Her two youngest sons spent a lot of time in my lap as they readjusted.

At the beginning of November, a team from my sending church, Mercy Charlotte, came to Kenya. They helped out with Mercy House for three mornings. I loved seeing the energy they brought and the kids loved having them around. The moms were still going to school and we had 17 kids at home. It was nice to have the extra hands! We build toy airplanes, played board games, and even made homemade cookies!



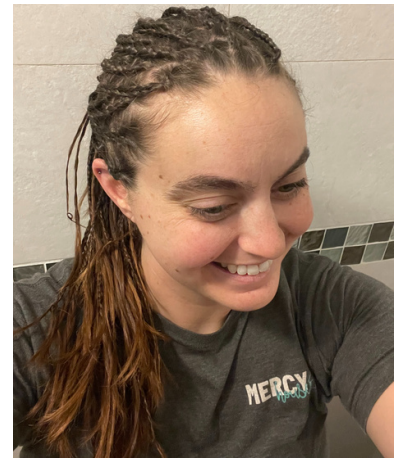
Caleb had a day off when I was scheduled to work so he decided to come join us at Mercy House. He taught some of the ladies how to make popcorn on the stove top while the kids watched the Lion King.

Everyone loved the popcorn! I even came to work the next day and they had already made popcorn on their own. We enjoy sharing American culture with the residents at Mercy House.

The Kenyan school system runs a different schedule than American schools. The school year is from January to November and in trimesters. Therefore, the 7 women and 18 children are all home from school during the months of November and December for their "summer" break. We wanted to make sure they didn't spend the entire break watching tv, so we planned some activities.



We made pasta necklaces. I taught the women how to crochet.



We painted. The women pleated my hair. It took 5 hours!



We took a trip to the safari walk which is like a zoo.



We went to the park.

# PERSONAL UPDATE

We had a lot to celebrate over the last two months!



We celebrated Caleb's first birthday in Kenya! He always goes to the fair for his birthday in the States so we spent the entire afternoon and evening making fair food including: corn dogs, fries with cheese dip, onion rings, funnel cake, fried Oreos, and candied apples. It was a lot of work but so much fun getting to recreate these foods!

Salome is one of the matrons at Mercy House. She was attending university and has now graduated with an associates degree in Biblical studies and a bachelors degree in Christian counseling. She invited us to her graduation party. Big celebrations usually happen in the village where the person being celebrated in fun. I will admit that Caleb, Ashley, and I got lost on some muddy roads. A boda (motorcycle) driver had to come find us and lead us to the right location. It was a fun adventure but a long day. We were so happy to celebrate this huge accomplishment with Salome.



Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday! Last year I was in the States for a visa run so this was my first Thanksgiving in Kenya. Caleb and I really enjoyed hosting. We made many different dishes to make sure everyone's favorites were included. I also made a pecan pie from scratch for the first time. I am so glad we got to celebrate with Tori and Ashley. We also introduced our Kenyan friend Barbara to the American holiday. There was some pecan pie leftover so I took it to Mercy House to share with the women and children. They loved it and said it was so sweet!



We had a wedding reception in order to celebrate our marriage with the friends we have made in Kenya who were unable to attend our wedding in the States. We enjoyed Kenyan food and even learned some Kenyan dances! It brought my heart so much joy to see many cultures (American, Kenyan, Brundian, Korean, and Canadian) come together to celebrate. It felt like a small taste of what heaven will look like when we are worshipping God together.





Mercy House



West Nairobi School



Sean and Yvonne  
from Mercy Nairobi Church



Brian and Brenda  
from Mercy Nairobi Church



Thompson, Ashley, and Tori



Ebe from Mercy Nairobi Church





Caleb and I took a weekend to get away from the hustle of Nairobi. We went to a place called Naivasha. Our Airbnb was in an animal sanctuary so we got to walk around and see many animals including zebras, giraffes, dik-dik, waterbuck, antelope, and hippos. It was a refreshing trip!



We also had the opportunity to visit a rhino and elephant orphanage.

# PRAYER REQUESTS

## Rachel

- Good health, I have been in and out of sickness for over three months now
- Opportunities for Gospel conversations with the women and children at Mercy House
- Spiritual jubilation during the Christmas season

## Caleb

- Good time with family during the Christmas season
- End of semester exams to go well with his high school students
- Opportunities for Gospel conversations with his students

## Mercy Nairobi Church

- Family groups to continue growing
- Allan & Jordan as they shepherd a growing church plant
- New believers to be disciplined well to grow and mature in their faith

## Mercy House

- The women and children have an opportunity to spend time with family during Christmas. Please pray for wisdom and peace as they decide how long to go home.
- Praise: There is joy and laughter in Mercy House! Pray this continues for the entire school break.