

September

2009

The **CARTER CHRONICLES**

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"And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ..."

(Col. 4:3)

Dear Friends, Family and Ministry Partners,

It's hard to believe we're half-way into September already! The days are finally warming up although we still enjoy evening fires in the fireplace. Josiah has started his final year at Rift Valley Academy and has already submitted several college applications. The monkeys have discovered our lettuce patch (so monkeys like salad!?) and so we have embarked upon a project to screen in our tiny garden.

Thank you for praying for rain in Kenya. We have finally started receiving a few overnight showers. People are happier and the vegetation is less brown. A few colorful blossoms can be seen peeping out hopefully here and there. However electric power, mostly from hydroelectric plants, is still being rationed to only four days per week due to low water supplies, and the price of milk has shot up because dry cows have stopped producing. Food staples are still expensive and in short supply, and there is a level of hunger we have not seen in Kenya before. Please continue praying.

Last month (Aug. 8) Bob turned 54 years old. He actually volunteered to take call on his birthday, not to ignore a reminder of aging but to free up an otherwise-scheduled call day in order to enable a family vacation to Kenya's coast the following week. Of course, the inevitable happened. As he was setting knife to birthday steak he got an emergency call to the hospital and so was an hour late to his own birthday party! But we celebrated the entire next week with sun, sand and seafood. It was worth the exchange!

Bob also did a "birthday experiment" this year. The question, "What do you want for your birthday?" is perennially difficult to answer, since "the Kingdom of God expressed on earth" is not yet commercially available. Bob

decided to use his birthday as an occasion to raise funds for HOPE for AIDS on Facebook. This way, we enabled friends and family to do something special in honor of Bob's birthday: to contribute to a worthy cause. We did not publicize the request outside of Facebook. The results: so far four people have given \$114 to HOPE for AIDS. We are grateful to each one who has given. Although Bob's birthday is past, we think contributions may still be received.

Kenya is celebrating the recent arrival of two trans-oceanic fiber-optic internet cables that will vastly enhance its connectivity with the rest of the world. As communications technology advances and options expand, how best to communicate with our ministry partners becomes increasingly complex. Some of you receive our monthly email updates, some of you frequent our web page for the articles and pictures posted there, and some of you without internet access only receive these quarterly newsletters. We would ask those with internet to be understanding if they see some information duplicated in these newsletters for the sake of our partners who have no other way to hear from us. Meanwhile, it may still be long before Kijabe is able to link into Kenya's new fiber-optic technology. For now, letters and email are still the best ways to communicate with us.

As always, we remain acutely aware of how dependent we are on the faithful prayers of our ministry partners. Indeed your faithfulness in prayer is a constant blessing and source of strength to us. We frequently thank God for you. Please know how much we appreciate you.

Partners Together in the work of Christ,

Bob and Hope

Reaping Dividends with Prayer

by Hope Carter - HOPE for AIDS Prayer Coordinator

“I have something exciting to share with you after the planning meeting,” Pastor Manase said to me last week. Pastor Manase is on the community prayer planning committee which organizes and leads the monthly AIDS prayer meeting in Nairobi. Different churches take turns hosting this interdenominational prayer meeting. It was when the monthly prayer meeting was hosted in his church that Pastor Manase first became involved with HOPE for AIDS. He attributes his growing interest and involvement to those prayer times.

Then last Christmas Pastor Manase invited Bob and me to come sensitize pastors and community leaders about HIV and AIDS in his home area near Kakamega in Western Kenya. You will find that write up in a previous newsletter and on our website. But that was just the beginning for him. He was trained by HOPE for AIDS as an AIDS Educator and a few months later joined the planning committee for the monthly community AIDS prayer meetings.

Growing in excitement and vision for AIDS-related ministry, in July he called together 60 pastors from different denominations in his home area for a 3-day seminar on HIV and the role of the church. Our colleague, Bev Howell, accompanied and assisted him for this event. The pastors, many of them personally acquainted with the effects of the AIDS crisis in their churches and even their own families, were hungry to learn and were motivated to action by the event. They decided to begin with joint prayer meetings like the one they heard about in Nairobi, where they can come together to seek guidance from the Lord about how to begin ministering to those impacted by AIDS in their communities.

A friend of one of the pastors attending the July seminar requested Pastor Manase to hold another one day workshop for church leaders on Mount Elgon this month. The area is notorious for generations of violent land disputes between the Sabaot, Bukusu and Teso tribes. In the past 3 years there have been more people displaced from their homes because of that conflict than were displaced in all of Kenya during the post election violence of 2008. Rape as a weapon of war has become common, leaving many HIV positive. For the first time in memory, church leaders

representing each of the warring factions gathered together in one place. Due to the tensions, the site they chose for gathering together was just outside the camp of the Kenyan army peacekeepers! They gathered to learn more about their common enemy, HIV, and whatever role the church might play in fighting it. They gathered to hear a message of hope from the man of prayer and passion, Pastor Manase.

The army commanders also attended the meeting, both out of curiosity and to assure peaceful conduct. Pastor Manase observed that the soldiers managed to find duties that were within earshot and were unusually quiet as they leaned close to hear what was being said through the public address system. The day was peaceful, fruitful and anointed. Across factions, pastors and church leaders found something significant that they could work on together – and they plan to begin by praying together regularly. They are eagerly anticipating further training on how to effectively address the ravages of HIV in their communities, churches and homes. The Commander in Charge has requested similar training for all his soldiers.

Pastor Manase incorporates active promotion of prayer as he works to educate church leaders on HIV. It was through prayer that his interest in AIDS ministry was piqued, and he sees it as a motivating and unifying factor for churches. Through informed prayer, church leaders are learning more about AIDS issues and discovering ways to coordinate their efforts as they listen to God together. It is creating a thirst to learn more not just about HIV but also about how God works in the midst of such difficult circumstances to express His compassion and His power through His people.

It is exciting for us to see how God has used our efforts to encourage prayer and to train a few pastors and church leaders in Nairobi in a manner that has reached places far beyond our scope of influence with His Love and Mercy. Our God can multiply our few loaves and fishes to produce fruit and meet needs beyond our wildest imagination. Pray for these communities in Western Kenya, as they struggle for peace and health, to know that our Almighty God is ready to help them with both.



Pastor Manase

Kaimosi Hospital Board Report

The Kaimosi Hospital Board met on 11 & 12 September, with Bob chairing the Clinical and Standards Committee on the 11th and participating in the full Board on the 12th. Points of interest include:

- The Board confirmed Mr. John Mulama in the position of hospital administrator after the successful completion of his probationary period. We are now looking to recruit a Head of Finance to work under him.

- The successful hiring of a full-time x-ray technician has given the hospital 24-hour x-ray services.

- Specialty clinics are now being offered for diabetes, hypertension, eye diseases, tuberculosis, trauma follow-up, pediatrics, and complicated obstetrics/gynecology in addition to routine maternal and child health clinics and comprehensive HIV care.

- Two more nurses and one clinical officer have left the hospital, attracted by the improved salaries now being offered at government hospitals. It is so difficult to compete with Western-funded government salaries when the hospital's primary source of income is the pockets of impoverished patients. Only God knows the solution to this dilemma, yet still He reigns.

- The new hospital ambulance has been delivered, but at the time of the board meeting still needed a few "finishing touches" before being released for duty. We are SO grateful for everyone



New hospital ambulance

who contributed to make possible the purchase of this ambulance.

- We also rejoiced to learn that enough money has now been received to pay transport costs for the 40-foot shipping container filled with needed donated medical supplies. These supplies will considerably boost the diagnostic, surgical and therapeutic capacities of the hospital. We expect the container to arrive by the end of the year if all goes well.

- Hospital renovations have been continuing through the generosity of APHIA II, an AIDS-focused project renovating the

pediatrics ward and the laboratory, and courtesy of another organization that is sending groups of Somali nurses to Kaimosi Hospital to upgrade their professional skills. This is another evidence of the hospital's improving reputation.

- Finances remain a challenge. The Adopt-a-Nurse program continues to be a financial lifeline until patient revenues will eventually increase to the point of enabling

long-term financial sustainability. Until that day comes, the hospital still needs greater participation in this vital program.

Overall, this was a mixed meeting of encouraging reports and daunting challenges. Yet by the end of it all Bob came away with the strengthened conviction that given adequate support over the next few years, the long-term prognosis for vital, quality sustainable health services at Kaimosi is excellent.

Family Bits

Our house in Mebane, NC is temporarily (we hope) between renters. Needed repairs and maintenance are being undertaken at present. Please pray that a good, responsible renter will be found soon so that mortgage payments will not become a financial burden. We desire for the house to be a blessing both to us and to whoever is living in it.

Nathan finally has a routine work schedule, although it is still all night shifts. Each week he works four consecutive 10-hour night shifts followed by three nights off. He laments excessive boredom on his nights off, so if you are a weekend night owl you can encourage him by phone call (479-899-8480), Skype (nathancarter), or email (nathancarter@lavabit.com).

Levi has begun his final year at Taylor University. We are delighted that he received unexpected additional scholarship aid this year that will essentially give him a full ride. God is faithful! He reports that last week saw the Lord move in a powerful way in the student body. Students were publicly confessing sin and repenting with weeping over various ungodly lifestyle entrapments. It was, in short, an outpouring of revival

that is continuing to impact the student body even as of our Skype conversation with Levi last night. Pray for his efforts to establish an accountability group among the guys in his dorm. They plan to begin a study on "Purity."

Hannah is in her second year at Houghton College. She helped to orient new international students to the college at the beginning of this first term, and has decided to declare a major in English literature with a minor in linguistics. Besides her classes she enjoys participating in a Shakespeare drama group and singing in the women's choir.

Josiah is off to a good start in his challenging senior year at RVA. He is taking two advanced placement ("AP") courses in addition to physics, government, and the other usual college prep courses. He auditioned into Jazz Band this year and finds it challenging but a lot of fun. This first term he will play the part of the parson in the school drama, "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." He also is taking seriously his responsibilities as Pizza Manager for the monthly Senior Store, and still enjoys informal rugby games on Sunday afternoons.

Displaced No More!

In last month's emailed ministry update, we told about a Kisii widow among the mostly Kikuyu residents of an IDP camp ("internally displaced persons") situated in the Rift Valley below us. They have lost hope in the government's ability to resettle them and have taken matters into their own hands by deciding to buy the land on which the camp was established, and then to build their own permanent dwellings there. Each family unit needed to pay its portion or be left out of the arrangement, but the widow had no means of support or access to money. She feared being driven away once again. We are now glad to report that fundraising efforts among the missionaries at Kijabe were abundantly successful and the widow's place in the new community-to-be is now assured. Indeed God has a

heart for widows and orphans; but His heart is displayed most clearly through the love and compassion of His people. (If you would like to receive our email updates, send a message to bob.carter@sim.org.)



IDP camp down in the Rift Valley

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Praise

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Praise God for:

1. Rain! And pray that Kenya receives enough this year.
2. Pastor Manase and the impact of his ministry.
3. Revival at Taylor University!
4. Kaimosi Hospital's new ambulance, the funds to ship the much-needed container of medical supplies to Kaimosi, and the many other positive developments there.
5. The contributions to HOPE for AIDS raised through Facebook.
6. The generosity that enabled a Kisii widow to avoid being displaced again.



Pray for:

1. Relief from shortages of food staples and electricity.
2. Resolution to the many violent land disputes in Kenya.
3. Churches to work together across divisions in communities hit hard by AIDS. Pray that they may be effective in ministry.
4. The Lord to raise up a groundswell of prayer among His people in Africa. Pray for peace, health, justice and reconciliation.
5. An increase in patient utilization of Kaimosi Hospital services and for a consequent improvement in hospital finances.
6. Levi's efforts to start an "accountability group" in his dorm.
7. The \$2500 deficit in our support account to be met.

Reminder:

Support checks should be made out to SIM-USA, designated for Bob & Hope Carter and mailed to: **SIM USA, P.O. Box 7900, Charlotte, NC 28241-7900**. Alternatively, contributions may be made by web-based donation at www.sim.org. **Thank you!**