

The Holtums in Kenya – Prayer Letter No. 5

02/10/2007

Kenya Address:

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Kitere Church Growth



Foundations, December.



Walls built, 1 month on.

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“Consider the birds of the air.”

One of our favourite recreational activities is to watch the amazing Kenyan birds from our balcony. We enjoy such a wonderful variety of birds and our lifestyle is varied too. The bright yellow, black crowned, *Weaver Bird* is a frequent visitor; confident and sometimes aggressive with the other birds, then submissive if a larger one arrives. I liken him to the teenagers we visited in December, at Tumaini Children's home, in the foothills of the Aberdare Mountains to play a small part in their “coming of age” conference. A group of 30 or so met together over a period of 3 weeks. The boy's transition was marked with circumcision (performed by a trained doctor) and they all followed a discipleship programme culminating in Baptism in a local stream. We saw the Weaver's rounded nests hanging from the trees in groups as we journeyed.

The Northern Olive Thrush comes often - bold, lively with a good song. He is thrush sized but in many ways reminds us of our Christmas robin with his orange, rufous belly. A few days before Christmas we (SIMPACTERS) gave a party for the orphans at GOA Merciful Redeemer Children's Home with crafts, games, food including a Birthday cake for Jesus and goody bags. Our own Christmas celebrated on the compound was non commercial with good food & lots of fun. But we missed not having Holy Communion - our thoughts were with you, our family & friends. The New Year was likewise celebrated with hilarity and then fireworks. The weather until recently has been unseasonable- the *Crowned Crane* we spotted whilst driving best typifies the prolonged rain as it waded in the enlarged wayside pool, but the glorious *Sunbirds* with their long curved beaks and multi-coloured metallic sheen are now back, along with the sunshine, in our hedgerow, but they don't dine at our bird table.

Our King of Birds - the *Black Kite* continues to soar magnificently overhead, rising where others cannot fly & just occasionally will take something from the table. His presence is awesome causing our spirits to soar too. We have to compare him to the Lord's work in Kitere. Our return trip from Jan 4th -8th with Pastor Maurice was also awesome. Travelling is becoming easier, soaring over a new section of road which has been opened in one area to reach Kitere, rising, then plummeting into the potholes. All praise to God for amazing progress on the church building, the growing Christian discipleship, for 50 + leaders we trained & for their Life Cell groups; also for the fellowship & love shared as we stayed in their simple traditional mud homes. They gave richly from their poverty which was very humbling. This area of Kenya has been the most devastated by the AIDS pandemic & Fey gave the HIV/AIDS awareness talk she'd previously given to youth in Kibera slum, to the 100 + mixed age group gathered. Around 20% of the population are infected, all are affected.

The *Pied Crow* is a menacing creature, frightening weaker birds & devouring all he can. The works of the devil are all around in the poverty, crime & corruption. We need God's protection & his wisdom to fight and address issues as he leads.

.Prayer Points.

Thanksgiving:

- That our vision for cell development at GOA was accepted by leaders at the annual Conference in December
- For the generous gifts of people back home enabling the beginning of the KUKU (chicken) project at Christ Compassion.

For intercession:

- Pray new leaders at GOA Nairobi will see the need for cells and the ongoing training, and that our discussions with the International leadership will develop a strategy for Cells in all GOA churches.
- For the relocation & staffing changes at the ministry on Kibera.
- For our minister, Robin Trew, as he visits in early February.

Encouraging Christian Growth with Glory Outreach Assembly, Nairobi

Pray for us that: *the things we have heard.....may be entrusted to reliable men qualified to teach others.*

(2 Tim. 2:2)