



November 2020

Samburu Leaders Receive Entrepreneurial Training

"I thank God for the Friends Church family and global leaders to have such a training for our pastors in Samburu . . . which will be a light of hope in the church and for our families."

— Workshop participant Pastor Felix Nayeyo Lekuyie

Katrina and Shawn McConaughy recently spent six days in Samburu with pastors from Samburu, leaders from Turkana, and trainers from the Global Disciples organization. The week was sponsored by Indiana Yearly Meeting and centered around a four-day training course in business for pastors developed by Global Disciples. A similar training happened with the Turkana mission leaders several years ago and has made a significant difference there.

Shawn writes, "The Global Disciples training was meaningful and important for several reasons. For one thing, thirteen Friends pastors and pastors-in-training were introduced to a helpful framework for combining mission and small business.

"As in many places, sacred and secular work here gets separated so that pastors feel like they must choose one over the other. This training does a nice job of helping leaders learn to blend the two. It emphasizes the importance of doing business with ministry in mind and of recognizing that ministry can take place outside of a religious framework.



Friends from North Yearly Meeting, including Turkana Friends Mission Director John Moru, center, participated in leading a business training workshop for leaders in the Samburu Friends Mission. Here Robert Lesaana, from Samburu (at right) is interviewed about his business plan by (from bottom left) Pastor Philip Motwoi, Amos Maneno, John Losike Moru, and Nancy Saekwo.

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“Scripture was woven throughout the training, and tied to God’s call on us no matter what we are doing. I found that a number of Quaker values were highlighted by the curriculum: all persons are ministers; God has equipped us to respond to God’s call on our life; all of life is sacramental, not just church stuff; and God has created us to be holistic in our ministry—all of a person’s life matters to God.

“Breaking down the divisions between secular and sacred work helps pastors to become less reliant on their mission to support them. They become more financially stable, their families are happier, and it helps pastors get out in the community in a different role. FUM has invited all of its ministry partners to consider how they might find ways to become more financially self-sufficient. While the Samburu mission is not fully ready to stand on its own, a workshop like this helps move the mission in that direction.

“Another advantage of this training is that donors have supplied funds so that those who successfully complete the training have access to a revolving loan fund. That fund helps provide up-front capital for several pastors to get a simple business started. Possible businesses could be a small shop, a restaurant, a motorbike taxi, and so on. To request a loan, a participant in the program must submit a solid written business plan, as well as a ministry plan that explains how the business and ministry will be woven together. As loans are repaid, the next-in-line trainees can borrow.”



Read more of Shawn’s account at <https://www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/journal/samburu-mission-training>.



Ramallah Friends School, pre-Covid.

Friends United Meeting is accepting applications for the position of Head of Ramallah Friends School (RFS), located in Ramallah, Palestine. This is a full-time long-term field staff position within the Global Ministries Department of Friends United Meeting. The Head of School is the senior member of the RFS staff, responsible for ensuring FUM’s faithful stewardship as owners of the school and shepherding its mission of providing a distinctively Friends education to Palestinian boys and girls since 1869. The Head of School reports to the General Secretary of Friends United Meeting, and works in a mutually-accountable relationship with the Board of Trustees of the School.

Strong candidates will have the following qualifications:

- A growing Christian Quaker faith
- Extensive leadership experience, preferably within an educational institution and/or a large, complex organization
- Cross-cultural competence
- Excellent written and verbal communication
- Knowledge of the International Baccalaureate

[Visit FUM’s website for more information about this opportunity.](#)

AMO Explores New Avenues for Communication

The FUM Africa Ministries Office is constantly evaluating how we can communicate the work of Friends to our East African members. Effective communication is a unique challenge in East Africa, with its twenty-four Yearly Meetings, about 3,000+ local churches, and between 300,000–500,000 members. In addition, East African Friends vary widely in their access to electronic communication. Many places have no electricity yet many cell phones, which receive a signal through cell phone hot spots in most places, as well as fiber optic internet in some places. Computers and email are not nearly as widespread or accessible as mobile phones.

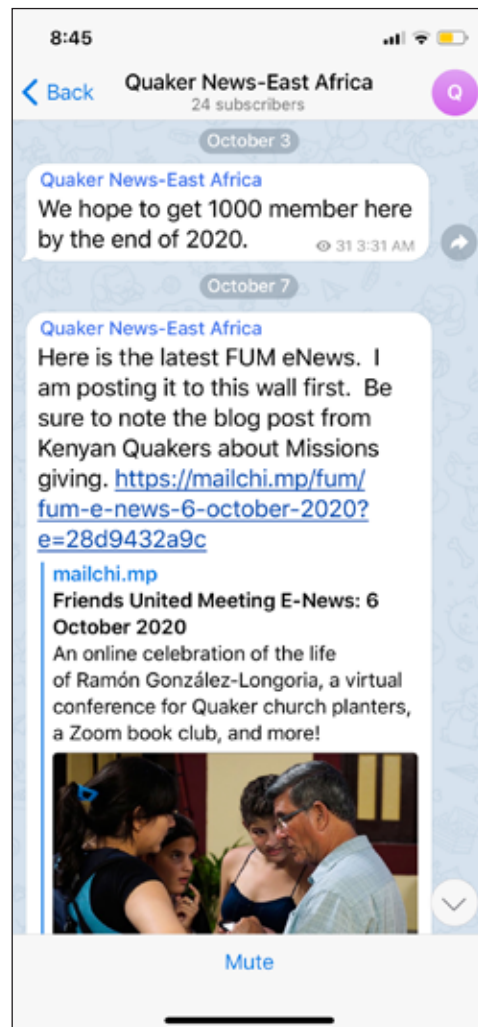
Even with sometimes intermittent service, cell phones have become essential to Kenyan life. During the 2007 post-election violence, phone payment systems that reduce the need for cash, or to be physically present to pay, became common. Now you can pay for everything from your electric bill to an ice cream cone with MPesa or one of the other phone payment systems.

Some of the cell networks still lag in remote areas and phone charging is a challenge in remote places like Turkana. Often one child walks to town—maybe an hour or more away—with several cell phones and pays a few shillings to get them all charged. Small solar units are becoming an affordable tool in areas with consistent power outages, or which lack electrical service. It is not uncommon to see a small solar panel outside a woven dwelling in remote Samburu County. You can buy solar sets complete with a solar panel, two to three room lights, a phone-charging port, and a rechargeable torch (flashlight), as well as various other options, for twenty to forty dollars.

Recently, closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have pushed many African churches online—which mostly means onto cell phones. Churches have learned to use Zoom and Facebook Live to stream services and meet together. Some have used texting or platforms like WhatsApp to reach out to members, and have created groups for online prayer and Bible study. Some have been creative with MPesa to collect offerings for paying the church bills and for feeding those who were struggling. Many have been grateful to join the FUM International Prayer Gatherings and the global General Board meeting on Zoom, as well as to join memorial services and church services all over the world.

FUM's Africa Ministries Office has been using the very popular WhatsApp messaging platform for some time to communicate with Friends across Africa. WhatsApp has allowed the AMO to create groups for the distribution of information and for discussion of ministries. AMO Programme Officer Shawn McConaughy reports that he belongs to at least twenty such WhatsApp groups, with titles like General Superintendents, FUM Ministries, Samburu Board, etc.

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With all the new ways of communicating electronically, however, the AMO has been finding itself challenged by the 256-member size limit for WhatsApp groups. Most AMO-affiliated WhatsApp groups are not that large, and the work of committees or task groups can be easily managed within that limit. But the limit does mean that WhatsApp is not a good platform for broadcasting information to thousands of people. In the past, FUM and the AMO have used print media when the desire is for a message to reach every Friend. But as pandemic closures disrupt travel (and therefore postal service), and close the gathering places that have served as distribution points for paper communications, the AMO has been looking for means other than paper by which to communicate to thousands of Friends and Friends groups.

For this reason, the AMO has begun to use and explore the Telegram messaging platform. A Telegram group can allow many thousands of members to share ideas and discuss issues. In addition, a Telegram channel allows the one-way dissemination of information, similar to radio and newspaper. A

Telegram channel allows the AMO to send out news in a variety of formats to groups which can be as large as 20–30,000 people. The one-way distribution makes it possible to keep our AMO announcements on the recipient's screen for a longer time—it doesn't move up the page and off the screen as people comment on and discuss the post.

The AMO would like to invite the Reading Clerk from each Local Meeting, Monthly Meeting, and Yearly Meeting to belong to the Telegram News Channel. Widespread membership in our Telegram channels would allow Quaker organizations like FWCC or USFW, as well as Yearly Meetings, to send messages that would reach far and wide among African Friends and increase our chances for broader connection. You are welcome to join our Telegram channel called "Quaker News–East Africa," or our interactive group named "Quaker Conversations–East Africa." After you've downloaded and set up the free Telegram app onto your phone, you can join these news channels at these links: [Quaker News–East Africa](#) or [Quaker Conversations–East Africa](#).

FUM Welcomes New AMO Operations Manager

Friends United Meeting is pleased to announce the appointment of Emonse Ibida Muhindi to become the newest member of our staff team. He will work from the African Ministries Office in Kisumu as our Operations Manager. Emonse is a graduate of Kenyatta University, where he received a bachelor's degree in Finance and Statistics. He completed his CPA I qualifications and is currently preparing for the CPA II exam.

Emonse is a strong communicator, detail-oriented, dedicated Christian, and comes to FUM with experience managing financial responsibilities for mission and NGO organizations. Previously, he worked as a Finance and Administrative Assistant for the University of Washington-Kenya. Most recently, Emonse served as a Finance Assistant with AIM AIR, the aviation division of African Inland Mission, Nairobi.

Emonse is a member of Soy Yearly Meeting. His pastor, Kennedy Demesi of Huruma Friends Church, says of Emonse, "He is a very committed member of the church where he grew throughout his life, together with his parents. He is a very humble and honest man. He loves his Quaker church."

As the Operations Manager, Emonse will oversee the daily operations of the African Ministries Office, coordinating staff schedules, managing business engagements, and serving as our bookkeeper. He began service with FUM on 26 October, 2020.



New Tablets Aid Remote Learning for BFS



Nikki Holland and Patricia Welch driving around the jungle looking for a student's home in order to deliver a tablet.

Nikki Holland writes from Belize:

This year, school in Belize is all remote. At Belize Friends School we have been trying to find a way to provide the same sort of holistic care that we normally give, and the paper packets mandated by the Ministry of Education did not allow for the deep connections between teachers and students that are so important to learning and growth for our kids. Many of our kids are at our school because they have different ways of learning, and paper packets aren't particularly effective for them, either. Paper packets require an incredibly high degree of parental involvement, and not all of our parents are able to provide that, whether because they work demanding jobs or for other reasons.

So at the end of September, we were able to purchase nine tablets, through generous donations from Western Yearly Meeting and FUM's COVID-19 Solidarity Fund, so that all of our students would be able to access a digital platform for their classes. We are still using paper packets. But now our teachers can connect with the students through calls and video conferences and they can post videos and links to resources.

Ms Patricia Welch, our main teacher, writes: "I feel happy that we will have the opportunity to use technology to bridge the gap between the students and us, the teachers. I am also thankful that our students have people on their side with genuine interest. I trust that with time we, both students and teachers, can learn to use our new technology for optimum learning."

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Indiana Yearly Meeting Translates *Faith and Practice* into Spanish

Recently, we at FUM have been noticing that North American Yearly Meetings are publishing their books of *Faith and Practice* in multiple languages as they increasingly serve multicultural communities. Most recently, Indiana Yearly Meeting (IYM) is preparing to publish their *Faith and Practice* in Spanish. Doug Shoemaker, General Superintendent, and Cathy Jessup, Clerk of the Communications and Publications Committee, shared insights with FUM about this important project:

FUM: What role does the *Faith and Practice* have in IYM?

Doug: Our *Faith and Practice* is important to us. We regard it as a clear description of our Christian/Quaker identity and the mutually agreed-upon standards of faith and practice for which we hold ourselves accountable.

FUM: Why is it essential for IYM to have your *Faith and Practice* published in Spanish?

Doug: We have three congregations in IYM for whom English is not their primary language. Two of them are Hispanic congregations. Translating our *Faith and Practice* into Spanish is a matter of accessibility for our Spanish-speaking Friends.

Cathy: I felt it was important to have a Spanish version to help our Spanish-speaking congregations better understand what it is to be a Quaker and Friend.

FUM: Who is guiding this effort?

Cathy: Our Communications and Publications Committee had this project on our agenda for a while. When I was asked to clerk this committee, I felt God put it on my heart to see it through from beginning to end. With the help of my committee and God's guidance, we found Karla Jay, who agreed to help us translate the *Faith and Practice*. Karla is the daughter of Carlos Moran, pastor of Iglesia Amigos de Indianapolis.

FUM: How do you envision the Spanish *Faith and Practice* being used and implemented?

Doug: While we are nearing completion, it is not published yet. Initially, I expect it to be available

electronically. Like our English version, we hope this resource will be used. Local congregations can use it to introduce their members to Friends in general and Indiana Yearly Meeting in particular.

Cathy: I feel the Spanish version of *Faith and Practice* will help more congregations and churches to thrive as Friends Meetings.

Friends are growing in new ways as communities become more culturally diverse, and as Friends from all parts of the globe settle in North America. The books of *Faith and Practice* reflect the unique identities of Yearly Meetings; this trend to issue new versions in other languages is a significant sign that Yearly Meetings are expanding as they welcome others, and this will only enrich their fellowships. —Kelly Kellum

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Friends Hold Conference in Southern Tanzania

In August of this year, Friends churches in the southern region of Tanzania held a regional conference in Mbeya Uyole. The conference theme was based on 2 Timothy 2:2-5, “Becoming a disciple and strong minister of the gospel,” and attracted fifty-six Quaker delegates and 180 guests from other churches.

Quakers are spreading rapidly in this area of Tanzania. The southern region is located on the shores of Lake Malawi, bordering the nations of Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia. The region includes Kyela, Mbeya, Sumbawanga, and Tunduma.

The Friends churches in Kyela have experienced sudden growth in numbers of people and numbers of churches. The seed for this growth was planted when Tanzanian Barnabas Mwaihojo read about Quakers on the internet and started a simple worship group. He went on to set up Meetings in three local villages. Since then, Kyela Friends have grown into fifteen Village Meetings.

Quakers are progressively becoming leaders in this region. The church that hosted the conference also invited pastors and choirs from five different denominations to participate in the open-air meetings in the church yard. The conference helped build good relationships with neighboring community churches that came to witness the conference and learn about Friends.

Some of the guests from other denominations were so influenced by presentations at the conference that they changed their denominational affiliation. Elisha Mwakaliwa, a Quaker pastor from the border town of Tunduma, invited one such participant. Nicholas Otieno, a Living Letter from Kenya to Tanzania, writes, “Joseph William Ngombanile is a graduate from a Baptist college. He was privileged to attend the leadership conference in Mwanza that was conducted by



Choir members in the church yard during the August conference in Mbeya Uyole.

Indiana Yearly Meeting and FUM. Since then, he has always been looking forward to attending other conferences, and interested to learn about the Quaker doctrines. He is eager to learn the Quaker Faith and Practice, and he is particularly fascinated by the Quakers’ simplicity and equality. In our sharing, he committed to joining the Friends Church with his family, which he has done.” Five more new members have also joined the Friends Church in Mbeya.

The USFW also held elections during the conference, after leadership training that was conducted by Dorcas Otieno—also a Living Letter from Kenya to Tanzania.

Despite challenges finding transportation to reach the conference venue, Nicholas Otieno says the conference was well-organized and full of the presence of the Holy Spirit. He also expressed appreciation for the FUM Africa Ministries Office, Indiana Yearly Meeting, and friends from around the world who have been in constant prayers and support of mission work in Tanzania. And he requests prayer for Friends Church Tanzania as it works to empower Kyela and Tunduma Monthly Meetings, which need both spiritual nourishment and demographic growth.

Kenyan Yearly Meetings Reflect on COVID-19

“People missed having church together BUT we remembered that the church isn’t a building and many families grew from having home fellowships.”

“Offerings were down and many pastors weren’t paid BUT it awakened the Yearly Meetings to how fragile this is and now we are strategizing how to better pay our pastors.”

“Our members felt afraid and confused by the lack of information or by conflicting information BUT we learned to use new technology for communication, spiritual encouragement, for connecting with one another, and for our financial giving.”

“It was sad to not have our usual big weddings and funerals BUT so much money was saved by the families that we might just keep some of it this way.”

“Government age restrictions first said no one over fifty-eight could attend churches when they reopened and we panicked to find that most of our leaders are over that age, BUT we have renewed our commitment to mentorship and the raising up of younger leaders.”

These are just a sample of some of the comments shared at a series of gatherings for Kenyan Yearly Meeting leaders when they were asked what they have learned during the COVID-19 pandemic. From 21–25 September, leaders from “The Big Three” Quaker organizations (FUM, FWCC, and FCK) traveled around Kenya to host daily regional workshops. Over the five days, Friends gathered in Chwele, Lugari, Kakamega, Vokoli, and Kisii. Each gathering brought together the Yearly Meetings in the region. Five to seven leaders from each Yearly Meeting as well as two young people under the age of thirty were invited. In all, twenty-one of the Kenyan Yearly Meetings participated.

It was valuable time spent together sharing about what we’ve been through in recent months and how we want to grow and change going forward.

As FUM’s Africa Ministries Director John Muhanji said, “Reflecting on what has happened is important because if you don’t know your story and what happened, it is hard to move ahead.”

The Africa Leadership team from FUM, FWCC, and FCK began meeting in April to agree on the dispersal of COVID relief funds raised from all over the world. And they began to discern that this was a powerful opportunity to continue working for unity among various Friends organizations in East Africa. One of the goals, after immediate relief, was to strategically look at communication inside and between Yearly Meetings, and mobilizing resources together rather than duplicating efforts, in the belief that we should not go back to “business as usual” when the COVID crisis has passed.

Speaking to the Yearly Meeting leaders, Muhanji asserted that, “We need to build on unity and remember that we are better together. The pandemic caught us unaware and we saw how unprepared we were, but it has also shone a light on our generosity and resilience.” During the workshops, each Yearly Meeting spent time evaluating their own responses to the impacts of COVID-19 in their churches. This reflection helped leaders assess how they might incorporate new practices and the lessons that they have learned. The conferences also included some teaching on how to improve communication, leadership succession planning, the mentoring of young leaders, and unity in resource mobilization.

Although we cannot know what long-term effects the COVID-19 era will have on Friends Churches in Kenya, even before the pandemic has come to an end Friends are challenging themselves to grow from the experiences, to celebrate new-found strengths, and to adopt some changes that will help their churches and Yearly Meetings flourish even when new challenges come.



Last Month on our Blogs

Friends United Meeting publishes two web journals, one for [news stories](#), the other for [spiritual and theological reflection](#). Here are some stories we published in October:

[A Sending Church](#): Shawn McConaughy interviews three Kenyan Friends on their philosophies of giving to missions work among Africans and around the world.

[What is Friends Church Kenya?](#): Over the past several months, a number of our news items have described work undertaken through partnership between three Friends organizations working in Kenya: Friends United Meeting's Africa Ministries Office, the Africa section of Friends World Committee for Consultation, and Friends Church Kenya. Of these three organizations, Friends Church Kenya is least familiar to our non-Kenyan readers. So we offer this brief description of their origins and their work.

[Kenyan Quaker Schools Begin Phased Re-openings](#): The Kenyan government recently directed that all schools partially re-open by 5 October 2020. The phased re-opening welcomed back students in Class Four, Class Eight, and Form Four. The Quaker Education Commission, led by the Education Secretary, Ben Nasikungu, surveyed six secondary and three primary schools within Bungoma County to assess challenges since re-opening.

[FCPT Continues to Promote Girls Health on Mt. Elgon](#): Friends Church Peace Team (FCPT), through the international COVID Collaboration fund, donated sanitary towels to teenage girls in an effort to reduce defilement cases associated with poor access to the items. They were able to give a three-month supply of sanitary towels to 115 girls from Kipsigon, Chepyuk, Nomorio, and Tuikut in Mt. Elgon.

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