

# CONNECTIONS

in Friends United Meeting



March 2021

## Living Water in Maasai-land

Some of us find it easy to simply turn on the tap in our kitchen or bathroom to find water that we can drink safely. According to various sources, the percentage of Kenyans who do not have ready access to clean water is between 40–43%. This represents fifteen to seventeen million Kenyans. It is far worse in some other African nations. Often, Kenya’s pastoralist people groups—Maasai, Turkana, Pokot, Samburu, etc.—have much lower percentages of people with access to clean water.

Recently, Friends in the Narok region in southern Kenya (the center of Maasai-land) undertook a biosand water filtration project among Friends. This training and filter construction was meant to benefit both the local members of Friends churches and to additionally serve as an outreach opportunity into the broader Maasai community.

Vincent Sinteria Lekishon, a Maasai Quaker, traveled from his current home in Kisumu to provide water instruction, oversight, and encouragement to those in his home region. Vincent had worked with Del and Suzanne Livingston (Water for Africa) on prior water projects and is a skilled leader. Some of the funds for this project came from individual donations to FUM for biosand water projects among East African Friends.

Through his trainings, Vincent taught about the importance of clean drinking water and the illnesses associated with contaminated water. Waterborne diseases, like dysentery, cholera, hepatitis, and others, often slow the growth of children, hamper maternal health, and lower life expectancy. The training also included direction on how to construct, use, and maintain biosand water filters. Another aspect of the training was a consideration of how churches might use the clean water project to reach others among their people with the Good News. Providing safe water and other kindnesses are ways that Friends live out Jesus’ command to love one’s neighbors. These acts of love not only serve others, they often open doors to sharing about the source of this love. New believers might be cultivated through this “watering” effort.

Vincent’s trainings were a great encouragement to the churches in this area. They learned not only how to provide clean water for themselves, but the filters might also provide some small income to help with other church projects. There will be a follow-up session in April to see how these Friends churches are doing with sharing clean drinking water and the Living Water.

Please continue to pray for this project that offers new life to Maasai-land.



# The New Generation Quaker Scholars

Our world has been going through some hard days with Covid-19 raging and invading many lives in different parts of the world. It has been a jarring and disjointed time in history. We have been praying for the world, and with the discovery of a Covid vaccine, we have a light of hope.

As we embrace the new normal, Friends Church Dar es Salaam has been struggling to get back on its feet. Friends Church Dar es Salaam is a member of Tanzania Yearly Meeting. It was planted in March 2019 after a week-long evangelism event that was funded by Friends in Kenya in collaboration with the Friends United Meeting Africa Ministries Office.

Nicholas and Dorcas Otieno have been working with the leadership of Friends Church Dar es Salaam to revive the church through personal evangelism, discipleship through teaching, and leadership training. Nicholas writes:

“Sospeter, a young marine engineering student, is one of these young Quakers we are nurturing into evangelism. He is looking forward to graduating in July of this year. While he awaits his graduation, he is committed to serve in the church with some of his friends.

“This group has been reaching out to their fellow students in colleges and sharing the gospel. They are all interested in serving God as Quakers. We have introduced a training program which helps them to go through Bible training exercises to prepare them for ministry, so that by the time they graduate from normal colleges, they will be able to plant and take care of the church.

“These young college students call themselves ‘The New Generation Quaker Scholars.’ Many of them come from Kigamboni district and so they find it hard to catch up with Sunday services at the main Dar church, which is across town in Ubungo District. We are planning to open a Village Meeting at Kigamboni which will be able to serve them and disciple new believers who will join us. We will be having a leadership training exercise as well as Easter meetings for evangelism from 1–7 April.

“Please pray for the planning and success of this evangelism event. We thank you for your willingness to join us in prayer.”



## **Quaker Life themes for the remainder of 2021 will be as follows:**

- July 2021, Community. Deadline: May 15
- October 2021, Simplicity. Deadline: August 15

*Quaker Life* is a quarterly publication which reports and reflects on how, as individuals and communities, we live our faith. How does Christ inform your life, shape your life, lead you here or there? How do you discern and answer the call of the Inward Teacher? What obstacles to Love have you overcome? How is Christ redeeming you these days?

Each issue of *Quaker Life* revolves around a particular Christian theme. We hope that by making the theme of each issue widely known, we will be able to deepen the pool of our contributors, and persuade some reluctant authors to send in a submission—in text, image, or both—by virtue of a powerful experience with our theme for the issue.

What we hope to receive in a submission is an account of your own experience with the theme—individually, within your family or work place or neighborhood, in the life of your faith community—written in a clear and understandable style. We are also eager to accept concrete or abstract images on the theme, accompanied by a brief description of the piece's meaning, or process of creation, or both. We have no word limits for textual submissions, but, as a useful guide, most of our essays run between 175 to 1800 words. We are not able to accept handwritten submissions.

To submit your work, or for more information, please email [danielk@fum.org](mailto:danielk@fum.org).

# The Otienos Need Support

Friends, I hope you are reading the news about Friends in Tanzania with joy and interest. Our Kenyan missionary friends, Nicholas and Dorcas Otieno, are hard at work sharing the love of Jesus throughout Tanzania. And they are working to raise up young people to be solid, well-trained leaders in the Friends Church. Friends churches throughout Tanzania are the beneficiaries of the good encouragement and training work of Nicholas and Dorcas.

Yesterday I sat with Nicholas and listened to him describe their hopes for ministry. I heard about what it takes just to travel between the areas where Friends are located. It is a very taxing undertaking, sometimes traveling by bus for more than twenty-four hours. The Otienos are committed to this work.

They are part of an answer to the prayers offered by Kenyan Friends that missionaries from Kenya would be sent out by Kenyans. Of course, other Kenyans, like Oscar Mmbali in Belize and Robert Wafula at Friends Theological College, are missionaries sent by FUM.

Financial support for the Otienos from within Kenya is building. A growing list of Kenyans are stepping forward to offer financial support. However, the start-up funds for this mission endeavor have come to an end, and Covid has slowed outreach to Kenyan Friends. Support from Kenya is not yet up to what is needed to fully sustain the Otienos. As the African Missions Committee works to raise up more supporters from within Kenya, would those of you outside of Kenya consider partnering with the Otienos and Kenyan Friends to keep this work moving forward? Your contributions will bring much encouragement during these trying times. The burden is a bit lighter when you know others are walking next to you.

Every \$1000 (100,000 Ksh) fully supports the Otienos for another month. A one-time gift would be so helpful. Or, would you consider a monthly donation of \$10, \$25, or \$100 for one year or more? If so, you can do that in one of two ways.

In Kenya use the FUM Africa Ministries mPesa paybill number 514608 and put “Otieno” in the account line. You will receive an electronic receipt from the AMO office.

From anywhere in the world you can go to <https://www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/giving/donate> to support the work. Under “select fund” scroll down to “Living Letters: Nicholas and Dorcas Otieno (Tanzania)” and follow the rest of the prompts. Checks can also be mailed to the FUM office at 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374.

If you are interested, we would be happy to add you to the WhatsApp Wall created just for the Otieno’s financial support team. You can get current updates on ministry in Tanzania and regular prayer requests directly from Nicholas and Dorcas. Just email [shawnm@fum.org](mailto:shawnm@fum.org) with your WhatsApp contact info.



—Shawn McConaughey

# Hybrid Quakerism

At the Meeting where I serve as pastoral minister, I like to tell them that we've squeezed about ten years of adaptation into about ten months. Before the pandemic, we weren't even thinking about virtual meetings, video meeting for worship, Zoom worship/meetings, and live streaming. Now, all of this has become as commonplace as the annual chicken noodle dinner or a Founders Day carry-in meal. And this is true for many Meetings, be they programmed or unprogrammed.

For most Meetings and pastoral ministers, a normal week these days might include a Zoom committee meeting or two, a Zoom gathering for a Bible study, and a Facebook Live event that offers encouragement or inspiration. The week will also involve recording a prepared message for their YouTube channel, sending out a Zoom link for the Zoom meeting for worship, and even preparing self-led worship guides that can be downloaded from a Facebook page or email. All of this is offered as a way to make sure folks have as many opportunities as possible to connect with one another in worship as well as keeping the ministries moving forward through regular meetings. Even if in-person/indoor worship is being offered, many of these other options are still included with the intention of making community life available to as many as possible.

For the most part, these alternative means of gathering have had positive effects—especially since we are in such a challenging season and our best creativity is needed to meet the challenge. But, it also offers some added pressure, such as:

- Increased costs to local Meetings to purchase video and live streaming equipment
- Increased costs to update websites and pay someone to manage the website
- Increased responsibility on the pastoral minister and staff to prepare multiple versions of a worship (ie, self-led, video recording, live stream, and even indoor)
- Increased challenges to find ways to connect with folks that do not have access to the internet or social media



*A Zoom meeting of the FUM Board.*

As we transition out of the pandemic, the next step of discernment will be what to keep and what to let go of in terms of innovation. The sense is that we will be continuing a lot of what we started due to the pandemic. Folks habituate very easily and many have become used to having “options” and live stream as well as recorded worship that they can view later if they can't attend meeting for worship on Sunday. We may find that as the world gets back to some semblance of normal, our Quaker world will look and feel very different. Our message doesn't need to change—but the medium through which we convey that message may be permanently altered.

—Scott Wagoner

*Scott Wagoner is in his nineteenth year as the pastoral minister of Deep River Friends Meeting (North Carolina Fellowship of Friends), and also serves on the Friends United Meeting Board. He hosts two Zoom calls a week (Wednesday/Thursday at 11AM EST) for Quaker pastoral ministers and Meeting leaders. Email him at [scottwagoner62@gmail.com](mailto:scottwagoner62@gmail.com) if you would like more information.*

# Friends on the “Radio”

Recently, Friends on two separate continents have been using online media to broadcast Quaker content.

## **In Africa: Rafiki Media Kenya Limited**

Rafiki Media is an independent faith-based online media platform owned by the Friends Church (Quakers) Nairobi Yearly Meeting. Rafiki is using online broadcasting to attract and serve a uniquely Quaker audience within, and beyond, Kenya.

Using Facebook to distribute content, Rafiki Media launched its operations in January 2021, to overcome the geographical distances among Kenyan Friends which create an obstacle to spreading content and information among the Quaker community. It is committed to generating and creating content that will inform and educate Quakers across all age brackets, keeping in mind changing needs and trends. It reaches major areas that are populated by the Quaker church, such as Nairobi, Nakuru, Mombasa, Malindi, Kwale, and the western region of Kenya. Rafiki Media aims to establish a digital platform for Quaker pastors in Africa. RMK has also launched an initiative to reach out to vulnerable Quaker schoolchildren by donating face masks, hand wash, and sanitary towels.

At present, Rafiki Media is using Facebook Live for their own broadcasting, and is also sharing news and videos published by others on that page. They’ve presented live video streams with, among others, Pastor Gilbert Imbayi of Friends Church Baltimore; FUM-AMO Director John Muhanji; Pastor Charles Shilongosi, the chairperson of the Young Friends Programme (YFP) Kenya; and live Sunday worship from Friends Church Donholm. ([You can find their videos here.](#))

Rafiki Media’s future vision is to create other media platforms, such as Quaker TV and radio, as a medium through which pastors, evangelists, and professionals will reach out to the general public to spread the Good News of Christ.



## **In Wilmington, Ohio, USA: WALH Quaker Hour**

When the governor of Ohio issued a stay-at-home order in March 2020, restricting the number of people who could safely gather in one place, the manager of the local internet radio station decided to create a series of hour-long programs to provide spiritual and religious content to the folks of Clinton County, Ohio. And thus it was that on Easter Sunday, 2020, the Quaker Hour joined the local Methodist, Baptist, Catholic and Church of Christ denominations, each with their own hour for broadcasting every Sunday. The Quaker Hour airs at 10 am and is repeated at 3 pm.

The Quaker Hour consists of three segments provided by six Wilmington Yearly Meeting pastors serving on a rotating basis. Mike and Nancy McCormick of Chester Friends and Springfield Friends are followed by Hannah Lutz of Ada Chapel Friends, or Katie Ubry-Terrell of Fairview Friends, or Patricia Thomas of Campus Friends, or Miriam Speight of Springfield Friends. Because [WALHradio.com](http://WALHradio.com) is an internet station, Friends from all over the country—whether they live in retirement communities, small towns, or rural areas—can listen along with Clinton County Friends to the Quaker Hour.

# Friendly Bananas in the DRC

The Quaker church in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was established in 1978 under the umbrella of Burundi Yearly Meeting. Since then, Friends' presence in DRC has grown, and the Quaker church there now has over 800 members. Located primarily in the eastern part of DRC, the Yearly Meeting conducts its business independently, despite the various challenges Congolese Friends face, such as illiteracy and poverty.

The Young Friends Program (YFP) in DRC has been actively involved in various income-generating activities to address the poverty of this region.

Almasi Malipo is a representative of the Young Friends Program in charge of development in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He studied agricultural industry and, when he finds time and resources, actively participates in YFP conferences. After attending a YFP conference held in Uganda, Almasi was inspired to begin a "banana project" with other Young Quakers at his home in DRC. Across Africa, bananas serve as an important food crop—and in DRC, bananas are cultivated intensively, as they meet many dietary needs. Also, bananas offer an affordable meal for every income earner.

The YFP banana project involves the young Friends in two Village Meetings: one of these Meetings was established in 2003, and the other has been in existence since 1984 under the Communauté des Églises Évangéliques au Congo, which is affiliated with Burundi Yearly Meeting and Evangelical Friends Church International.

This project is on a one-and-a-quarter hectare parcel of land and involves both young men and women of the church. These young people of the church are expected to cultivate, harvest, and sell bananas to the local population so that they can supplement the income of the church population—the majority of whom are illiterate and living in poverty. The project began in 2017, and is expected to continue through 2024.

These Young Friends are also involved in other income-generating activities, such as goat rearing, the cultivation of cassava, and other small-scale businesses that help them earn a decent living. By selling these products, the village women are able to send their children to school as well as meet their basic needs.



FUM North American Ministries Director Colin Saxton is continuing his series of weekly video reflections on how to be hope and light in the world. The reflections, usually four minutes long, can be found on our [Facebook page](#), our [YouTube channel](#), or our [Instagram channel](#). In the conversational manner of a spiritual friend, Colin has spoken about what the actual power of resurrection is, whether we live in the life and power in which Christ and the disciples lived, making the next right steps, the effects of recognizing that we are God's beloved, the disruptive impact of Truth, among other ideas. The videos are posted on Thursdays.



# February Prayer Focus: FTC

*In 2020, we asked members of the Friends United Meeting global community to spend some time in prayer for each Yearly Meeting of FUM. In 2021, we are asking members to spend some time in prayer for FUM's various ministries. Each month we'll tell the story of a different ministry or project, and pass along some prayer requests of Friends involved in the work. In February, we focused on Friends Theological College.*

Friends Theological College (FTC) was officially launched in 1943, in Lugulu, under the leadership of Jefferson and Helen Ford. The first class had sixteen students, three of whom were women. This was the beginning of the long tradition of FTC's commitment to providing theological education in Africa for both women and men who are called to Christian service among Friends. The school moved to Kaimosi in 1950. At first, the school was named Friends Bible Institute, a name that was changed in 1994 to Friends Theological College.

Currently, FTC offers both a Certificate in Pastoral Ministry and Diploma in Theology. The Diploma is an equivalent of an Associate's Degree. FTC also offers an Advanced Certificate in Chaplaincy and a Bachelor of Theology. In recent years, FTC has expanded throughout the region and has established five satellite campuses. With the outbreak of Covid-19 and subsequent school closures, FTC launched new online programs in May 2020. FTC students are equipped for effective pastoral ministry and leadership in the church. Graduates go out to work as pastoral ministers, religious educators, missionaries, and chaplains. FTC received accreditation with the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA) in August 2017.

In the future, FTC plans to develop a spiritual formation program, expand the Edith Ratcliff Library, establish an archive of African Friends history, and perhaps even start a Master's Program.

Please join FTC in giving thanks for

- God's protection during the Covid threat
- the generosity of Friends who supported the school during the recent closure
- two faculty members who were recently awarded doctoral degrees
- faculty members who sacrificially serve their students
- our new online programs
- students returning to campus

Please join FTC in praying for

- God's ongoing protection as students return to campus
- God's continuing call to Friends to enter ministry—and come to find preparation at FTC
- faculty members who are continuing their education to better serve their students
- financial health and sustainability of the school
- Robert Wafula, as he is raising support through FUM to fund his ministry
- the Board of Managers who oversee the school
- growth of FTC's online programs, satellite campuses, and academic curricula
- students as they secure school fees
- students as they grow in wisdom and prepare for God's service in Africa, and beyond



**Pastor, Pleasant Plain Friends, Iowa**

We have an opening for a pastor (part-time or full-time) at our church beginning July 1, 2021. For a job description, please send e-mail to [ppfriendsjobs@gmail.com](mailto:ppfriendsjobs@gmail.com).



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**Stay connected to Friends around the world and the work that is being done in partnership by receiving news and engaging in online communities in these ways:**

- Receive FUM's weekly newsletter by email
- Participate in FUM's monthly international prayer gathering
- Watch the new weekly video series, "Walking in the Way"

**For more information, email: [communications@friendsunitedmeeting.org](mailto:communications@friendsunitedmeeting.org)**



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