

## Ministry Summary of Joshua & Ruth Barron, CMF-KENYA (November 2011)

### **We have an equipping ministry**

Our team partners with the CMF-planted churches which began among the Maasai and Turkana peoples.

### **Primary Strategy**

Our primary ministry strategy is to help the churches by developing curricula in the local languages and helping them to implement those. As we have learned the Maa language, our focus has been on the Maasai churches, but as the believers are sharing Jesus with other tribes, our role is expanding. We are also involved in various training activities: discipleship, leadership development, and culturally appropriate teachers' training.

### **What's going well?**

We have completed a series of lessons that has been well-received on how to listen to the words of God in the Bible with understanding (*Enkinosata Ororei Le Nkai* – “Eating the Word of God”). We are currently working on a series on stewardship and one on the Lord's Supper is on the drawing board. Ruth has been working to help develop the existing children's ministries. She has a vision for a resource for the teachers that would help them know how to use every day materials in their teaching as props and to know where to find what sort of stories and teachings in the Bible. Ruth has also begun writing a series of animal parables for children; the lessons are embedded within the stories. We have a focus on teaching through parables or stories, and also use a lot of drama and traditional proverbs. As curriculum coordinators, we are also focused on providing reproducible teaching.

We are now working to help congregations implement the curricula that we prepare in collaboration with national co-workers. This involves a lot of teachers' training. We teach courses and seminars for pastors, elders and teachers on how to use these materials. Ruth generally assists Joshua with his course preparations; sometimes we will team teach. Recently, we've heard on the grape vine that Sunday school teachers are teaching with stories and that the children are going home and telling the mamas both the story and the application. THIS IS NEW. We could give several examples: we are finally seeing some of our work bear fruit.

Joshua was recently blessed by being able to teach two courses (Church History and Missions & Evangelism) at Turkana Bible Training Institute. One of the highlights was when two of the students told him, “now I can see that the Church is not a wazungu (*foreign white people*) religion. It has always been in Africa and has deep roots in African soil.” One student acknowledged that his teaching style is ... different ... but went on to say, “I like that you just keep teaching in parables. It is easy to understand and it will be easy to remember when I am teaching in my home area.”

Joshua is also contributing to the upcoming revision of the Maa version of the Bible.

### **Greatest Challenge?**

Balancing family and ministry.