



cmfi

Joshua + Ruth Barron

Missionaries to Kenya

JULY 2014



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: Emaisisi Olaitoriani lang!
: “Let us all praise our Lord together!”
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We have some wonderful news to share with you about the ministry among the Maasai, especially concerning the Discipleship Training School (DTS). Please stay with me until the end of this newsletter to find out what God is doing.

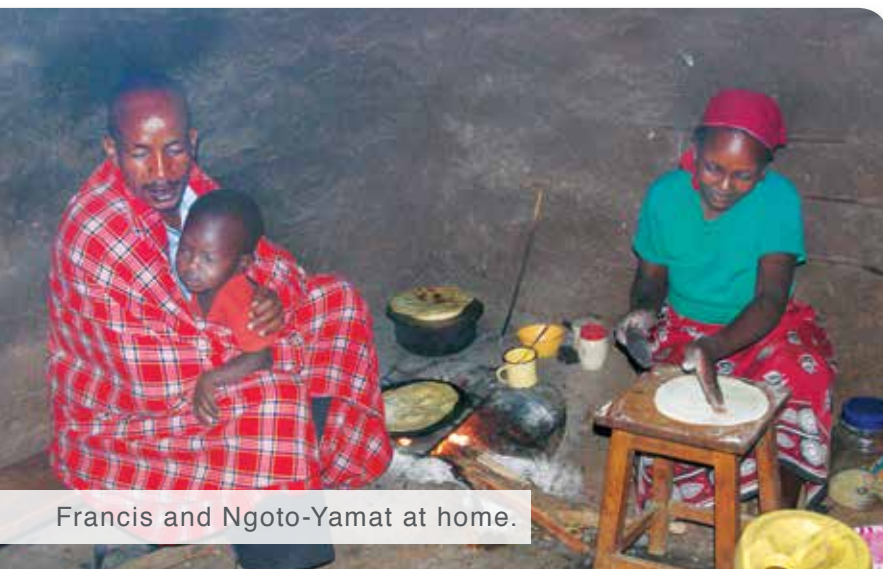
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A little history
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DTS is a ministry of CMF and the Community Christian Church (CCC – the fellowship of all of CMF’s churches in Kenya), originally founded for the Maasai leaders in 2000 by Andre Brink, a South African who was then a partner with CMF’s work. Andre, a graduate of YWAM’s (Youth With A Mission) DTS, modeled it after that training. The Maasai DTS met in a former mission house deep in the forests of the Loita Hills in Maasailand, and the CMF-Maasai team contributed funds to help support the school.

Meanwhile, Francis Yenko – a Maasai man who had been removed from school after 8th grade by his father to take care of the family’s flocks and herds – was mentored by a CMF missionary and became a faithful disciple of Jesus. He later attended and graduated from a YWAM DTS in Kenya. While a student, Francis developed a deep relationship with God and conceived a vision for a DTS in Maasailand. After graduation, he joined Andre in the CMF-Maasai DTS and became its director.



Joshua teaching at DTS.



Francis and Ngoto-Yamat at home.

The purpose of the school, as stated by Francis, was “to fully train upcoming leaders of local churches on who God is and what He has done for us all; to know how much God desires a relationship with us and loves us.” It met for a 3-month time period twice a year, with classes being limited to 12 students each time. The last 2 weeks were spent in evangelism in conjunction with local church leaders in various areas of Maasailand. Although it was called Maasai DTS, it was not limited to those speaking Maa because Francis can teach in Maa, English, or Swahili.

In 2008, the Maasai DTS had 8 students (including 2 women). Ruth and I co-taught one of the topics that year, experiencing firsthand this valuable ministry and convinced of just how well this model of ministry works.

Challenges

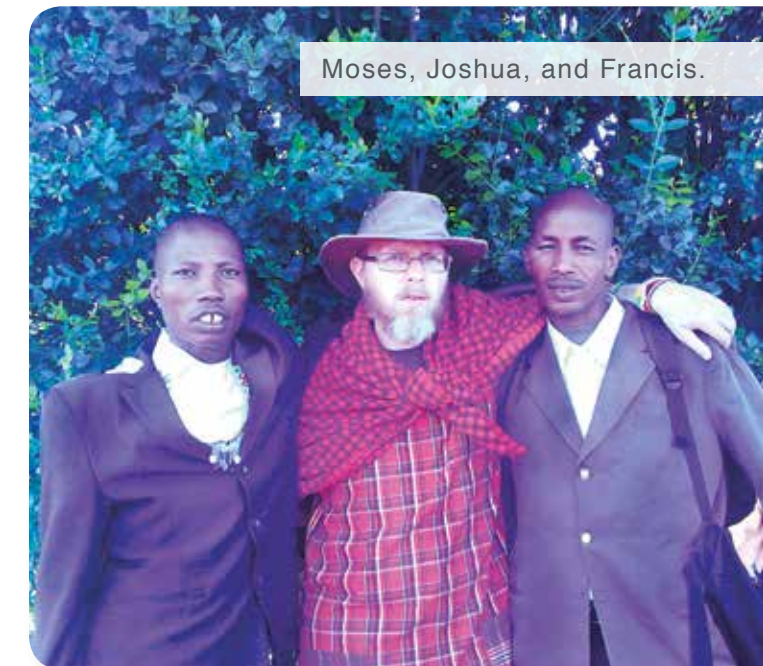
But from 2009-2012, the DTS did not meet. A new missionary family had joined Andre and needed to live in the old mission house, but there were not any funds for a new facility. Francis served as a director of Andre's new development ministry called Walking With Maasai (WWM), which focused on Christian stewardship of the environment and hosted ecologically sound safaris to generate income for supporting both WWM and the DTS ministry. Francis also divided his time between his home in Olepishet where he was a church elder and his work as the DTS director, as well as the primary teacher and mentor for the students. Francis needed co-laborers in ministry but did not have any.

When our family returned from furlough in 2010, we discovered that the DTS had not had any sessions since our departure and that Francis was suffering from ministerial burnout. From that point, I tried to provide some pastoral care, relief, and encouragement for Francis. Then, at a meeting in 2012, I met Moses Mashipei, a graduate of the Maasai DTS under Francis. As the seemingly defunct DTS was being discussed, Moses shared a powerful testimony of how the school had deepened his faith and strengthened his walk with Jesus. *"The DTS and Francis have really shaped me,"* he declared.

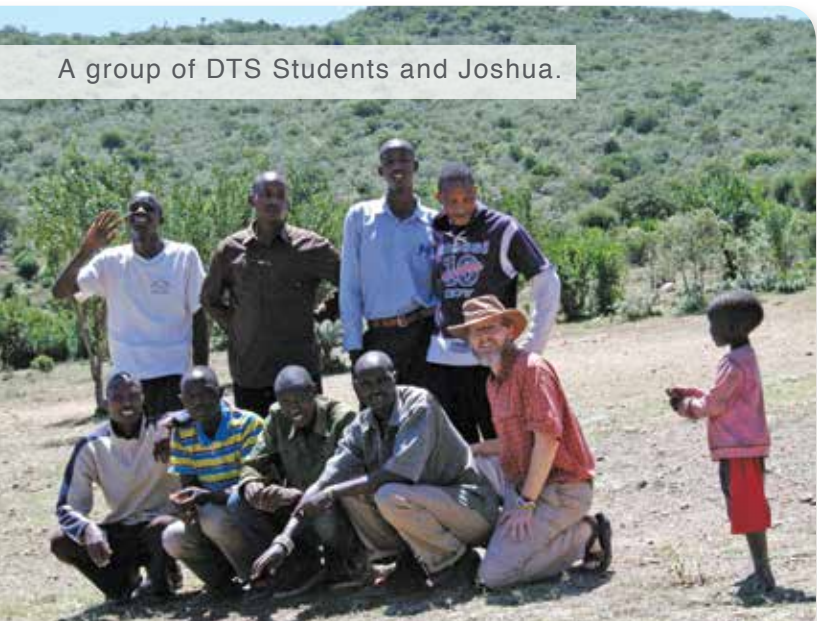
I said to myself, *"If this isn't the man to help Francis with the DTS, then he is the man to find that man."*

Reviving the DTS

Later in 2012, I formed a steering committee to resurrect the DTS. In February 2013, we had a reunion, gathering 20 DTS graduates together, quizzing them on what had really helped them in life and ministry from their sessions, and asking what they wished had been a part of the sessions. We closely evaluated the Maasai DTS and recruited Moses to become Assistant Director under Francis. Eighteen agreed to join a pool of teachers to share the load with Francis. Throughout 2013 preparations were made to reopen the DTS, which began its first session in February 2014.



Moses, Joshua, and Francis.



A group of DTS Students and Joshua.

Many came together to provide a guest house, an outhouse, shower stalls, a cook, and tents for the renewed sessions in Olipeshet; 7 students from different areas of Maasailand arrived to begin their study. Please pray that God will continue to mold each of these young men into spiritual warriors and shepherds, with hearts after God's own heart.

Now here's the really exciting part...

DTS 2014: Reaping the Harvest

During this year's session, 21 topics have been taught by 7 teachers. I was able to spend the last week of April there to teach a course on "The Fear of God" (did you know that there are at least 157 verses that address this topic?). Hannah Gail (8) and Eliana (6) came with me on this trip. The week was during midterm break in Kenya, so they made friends and enjoyed playing with several Maasai girls while I taught.

Several hours of each week of a DTS session, together with the final two weeks, are devoted to community outreach. At the eastern edges of this area are 2 congregations from other fellowships. The DTS and the leaders of the nearby CCC congregations are collaborating with those congregations to take Jesus to as-yet-unreached villages in the areas between. Great things are happening for the kingdom! Here is an excerpt from an email Francis sent about midway through the session (April 8th):

*"Please praise God with us for the new church which had been planted a week ago by the DTS students at a place known as Naitiami. This place is a very remote place and is between Olepishet and Elang'ata Enterit. **There had been no church there before and these guys [the current DTS students] prayed over 85 people on last Sunday who gave their lives to Jesus....** Meisisi Olaitoriani Yesu! [May the Lord Jesus be praised!] We plan to send people from Olepishet CCC and DTS students on a weekly basis to encourage or to feed them the Word of God."*

I received a more complete report on April 30th. Among other great news, I learned that 2 Sundays prior to our meeting, there had been **18 baptisms in Olepishet** as new believers joined the congregation. Ten of those new believers came to Jesus in response to the outreach ministry of the students, working under the supervision of Francis and Moses. The students themselves are sharing testimonies about what God is working in their hearts and lives. During the two final weeks of outreach, **an additional 131 from 5 communities came to the Lord!**

The news of **some 60 coming to Jesus in another group of villages** is very exciting because that area has long been known as a stronghold for the laibons (hereditary leaders of the pagan traditional religion), witchcraft, and spiritual bondage. Francis and Moses, together with the 7 DTS students, met long in prayer before going to this area, they then went out together in twos and threes. When they arrived, they were met by the people telling the evangelists, *"We have just been waiting for someone to come and share with us the news about the way to God."* Amazingly, even one of the laibons has asked to hear more about Jesus.



Hiking with DTS students and Eliana, a great bonding time.



A DTS ministry baptism.

Yes, that's at least 226 new people – so far – being reconciled to God in Jesus through the ministry of one session of our DTS! Please pray that each of these will grow into mature disciple-making disciples.



Ruth and I went out with the children to Olepishet for the DTS graduation on May 18, 2014, and had a wonderful time of celebration and commissioning with the students and the Olepishet congregation. We heard testimony after testimony of transformed lives. Emaisisi Olaitoriani lang! *"Let us all praise our Lord together!"*

Vision: Looking Ahead

The renewed DTS has its headquarters in Olepishet, but it continues to have a vision not only for the Maasai churches but for churches across Kenya. We are developing plans for a mobile DTS that would hold sessions at various training centers in Maasailand and Turkanaland, and perhaps even in Samburuland.

Next year's DTS session will again be hosted in Olepishet. We already have 12 students. Please pray for these believers that God will make straight their paths to attend the DTS, and that the DTS will provide them an opportunity to grow deeply in their relationship with our Lord.

Now that the DTS has celebrated the graduation of its 2014 students, Francis, Moses and I are trying to figure out how to enable it to become a sustainable ministry. We would like to return to 2 DTS sessions a year, but are currently limited to just one session for financial reasons. Please pray with us that God will show us the way forward for a sustainable ministry of the Discipleship Training School.

Grace to you all and peace in our Lord Jesus,

JOSHUA

Joshua "Lemayan" Barron
DTS Steering Committee Chair
CMF-Kenya Field Team Chair



How Can You Partner With This Ministry?

If you would like to be a partner with the ministry of the Discipleship Training School, please go to our page on the CMF website, cmfi.org/jrbarron.

There is a place at the bottom of our page to give to this ministry. Any size gift will be greatly appreciated.