

## *The Church in Vote and her Pastor*

Vote is a tiny shopping centre in Kibwezi South. Benson Nyamai pastors a small congregation in the area. He has faced many reasons for discouragement and despondency, both in the ministry and with the family demands on him. On the 17<sup>th</sup> July, with Ryan Devine of the Reformed Baptist Church of Riverside, California, we made a visit with the aim of being of encouragement to him and his family.

The church building has been demolished by strong winds of Kitui three times! This has been a source of discouragement for the church. Vicious termites attack the wood holding the structure together and this gives opportunity for the wind to bring down the weakened structure. For this reason, they have now decided to put concrete pillars. They have constructed six of the 10 pillars for the whole building. As we spent time together opening up the Bible and spending time in prayer, the one single item of prayer that was repeated many times was the church building. We thank God that He has been kind to hear their prayers and substantial amount of money has been raised to meet this need. The next need now is to find someone from TBC Nairobi who can supervise the construction and deliver a church building for this community to gather and worship the Lord.

Benson Nyamai has so much struggled to make ends meet. The tiny church cannot support him financially. He has tried all sorts of jobs in order to cater for the needs of his family. He is a trained carpenter and so has tried to set up workshops, but unsuccessfully. The last time he had a workshop, he had a serious chest infection which landed him in hospital for three months! He has tried supplying bread from the bakeries to retail shops. This also has not gone very well. He has also tried farming in his 8 acre piece of land. But the area is arid and barely supports farming. Bee-keeping has also not been lucrative at all. He has resolved to devote himself to serving the Lord faithfully despite all these hardships. It is not easy with his children at the secondary school level. His daughter is now in form 4 and his son in form 1. The fees arrears have been increasing by the term. All these difficulties had driven him almost to despair, until one night he decided to call me and we spoke at length. Thankfully, the Lord has heard his plea for help and has now provided fees for his daughter and his son graciously supplied.

We pray that his resolve to devote himself to the ministry will be fruitful. It is not easy ministering alone, and serving almost alone, with no like-minded encouraging voice nearby. Our prayer for him is that he may have a co-labourer with whom they can diagnose the human depravity and sinfulness of sin and proclaim the excellences of Christ. Acknowledging the theological ignorance amongst pastors in the area, he has been trying to educate them with things of God. He has a rich library and hopes that he could be used of the Lord to help many pastors be more theologically astute as they serve the people of God. Recently, a man from the area, who actually taught him in primary school, came to the APC (see above) and submitted his application for the TPC. Daniel Moki is hoping to learn how to better divide up the word of truth.

Please pray for this church that it would be rejuvenated in love for Christ in the midst of all the trials of this fallen world; that they will not despair, but that all may devote themselves to the service of the saints. Kindly pray for Benson that his ministry in the church will flourish and the Lord would bring many to salvation in His saving grace. That the church will grow both spiritually and numerically, and that the kingdom of God may flourish in the general area.

Submitted by Murungi Igweta & slightly edited

29<sup>th</sup> August 2017