

REPORT: PCEA EVERGREEN VBS

Greetings brethren,

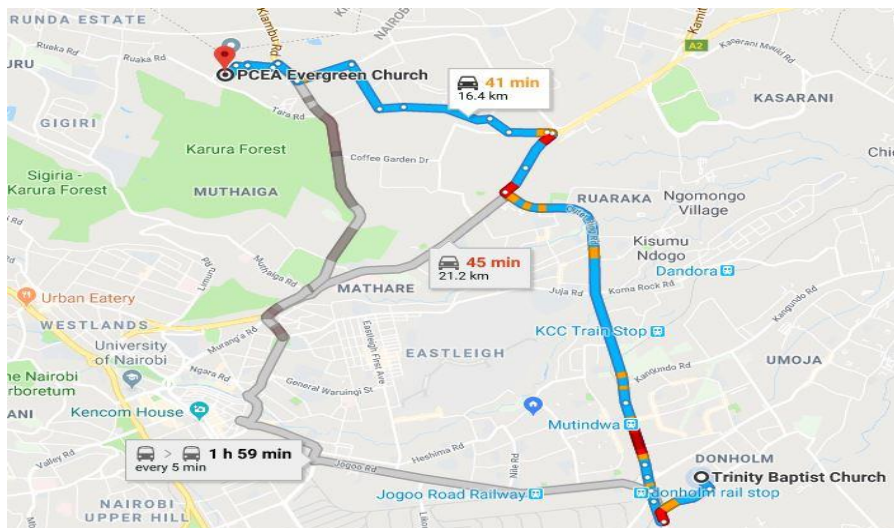
We in the Children's ministry began the year having asked you to join us in prayers for open doors to preach the gospel in institutions like schools, as well as to partner with other churches. The Lord heard and answered our prayers, as we found one such opportunity. We received a call to help PCEA Evergreen with their VBS between **9th-13th April 2018**. This opportunity allowed us to bring the gospel to over 250 children and teenagers from the *Evergreen church* and its church plant known as *Beulah church* located on the Eastern bypass. Many of the children in these churches come from the nearby slums of **Huruma** and **Githogoro**, while a few came from **Runda**.

This is a door that opened with a phone call from *Paul Ruhiu*, a member of PCEA Evergreen who comes for our evening services. He is the Chair of the '*Church school committee*', which oversees the Children's Ministry. He informed us of their desire to have us do VBS for them, as he knew of our gospel centred approach to children's ministry.

Organising and logistics

Organising for this mission offered some challenges. To begin with, it was not easy to find teachers who would be available for the five days of the program, since most of our Sunday school teachers are employed fulltime in their secular jobs. We also faced the challenge of logistics, where we had to ensure that our teachers travelled from their homes in different parts of town, and that they arrived in the venue on time. Considering that Runda is a suburb at the very edge of Nairobi city bordering Kiambu county, it was a hustle to ensure that we arrived on time.

Looking at these challenges, we are thankful that we were able to find the teachers and execute



our mission as per the program. It was a blessing to have 8 of our teachers commit themselves to be available for the five days of the VBS. Some of them had to take leave from their work places to be available to teach. We pray that the Lord honours their sacrifice for the sake of the gospel. We are also thankful to God that we were able to hire a vehicle which picked us at different points of the city and we arrived on time for preparations and Morning devotions.

The Morning devotion

Having managed to beat the morning traffic, we would arrive in the affluent suburb of Runda at 8:00am. This would give us enough time to pray and prepare for the classes. We would later gather at the Youth Hall, a tent big enough to handle a crowd of a thousand people. It would take a bit of effort the teachers as well as Evergreen volunteers to ensure that the children settle down enough for the devotions to start.



The morning devotions served the purpose of evangelising and preparing them for the teaching later in class. I had the privilege of leading this work every morning. The devotions were between **8:45-9:15a.m**, thirty minutes that we sort to bring the children's attention to God's word in teaching and singing.

We had a collection of hymns from our own Grace Hymns, which were projected for the kids to sing along. We were thankful that the songs were well received by the children, as they easily sang along after hearing them for the first time. This was a reminder of the fact that although the children have young minds they need and appreciate songs with doctrinal truth.

The Classes

The class sessions were the backbone of our mission, as they offered a more focused and intensive teaching time which ran from **9:15-11:30am**. The first day was a challenge as it took time for us to adapt to the numbers as well as to establish class discipline. Our teachers had to handle a class with 50-65 students. You can imagine how tasking it is to calm a group of 60 fidgety teens and preteens so that you can bring them truths of the gospel. We are thankful however that the situation settled by the next day where our team came up with strategies to control

We also faced the challenge of class division, where students from the affluent *Runda* area would



not interact freely with those from *Githogoro* and *Huruma slums*. Although our teachers did try to deal with it with some success in integrating the two groups, its nonetheless something that only the power of the gospel is able to break. Please pray for the teachers in Evergreen as they seek to deal with it in the long term.

The Lesson

One of the great tragedies of our time is that children are not taught to read, hear and internalise the word of God. Many times, Sunday school classes and VBS' are nothing more than Christianised day care, where children are kept busy with playing and activities. We thank God that this was not the case at Evergreen, as we could teach the word of God as it is.



All the classes looked at the account of the ***Exodus of Israel from Egypt***. Our teachers worked hard to expound and simplify this very important account to the kids. They especially endeavoured to show God's mercy to the enslaved Israel and apply it by showing Christ salvation from the slavery of sin. They presented these truths in the way that it could best be grasped by the children's understanding level, as well as using helpful classwork material. Our team taught the children with the confidence that God can use whatever the children grasped for their salvation.

The Team

'*Church is no spectator sport*' is a fitting phrase to show that every member of the church should be actively involved in the work of ministry. Ephesians 4:12 further emphasises this fact; that the spiritual privileges and ministry that we receive every Sunday, and within the week, are meant to help us to be more involved in the work of ministry. It is an encouragement to know that there are



many in this local church who have exerted themselves in the work of preaching the gospel.

The Lord blessed us with a capable and willing team of 8 teachers for this mission. Let's pray that the Lord would help them to fan this gift of teaching, as well as to raise many more in our midst, for the glory of His name and the good of His church.

From left to right: ***Dominic Kabaria, Jackie Kabaria, Martha Nasimiyu, Edna Nthoki, Loise Wanjiku, Paul Ruhiu (Evergreen church), Mary Kathure, Ema Karuri, Kimani (Beulah church), Ted Atsulu.***

Conclusion

Let's continue to pray for more open doors, and that the Lord of the harvest would raise more labourers, as the harvest is ripe, but the labourers are few.