



## Baraka Road Church of Christ 2021 Newsletter

Dear Kalispell church of Christ.

Greetings to you all. I hope everyone is doing well in the midst of this ever-challenging time as we are all living through this global pandemic! Since March 2021 to present, Covid-19 has caused a lot of changes in everyone's lives. Most churches have to figure out how to adapt to other ways of worshiping online and connecting with members over the phone during the government's order of total lockdown and prohibition of in-person or public gatherings.

At Baraka Road Church of Christ, we too had to make these changes in our outreach and to figure out how to engage people. One challenge that has come along with this was technology. For some of our members technology was not accessible or easy to navigate. Thankfully, we stayed in touch with our congregation through phone calls, sms, whatsapp groups, and encouraged in-person fellowships in families' homes. Through these means, we were able to network and continue our service to God.





### House fellowships

Another change came with frequent lockdowns by the government as a contentive measure of Covid-19. Mathare slum dwellers live from hand to mouth at an average wage of \$1 per day, which is not always guaranteed. Lockdown rendered most people jobless. They were hardly hit by economic challenges. This caused many people to move to their local villages.

Fortunately enough, when I asked you all and brother Don Smith, Deacon at 4<sup>th</sup> & Steward Street church of Christ, for support on behalf of our congregation members who were hit by this challenge, you responded positively. Your \$1000 and Don's \$400 financial support, enabled us to buy two days worth of meals for over 100 members who were in need of food. This also helped to pay one month's rent for the Hall where we worship. We pray all of you are keeping well and we are very thankful for your support. This was a great act of love!!





We at Baraka Road Church of Christ have some great news to share that will hopefully bring light to your day! Apart from the economic challenges stated, God's protection was on us in amazing ways! None of our members were reported to be Covid-19 positive or died due to the same despite our congested environment, which made it almost impossible to keep 1.5m distance. God saw us through! This was a big miracle in our eyes!



*New Portable Swimming pool for baptism service*

We want to thank you all for your May-2021 financial gift of \$ 510. We used this amount to buy a durable swimming pool. Now new converts enjoy their baptism in safe and unpolluted waters. This continues to help the church's expenditure. We used to rent swimming pools for baptisms. However, currently, we have a temporary challenge of water shortages in Mathare due to sewerage system repairs by the government. Hopefully very soon we will have water in Mathare and continue using our new pool for baptisms. From mid-2020 to Dec 2021 we had 51 baptisms.



Polluted waters where we used to baptize new believers before buying a portable swimming pool



New pool baptism service!

On behalf of my family, I want to humbly thank all of you for your continued monthly support of \$1200. This act of love and brotherhood has enabled me to meet our family's daily basic needs and our six kids' quality education. With these two great needs met, I have been able to devote more time to ministry work with the result being that more people are obeying the gospel and giving their lives to Christ through baptism.

These are new believers who recently obeyed the gospel, were baptized & added to Christ's Church



From left: James, Sharon, Eunice, Daniel, Lynn and Jane.

To realize our vision of *Knowing Christ and Making Him known* and to achieve our goals, we organize our mission within five Biblical purposes of the church: worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism. These are our church's driving force.

**Worship:** We teach and encourage believers to embrace the spirit of praise, adoration and reverence of God, both in public and private, as we celebrate his worthiness, love and saving deeds in honor of his name.

We continue enlightening the church, that true worship is not the mechanical repetition of rituals, but should be wholehearted and reverent. It should be based upon trustful and obedient lives, in that obedience is itself to be seen as an act of worship.

The Lord continues to add new believers into his church, currently our membership stands at Sunday School 60, Adults 150 and 14 Youths. We had 9 Baby dedications. Below are some of our Church worship pictures.



Sunday Worship



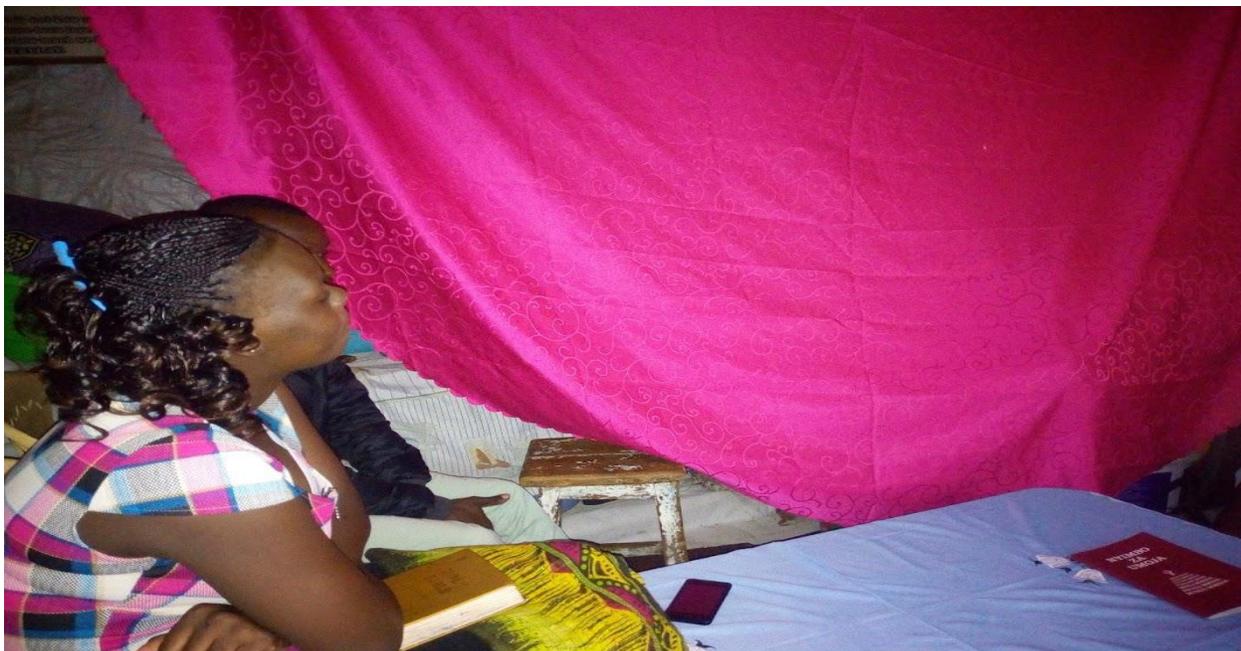
Sunday School presenting songs and memory verses.

We are also planning to revive our children's weekly bible study come this new year of 2022, now that Corona effects are down.



Baby dedications.

**Fellowship:** The fellowship that we share as a result of our common union with God through Jesus Christ is expressed in our lives together. It is evident in our worship and fellowship together, in love for one another which reflects God's own love and in a practical commitment to one another which is demonstrated in concern for the weak and readiness to share our possessions with the poor and needy. We fellowship in our homes every weekend on Saturday evenings. We also have youth fellowships every Sunday morning. Through these actions, our various neighborhoods are reached with the good news of Jesus Christ.



**Discipleship:** In this class I teach new believers the process of becoming a committed follower of Jesus Christ, with all the spiritual discipline and benefits which this brings.

We further stress the privileges, joys and cost of this calling of following Jesus Christ, and serving and obeying him. I incorporate discovery and redemption bible study, and one on one home Bible studies and prayers, the result, many people obeying the gospel through baptism, and are added into Christ Church, disciples also mature in their love and commitment to God's service. Currently, I have 5 in my redemption class and more than 10 new believers in my discipleship class as well.

**Ministry:** We strive to express our love by practically obeying the Great Commission and Great commandment of Jesus Christ. We encourage members to serve the purposes of the church, like evangelism through practical love, *Hospital ministry* where we visit and pray with the sick in hospitals and homes as we give them one banana.

***Mercy Kitty (Fund) Project,*** we encourage our congregation to emulate the spirit of charity, sharing their possessions with the poor, widow and orphans. Monthly, our congregation supports this initiative in kind and cash to help believers who are needy with used clothes and with food. Many of our needy members at least nowadays can smile at the end of the month for a day's meal and clothing given to them by the church.

We dearly appreciated your gift of \$137 toward this project, this will be of great help to the needy members of our congregation.





SHOT ON HOT 7  
INFINIX DUAL CAMERA

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INFINIX DUAL CAMERA



**Hospital Ministry:** We do hospital visitations twice a month, and share the word of God with the patients, pray for them and serve each with one banana. Through this ministry, we've seen souls worn to Christ. The challenge now is that most hospitals only allow a few family members of the sick to visit them due to Covid-19. We hope things will work well very soon and the church will get back to this ministry.

**Evangelism:** We balance seeker sensitive/ evangelistic worships and fellowships services and also make use of evangelism methods like relational; whereby we encourage our congregation to use this method to fish for their relatives, friends, families and neighbors for Christ.

I also employ, evangelistic, discovery and redemption Bibles studies. Inviting guests to cell groups, we currently have four Cell groups in four estates: Mathare, Lucky Sumer, Obama and Githurai. We evangelize to more people using invitation enquiries, church visitors and hospital ministry. We also reach the unchurched through WBS. Currently, I'm helping 12 students in their WBS study.

Long before Corona, we had an active weekly children's Bible study, and over 250 kids used to come for Bible study, prayers and snacks. Through this program we were able to reach the parents of these kids with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Result, a good number of them gave their lives to Jesus, obeyed the gospel and were baptized and added into the Lord's church. We're planning to revive this program early next year.

We have an urgent need of registering the BR Church of Christ with the government. The church has grown and is well known by local leaders. It is a legal operational license. Without this license, the government can potentially cancel our operation indefinitely! This would be really very bad news!!

Please remember us in your prayers that as we continue to minister in this very challenging environment, that God would open for us more financial doors to help with these ministries.

*Prayer Requests:*

- i. New believers to continue growing in their love for Jesus and his service.
- ii. \$1,000 for registering the Baraka Road Church of Christ with the government.
- iii. Education of my six children. My elder Son, Godwill's higher education fees at Egerton University.
- iv. Job opportunity for my wife Susan. And also, a seed capital to start my tour and guide business.
- v. God to continue touching the hearts of people to give in cash or in kind to help with our Mercy Kitty project.
- vi. Get a land in our rural area and build a home to settle my family.
- vii. Get a land to build a Hall where we can worship free of charge and do farming to boost the church income.

*My six kid's education updates*

I'm very thankful in the Lord for you- my brothers and sisters at Christ at Kalispell Church of Christ- for your continued financial support throughout the year 2021. This enabled me to reach more people with the good news of Jesus Christ, many of them obeyed the gospel and were baptized and added to the church. This also enabled my six kids to access quality education, with good performance. They closed for a two-week holiday, and they're set to resume from 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2022 for their term learning. My five kid's education savings for third term stands at KSh 100,000, and by early January 2022, their school requirements will be, shopping – Ksh 20,000, plus Fees- Ksh 126,205, = Ksh 146,205. Now the fee balances for their third term = 146,205-100,000 = KSH 46,205.

My eldest son, Godwill set a good example for the rest of his siblings and sent a strong message to the entire Mathare community, that with God, even children from a slum community can make it to university, contrary to the norm here. Godwill's case was a rare one! I thank God for you

and your financial support over the years. Godwill is doing great in his higher education at Egerton University, he will resume for Y1S2 in early January 2021, the HELB Board offered him a loan of KS 15,000, that means he will need KS 45,000 more to complete his year one, semester one. Please, remember him in your prayers for a break-through on this as well. I trust that the Lord will open him a financial door to help with his higher learning needs.

Without your tireless involvement, prayers, encouragements, and generosity, I would have not been able to aim high and reach our potential. Thank you for supporting my family and ministry. Thank you again for your love and support.

Yours in his service,

James Ooko.